Entertainment Program

The hottest nuclear hits from yesteryear, including:

Over My Head (1966)
A sad tune of corporate woe, as PG&E starts building a nuclear plant in San Luis Obispo and gets $4 billion worth of trouble it never bargained for.

Call Me Irresponsible (1970)
A local geologist tries to rock PG&E with vibes about a major earthquake fault only a few miles from Diablo Canyon. The utility and the Atomic Energy Commission play deaf.

Let's Call the Whole Thing Off (1973)
Plant opponents sing scary scientific solos of earthquakes bigger than the plant can withstand. The Atomic Energy Commission changes the channel.

Take it To the Limit (1975)
Faced with a potential earthquake ten times bigger than Diablo was designed for, the AEC improvises some tuneful "science," including the awesome "tau effect," to make the problem go away. Independent critics later call this breathtaking performance "almost mystical."

Let's Spend the Night Together (1975)
The Atomic Energy Commission, stung by accusations that most of its material is ghostwritten by the nuclear industry, changes its name to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and takes on a tougher image.

The Song Remains the Same (1976)
A year later, the *Los Angeles Times* publishes an internal NRC songsheet showing that despite the risks at Diablo, the agency is reluctant to withhold a license "because of the large financial loss involved and the severe impact such action would have on the nuclear industry."

You Can't Always Get What You Want (1976)
Nervous audiences begin looking for some nice, easy-listening nuclear insurance just in case something goes wrong at the local reactor. They find they can't get it, and have to settle for the nerve-jangling *Price-Anderson Act (1957),* which shelters the nuclear industry from lawsuits while giving nuclear victims only pennies on the dollar for their losses.

I Can't Get No Satisfaction (1977)
Large-scale public protests begin as it becomes clear that the NRC sings only PG&E's tune -- and doesn't take requests. About fifty people are arrested in a civil disobedience action at the plant site. Nearly 500 are arrested a year later.

Born to Run (1979)
Despite the lack of an adequate evacuation plan for the area around the plant, and the fact that an earthquake could block all exit routes, the NRC just whistles its familiar "No Problem" refrain.

That'll Be The Day (1980)
As Diablo's costs continue to climb, PG&E keeps crooning seductive ballads about low-cost nuclear juice. But the company's applications for rate hikes when the plant operates are much less romantic.

I Heard It Through the Grapevine (1981)
At the end of massive public protests in San Luis Obispo, a young PG&E engineer belts out tales of reversed blueprints used in installing earthquake safety bracing. This tune has too many verses to remember, but the chorus is easy: "Mistakes, mistakes, hundreds of mistakes!" The NRC, blushing, is forced to withdraw the low-power test license it had issued.

Let It Be (1983)
The NRC revives its hit single "We'll license anything," and allows PG&E to load Diablo with nuclear fuel. It also demonstrates its independence by letting PG&E audition and change reports of problems at the plant before their public release. Outraged audiences have had enough; they walk out.

Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow? (26,084)
The nuclear song may be over, but the melody lingers on and on and on. A thousand generations from now half of the plutonium produced by reactors like Diablo Canyon's (as well as for nuclear weapons) will still be in existence and still deadly. So the NRC will be remembered not for its endless hearings that always turn out the same -- or its mountain of meaningless paper "regulations,"-- but rather for the radioactive waste it has helped produce. Perhaps its time to teach the NRC a new word: no.

For more information on Diablo Canyon and the opposition to it, contact the Abalone Alliance at (415) 861-0592.