



# Protest Diablo: Living and Dying Under the Shadow of a Nuclear Power Plant

*Judith Evered*

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## **Protest Diablo: Living and Dying Under the Shadow of a Nuclear Power Plant** Judith Evered

Inspired by Charles Perrow, Jay M. Gould and Helen Caldicott, Judith Evered shares her personal tragedy related to the 1957 explosion at Windscale Nuclear Power Plant in England. Her memoir recounts the courage, friendships and common ground that united activists throughout the country in planning and executing what is known as the 1981 blockade of Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant. With all engineering feats, we must take precautionary action when reasonable threats to human safety exist. The seismically active foundation on which Diablo is sited and the questionable safety measures surrounding nuclear power initiated the largest act of nonviolent civil disobedience in U.S. history. A large power corporation, Pacific Gas & Electric and the Nuclear Regulatory Committee conspired to keep the risks of Diablo hidden. Thankfully, an educated populace directed by the Abalone Alliance earnestly set out to prove PG&E and the NRC inadequate in their ability to safeguard against potential terrorist attacks. Land and sea ventures onto the power plant's property reveal disturbing vulnerabilities. Doctors, engineers, teachers, mothers, fathers, children and others were among the peaceful protestors who were not always greeted with the same nonviolent attitude. One almost feels like a part of the action, possibly being handcuffed, dragged and thrown into a detainment camp with Jackson Browne, protest organizers and the many members of colorfully named affinity groups. Police officers and national guardsmen were employed to keep the "bums off the street" as Ronald Reagan called them in 1970. Valuable strategies and tactics are shared with the reader in addition to a history that could easily pass with the generation. If civil disobedience has been shelved in an effort to keep a clear record, this book may counter that by enlivening one of the most democratic forms of assembly: unified nonviolent direct action- real democracy. The hope for peace and security is revived.

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