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ANTARCTIC

To the South Pole by Air

If you see a person in the middle of summer packing warm clothes and stocking up on winter hats and felt boots, it can only mean one thing: he is headed for the Antarctic.

On July 12 an IL-76 MD, number 76623, left Sheremetevo and set course for the sixth continent. The flight this heavy transport aircraft is undertaking is unique. First of all, our airplanes have never before flown from the 'big country' to the South Pole in the middle of an antarctic winter. Secondly, there is an unusual route for this air expedition, which has been organized by Goskomgidromet SSSR (USSR State Committee on Hydrometeorology) and 'OKB imeni Ilyushina' (Ilyushin Special Design Bureau). The airplane is flying to the Antarctic not by the usual route over Africa but by way of North and South America, and for the first time it is due to land on King George Island near the Soviet station Bellingshausen. And finally, a word about the cargo and passengers to be embarked in the American city of Minneapolis: these are the equipment and participants for an international trans-Antarctic expedition (including 42 sled dogs).

"We have long felt the need for establishing a new air route to the Antarctic," says A. Chilingarov, leader of the expedition and deputy chairman of Goskomgidromet. "The existing route is shorter, but a large part of it (approximately 5,000 kilometers) lies above the ocean, and, in view of the instability of Antarctic weather, this presents a definite risk for every flight. The distance from South America to the sixth continent is much shorter - only 1,200 kilometers. In other words, the main goal of this flight is to work out a series of measures for providing effective and timely assistance to Antarctic stations."

We are carrying out this flight on a commercial basis, which means that we will be taking on cargo all along the route, and from the USA we will be flying an expedition led by Jean-Lou(is) Etienne to its starting point. Plans call for this expedition to use dog teams to traverse the south polar ice cap in a single season following the so-called long axis - from King George Island to the Soviet station Mirnyi, a distance of approximately 7,000 kilometers.

... We will be telling the readers of "Pravda" more in detail about this trip, in which 37-year old Soviet scientist Viktor Boyarskii is a participant. For now, I will introduce the captain of our airplane. Stanislav Bliznyuk, Meritorious Test Pilot of the USSR, head of the air service of the Ilyushin Special Design Bureau, has flown at northern latitudes a number of times and participated in the "Ekspark" expeditions.

And so, it's farewell to the heat of Moscow! We should be arriving at the icy continent in a week. The total span of our "air bridge" is 47,000 kilometers, and we are due to spend 60 hours in the air.

Pravda

13 July 1989

Page 3 (Full text)

CONSTRUCTION

Helicopter Assisting With Power Line Installation

A new K-32 helicopter is helping workers build the Nadum - Sosnovka LEP-220 power transmission line in Tyumen Oblast.

It is doing the difficult job of rolling out and hanging the wires. Specialists find that the K-32 is maneuverable, has excellent visibility and, most importantly, is more economical than the veteran of the Tyumen northland -the Mi-8.

Stroitel'naya Gazeta

12 July 1989

Page 2

Brick Factory at Ukhta Begins Production

A. Sub-Units of the Industrial Construction Trust of Glavkomigazneftestroi (Main Directorate for Construction in the Oil and Gas Industry - Komi ASSR) have begun phase one of the largest red brick manufacturing plant in the country, in Ukhta.

After phase two is put into operation, production of this high-quality building material, which will mainly be used for residential buildings, will double, amounting to 150 million bricks.

The new plant is worthy of note not only because of its size but also because of the fully automated technology which it employs.

Stroitel'naya Gazeta

6 August 1989

Page 1 (full text)

B. Ukhta (Komi ASSR), 26. A document has been signed here certifying acceptance for operation of the first phase of the country's largest brick-making factory. For now, it will produce 75 million red bricks per year, and output will double when the second phase of construction has been completed.

The new enterprise is outfitted with modern Soviet and Italian equipment and electronics. The first superior-grade specimens of this traditional wall material have already been produced in the course of start-up operations.

Pravda

27 July 1989

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8 август 1989

Страница 1 (из 2)

MINERAL RESOURCES AND MINING

Exceptional Diamond Discovered in Yakutsk Kimberlites

At an enriching plant situated near the Arctic Circle, a diamond so big that it could barely be measured was extracted from kimberlite ore.

The crystal weighs 76.5 carats (one carat = .2 grams). According to specialists, after it is cut it will be a most exceptional diamond. It is customary to give such giants a name of their own. This one has been named "Kosa Sokolinaya" (Sokolin's Sand Bar), in honour of the 40th anniversary of the day Yakutsk geologists first began their search for superhard minerals. Forty years ago they discovered their first diamond on a sand bar of the high Vilyuy River and they named the diamond field they had discovered "Sokolin's". Since the industrial exploitation of the Yakutsk kimberlite deposits began, the biggest collection in the world of these crystals has accumulated in the autonomous republic. The total weight of the collection surpasses 2.5 thousand carats.

Trud

August 22, 1989

Page 4 (Full text)

Effects of Coalminers Strike

Vorkuta

The work of the Vorkuta mines and their neighbouring enterprises is regaining its usual

pace. In recent days the shipping of coal has reached the plan level. Nearly 58,000 tons of coal in 814 railroad cars have been dispatched to customers. This is 1300 tons over the daily goal. But since the beginning of July, shipments have lagged behind by approximately 183,000 tons.

All 13 mines of the "Vorkutaugol" Association are at work. But up to now only two of them - "Ayach-Yaga" and "Promyshlennaya" - have been able to keep up with daily quotas for coal production. The other mines are still showing the effects of the strike, and a considerable amount of time has been spent starting up and testing equipment on the coal faces. Overall, the "Vorkutaugol" Association has brought out 15,800 tons of coal less than planned in recent days. The shortfall in the amount to coal mined since the beginning of the month has already reached 350,000 tons.

