

"Thanks to the final series which has just been carried out, France will have at its disposal a viable and modern defense," Mr. Chirac said. "The security of our country and our children is assured."

The Defense Ministry said the final test, conducted Saturday beneath Fangataufa Atoll, about 750 miles southeast of Tahiti, had a force of 120 kilotons—the equivalent of 120,000 tons of TNT, six times more powerful than the first blast in the series.

Greenpeace and other environmental groups called the tests needless and dangerous to a region known for its crystal seas and rich marine life. Some reports have said the continued nuclear pounding cracked the atolls and could eventually release radioactivity, a contention the government vehemently denies.

Mr. Chirac announced last June that France would conduct up to eight such underground tests, then stop for good and sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. Late last year, he said the tests would end by March and would number six or seven.

President Charles de Gaulle brought France into the atomic age in 1960. It stopped atmospheric testing in 1974 and bored the test tunnels beneath Mururoa and Fangataufa, where it has detonated 144 underground blasts.

[From the New York Times, Jan. 30, 1996]

FRANCE ENDING NUCLEAR TESTS THAT CAUSED BROAD PROTESTS

(By Craig R. Whitney)

PARIS, January 29.—The French Government said today that it had ended its nuclear weapons test program for good after conducting an underground blast in the South Pacific on Saturday, the last in a series of six such tests that were deplored by most of France's European allies and scores of other countries.

President Jacques Chirac announced the decision on national television this evening, calling the halt "the definitive end of French nuclear testing."

Mr. Chirac lifted a three-year moratorium on testing last year to try out a new warhead for French nuclear submarines and to gather data for computer simulations that will make future French nuclear weapons tests unnecessary.

French officials said today that the six tests carried out since last fall, which include the last and most powerful one under Fangataufa Atoll in the South Pacific on Saturday, had yielded enough data to make an additional test unnecessary.

They said that Mr. Chirac also wanted to put his best foot forward during a state visit to the United States this week and that he would use an address to Congress on Thursday to reaffirm France's intention to join the United States and other nuclear powers in signing a comprehensive test ban treaty this year to stop all further test explosions, no matter how small.

[In Washington, the Associated Press quoted the White House Press Secretary, Michael D. McCurry, as saying that that the French decision would "provide new momentum" to efforts to reach an international test ban treaty. The United States had pressed France to abide by the global moratorium.]

Mr. Chirac had said last June that the tests would end this spring but cut the number planned from eight to six after objections to the resumption of testing came from 10 of his 15 European Union allies, expressions of concern from the United States and vehement protests from Australia, New Zealand, Japan, and other Pacific countries.

"The possibility of rebuilding relationships with this part of the world, let alone New

Zealand, is going to be very, very difficult," New Zealand's Foreign Minister, Donald McKinnon, said today.

In an interview late last year, Mr. Chirac defended his decision to announce the resumption last June, not long before the 50th anniversary of the United States atom bomb attack on Hiroshima at the end of World War II.

"I didn't have any choice," he said. "To get the tests done in time to sign a comprehensive test ban treaty, preparations had to begin in the summer, and if we hadn't announced them, people would have discovered the work going on and accused us of being duplicitous."

French military experts told Mr. Chirac, a Gaullist conservative, that suspension of testing by his Socialist predecessor, François Mitterrand, had left a question mark over the reliability of the new TN-75 submarine-launched warhead and had also left France without sufficient data to future nuclear weapons testing to computer simulations.

Without assurance of reliability, the French independent nuclear deterrent would lack the credibility needed to scare off potential aggressors, the military said. Mr. Chirac was as determined as the late President Charles de Gaulle to enable France to take care of itself militarily, if necessary, without help from hands across the sea that could be withdrawn at any moment.

So he clenched his jaw while protesters poured Beaujolais down the drain and hanged him in effigy as "Hirochirac."

"I shared their concern," he said tonight, speaking from his office in Elysée Palace. "I know that nuclear tests can inspire fear." But, he continued, nuclear weapons served peace by deterring aggression.

It was to gather data necessary for simulation, authoritative French officials said, that the last explosion, equivalent to up to 120,000 tons of TNT and more than six times the size of the Hiroshima blast, was set off under Fangataufa Atoll on Saturday. Five other blasts were set off there and at nearby Mururoa Atoll, both in French Polynesia, between Sept. 5 and Dec. 27.

This brought to 198 the total number of French tests since the first one, which occurred in 1960 in the Sahara, in what was then French Algeria.

The end of French testing means that only China, among the admitted nuclear powers, is still carrying out underground explosions on its territory, though China's tests have not elicited nearly as much vehement protest as those of France. Tahitian protesters burned down the airport terminal at Papeete and caused \$40 million in damage in a riot after the first test in September, and the Greenpeace environmental pressure group sent protest ships into the test atoll.

France seized the Greenpeace ships and has refused to give them back, but Mr. Chirac was more irritated over the conduct of some of his European allies, including Italy, Sweden, Austria, and Finland, who voted at the United Nations in November to condemn French testing instead of abstaining as Germany, the United States, and many other countries did.

French officials, who had not consulted with their European allies about resuming the tests, canceled diplomatic meetings in anger. "It proves that there's a long way to go before Europe is built," Mr. Chirac said, but he thanked Britain, the only other European nuclear power, for never uttering a word of criticism about the French tests.

The French Defense Ministry has always insisted that the South Pacific tests caused no environmental damage, though it has conceded that trace amounts of radioactive iodine and other elements had been found in the waters around Mururoa after previous tests.

In a gesture to its European and NATO allies, France has offered recently to discuss ways of making its nuclear deterrent part of a stronger European defense pillar within the alliance, but concrete proposals are likely to be a long time coming, diplomats believe.●

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 301 of Public Law 104-99, which provided for the final disposition of Senate amendment number 115 to H.R. 1868 in both Houses, as if enacted into law, the Chair lays before the House the following enrolled bill:

H.R. 1868, an act making appropriations for foreign operations, export financing, and related programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1996, and for other purposes.

REMAKING AMERICA THE RIGHT WAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York [Mr. OWENS] for 60 minutes.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, the front-page article of the New York Times today, which talks about the CIA, has implications for the war to remake America that is going on in this Capitol now. Speaker GINGRICH has declared that politics is war without blood, and they have waged a relentless war.

My colleagues who spoke before about the threat of a default have indicated how serious this war is. The threat of a default is very serious. A default itself, of course, would be a disaster, but even a threat shakes the confidence of the world economies in this country and shakes the confidence of Americans.

Already the confidence of Americans has been shaken in their Government by two shutdowns of the Government. So I think it is very serious.

The following article that appears on the front page of the New York Times certainly has implications for what is going on with respect to streamlining and downsizing the expenditure side of the battle to remake America. It also has very serious implications with respect to the revenue side of the battle to remake America.

The New York Times article of today, January 30, says that a secret agency's secret budgets yield lost billions, officials say. Let me repeat that. A secret agency's secret budgets yield lost billions, officials say. Budgets, not just one budget. This secret agency has several budgets, and it has lost billions. The lost billions have been discovered, fortunately, at least as far as we know nothing has been stolen and whisked away from the American taxpayers, but it is there.

This \$2 billion slush fund, you know, with the Super Bowl for football over,