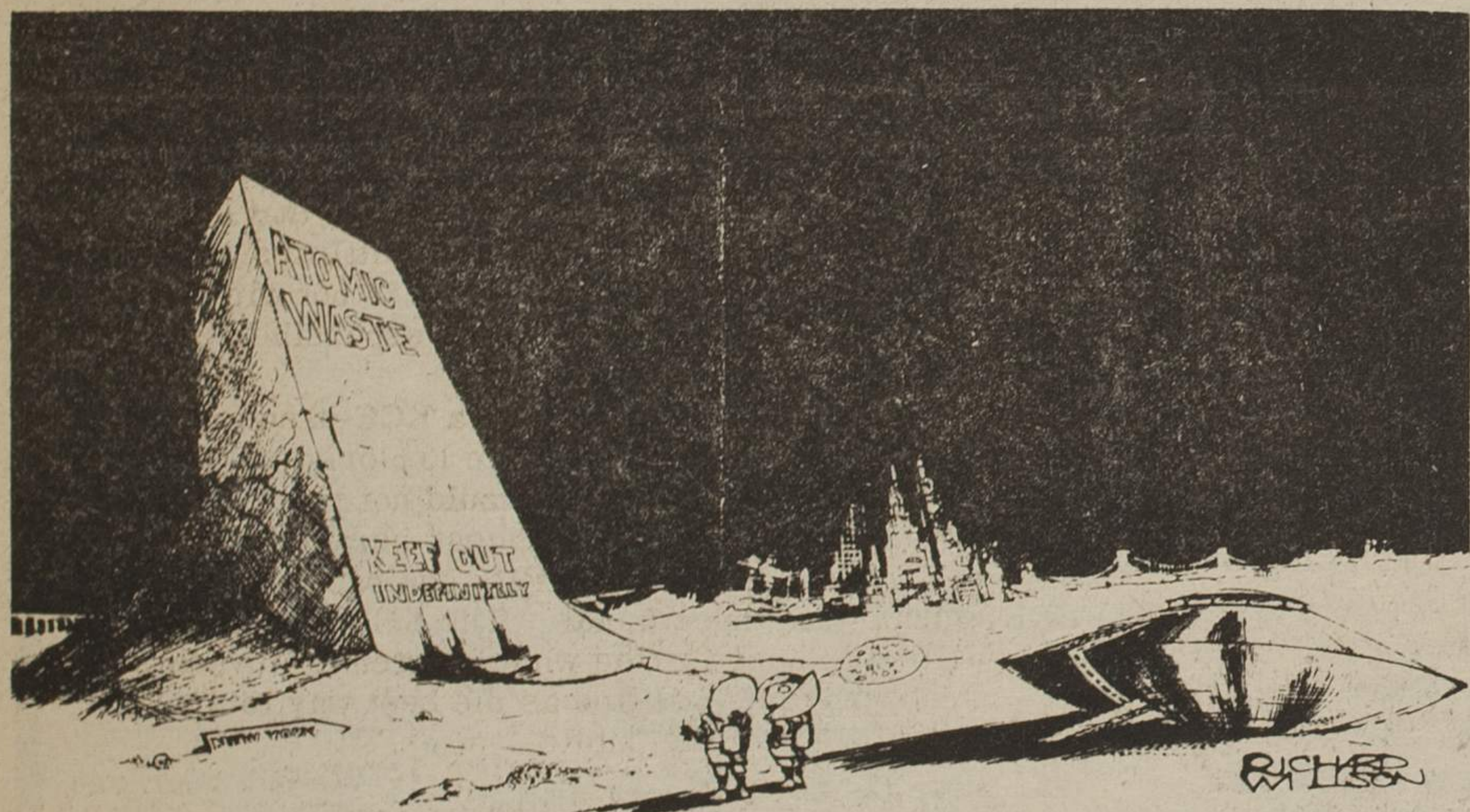


BLESSINGS OF EMPTINESS

The People's Energy Project is concerned with energy issues. One of the most important of these issues surrounds the construction of the proposed nuclear power plant to be located near Burlington, Kansas, a small town about sixty miles southwest of Lawrence. The issue is not merely whether Kansas should get its electricity from burning coal, the traditional method, or from the fissioning of uranium-235, as in the nuclear power plant. Instead, the most important issue is a moral one; that being what sort of a world we want to leave to our children and their descendants. P.E.P. feels that nuclear power will be an insufferable burden to generations to come, that there is no reason why we need such plants, that we should abandon the nuclear experiment and turn to the sun for our energy supply. But to back up a little, we should look to see why nuclear power is being considered as the nation's principle source of electricity for the foreseeable future.