The situation in this Arctic city and its worker settlements remains troubled. V. Tareev, chairman of the city strike committee, reports that the committee has reserved the right to call the miners to a new strike. And the committee is prepared to do so if the agreement between the government and the miners of the Pechora Coal Basin is not implemented. If the resolution currently being prepared by the USSR Council of Ministers satisfies the miners, the city and mine strike committees intend to continue their work as a public service until January 1, 1990, to verify that this document is being honoured.

Inta

All mines of the "Intaugol" Corporation are almost back to normal production rates. It is true, however, that the goal for coal delivery has been somewhat underfulfilled - by 600 tons in recent days. This is attributed to the beginning of the transition to a new longwall at the "Glubokaya" mine. Its miners intend to complete the process quickly and to regain the lost time. The shipping of coal is keeping a steady pace. The daily plan is being exceeded, and customers have been shipped 1200 tons of coal from Inta over and above the plan.

Coal shipments did not cease here even during the strike. But during that time customers were being sent screenings - fuel for electric power stations - and did not receive any concentrate. During the first days following the strike there was a shortage of raw material at the "Kapitalnaya" ore-dressing plant, as a result of which its production capacity was not fully used. Coal dressing is now returning to normal, and daily production plans for concentrate have been surpassed by 660 tons.

Workers at the "Kapitalnaya" mine are promising to make up the shortage and to fulfill the July plan.

Sovetskaya Rossiya

29 July 1989

Page 3 (full text)

OIL AND GAS

Indigenous Inhabitants of Nenetskii Region Clash With Geologists Over Drilling Rights

The Vyucheiskii Tundra Council of the Reindeer-Breeding Collective Farm refused to grant a request from geologists to allocate lands for new boreholes.

"This "mini-revolt" gave us the idea of creating a zone where indigenous inhabitants will have preferential land tenure, and where the presence of geologists and petroleum specialists is, for the time being, not desired," said the chairman of the Executive Committee of the Nenetskii District Council, L. Sablin. By decision of the executive committee, 70% of the most severely ecologically damaged lands were assigned to these zones, including the Arctic islands of Kolguev and Vaigach. Helicopters are not allowed to fly over regions densely populated by birds during their nesting seasons. In order to preserve the commercial shoal of Pechora salmon still in existence, the limits of the protected zone containing salmon spawning rivers have been pushed back by 1 kilometer.

By this decision, the local authorities have attempted to halt the costly process of prospecting for mineral which has been launched at full speed by the Ministry of Geology in the Nenetskii autonomous region. The search for oil and gas has been going on here for more than a quarter of a century now, and every second household has a borehole on its land. The geologists got a bargain on that land: a hectare of early spring reindeer pasture was obtained for a ridiculously low 2 roubles and 73 kopecks. The

region has experienced incomparable losses. In the last 10 years alone, more than 800 thousand hectares of land have been removed from the pasture rotation system, and yearly losses experienced by the fishing industry due to water pollution are close to 5 million roubles.

This is the cost of the boring "shaft". The fact is that the drillers care not so much for oil and gas as they do for the footage of the boreholes. For them, the footage plan is the law. As a result, every second hole that they drill in the tundra is barren. And even though in geological prospecting, as in science, a result is a result whether it be a negative or a positive one, it would be better if there were fewer misses. Each of these barren holes costs over 3 million roubles - this is almost half of the yearly amount allocated for the social development of Nenetskii villages. It would be better to give at least part of this money to the impoverished polar villages.

The executive committee of the regional council, adopting the resolution regarding zones of limited economic activity, has proposed to geologists that they concentrate their activity in areas which look promising with respect to oil and gas extraction. For example, there is the Kolvin megashaft, where the first oil field in the Nenetskii tundra is about to begin operating. Oil and gas reserves are not needed today at all. Why explore reserves when it is doubtful that they will be developed even half a century from now?

It must be said that the economic approach taken by the local council has received the support of some of the geologists.

"We can easily reduce the drilling footage in the region by 30%", agreed G. Gurevich, the head of a large seismic prospecting expedition.

It is not difficult to estimate the funds that could be freed if one considers that the industrial association "Arkhangel'skgeologiya" alone has been given funds in the area of more than a billion roubles for prospecting during the present Five-Year Plan. We must spare our geologists a wholesale evaluation of their work, while at the same time critically reexamining the practice of exploiting Arctic deposits on what is definitely a "broad front".

Incidentally, this problem is not new. Two years ago the USSR Council of Ministers commissioned the Ministry of Geology, together with the mining ministries, to develop a program for the integrated development of the raw material sources of the Nenetskii autonomous region, which would wisely combine their industrial activity with the traditional way of life of the indigenous population. Time goes by but there is still no program. Surely the ministries aren't doubting the economic benefits which they would derive from the program?

When six years ago the regional authorities prohibited all-terrain vehicles from going on the tundra during the summer, the hotheads predicted massive losses for geologists. The opposite proved to be the case. The tundra regenerated itself a little and at the same time the drillers profited.

Izvestiya

August 29, 1989

Page 2 (Full text)

Plan for Development of Yamal Peninsula Needs Revision

The exploitation of the West Siberian oil and gas deposits is coming to an end - the first, most readily accessible reserves of the Tyumen deposits are almost exhausted. There has been a slow increase in the net cost of the gas and oil obtained but this is accelerating with each successive year. In our opinion, by the year 2000 the cost of Siberian fuel will have doubled or even tripled, due to the fact that it is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain. The wear and tear on the equipment and pipelines brought here at the outset is taking its toll and there is an increasing number of minor accidents, and lately, major disasters, of technological origin or, to put it bluntly, poorly thought out activity.

