



**Nuclear  
safeness  
debatable**

**guest  
opinion**

Editor's note: Rob Aiken is chairman of the ASUN Environmental Task Force.

Nebraska: circa 2020

Jon and Harvey were floating down to Brownville to catch some old-time bluegrass music when Harvey stopped his centripetal-balanced aerocycle.

"Hey Jon, catch this supra-mound. It looks like a project-reject the Corps of Engineers designed back in the 1980's."

"Get straight Harvey, that's the old nuclear plant the Atomic Energy Commission de-commissioned last year. They figured the best way to cover it up was to cement the whole joint."

"Now Jon, I'm a 21st century man. You can't tell me that 48,000 tons of concrete is burying a nuclear plant. That went out with the Aztecs—building stone monuments to the gods. No, this heap has to be something logical, intelligent."

"I'm telling you, Harvey, this quarter-section pile of cement used to be a \$250 million power plant—it just got worn out."

"Sure, Jon. And I suppose these lead shafts are filled with radioactive wastes."

"You got it Harvey. This stuff will be hanging around for a few thousand years and if it leaks like the joint in Illinois..."

"You mean the place where my folks used to live?"

"The former heart of the corn country... as I was saying, Harvey, if this place leaks around here we'll be moving on again—if we're still around."

"What a pain. Jon, it's a good thing we're on this solar and wind energy kick. We're not as dumb as our parents—keeping nuclear boobytraps around. Never trust anyone over 30."

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We don't have to have nuclear power plants 50 miles from Lincoln and Omaha or anywhere else. In 1968, the Nebraska Public Power District put the Cooper Nuclear station in Brownville without any public hearing. If the cooling system breaks down (right now, they're being checked for cracks all over the country) the plants have a killing radius of 100 miles.

Insurance companies won't touch the power plants. Homeowner's Insurance Policy specifically eliminates coverage of nuclear damage. Lloyds of London won't insure nuclear power plants.

It's important to attend the nuclear power public hearing March 6 at 2 p.m. The public works committee is likely to be more interested in the testimony when there is a crowd of onlookers.

If we don't help make energy policy decisions, other interests will decide for us.



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