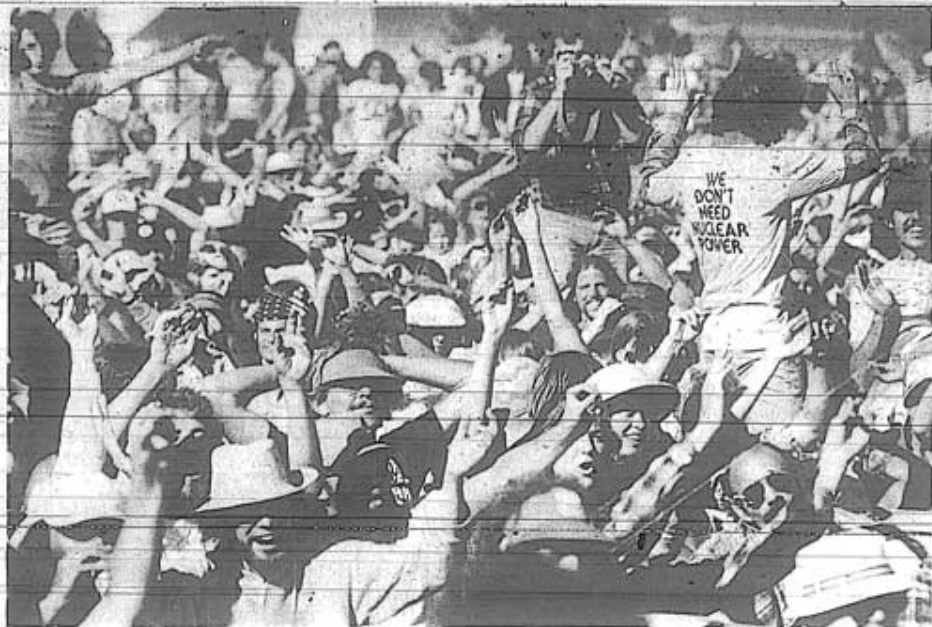




Gov. Edmund G. Brown Jr. told rally-goers he will pursue legal action if the Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant is licensed.



Photos by Tony Hertz

Rally participants raise their arms to the sun, and one anti-nuclear protester models an Abalone Alliance T-shirt for a photographer.

# Anti-Diablo rally Songs, speeches, sun . . . and a giant traffic jam

More than 30,000 people were preached to, sung to, exhorted to action and prayed just for being there Saturday at the Abalone Alliance's anti-nuclear rally at Camp San Luis Obispo. It took seven hours from when folk singer Peter Yarrow opened the event by singing, "I Know that it's Possible," till he took the stage again to lead those still in the audience in a closing chorus of "no nukes, no nukes, no nukes."

Highway 191 in San Luis Obispo. Highlighting the event was the unscheduled appearance of Gov. Edmund G. Brown Jr., who announced his decision to oppose licensing of the Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant near San Luis. He pledged legal action to block opening of the plant if the Nuclear Regulatory Commission granted it a license. —County Supervisor Richard J. Krejca, who chanted songs and poems and reviewed the history of the county's anti-nuclear movement from the time in July 1966 when supervisors sent the state a letter stating they'd been unable

to find a single person in the county who believed nuclear power plants were a health danger. —John Getman, a University of California at Berkeley professor of medical physics who referred to the nuclear industry as the "nuclear mafia." He said sub-atomic particles released by radioactive material from nuclear plants "rip like bullets through (living) cells, destroying 250,000 to 253 million chemical bonds, causing cancer and leukemia. —David Brower, founder of Friends of the Earth, who said, "Providence saved Pennsylvania" following the

March 28 accident at the Three Mile Island nuclear plant. "The nuclear priesthood didn't," he said. —San Francisco labor leader Percy Edmund, who accused oil companies and utilities of deliberately withholding energy to stamper the public into accepting nuclear power and restrictions on people's lifestyles. Singers — including nationally-known performers Jackson Browne, Bonnie Raitt, Jesse Colin Young and Graham Nash — serenaded the audience with anti-nuclear ditties as well as their own recorded hits.

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Singer Bonnie Raitt concentrates on her song, which drew a standing ovation.



Eric Peterson of Ventura takes a sun break from the rally, sprawled out on his car behind the action at Camp San Luis Obispo.

## Typical rally-goer came to learn more

By Steven Churm  
And Larry Bauman  
Staff Writers

Two hours before singer Peter Yarrow kicked off Saturday's anti-nuclear rally — the largest rally of any kind in San Luis Obispo County history — Debbie Benden sat alone on a faded blanket. As hundreds of people streamed past her on the Army airstrip near Cuesta College, Benden idly read a full-page newspaper advertisement about nuclear energy's "dangers."

"I've come to learn," said the 29-year-old woman, who arrived in the county late Friday night from Santa Ana to show her support of a growing nationwide movement against nuclear power. "Nuclear power is really dangerous and it's time we found out what it's all about. It's our future," she said. —Benden, like most of 73 persons interviewed by the Telegram-Tribune at Saturday's rally, went to the little-used airfield to rally against the licensing of Pacific Gas and Electric Co.'s \$1.4 billion twin reactors nearing completion at Diablo Canyon.