OUR CURRENT SITUATION IS THIS: The population of the world, and, to a lesser degree, the United States, is increasing sharply. Even if we were to attain a zero-population growth rate tomorrow, our population would continue to grow. The demand for energy has been increasing also, although a sharp decline in the rate of that growth occurred last year. In the face of this growth in demand, there is a rapidly diminishing supply of the fuels needed to satisfy these demands. Natural gas and petroleum reserves are not expected to last more than fifty years or so. There won't be any more large discoveries of petroleum, as everywhere suspected of containing oil has already been surveyed. Even a major find would last only a few years, at our present rate of consumption. Our coal could last us a few hundred years, but it is also a non-renewable resource. Much of that coal is accessible only through the strip-mining of our western lands. Many feel that it is a crime for us to waste fossil fuels that have so many other uses besides the gross production of electricity or the propulsion of automobiles.

NUCLEAR POWER IS SEEN by its proponents as a means of decreasing our consumption of fossil fuels while producing energy in a non-polluting fashion. The People's Energy Project feels that this assessment is incorrect. The construction of a nuclear facility and the production of its uranium fuel requires immense expenditures of energy, mostly from fossil fuels. So much energy is needed, that it is estimated that the facility would have to run at full capacity for ten years before it became a net producer of energy (for an average-sized plant). Thus a rapid development of many nuclear power plants would increase our consumption of fossil fuels. Nuclear power plants only produce one useable form of energy: electricity. Electricity is a very high-quality form of energy that is best suited for only a small number of uses, such as lighting and powering appliances and machinery. The bulk of our energy needs (industry, space heating) require only low-grade power and heat which is much more efficiently supplied by burning fossil fuels on the site than by "electric resistance" heating. Nuclear power does not create the kind of pollution we normally hear about. The fission process produces highly radioactive wastes that must be completely isolated from the environment for at least 800 years. No one yet knows how to do this. Even if there were a way, the transportation and reprocessing segments of the nuclear fuel cycle are still quite vulnerable to human error, and acts of malice that would have very serious consequences for the environment.



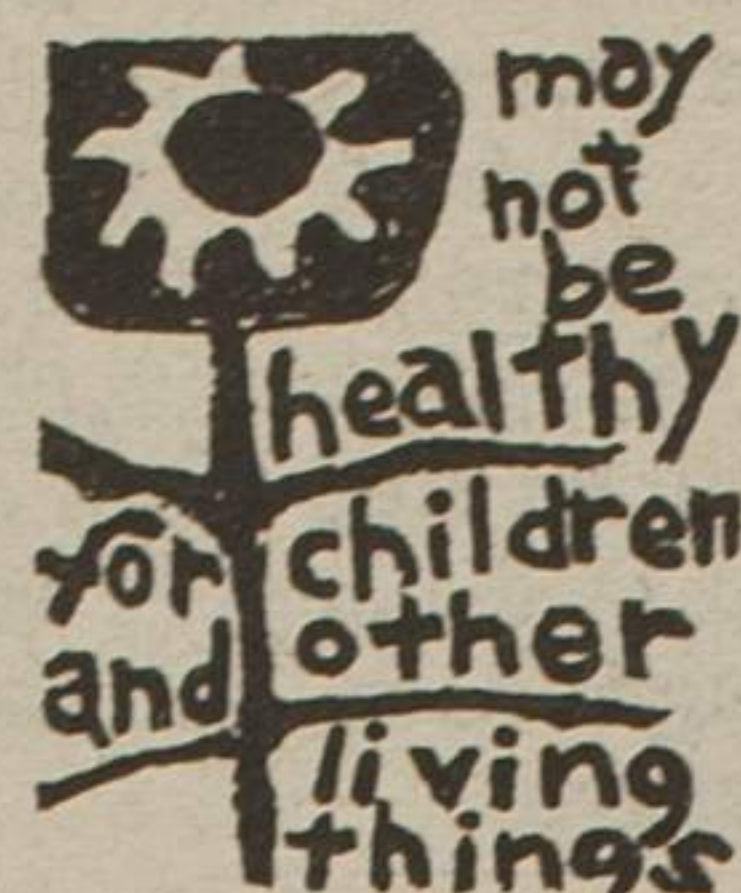
(translation) "Presumably a shrine for one of their primitive religious cults."

IT HAS BEEN STATED that nuclear power plants are an unimaginative solution to the energy crisis; not because the technology is simple--far from it. Its most serious shortcoming is its failure to change peoples patterns of energy consumption. If we do not halt the growth in energy demand, which is at the root of our problem, then we will ultimately fail to solve the energy crisis. We can either choose to conserve now and make a controlled transition to a steady-state economy, or be coerced into strict conservation when the shortages reach true crisis proportions. P.E.P. believes that a serious program of energy conservation, which need not lower anyone's standard of living, and intensified development of the various forms of solar energy are the keystones of a safe and sane energy base that our posterity would gladly inherit and build upon.

