



ECOLOGY CENTER  
OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

P.O. BOX 35473, LOS ANGELES, CA 90035 • TELEPHONE 213/559-9160

March 8, 1989

Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Chairman Lando Zech  
U.S.N.R.C.

Dear Chairman Zech,

The statewide members of the Ecology Center of Southern California join with concerned citizens world-wide in urging you to fix or close General Electric reactors once and for all.

Consider these facts:

1. IN 1972, a Federal Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff member recommended that General Electric type reactors be banned in the United States.
2. In 1975, General Electric engineers wrote an internal report highly critical of their own company's nuclear reactors. This Reed Report was kept secret by both General Electric and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission until 1987, when it was released under pressure by state and local governments in cooperation with safe energy organizations. The General Electric engineers detailed dozens of safety and economics problems with all the reactors, concluding that General Electric reactors are - "not a quality product" In fact the engineers recommend that General Electric stop selling their reactors.
3. In early 1986, a top Nuclear Regulatory Commission official admitted that the containment vessels, the last barrier to radiation release, - on 24 General Electric reactors have a 90% chance of failure in a nuclear accident.
4. In late 1987, a Nuclear Regulatory Commission task force confirmed the failure rate of these 24 "mark I" reactors, saying that their containments are "virtually certain" to fail in an accident.
5. The Mark II reactors (there are 8 in use) supposedly an improved model, still have many possible scenarios for early containment failure, according to Nuclear Regulatory Commission safety studies.

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6. The Mark II reactors, on which the 1975 General Electric Reed Report was primarily focussed, have the aforementioned "dozens of safety and economic problems", and have suffered massive cost overruns during construction as a result of design problems.

Now General Electric is asking Congress to pass pro-nuclear legislation that would limit the rights of citizens to oppose nuclear plants. At the same time they are pushing its new Advanced Boiling Water Reactor design, asking that it be accepted as a "standardized" design, exempt from public challenge. However this design fails to address many of the shortcomings identified by General Electric's own engineers as far back as the 1975 Reed Report.

General Electric reactors pose an unnecessary threat to the health and safety of the American people as well as the world. In good conscience you must not allow this to continue.

Sincerely,

*Anna Harlowe*

Anna Harlowe  
Issues Coordinator  
Ecology Center of Southern California

# Four Soviet Ports Bar Ship in Protest Over Nuclear Safety

By MICHAEL PARKS, Times Staff Writer

MOSCOW — A Soviet nuclear-powered container ship has been barred from four of the country's major Pacific ports in a popular protest over nuclear safety.

Unable to dock, the two-month-old ship, the Sevmorput, was reported to be riding at anchor off Vladivostok after being turned away from there as well as from Nakhodka, Vostochny and Magadan in the past 10 days.

Municipal authorities in Vladivostok refused last Thursday to allow the ship into port in what the newspaper Soviet Russia described Tuesday as "an unprecedented decision" that reflects growing fears over the use of nuclear power.

Without firm assurances on the

safety of the ship's atomic power plant—a demand that the Maritime Ministry has so far ignored—the Vladivostok City Council has insisted that the Sevmorput remain outside the port.

Describing the ultra-modern ship as a "homeless waif," the Soviet news media have begun to suggest that it might not be allowed to dock at all in the Soviet Far East.

When the 858-foot ship approached the other ports in the region, dockers declared that they would not load or unload it or provide any port services because of their fear of radiation leakage.

Petitions and letters of protest by

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"tens of thousands" are flooding into Communist Party, government and news media offices there and in Moscow in one of the largest such popular protests ever in this country.

A huge wave of public indignation has been set in motion by the lack of information, by uncertainty about the safety of the ship itself, by an invisible shadow of the Chernobyl tragedy and by the complex ecological situation in the Soviet Far East," the Soviet Russia newspaper reported.

The \$265-million ship, described before its launching as the pride of the Soviet merchant fleet because of its modernity, has effectively been denied a home port in the region it was supposed to serve—and the newspaper raised the question of whether it would ever be allowed to put into port.

Novosti, an official press agency, described the dockers' action in its report as the "first ecologically inspired labor protest" in an increasingly environment-minded country.

Although the ship may be as safe as nuclear specialists and engineers insist it is, the newspaper reported, the continued official secrecy about nuclear safety leaves many people in doubt, especially after Chernobyl.

The accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in the Soviet Ukraine still hangs heavily over this country. The April, 1986, explosion and fire killed 31 people, injured more than 200 and forced the evacuation of more than 131,000.

Chernobyl's long-term effects are only beginning to appear in birth deformities in children and animals, a rumored higher incidence of some cancers and other diseases and continued high levels of radiation in the region north and west of the plant.

Objections have multiplied since then against other nuclear power plants, although critics often risk being labeled crackpots or anti-Soviet nationalists.

## Armenian Plant Shutdown

The Armenian nuclear plant, north of the republic's capital of Yerevan, is being shut down in the wake of the devastating December earthquake there, and construction or expansion at six other nuclear power plants has been canceled, partly from fear of the damage an earthquake might do but also in response to popular protests.

*the Soviet government is listening to its concerned citizens.*

*Ours seems to listen only to big business*