The strategy for the general development of the Yamal was worked out seven or eight years ago. In an earlier day this would have been considered a short span of time but so much has happened during the 7 or 8 years in question that projections concerning the future of the Yamal are currently being revised.

We still sell Tyumen' gas at a small profit, but gas coming from the Yamal Peninsula, according to our calculations, will be sold at a loss. It was projected that the region would be developed with a fairly sparse network of settlements with a built-in infrastructure, and that each pair of neighboring points in the network would be connected by a pipeline corridor, and by road and rail. The number would be kept to a minimum: everything was to work according to a remarkable automatic system. Does all this sound good? Well, let's take a look at what is to come of it.

The estimated cost of exploiting the gas and oil reserves of the Yamal Peninsula is 40 billion roubles. It is felt that circumstances will reduce this amount to 30 billion. Actual expenditures, however, according to our calculations, will be 3 to 4 times greater - somewhere around 120 billion roubles. This is because the unique physico-geographical and geological engineering peculiarities of the Yamal Peninsula require new and unique technological solutions which have never before been attempted. All engineering installations and structures will be erected here by the new methods.

Many of the proposals are brilliant, yet not one of them has been approved for large installations over an extended period. The BAM (Baykal-Amur Trunk Line) comes to mind. There, too, were new solutions admired by all. However, poor planning and construction resulted in the doubling and tripling of the initial "standard" cost. The risk is much greater in the Yamal. For this reason, a non-labour-intensive operation will result in much more costly decisions, repairs and consequences of accidents. A very small portion of the salaries is built into the operating costs. Also needed is a manifold increase in the reliability of these non-labour-intensive systems, at a time when the technology is not yet equal to the task.

Other reasons for anxiety are the predictable and non-predictable natural processes which have an adverse effect on the development and utilization of tundra regions.

For example, there are the complete thinning of the soil over vast territories, landslides involving large tracts of land, and the stripping of

the ligneous mossy cover which serves to hold the soil in place. However, the major threat to the environment is posed by global and regional warming. A rise in temperature of 2-3 degrees is being predicted. This, however, is only an average figure. At the Equator this increase will amount to an insignificant 0.5 degrees but, the closer one gets to the Pole, the greater the amplitude will be. As one approaches the Yamal Peninsula, there may very well be a more dangerous increase of 4 degrees in the mean annual temperature. This will lead, in some places, to a complete loss of supporting properties of solidified rock. The considerable iciness of up 50-80% of the upper layers will lead to the melting of ice in certain regions and the sinking of land by 20-50 centimeters or maybe even more. The melting of Arctic and Antarctic ice and continental glaciers will inevitably lead to a rise in the level of the Pacific Ocean, causing it to advance onto low-lying areas of land.

Having soberly evaluated the technical aspects of the possible course of events, the following scenario must be postulated: in order to preserve the supporting properties of the tundra, it will be necessary either to build huge surface freezers, switch to "floating", platform methods of oil and gas production, or alternatively, construct dams which would protect the northern part of the Tyumen' lands, or even those of the Yamal Peninsula as a whole. We are now, however, into the realm of construction engineering fantasy because it would increase the cost of development to 4-10 times the original cost, and there would simply not be enough potential in it. The development would become a losing proposition - it could not be sustained and the colossal plans would turn into a tragic farce.

This is why 30-40 billion roubles is clearly not enough for Yamal and there is talk of 100-120 billion. Where is the money to come from? It will, of course, be taken away from the production facilities, which will lead to the same kind of disruption in the gas industry as the BAM (The Baykal-Amur Trunk Line) caused in the railway system.

But perhaps you have forgotten that the required sum of 20-30 billion roubles has not yet been found? The gas industry will cut its expenses and take the money from other areas, but where are the remaining 50-60 (and possibly even 90) billion roubles to come from? Will we find ourselves out of necessity skimming the funds from agriculture, public health, education, chemistry?

So what should be done? Perhaps the Yamal should not be developed? This is not what we are proposing - the door is open, the wheels have been set in motion. We offer three proposals.

The first involves coming up with a set of alternatives, as soon as possible. In our scheme of things, central among these would be deep, "secondary" exploitation of continental gas and oil reserves. How many of us are aware that there are sizeable quantities of gas here which have not yet been explored? Such work, carried out over a period of 3-5 years, and paralleled by scientific research work in Yamal could, according to a number of expert analyses, bring very considerable results, while incurring 10 times fewer expenses. If a sudden failure were to occur in Yamal in this millenium (which would be entirely understandable), then this would be the final splash along the path of extensification and the last of the great turning points of our economy in the direction of intensification.

The second proposal is related to the strategy of developing the Yamal Peninsula and administering this major undertaking. Organizationally the problem of protecting the Yamal Peninsula can be resolved in broad strategical terms without an infusion of new capital and without planning new expenditures. What do we usually do in such a case? We pose the problem globally and require that a new institute be formed to look into it, or better yet, a regional scientific centre.