The interviewees indicated: — Most of those questioned were from Southern California, with those from San Luis Obispo County second most in number. — Almost all said they would have come to the Camp San Luis Obispo rally even before the near-disastrous accident at the Three Mile Island nuclear power plant near Harrisburg, Pa., March 28. Half said they had been to other anti-nuclear power rallies, mostly ones held after the incident at Three Mile Island. — Nuclear power was the issue that drew most to the gathering, but a handful admitted they'd trekked to the rally to soak up the sun and to party. Most said they were overwhelmingly against

Santa Rosa to be at Saturday's rally and had been training in "non-violence techniques" in her home town for the past three months in preparation for future acts of civil disobedience, if an operating license is granted for Diablo. She said the anti-nuclear movement has many similarities to the anti-war movement she participated in as a college student. "Just like the war, this issue is a tool for organizing, for getting involved politically," she said, sitting cross-legged in cutoff jeans under the hot sun. Sandra Stroh, 27, of Santa Monica said she had participated in anti-war protests in Southern California. "Just by seeing other people around, it gives one confidence that grassroots groups can confront institutions," she said. "It happened in the late '60s and early '70s over Vietnam and it can happen again." But for some at the Camp San Luis Obispo airstrip, political protest was a new form of expression. For 66-year-old San Luis Obispo resident Cynthia McMurtry, the rally was a first. She said it was a chance for her to help stop this nuclear mess that's going on and to care for people's health. A North Hollywood couple were among those who said the "frightening" implications of the Three Mile Island accident touched a social nerve and turned them into anti-nuclear converts. Roy Branhardt, cradling his 2-year-old son, Russell, and holding his wife's hand, said Diablo must be stopped "to show the power of the people." A 40-year-old Southern Californian, Branhardt said he belonged to several environmental groups. "This issue cuts across political lines," he said. "We parked our car with Sierra Club stickers next to a four-wheel drive vehicle with gun racks and neo-fritz bumper stickers. That should

## 'Mellow' best word for protesters' spirit

Commentary  
By Glenn Scott  
Staff Writer

They flocked like pilgrims to the anti-nuclear power rally Saturday at Camp San Luis Obispo, but the way the protesters made their point was purely modern.

better location. But as he lugged a blanket and styrofoam ice chest away, he tripped and dropped the chest. Out tumbled a full bottle of white wine and six bottles of beer. The man looked up, embarrassed, and then fumbled with the bottles until he finally fitted them back in the container.

The scent of marijuana also was common in the crowd. Noticeably absent from the rally site were uniformed sheriff's deputies or police officers, but it was not a day for strongarmed reminders. Instead, it was a time for people to cheer when colored balloons were released to float and toward San Luis

about nuclear power by wearing messages on their chests — via T-shirts. Samples: "Diablo Canyon Has a Lot of Faults," "Split, Banana, Not Atoms," "Use a Nuke, Go to Prison," "Where the Hell is the Hoozy Fault?" "Anarchy Now" and "No Nukes in

A more fitting description of the spirit of the spectators — and one they surely would feel comfortable with — would be "mellow."

Nary a harsh word could be heard among the rally-goers, except when they joined in gibes at Pacific Gas and Electric Co.'s Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant.

The Abalone Alliance, rally sponsor, had promised that alcohol would not be allowed at the affair. But on a warm and breezy Saturday, the rule was virtually unenforceable.

A man sitting far from the stage, for example, decided finally to shift to a

Two monitors, or uahars, winced at the scene, then stepped away to prevent a confrontation. One of the arm-banded uahars, a soft-spoken young man with light hair said none of the monitors was bothering the peaceful crowd about booze.

"Frankly, I wouldn't enforce it anyway," said the monitor. "If we started a whitewash of the crowd, then we'd be acting just like PG&E."

The monitor, who appeared to be in his early 30s, said he wasn't drinking and it was "kind of a drag" that some people couldn't follow the rules voluntarily.

Obisks and beyond at a quarter moon hanging in the clear sky.

The sky, in fact, was an amphitheater of its own. Kites shaped like birds and planes pointed into the breeze. Above them, helicopters swooped and swirled as they ferried news camera crews and law enforcement officers above the rally.

Sometimes when the copters hovered too low and their rotors drowned the sound from the stage, spectators would gesture at the mechanical monsters as if they were enemies.

On the ground, meanwhile, some people made their personal statements

Buttons were popular, as were ecologically-oriented flags and pamphlets espousing various new left causes. Gas masks weren't so common, but Winston Smith of San Francisco claimed he was going to wear his all day.

For sheer impact, though, it was tough to beat the red candles being sold at the rally's "alternative energy fair," a row of booths set up across the airstrip from the stage.

The candles were shaped like nuclear reactor cooling towers. When the wick was lit, they would — of course — melt down.

the operation of any nuclear power plant.

— Nearly 75 percent were 20 to 30 years old. About half of these said they had actively protested the Vietnam War during the late '60s and early '70s.

The rally Saturday was reminiscent of the anti-war protests.

Music, drugs, rhetoric and optimism mixed in a festival-like atmosphere.

One woman who described herself as a veteran political activist, 25-year-old Lotan A. Endrody, said she had been among those arrested for trespassing last August during a protest at the Diablo plant.

She said she had driven down from

tell you something."

Lin Robertson, a former safety inspector for General Atomic of San Diego, which builds nuclear reactors, said the rally should have been held closer to the Diablo plant.

"It should have been right outside these goddamn dunes," the 28-year-old Robertson said. "It really bothers me that we are so far away from that plant."

Robertson said that while rallies such as Saturday's may educate people, he believes civil disobedience is a tool that should be used if necessary, to stop nuclear power.