

After the war, a fundamentally new period in the development of the Arctic and the Antarctic began with the addition to the fleet in the 1950s of "Lena"-type strengthened ice-class diesel-engined ships. Suffice it to recall that the "Ob'," a vessel of the same class completed 19 antarctic runs. And a decade later, the "Lenin," the first nuclear-powered icebreaker, made its debut on the world maritime stage. Today the nuclear fleet is additionally complemented by the "Arktika," "Sibir" and "Rossiya." The "Taimyr" recently set out on its first voyage, the nuclear-powered lash-carrier "Sevmorput" has begun operation, and soon the fleet will be supplemented by the icebreakers "Vaigach" and the "Sovetskii Soyuz."

The two expeditions to the North Pole by the "Arktika" in 1977 and the "Sibir'" in 1987 were not simply demonstrations of what was possible. During the expeditions, important experiments and scientific research were carried out. These served as a foundation for the formation of a new technical policy in the field of modern shipbuilding and for the improvement of transportation and technological schemes for the delivery of cargo between the rapidly developing regions of the Soviet North and the Far East, and between the ports of Western Europe and Japan.

Nor is it possible to imagine today's Northern Sea Route without the new generation of diesel-propelled icebreakers, such as the "Kapitan Sorokin," "Kapitan Nikolayev," "Murmansk" and "Kiev," which are reliably operating not only in inner basins, but also in the poorly accessible regions of the Arctic.