The Yamal Peninsula happens to be one of those "fortuitous" instances where it is not necessary to create an institute or academic research centre since these already exist. The reference is to the Tyumen' Institute for Problems Associated With Northern Development (IPOS), of the Siberian Department of the USSR Academy of Sciences. Since it is not yet a strong and immutable institution, lends itself to being divided into two or even three institutes. In what way is it not an academic regional centre? Its plans consist of at least a dozen topics and sub-topics which, given the desire to do so, could be ranked with northern topics. The only problems which have not recently been looked at by its sub-divisions are: the anti-alcohol program, the municipal atomic power plant, domestic greenhouses, intellectual systems, synthetic solid foam and the like. Missing from this list are more urgent "northern" topics which the institute, by virtue of its name, is obliged to consider. Has the time not come to re-examine the purpose of the institute? The institute is presently responsible for all problems concerning northern development but, in reality, this amounts to nothing at all. Everyone is responsible for the Yamal Peninsula these days but no one in particular answers for it. The Yamal Institute, based on the Institute for Problems

Associated With Northern Development, Siberian Department of the USSR Academy of Sciences, by assuming inspectional or perhaps special administrative and cadastral functions, could become a real defender of the Yamal Peninsula, its peoples and natural resources, its waters and skies and its industrial development.

And finally, our third proposal is that immediately -today- there should be a State-funded interdepartmental evaluation by a commission of experts of the plans for industrial development of northern territories, and most importantly, of the Yamal Peninsula. Minvodka (The Ministry of Reclamation and Water Management) is an unfortunate case in point - how much blame has been heaped upon it in recent years! God forbid that we should defend Minvodka. It is at the centre of so much fuss because its work is there for all to see, and everyone steps over the ditches it digs. Public discontent surrounding Yamal will be a thousand times less than that surrounding Minvodka. What is needed here is not a fuss or hullabaloo, but rather a sound, objective analysis. Our civic and professional conscience forces us to turn our attention to this serious socioeconomic issue.

(Article signed by
V. Tsarev, Ph.D.
Geological and
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Technical Sciences)
Ekonomicheskaya Gazeta
August, 1989, No. 32
Page 19 (Full text)

SOCIOLOGICAL ISSUES

Long-Term Program for Socioeconomic Development of Northern Minority Peoples in Preparation

The peoples of the North, having established their civilizations of reindeer-breeders, taiga hunters and coastal fishermen, and after having preserved themselves and their distinctive culture for thousands of years, have in recent years been subjected to the most serious ordeals. What kind of situation do these tiny northern minorities find themselves in today? What lies in store for them? What means are being proposed to resolve the problems arising in light of the published draft program of the Communist Party of the USSR with respect to the party's national policies?

These became the main issues in a discussion which, at the request of "Trud", was held between a TASS correspondent and a department head of the Council of Ministers of the RSFSR, G.N. Oskolkov.

* * *

The discussion got underway with a question regarding the role and importance in problem solving of local self-government of the association of northern minorities.

Unfortunately, even though the newspapers have reported the creation of such an organization as being an accomplished fact, the issue is still only under discussion.

When speaking of the development of a rudimentary form of self-government, and of the growth of the spiritual potential of each national

minority, suggestions are made regarding a congress of peoples of the North. According to preliminary data, the congress will take place next year. Within the framework of the congress the issue of the long-term economic and cultural development of these nations will be discussed. The issue of creating an association of national minorities of the North will be resolved as well.

The growing interest in problems pertaining to the socio-economic development of the North, Siberia and the Soviet Far East is understandable, for these regions comprise more than 60% of the territory of the RSFSR. These minority peoples are in fact living under exceptionally complex, difficult and at times extreme conditions. However, when, in addition to natural conditions there are difficulties stemming from industrial development, all this naturally gives to a number of major problems.

There is no doubt that during the years of Soviet rule, the 26 nationalities of the North, Siberia and the Soviet Far East developed at an unprecedented pace. Each of them experienced growth in its economic, social, cultural and occupational potential. Their demographic situation improved. According to the census of 1970-79, the indigenous peoples experienced an annual growth rate of approximately 3% whereas in recent years it has risen to 12.3%. Coincidentally, the number of individuals studying their native language has doubled, 96% of the indigenous population is able to watch television, major radio centers have been built and there has been an improvement in the provision of transportation.

In the last ten years alone capital investments in the regions where these nationalities live have totalled more than 70 billion roubles. Can

you conceive of the magnitude of these funds? Our entire problem, however, lies in the fact that all of this money went to industry and ended up, as a rule, in regional, territorial and district centres.

Over the last ten years the number of reindeer pastures has been reduced by 11 million hectares. If one flies along the northern extremities in a helicopter one can see open wounds in the tundra. An all-terrain vehicle has passed, leaving behind it a trail of caterpillar-like tracks. The tundra will not re-establish itself here for many years to come.

In June of this year, the Council of Ministers of the RSFSR thoroughly analyzed the local state of affairs, and studied the issue of additional measures for the economic and social development of these regions in the year 1990 and during the 13th Five-Year Plan. Currently, taking into consideration the opinions of local residents, a long-term program for the economic and cultural development of northern peoples until the year 2005 is being drawn up.

But as before, although a variety of what might be termed good documents were produced and adopted, and funds directed to these regions were quite substantial also, why did they not reach the actual inhabitants?

In my view, the most serious shortcoming consists in the fact that many of these documents were adopted and put into effect without taking into consideration the opinions of the indigenous population. They built where it was easiest to build, and not where the need was most acute. Today the Councils perceive their task as being that of

trying to optimize relations between departments comprised of indigenous and non-indigenous populations.

I would like to point-out that the draft program of the Communist Party of the USSR which has been proposed for discussion, is a very capacious document. All problems are expressed in it in a bold and multi-faceted manner.

In my opinion, the issue of increasing the legal status of our autonomous peoples is the most important of all issues.

It would be right if the notion that laws pertaining to national regions should be made nominal instruments that take into account the specific character of each autonomous unit, were to be incorporated into the Party's program.

