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# Greenpeace Attack Linked to Key Atomic Tests

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PARIS, Sept. 24 — The sabotage of an antinuclear protest ship by French agents was intended to stop the environmentalist group Greenpeace from disrupting the testing of two types of nuclear weapons that are part of a new generation of French armaments, according to French sources and others.

But it is not known why the French intelligence service took the drastic step of sinking the Greenpeace boat, the Rainbow Warrior, instead of incapacitating it in some other way. A Greenpeace photographer was killed in

the attack in New Zealand on July 10.

A former officer in the Special Air Service, an elite British undercover paramilitary body trained in sabotage, expressed amazement at the decision to sink the vessel, asserting that it could have been put out of action in many other ways.

## Increasing French Anxiety

There has been speculation that the size and importance of France's current nuclear testing program may have encouraged the authorities to take drastic steps to keep out intruders.

While it remains unclear who ordered the French intelligence service to sink the Rainbow Warrior, a Government report on the incident, issued last month, indicated that authorities in the French nuclear program were increasingly anxious about Greenpeace's plans to send a protest flotilla to the Pacific test site this year.

Adm. Henri Fages, head of the French Nuclear Testing Authority, made repeated requests for help to Charles Hernu, then Defense Minister, and Adm. Pierre Lacoste, then head of the intelligence service, according to the Government report.

Even if the flotilla were stopped at

the edge of French territorial waters, Admiral Fages warned, it would be difficult to prevent the crews from sailing in fast dinghies to the atolls of Mururoa and Fangataufa, where the tests are carried out. The admiral asked for additional police forces to capture anyone who landed on the atolls, and he requested more information about the Rainbow Warrior's movements.

Greenpeace officials say they think the French decision to sink the boat reflected both the importance of the nuclear tests and the fact that the Rainbow Warrior was far larger and better equipped than a ship used in a Greenpeace protest in 1982. The Rainbow Warrior was able to stay at sea much longer and to transmit photographs of what the crew saw, they said.

Stephen Sawyer, the Greenpeace project coordinator, noted that the waters around Mururoa were closed to shipping on May 28, shortly after France carried out its largest explosion in two years. In the test, a 150-kiloton warhead for the M-4 missile was exploded on May 8, just before such missiles were deployed on the new submarine Inflexible.

Mr. Sawyer speculated that the test might have caused radiation leakage or damage to the atoll and thus increased French determination to keep out intruders.

## A Major Modernization

The new nuclear weapons that France is testing in Mururoa this year are part of a major modernization of its nuclear deterrent that has been under way for several years but is only now yielding results.

In addition to acquiring more flexible and advanced weapons, French sources and others said, France appears to be slowly modifying its traditional independent defense policy in favor of greater cooperation with its allies.

While details of France's nuclear testing program remain secret, officials report that this year's nuclear tests mainly involve two types of weapons components. The first is the 150-kiloton warhead for the M-4, which is now being fitted on French submarines and will later be upgraded by the longer-range M-5. The second type is a 60-kiloton warhead to be used on a new medium-range ground-to-ground missile known as Hadès that is scheduled for deployment in 1992.

Other new French nuclear weapons include a medium-range air-to-ground missile with a 100-to-300-kiloton warhead, which is now being issued to the air force, and a neutron bomb, or radiation weapon, which has been tested but is not yet in production. A new warhead for France's land-based intercontinental missiles is also planned. In addition, France regularly tests existing weapons from its stockpile to insure that they work, sources say.

Many experts see France's new nuclear weapons as part of a gradual shift away from de Gaulle's belief that France could stay out of a European war by threatening any aggressor with nuclear destruction. Instead, the French increasingly favor a more flexible strategy based on joining other allies in the defense of West Germany.

The M-4's, which carry six independently targeted warheads, replace missiles having a single one-megaton warhead. The change will allow submarines to attack many smaller targets and permit a more graduated nuclear response than massive retaliation.

In addition, France's decision to develop new tactical nuclear weapons, including the Hadès, the neutron bomb and the air-to-ground missile, all appear designed to enable it to fight a ground war in Western Europe instead of concentrating its forces on the defense of French territory.