

## FRENCH TESTS

### AUSTRALIA IN DANGER

The decision of France to look elsewhere than the Sahara for a nuclear testing ground was greatly influenced by the protests that were received from all over the world, protests which were strengthened by the United Nations decisions of 25th November 1961 to outlaw nuclear weapons and to call on all nations to observe Africa as a de-nuclearised zone.

On April 6th 1963 it was officially announced by France that a new testing site would be built on the Atoll of Mururoa in the French-owned Tuamotu Archipelago located in the South Pacific Ocean about 4,400 miles east of Australia.

At least three airfields are to be constructed in these French Polynesian Islands, including an international field at Hao Atoll. Observatories and a radar station will also be built to monitor the atomic tests. Tahiti is to be used as the base for stores, laboratories and medical services.

The Melbourne "Herald" of 19th October 1963 reported that the French Parliament had recently voted £3,000,000 to transform the Port of Papeete in Tahiti in readiness to handle the increased traffic resulting from the testing of H-weapons.

A daily newspaper "The New Caledonia" on the Island of Noumea, the administrative centre for the French Islands, has reported that the nuclear weapons test centre would cost France more than £7,000,000.

France's determination to have her own nuclear arms and become a "big power" has disturbing aspects from Australia's point of view. The testing ground of Mururoa Atoll, which will be operational by 1966, is only 4,400 miles from Australia and will present a direct health hazard to the population.

The Tuamotu Archipelago lies in the tropical trade wind belt. South of the Equator the trade winds blow from Southeast to Northwest, and will carry radioactive fallout to our Pacific shores.

The East Coast of Australia, major capital cities of Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne and areas including rich agricultural and dairying districts are in direct danger from radioactive contamination from these hitherto gentle trade winds.

In a letter to the "Times", London, Professor Dudley Stamp, Britain's leading Geographer, said that Pacific tests were especially dangerous, because the ocean currents would carry the radioactive fallout to islands and also to the mainland surrounding the Pacific Ocean.

Mururoa Atoll lies in the midst of the South Equatorial Current, which laps the shores of the South Pacific Isles, New Zealand and Eastern Australia.

Flowing in the opposite direction, the westward "West Wind Drift" will be equally dangerous to the coastline of South America.

There are certain radioactive substances associated with fallout from nuclear weapon tests that are particularly dangerous to all animals. These substances are taken up by the body and concentrated in certain organs. These are: Strontium Isotopes 89 & 90 which causes bone cancer and leukaemia; Radioactive Iodine 131 which causes Thyroid cancer; Radioactive Carbon 14 and Caesium 137 which cause hereditary illnesses.

The Australian Government has officially protested to France.

The Australian Council of Trade Unions, together with the New Zealand Federation of Labor, agree to make a joint approach to the French Government - requesting them to discontinue preparation to test; will consider taking further action if world opinion is ignored; will enlist the support of French trade unions to insist that France sign the Test Ban Treaty.

French Nuclear Tests  
Weapons Tests

Victorian Peace Council  
Research and Information Centre.

Victor Peace Council

FROM AN ORIGINAL IN THE  
UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE ARCHIVES  
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Australian Shipwrights join Watersiders in calling for a nation-wide boycott on French ships. They will ask the A.C.T.U's maritime transport council for a complete boycott until the French Government abandon the tests and sign the partial test ban treaty. "Herald" 7.11.63.

DANGER TO THE PACIFIC ISLAND PEOPLE

Only low yield (small) nuclear devices are detonated on the Continental Proving Grounds whereas very powerful bombs are exploded at the Pacific Test Sites.

If France continues with her plans to test it will be the fourth Pacific H-Bomb site. Others were the Marshall Islands, Christmas Island and Johnston Island.

In 1946 the United States tested in the Marshall Islands, - Operation Crossroads - this consisted of an underwater burst and an air burst.

(220) Ships within one or two miles of the explosion centre were showered with radioactive debris. "Hot" ships were towed back to a laboratory at Hunter's Point, San Francisco, to be studied and decontaminated, other ships were towed out to sea and sunk.

March 1st, 1954, tiny palm-studded Bikini Atoll, also in the Marshall Island Group, served as the test site for the first super-weapon exploded by the United States.

(220) Meteorologists had predicted that the bomb cloud would move to the west, but it rose higher than anticipated and moved to the east.

(227) Local fallout from this test extended several hundred miles downwind and covered an area of 7,000 square miles with serious lethal doses of radioactivity. One hour after the explosion a soft rain of ash was falling fifty miles downwind. Several hours later the ashy rain began (221) to fall a hundred miles from the bomb site.

(221) The most seriously irradiated people were Japanese fishermen aboard the tuna trawler "Lucky Dragon No. 5", also American personnel manning weather posts and hundreds of native people on the islands of Rongelap, Ailinginae and Utrik, and Rongerik.

FISH POISONED

(223) Fish swimming in the waters around the Marshall Islands became contaminated with the debris particles which fell upon the water; the abundant marine life close to where the bomb was exploded became radioactive by feeding upon microscopic organisms (microplankton). Upwellings from the ocean floor bring vast quantities of nutrient chemicals to the area so that all kinds of micro-organisms abound and form a tasty diet for larger denizens of the sea.

Well outside the estimated danger area the tragedy of the "Lucky Dragon No. 5" became known to the world.

(222) Two weeks after the explosion the little trawler chugged into its home port in Japan, Dr. Ohji Toshisuke, at the Port of Yaizu, diagnosed the twenty-three members of her crew as suffering from radiation sickness. Dr. N. Masanori from the University of Tokyo boarded the boat on March 17, just sixteen days after the fall-out accident. Using a portable survey meter he recorded his Geiger counter readings, which registered the radioactivity as being nearly fifty times the daily permissible level. Not until three months later was most of the boat down to the tolerance level.

FISHERMAN

On "Dragon" died. jobs. In 1957 three were engaged (222) treatment in the

After the newspaper "Yomiuri" by the news and fish markets, the health University. Science

Photographs partake of the bomb (224) produce as a vital

If only the incident could fishing in the sea

Alarmed fishermen decided to inspect During the inspection checked the content (225) found to be contaminated

The Preliminary Report on the Effects on Fish

"An official fish caught in to near Hawaii, considerable pollution after the explosion

These tests 1954, the United States

"... Thyroid States three months unusual amounts grazing along the

(34 ) In 1956-57 nuclear fallout, the 1200 miles from the British army Sergeant (N.T.) died of leukemia in

"The hydrographic fishing grounds of the Society says an appeal issued by the Society.

Two hundred directly by the fisherman nation with the bulk

"H-bomb test 26,000 deep sea fishermen, a great number says the fishermen's