The process of creating self-government is moving ahead at full steam. In a number of regions such as Khanty-Mansiisk, Yamalo-Nenetsk and the Chukchi Peninsula, councils of elders are being formed, and councils on Northern People's Affairs, attached to the executive committees, are being organized. Local proposals are presently being received regarding the creation of national districts and national village councils.

The aggregate of problems related to the North is so complex and far-reaching that we are forced to consider organizing State aid for these peoples.

Trud (Labour)
August 25, 1989
Page 1 (full text)

TRANSPORT - RAIL

Shortage of Railway Cars at Vorkuta and Inta Coal Mines

The miners of the arctic city began working week today at a rhythmic pace. Things are not going well with the coal shipments: over the past days the railway has provided 40 fewer cars than normal and, as a result, coal deliveries to consumers have fallen short of the projected total by 2.2 thousand tonnes.

There is a shortage of cars in Inta as well.

"We didn't hold back empty cars even during the strike and coal shipments went on uninterrupted", says V. Mamaev, the production manager of the "Intaugol" firm. On the whole, coal shipments are backlogged by 30,000 tonnes. At this time, however, when we are actively preparing for winter, particular attention must be paid to getting the coal to consumers."

Sovetskaya Rossiya

1 August, 1989

Page 1 (Full text)

Railway Track Workers Demand Better Vehicles

As early as nine years ago we, railway track workers of the Surgut Division, addressed an appeal to the MPS (Ministry of Railroads) to order new light trucks for track repair. But we are still getting to work, as before, in a "GAZ-52". And "getting to

work" is not half of the story since we do not travel on asphalt but along the railway bed. And in the winter these vehicles are totally inadequate.

The cab in these vehicles is nothing but a box. If you are sitting on the machine, you bounce over the pot holes so much that you think you've worked a whole shift. In the summer it's impossible to breathe in the cab, and in the winter it is frigid. This is not a vehicle at all, but a torture chamber on wheels. Why are we condemned to this torment? Gas field and oil field workers, for example, have altogether modern, comfortable vehicles. We want what they've got.

If we had this kind of diesel, all terrain vehicle, with a single-axle trailer for the machine, many problems would be solved immediately. First of all, solar oil is not gasoline, and there is plenty of it along the road. Secondly, operational efficiency would increase. Thirdly, we track workers would have humane conditions.

Gudok

23 July 1989

Page 2 (Slightly abridged)

TRANSPORT - WATER

Headed For The Arctic Circle

Passenger transportation has opened on the longest river route in Western Siberia: Omsk - Tobolsk - Khanty-Mansiisk - Salekhard. Almost three thousand kilometers of waterway link the Omsk Irtysh region with the two autonomous okrugs of the Tyumen northland. The first motorships to set off on the Irtysh and Ob' rivers were the veterans of the Ob' - Irtysh Steamship Line - the "Rodina" and the "Chernyshevskii".

Vodnyi transport

6 July 1989

Page 3

New Nuclear Barge Carrier Heads for the Arctic

The nuclear-powered barge carrier "Sevmorput" departed Nakhodka yesterday for its first arctic cruise.

It is delivering building materials, machine tools, and technical equipment to residents in northeastern parts of the country.

"Sevmorput" has been undergoing close scrutiny by specialists in every foreign port, and the specialists have been convinced that this is an ecologically clean and safe ship. Even the food scraps remaining in the galley are reprocessed on board.

Sovetskaya Rossiya

26 July 1989

Page 1

Drop in Water Levels on Northern Rivers

A critical situation has developed on the Russian northern rivers Vychegda, Mezen and Severnaya Dvina. A continuing drop in water level has seriously complicated navigation on principal transport routes of the Northern Basin.

While the guaranteed depth for ship movement in shallows of the Dvina channel is 170 centimeters, depth is now no more than 145 centimeters. Regulations in effect for the river fleet give river workers the right to halt navigation temporarily. But according to A. Merkushev, head of the Transport and Movement Service of the Northern River Steamship Line, work on the rivers is continuing. Steps are being taken to assist shipping. Light tugboats have been sent to the shallow headwaters of the rivers and deep-draught ships have been relocated to areas near river mouths. Barge loads and the draught of log rafts have been reduced. Dredgers are helping to maintain the depth of fairways in the rapids.

The hydrologists' forecasts are not encouraging. According to the specialists, levels in the rivers of the Oblast this summer will be at their lowest since records began to be kept.

Vodnyi transport

13 July 1989

Page 3 (full text)

Северная Двина
13 июля 1989
стр. 3

Second Atomic Icebreaker on Northern Sea Route

A prolonged blast was sounded yesterday as the nuclear powered vessel "Lenin", a veteran of the Arctic routes, greeted its younger helper, the atomic icebreaker "Taimyr".

Commissioned just a few days ago, the "Taimyr" successfully completed its first ice trials in the Arctic when it guided a convoy of transport vessels and their cargo through the Laptev Sea, into the ports of Tiksi and Pevek.

There is a good deal of activity along the Northern Sea Routes these days. Hurrying to the northern cities and settlements are motor vessels from the east and west, carrying all that is necessary for the day-to-day lives of the inhabitants and for the work of industrial enterprises.

Sotsialisticheskaya
Industriya

August 25, 1989

Page 2 (full text)

New Oil Tankers For Primore Steamship Line

The oil tanker fleet of the Primore (Maritime) Line has just received two ships of the reinforced icebreaking class. The tankers "Svobodnyi" and "Arsenev", built in Finland, left yesterday on their first arctic cruise to Kolyma. Each of these tankers has a capacity of 5,000 tons.

