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Denver Post Photo by Jack Riddle

WOMEN WHO IDENTIFIED THEMSELVES AS MEMBERS OF PEACE GROUP DEMONSTRATE WITH GAS MASKS IN BOTH HOUSES OF LEGISLATURE.
They distributed anti-chemical/biological warfare literature, sat for several minutes in galleries. They opposed rail shipments of gas.

COLORADO STATEHOUSE

Women Protest Nerve Gas Shipments

By LEONARD LARSEN
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Nine women, six of them wearing gas masks, demonstrated at the Colorado Statehouse Monday urging the legislature to take some action against nerve gas shipments

through Denver and against U.S. military chemical and biological warfare development programs.

The women, one of them carrying a small child, identified themselves as members of the Women's International League

for Peace and Freedom.

The gas mask-wearing women walked onto the floors in both the House and Senate circulating literature and then sat briefly in the galleries of both chambers, still wearing the gas masks.

The specific issue raised by the demonstrators was the safety of shipments of nerve gas capsules from the Rocky Mountain Arsenal north of Denver through the Denver railroad yards and then to the Tooele Army Depot in Utah.

A spokesman for the group, Mrs. Betty Silver, 4201 E. 2nd Ave., said the demonstration was undertaken as a means of "making the legislature become more visibly concerned about this problem."

Mrs. Silver, citing a report in a national magazine, said the nerve gas shipments to Utah were along Union Pacific railroad tracks on which there had been three derailments of other trains in six months.

While she acknowledged that the Colorado Legislature might not be able to legislate concerning interstate rail shipments or the military testing

and development programs in chemical warfare, Mrs. Silver suggested Colorado lawmakers could "at the minimum memorialize Congress about this whole business of chemical and biological research."

She noted that the Monday demonstration at the Colorado Statehouse was because "it's only when the public is aware of these problems that we get support."

The demonstration by the women was an orderly one but it brought a mild rebuke in the House chamber from Speaker John Vanderhoof, R-Glenwood Springs.

The women, seated in the House gallery, had been asked by a television cameraman to stand wearing their gas mask and Vanderhoof asked that they all be seated. The demonstrators quickly complied.

Women in Gas Masks Protest at Statehouse

A small group of women Monday protested storage of nerve gas at the Rocky Mountain Arsenal and transfer of the lethal gas through the Denver metropolitan area.

Ten women, representing the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, donned gas masks while in Senate and House chambers at the State Capitol to make their point.

"We demand that our legislators act immediately to insure our safety," a statement issued by the women said.

There were no incidents during the demonstration. At one point, when the women were standing with gas masks on, House Speaker John Vanderhoof, R-Glenwood Springs, said school children are welcome in the gallery if they observe rules and stay in their seats.

"I would appreciate it if the adults would do the same," Vanderhoof said.