

Most esteemed Mikhail Sergeyevich!

I want to bring your attention to the fact that in our country, the public and public opinion are excluded from participation in the issues of designing and placing nuclear energy facilities.

This will lead and undoubtedly already leads to mistakes and serious complications, because, as much as they wish, specialists are not able to take into account all economic, environmental, demographic, social, and other conditions and other circumstances- this can only be done by the public itself, because among them there will always be specialists and experts in any field of knowledge, but which narrow-minded specialists stubbornly label a mob of amateurs. And that is unfortunate because it would be precisely in the interest of these experts—to shift part of this responsibility to the public.

In all developed countries they understood this long ago, they understood that engaging the public in resolving of technical issues is necessary, that in doing so it humanizes both technological progress and the scientific-technological revolution.

These are the general considerations that I considered necessary to express in connection with a specific fact- the fact of the obstruction of the publication of G.U. Medvedev's novel "The Chernobyl Notebook" in the magazine "Novy Mir [New World]" (I am the author of the introduction to this novel, and Medvedev is a nuclear engineer and a writer).

I am convinced that the public is not only able but is obliged to know all of the circumstances of the Chernobyl disaster, contrary to the censorial gimmicks of departments, with their interests and ambitions.

Any restrictions here damage both our society and the memory of the deceased, and the moral state of the victims. By hiding the facts, we confirm the possibility of their repetition. This concealment is illogical already, if only because we have reported all these facts to the IAEA. Why is the

international community entitled to know more about our events than our own population?

And if we hide the names of those responsible for the catastrophe (who are now exercising censorship), then we provide a cover for potential screw-ups during the subsequent designing and construction of NPSs.

I have many similar considerations; I will not present them here. And one more thing—I will only say that as a scientist with a direct relationship to the problems of the use of nuclear energy, I do not deem it possible for myself to further keep silent about the work of G.U. Medvedev before the global community, and I will act so that [this work] is broadly known.

I believe that the publication of the novel in “Novy Mir” would be a good service for our country, would expand the openness [glasnost] and the self-awareness of Soviet society, without whose participation it is impossible to imagine our further development.

With the deepest respect,

Academician A.D. Sakharov

Member of the Presidium of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR

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