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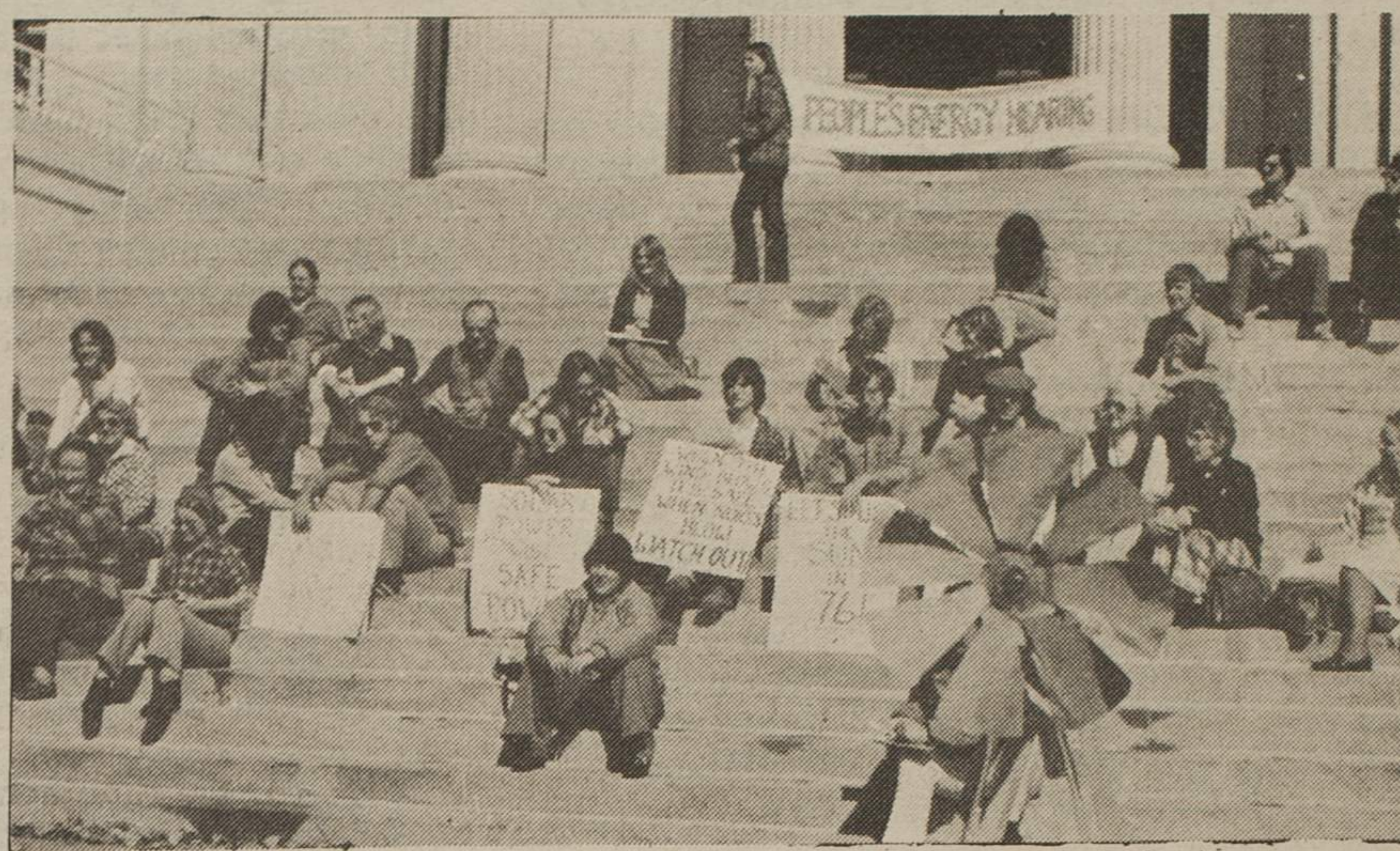
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NUCLEAR POWER



AN ANNOUNCEMENT

A NUCLEAR POWER PLANT right in our own back yard? To get the word out on this and other utility companies' plans for our future, the People's Energy Project has put together a concise factual presentation on "Nuclear Power and its Alternatives." Over the last few months, we have given our presentation to many local groups and classes. We would like to come and talk with your group. If you don't have a group, just gather together some of your friends and neighbors. It doesn't cost a cent. Write us at P.O. Box 423, or call 841-3364, 842-6344, or or 843-0502 and let's arrange a time and place.



ON Saturday, October 18, about 100 people from across the state met on the Capitol grounds in Topeka to hold a "People's Energy Hearing." The hearing was held in response to the restrictive nature of the current run of hearings conducted by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission on the proposed nuclear reactor slated for Burlington, Kansas.

The hearing focused upon opposition to that plant's construction. Other energy issues, such as solar and wind power, utility rate structures, and public ownership of utilities were also discussed. Several speakers participated, including Dr. J. K. Frenkel from Overland Park, Bill Ward from Lawrence, and Illene Younghein from Oklahoma City. Others present took advantage of an open microphone session to voice their opinions. There was also an entertaining and educational puppet show entitled "Burnt Toast: Trouble in the Nations Breadbasket." It starred Nuke, the monster with the poisonous breath, and Leon, the Solar Lion.

THIS WEEK'S SPECIALS

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