Rejuvenation of the fleet for the Primore Shipping Line is moving ahead without cease. By the

end of the year the fleet of ocean-going ships at Nakhodka will be receiving another tanker, which is currently under construction in Finnish shipyards. The oil tanker reinforcements coming to the aid of the Primore seamen are equipped with electronics and space communication equipment and provide comfortable quarters for crew members. All of this permits the ship's personnel to work with a high degree of effectiveness, making for timely deliveries of fuel to the arctic coast of our country, Soviet scientific research stations located at the South Pole, fishing expeditions, as well as Soviet ships hauling freight.

Vodnyi transport
18 July 1989
Page 1 (full text)

Latvian Tankers Deliver Oil to Northern Ports

Among the radio messages arriving from all directions in the control room of the Latvian marine steamship line, communications from the Arctic Basin have been coming in regularly throughout the summer. At the height of the arctic navigation season, seven tankers belonging to the oil tanker fleet are completing their voyages to remote northern ports.

Their speedy unloading depends to a large degree on the recipients of the cargo. Representatives of the Ministry of Geology and the Ministry of the Gas Industry have adopted a number of measures aimed at installing larger pipelines at points where oil products are discharged. This will significantly speed up the unloading process and cut down on oil tanker demurrage time.

Vodnyi transport
August 31, 1989
Page 1 (full text)

Shortage of Cargo for Northern Delivery Leads to Difficulties for Lena River Shipping

Autumn has come to the Arctic, bringing with it some very changeable, unpredictable weather. In some areas snow has fallen; in others it has been raining for days on end. And of course there are frosts at night. Storms are becoming more and more frequent in the Laptev Sea. On the polar routes the Lena river transport workers have just about completed their first month of the Arctic navigation season. Today more than 200 river boats are delivering cargo of importance to the nation's economy along almost inaccessible arctic rivers - the Yana, Indigirka and Kolyma. Others are entering Tiksi Bay and weathering out the storm in Cape Bykov.

How is the river transport workers' arctic navigation season shaping up? What types of problems are they up against? This is the topic of our discussion with first assistant chief of the Lena Steamship Line, V. Arbatskii.

"I'm flying to the Eastern Arctic together with a group of business managers", says Vladimir Aleksandrovich. "They're part of the staff responsible for finishing up the navigation season in the Arctic, which was formed on the orders of the chief of the steamship line. A number of problems which have cropped up with the crews have to be resolved locally - the crews must be helped. I would like to note that the most difficult are at present in Olenek Bay. At the mouth of the Olenek River and in the approaches to the bay there is heavy ice. Nevertheless, three tankers were successfully guided through and unloaded. They are unable to leave, however, because of the ice. Right now there are two tugboats on the spot with two more headed for

Olenek. We are hoping that the winds will change and at least somewhat alleviate the situation. Otherwise, we won't be able to deliver all of the cargo or get the ship out of the bay. The situation is different in the Eastern Arctic where ships are travelling through unobstructed waters in the Laptev and Eastern Siberian Seas, headed for the Yana, Indigirka and Kolyma Rivers.

There are presently sixteen motor ships of the "Sibirskii" type navigating the remote arctic regions. The group is headed by senior captain M. Berdar, a very experienced navigator and an excellent organizer. That particular collective plans the work of its crew by itself, decides on the disposition of the ships, keeps its own books and maintains daily radio communications. Berdar's group is achieving excellent results and is self-supporting on a year-round basis. Working in a similar fashion is a group of river and sea vessels headed by V. Petrov. Together with them, hundreds of smaller motor ships are heading towards their destinations, hugging the shores and avoiding danger. The Lena river transport workers are delivering oil, provisions and commercial goods to the inhabitants of the Arctic. They are transporting equipment, building materials, wood and coal.

The bulk of the cargo goes to the Yana. This Arctic river is more than 3-5 meters deep and all of our dry-cargo is delivered directly to the settlements of Kuiga and Kular without having to reload in the Nizhneyanskii Port. During this navigation season cargo delivery along the Yana River will reach one million tons, with 600 thousand tons having already been transported. We managed to deliver all of the necessary goods early to Batagai in the Verkhneyanskii District. However, there is

still much to be done in the Kolyma Region. The sea going ships arrived here quite early on. The river transport workers unloaded their cargo and delivered it throughout all of the Kolyma Region including the upper region. All of the shipments were made even to Omolon, in the Magadan Region. Right now we are stepping up outgoing deliveries of coal from Zyryanskoe - that cargo totals 310 thousand tons. We're capable of transporting significantly more than that, we have the ships, but coal miners are not keeping up with us.

There is a seaport called Zelenyi Mys on the Kolyma River belonging to Gossnab (State Committee on the Supply of Technical Materials, USSR Council of Ministers). Coal from Zyryanskoe is brought here, where it is unloaded onto moored vessels and then reloaded onto sea-going ships which deliver it to Pevek. It is this that constitutes the weakest link in the chain. There are always river boats standing idle in the roadstead of the port because their cargo is not being unloaded - the workers of Zelenyi Mys cannot handle all the coal. From time to time we head over to lend assistance to the port. Our ships approach the sea going vessels and, side by side, help with the reloading. It would seem that this is a totally normal situation which allows for the cargo to be reloaded two and a half times less expensively. It follows that sea and river tonnage stands idle for shorter periods of time and the coal is delivered more quickly to the Yana and on to Pevek. The managers of the port of Zelenyi Mys, however, have begun a lawsuit and are bringing their grievances against the steamship line to the highest courts. It suits their purposes better to have ships waiting in the roadstead, thereby ensuring that all of the profits go to the port while the others must suffer the losses.

