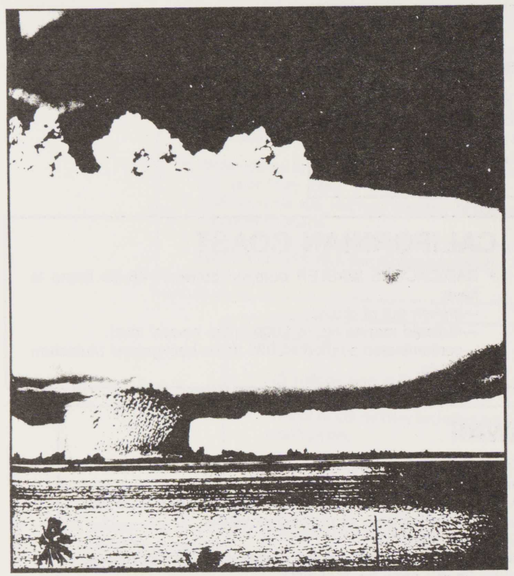


Submarine Launched Ballistic Missles (SLBM's) have become an important part of the modern nuclear arsenal supporting this strategy. CCC&I installations in Australia share responsibility for early warning signals, post-attack intelligence, and the receiving and transmitting of the minute-to-minute data essential to the coordination of any attack or defense. Second only to those in Hawaii, these Australian bases provide communications (including firing signals) to the growing fleet of U.S. ballistic missile submarines which prowl the Pacific and Indian Oceans.

Considering the flexibility, survivability, and mobility of SLBM's, it's not too surprising that ballistic missile subs carry over half of America's nuclear warheads. The new Trident 2 SLBM is without a doubt the most deadly weapons system devised to date. The U.S. Congress has already approved the construction of 14 of these awesomely destructive machines. (The first one entered service in the Pacific in August of 1982 despite strong protest on the part of anti-nuclear activists, many of whom are now serving long prison terms.) The Navy, on which Forward Defense depends, is pressing for 16 more. The commander of any one of these Trident submarines controls more destructive power than anyone other than the heads of state of the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. Each submarine carries 408 independently targetable warheads, each of which is five times the size of the "Little Boy" bomb that exploded over Hiroshima. These staggering figures support Dr. Carl Sagan's statement to Congress that, "If you think the mere prospect of the end of the world will change strategic policy, you haven't spent much time in the Pentagon."

Other nuclear weapons based in the Pacific and Indian Oceans include the Trident 1 missile (fitted to Polaris subs), Cruise missiles in B52H bombers, and Tomahawk missiles on WWII ships refitted as "guided missile cruisers". These weapons systems are not a speculation about what might be tomorrow -- they're in place NOW, and are on virtually constant alert! America's strategy of Forward Defense has been upgraded in the '80s so that John Lehman, Secretary of the Navy, can boast that we intend "to make the Soviet Union an isolated island." *

The Soviet military's response to such a policy is predictable. Soviet officials state that there can be no such thing as a "limited war" in the Pacific; that they would not accept superior U.S. forces bottling up the U.S.S.R. in Vladivostok and the Sea of Japan; that they would be forced to engage in an all-out nuclear war. The U.S. military is well prepared for such a conflict and ruthless in its determination that the peoples of the Pacific will cooperate in preparing for such a war. But the Pacific peoples are not accepting their role willingly and the voyage of the *Rainbow Warrior* throughout the region was routed to give support to this struggle.

After moving the people of Rongelap from their contaminated ancestral home to the new home on Mejato, the flagship infiltrated the Kwajalein Missile Range in support of local opposition to the abuse of the Kwajalein Atoll and its inhabitants by the U.S. military. In the 1960's the American government designated Kwajalein (also in the Marshalls) as part of the Pacific Missile Range. Missiles launched from Vandenberg Air Force Base in California splash down there.

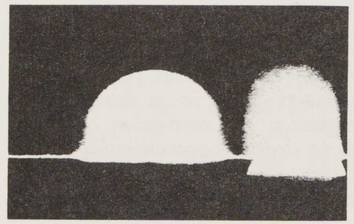
There are 3000 American military personnel living in air-conditioned comfort on the 900 acres of Kwajalein, while 9000 Marshallese live nearby in slum conditions, as many as 15 to a one-room corrugated steel hut, on 70-acre Ebeye Island. Fresh water must be brought to the island, and there are waste and sewage problems. Schools are inadequate and medical care scarce. Ebeye residents aren't allowed to use Kwajalein's schools, hospital, or any of its facilities. There are no jobs on Ebeye -- its population provides the maids and gardeners for the military base on Kwajalein. Approximately one of every eight Ebeye residents has a job; s/he must take a ferry to Kwajalein in the morning, carry a pass, and be off the island by nine in the evening. Welcome to the Pacific; welcome to apartheid American style.

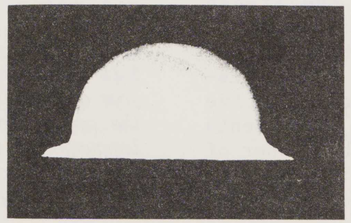
The French nuclear weapons tests (against which the *Rainbow Warrior* was to have led the Greenpeace protest flotilla this year) are relatively recent. France's claim to territories on which it is holding tests goes back over 100 years, but it was only when the Algerian War of Independence deprived the French government of its North African Test site in 1963 that it moved to its Pacific colonies. The French Foreign Legion then began to build facilities for nuclear weapons assembly and testing on Moruroa, Fangataufa and Hoa Atolls in the face of unanimous opposition from the Polynesian Territorial Assembly. Despite strong diplomatic protests from Australia, New Zealand, Chile and Peru, atmospheric testing began in May of 1966 and continued until 1975, when the pressure of world opinion finally caused France to move its testing underground.

This move is regarded by environmentalists as only marginally better since underground testing is believed to pollute the food chain and cause both destructive tidal waves and geological damage to the surrounding islands. However, this damage has been difficult to document. France conducted a total of 41 atmospheric nuclear tests on Moruroa Atoll, and has neither released any data on the radioactive pollution and resultant physical damage nor allowed independant observation or study of these phenomena. Since underground testing began in 1975, the record of the French "authorities" hasn't improved. Fangataufa Atoll has been literally blasted out of the sea, and a recent "independent observation" of the results was so strictly circumscribed that the participating area nations said that a valid evaluation on the basis of the information to which they had been allowed access was not possible.

Opposition by the people of the Pacific Basin to nuclear testing in their part of the world has been persistent, vocal, and active: diplomatic protests; clear electoral statements of objection to the policies of the nuclear powers; numerous protest flotillas sailing into test areas; occupations by the Marshallese people of their islands in the Kwajalein Atolls (which the Pentagon still insists on using as a missile range). After the *Rainbow Warrior* had been sunk, Hanne Sorensen, ship's engineer, said: "It is important to connect the bombing of the *Warrior* in Auckland with what is happening in the Pacific, and with what Greenpeace has done so far and what we are planning to do." Greenpeace has been very busy in the region -- there is, after all, a great deal to protest.

The *Warrior* had also stopped to visit the people of Kiribate in support of their continuing work against radioactive waste dumping in the Pacific. In 1981 Japan started dumping its nuclear waste in the





** The Navy is the armed service that has expanded fastest since Reagan came to power.*