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FRANCE: The French detonated their 44th nuclear explosion, FRD; 50X1, 50X9 at the South Pacific test site on 25 June.

50X1, 50X9

50X1, 50X9

The start of the series had been scheduled for 21 June but was delayed by technical and weather problems. French officials have said the series this year will include three or four low yield detonations for further tests of miniaturization of "detonators" for thermonuclear weapons. 50X1, 50X9

The French have been testing in the atmosphere at their Pacific site since 1966. Although each year the nuclear tests have been accompanied by protests from various countries in the area, France plans to continue nuclear testing at least through 1976. Paris, nevertheless, may decide to move some of its nuclear testing underground when it determines that such testing could obtain all the desired technical information.

50X1, 50X9

Underground nuclear testing would not be new to the French. They conducted 13 such tests in the mountainous area of southern Algeria between November 1961 and February 1966 before moving to the Pacific. CIA Statute

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