The Arctic is our livelihood. It is here that the largest profits are to be made in cargo transport. Every ton is of significance. However, as the Arctic navigation season progresses, it is becoming clear that the steamship line will not receive 120 thousand tons for delivery to the Yana, with 40 thousand coming from the port of Osetrovo. A part of the cargo is not being transferred to us by the sailors. There is none in Murmansk, Arkhangel'sk and Vladivostok. We are getting 30 thousand fewer tons from Yakutsk and the Middle Lena. The insufficient supplies of cargo places the Lena river transport workers in a difficult position. We have to make a minimum profit of 237 million roubles, but how are we to do so if there is a decrease in transportation volume?

There are many paradoxes associated with scheduling cargo deliveries to the Far North. They began to cut back on these deliveries and now we are constantly on the look out for cargo to deliver. For example, we will be bringing 80 thousand tons of coal from Kolyma to Osetrovo, from where it will be exported to foreign firms. The Murmansk Steamship Line refused to deliver potassium nitrate to Pevek, so we took on the job and will be bringing potassium nitrate from the port of Osetrovo to Zelenyi Mys, where we will reload it onto vessels of the Yakutsk Industrial Sea Transport Association. The fleet will complete the operation in Pevek. Everything leads us to believe that it will be very difficult to wind up the navigation season in the Arctic. The weather is already highly unpredictable and our task is to minimize risks.

Vodnyi transport
August 26, 1989
Page 2 (Full text)

MISCELLANEOUS

Cultural Expedition on Vaigach Island

The Arctic Marine Expedition from the Scientific Research Institute for Culture of the RSFSR Ministry of Culture and the Soviet Culture Fund is centering its work on the arctic island of Vaigach.

Its aim is to comprehensively research the historical and natural environment of the Arctic. Taking part in the expedition is a cross-section of specialists - historians and archeologists, biologists and geologists, sociologists and architects.

Sovetskaya Rossiya

5 August 1989

Page 6 (full text)

Magadan Celebrates Its Fiftieth Anniversary

Magadan, a city with a contradictory and dramatic destiny, has celebrated its 50th anniversary. It has taken its place in the history of the country as the key to a rich gold-bearing province, and as an advance post in the effort to settle the extreme Northeast. At the same time, its name has become a symbol for a man-made hell - for the terrible Kolyma prison camps. The past has seen tightly intertwined the romanticism of the first settlers' discoveries and the horrifying fate of the victims of Stalin's repression, the grand Komsomol enthusiasm for building and the forced slave labor of the convicts.

The people of Magadan have carefully preserved the memory of both the heroic and tragic pages from the past. And the jubilee celebrations bear witness to this. The slogan for the celebrations is "today we remember the past".

In my personal opinion, this memory has become rather too one-sided at times. For example, there is still no memorial in Magadan to the innocent victims of Stalinism, but on the square in front of the City Executive Committee building they have put up a bust of E. Berzin, founder of the "Dalstroi" Trust - an arm of the NKVD (People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs) - and founder of USVITLA (Administration of Northeastern Corrective Labor Camps). Frankly, I find this haste rather odd.

Nevertheless, today's celebrations are full of optimism. When construction of the city had only just begun, the "New York Times" predicted that it would meet the same fate as the Canadian city of Dawson, which sprang up on the crest of "gold fever" and then quickly faded away. Magadan has not faded. Today, it is not only the capital of the country's "hard currency shop" but also a hub of productive scientific and creative forces. The average age of its residents is 28 years, and this does a lot to explain the energy with which Magadan is taking on "perestroika". Here, self-supporting ('khozraschet') attitudes are being confidently written into the economy, and this may be the first place in the country to loudly call for State cooperative enterprises. Economic, cultural and friendly ties with the American State of Alaska are being successfully developed here.

...Magadan is looking festive today. The colorfulness of the freshly painted buildings, the

glossy black iron railings around lawns and squares, the deep green of the larches, the bright flags and streamers on the streets and the badges bearing the city's coat of arms - "a golden deer above an Okhotsk wave" - all contribute to a special holiday mood.

Sotsialisticheskaya
industriya

20 July 1989

Page 4 (slightly abridged)

Komi Republic Gets National Holiday

(Skytyvkar, August 22nd. TASS) The Day of the Republic is being observed for the first time today as a national holiday in the Komi ASSR. This decision was made by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Komi ASSR following numerous proposals by workers. Hitherto, only anniversaries of the autonomous republic, which was created on 22 August 1921, were observed. Now this date will be celebrated yearly.

Komi, a land which prior to the revolution had practically no industry, has become the major fuel base of the Soviet European North under Soviet leadership. The country supplies all of the union republics and many regions of the RSFSR with important products such as coal, gas, oil and petroleum products, wood and saw-timber, paper and paperboard, plywood and pulp. Part of this output is exported to various countries of the world.

Meanwhile, one of the autonomous republic's major problems is that it continues to be primarily a region comprising a source of raw materials. This is

hindering its social development and the country is therefore moving towards intensive processing, both in industry and agriculture. Work has begun on introducing regional self-financing, as opposed to financing by the State.

During the years of Soviet rule, a written language, national literature and theatre have been developed. Representatives of 70 nations and ethnic groups live in the republic.

Pravda

August 23, 1989

Page 1 (full text)

Introduction of Computerized Air Ticketing Misfires

Two years ago our ministry announced implementation of a program for regions of the Far North whereby the demand for passenger transport would be met 100%.

