

JUNE 12, 1979

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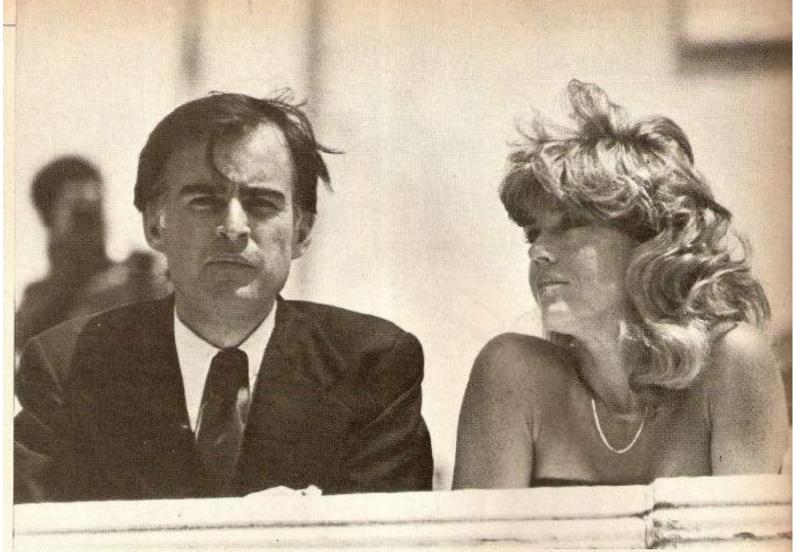
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The anti-nuclear coalition brought together entertainers and politicians alike. Here, California Governor Jerry Brown stands with actress Jane Fonda and husband/activist Tom Hayden.

Biggest no-nuke rally rocks Washington by Michael J. Weiss

he nation's largest gathering of anti-nuclear protestors in history was an event that seemed to defy the political apathy of the '70s. On May 6, barely a month after the nuclear accident at Three Mile Island, Washington, D.C., became the site of a massive protest in the spirit of the sixties: complete with a march on the Capitol and a premiere rock concert.

A crowd that police estimated at 65-75,000—more like 125,000 according to organizers—came to hear speeches by Governor Jerry Brown and Jane Fonda, performances by Joni Mitchell and Jackson Browne, and statements by a long list of headliners.

For many, the rally recalled the antiwar protests of another era. In the morning protestors gathered outside the White House, chanting slogans like "Hell no, we won't glow" and "Two, four, six, eight, we don't want to radiate." They came in blue jeans and tennis shoes, from as far away as California and Oregon, 122 bus-loads from New York City alone.

But once at the Capitol, the crowd turned mellow. They settled in for the afternoon of speakers and musicians and celebrated the clear skies by throwing frisbees and passing joints and wine. Hawkers sold granola cookies and "glow in the dark" T-shirts.

For those who grew up with the tear gas-seasoned marches of the past, the sun-and-fun atmosphere felt odd. Unlike 1969, government buildings were not guarded by contingents of gunwielding troops. The area around the White House was not barricaded by bumper-to-bumper buses as it was in May 1970. There were no hit-and-run confrontations with the "pigs" as the marchers filed in front of the FBI build-

The crowd's festive mood continued

throughout the day-long presentation of brief speeches and songs dedicated to opposing nuclear power. Musically, the program was reminiscent of Woodstock: Graham Nash sang "Teach Your Children," and in a surprise appearance, Joni Mitchell stood up to sing her version of "Woodstock." Lest the audience feel too nostalgic, she updated her 'parking lot' lyrics of one tune to sing: "They paved Paradise and put up a nuclear hot-spot."

THIS

"This is a rally of the "70s," asserted organizer Richard Pollock on the Capitol steps. "It's laid back, it's upbeat and it's positive energy."





In a rare public appearance, singer Joni Mitchell attended the rally to sing, "They paved Paradise and put up a nuclear hotspot."



Singer Jackson Browne joined most of the musicians on stage as backup singer and guitarist.

Representatives of 200 groups marched to the Capitol in the largest antinuclear demonstration in history.



photos by Robert Sherbow/Synchro Photographi