Immediately following announcement of this program, the appropriate civil aviation bodies unfurled a public subscription campaign. The people of Magadan took the same approach, and this work was carried out in good time. All persons wishing to fly for their summer vacation communicated their route for both directions. Then, this information was transmitted to the Riga Central Scientific Research Institute of Automated Systems of Control of Civil Aviation, where it underwent processing. In accordance with the results of this processing, people received their tickets directly.

Last year the program was a major flop. In Magadan Oblast alone, 6,700 people were left without tickets. These were people who had already started their vacation and were being expected somewhere by parents, children, friends, sanitariums, tourist excursions, and so forth. But these people remained stranded in the North!

We do not have any units of measure for nervous losses, and that is too bad. We could then determine precisely how much nervous strain these thousands of people had to undergo at that time. But in fact, the 'misfire' in Magadan was not the worst. It was much more serious in Kamchatka, for example.

Last year when all of this became known and when, as the saying goes, "you could smell something burning", those who were responsible for this error came to the Far East from Riga. The sight of local agencies, bereft of windows and doors from the storms, made an impact on them. One could hope that they understood the seriousness of the situation.

This year, however, there were already 24,000 residents of Magadan Oblast without tickets. Let me spell that out: "twenty-four thousand"!

I suggest that emotions are not enough to handle this. The time has come for an analysis of this enormous failure.

Yes, the computer made a fundamental blunder. More accurately, it was the people who programmed it irresponsibly who blundered.

The people in Riga operated very wastefully, and the result was a shortfall of 68,000 rubles.

But up to now we have only been talking about vacations. We have not said anything about those persons travelling on business and those who had not previously planned to take a rest but then changed their minds. There are also those people whose plans changed while their requests were being processed. There are outside factors which are impossible to foresee. Such as delegations. What are we going to do about all this if we still cannot 'digest' even the vacationers that were planned? And let us remember that this is in the context of an announced program for meeting the total demand for air transport!

And I thought that the people who never tire of unrealistic slogans were no longer with us. And how many of these slogans there were - from battle cries for model cities to the promise of happiness for the current generation. But no, a new one has appeared! And not in yesterday's period of stagnation, but in the full bloom of 'perestroika'. Give northern residents a 100% guarantee, and that's that!

I say emphatically: before a goal is declared, there needs to be consideration of the means by which it will be achieved. Perhaps this position sounds too categorical, but I insist on it. I also insist that this kind of consideration was not given by the ministry, not even at an elementary level.

There is lots of evidence for this. Let me provide an example. In 1986, when the requests from the residents of Magadan for passenger air transport were not being completely met, the administration was allotted 258,000 tons of fuel. One has to wonder how

the ministry thought it could carry out a 100% program if the administration was being allotted the same 258,000 tons for the following year.

I am certain, however, that the so-called interested parties understand the true state of affairs better than I do.. They are perfectly well aware that Magadan does not have either enough fuel or airplanes. That there must be an increase in the number of direct flights from this Oblast to the southern European part. That there has long been a need for measures to even out "peak situations", and the key measure to accomplish this is to introduce preferential fares.

I am certain that they are well aware of all of this. But why they ignore it remains a mystery,

Vozdushnyi transport

11 July 1989

Page 2 (Full text)

A Unanimous No To Plans To Build a Factory For Feed Protein From Natural Gas in the Tyumen Oblast

It may be that no other planning project has evoked such a stormy reaction from Siberians as a factory designed to produce 300,000 tons a year of feed protein from natural gas. The USSR Ministry of the Medical and Biological Industry (Minmedbioprom SSSR) was intending to build it in the Nefteyugansk district of the Tyumen Oblast.

The arguments went on interminably. The residents of the Middle Ob' region were armed with facts concerning the harmful effects on humans and

the environment of plants producing protein-vitamin concentrate (BVK: 'belkovo-vitaminnye kontsentraty') in other regions of the country. The planners and chemical specialists argued that the new technology was clean and safe. Discussions were held at meetings and gatherings, in the local press and on television.

And then, in February, a joint session of the city and district Council of People's Deputies was held in Nefteyugansk. These days a unanimous vote is a rarity, but in this case the people's elected representatives decided as one: they prohibited construction of the plant!

This was not what one would call a perfunctory refusal, without considering the opinions of the opposing side, or without analysis and study. In preparation, meetings were held with labor collectives; representatives of the public held dialogues with scientists and personnel from the ministry; and a group of citizens from Nefteyugansk even visited the village of Svetlyi Yar in Volgograd oblast, where there already is a BVK plant. But no one was able to persuade the northerners of the complete safety of this production facility. Nor were they able to clear up certain "missing facts".

Next, the executive committee of the Oblast Council requested a permanent inter-departmental commission on the setting of production facilities within the Oblast to make a detailed and thorough study of the problem and to issue findings. The commission did the study, and drew its conclusions. Here they are.

To date there have been no in-depth scientific studies with definitive results concerning the effect of this type of protein on the genetic

apparatus of humans and animals. It is also impossible to predict unequivocally what the effect would be on the health of humans and on the environment from such large-scale production of BVK. There is a lack of objective evidence from scientific studies concerning the persistence of the protein in cases of accidental release, and no reliable methodology for detecting harmful substances has been developed. In other words, for the time being permission for Minmedbioprom to build the new plant should be withheld. There are already too many "unknowns" about this facility giving rise to legitimate misgivings on the part of the public.

The Oblast Executive Committee agreed with the conclusions of the interdepartmental commission. The ministry was denied permission to locate the protein plant within Nefteyugansk Raion. The residents have at last heaved a sigh of relief.

Izvestiya

30 June 1989

Page (full text)

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