

Pacific

- ① Hindicision & Nuclearization
- ② Lesson - report -> but to militarization/nuclearization
recognition our resources/powers on
work:
- ③ -> commitment to struggle against three forces that threaten
peace & activities - prevent Hiroshimas

MILITARIZATION AND NUCLEARIZATION OF THE PACIFIC:
A CALL TO STRENGTHEN THE ANTI-NUCLEAR MOVEMENT

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*Use of force
to take over
the area
of the
South Pacific
is a
mistake
because
the area
is a
strategic
asset*

The theme of the 1986 Pacific Week is the "Use and Conservation of the Natural Resources of the South Pacific", the implication being that natural resources must be carefully utilized for the development of Pacific peoples. Hopefully by the end of the week, participants - students and staff of the University, visitors and members of the general public - will become aware of the reality in relation to our natural resources. This reality manifests the abuses of our natural resources by outside corporate interests and local associates. - Such abuses extend to the endangering of our whole ecosystem for the purposes of furthering national ambitions by outside powers. Thus the French Nuclear tests on Mururoa and Fangataufa in French occupied Polynesia and the traversing of our ocean and visits to our ports by nuclear powered and armed vessels expose our environment, natural resources and above all our people to the dangers of radiation. There are elements in French occupied Polynesia and in our own countries who support both the militarization and nuclearization of the South Pacific for their short-term self interests.

Besides endangering material and human resources, militarization and nuclearization at the world level waste such resources. An end to the world-wide race to mass annihilation is the single most important matter for the 4 billion people who occupy this planet. If the time, energy, resources and effort that are tied up with militarization and nuclearization are made available for the resolution of such problems as food production to feed the one half of our world's people who go to bed with empty stomachs; tropical diseases and natural disasters - these problems could be resolved and/or counteracted very quickly indeed.

To give you an idea about the amount of resources that is being expended on strategies for the annihilation of humankind I will just give you the expenditure of the two super-powers on nuclear arsenal. In 1980 the stockpile of nuclear weapons was one million times the power of the Hiroshima bomb. As if this was not enough, between them, the United States and the Soviet Union were spending \$100 million a day to up-grade their nuclear arsenal. This is \$12.5 million for each working hour. These figures are six years old. A figure of one million dollar an hour for up-grading nuclear arsenal would not be surprising for the present period. In any case if we were to add the resources spent by other nuclear powers as well as non-nuclear nations on militarization, this amount will be easily surpassed. (The world military expenditure was \$US750 billion in 1982.) The recent proposal by the United States to develop its Star Wars Programme

Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI) will now lead to the nuclearization of the space. SDI is a multi-billion dollar project. The military expenditure of the United States has soared from 160 billion dollars in 1981 to 280 billion dollars in 1984. It is anticipated that between 1984-1990, the Reagan Administration's military budget will be US\$1.5 trillion (1,500 billion) (Durutalo, 1984, 15).

With this enormous sums being spent on militarization there is little wonder that a significant proportion of the world's scientists are employed to refine death-dealing devices. Already 50% of all the world's scientists are involved in military related research and development.

Although various scientific bodies have warned about the dangers of such research and development bringing our world closer to a nuclear holocaust (for instance the debate over the notion of a nuclear winter after a nuclear exchange) the nuclear arms race is continuing. Many less powerful countries, both former imperialist nations and newly independent ones are participating in this arms build-up.

Our Pacific is increasingly incorporated into this global race to militarize and nuclearize (see Map on Military and Nuclear Installations). But this is not to say that the Pacific has been free of these dreadful aspects of our contemporary world. Indeed, the very first and only nuclear bombing was by one Pacific nation against another Pacific nation. The United States dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan,

in August 1945. Tens of thousands died instantly and hundreds of thousands of survivors and their descendants, known as the Hibakusha continue to suffer the physical and social pains of being the first victims of nuclear weapons. The Second World War had made the Pacific a theatre of war between the Allied and Axis powers. The war was about the redivision of the world's resources among the imperialist nations. Pacific peoples were caught up in this war. Several thousands of acres of land were made uninhabitable and many islanders lost their lives. Others, such as the Banabans were uprooted from their ancestral islands, never to return again.

Subsequently between 1946 to 1962 the United States tested 90 nuclear devices in Enewetok and Bikini in the Micronesian Trust Territories and in Johnston and Christmas Islands in the Central Pacific. The United States violated then and continues to violate now the basic rights of the Marshall Islanders. In 1954 a huge explosion of the "Bravo" device contaminated 7,000 square miles of the Pacific and also radiated 236 Micronesians and the crew of the fishing boat, Lucky Dragon. Altogether "14 atolls were subjected to radioactive fallout from the 66 nuclear tests between 1946 and 1958" in Micronesia (Bello, 1984, 16). The presence of large areas of contaminated sites has resulted in "nuclear nomads" - Micronesians from Rongerik, Rongelap and Uterik who have suffered from repeated doses of radiation and associated diseases, who do not have a home island anymore. The tragedy of these Pacific Islanders is directly related to the

development of nuclear weaponry. Dennis O'Rourke's Half-Life documents the plight of the people of Rongelap. However, even this moving film is not able to portray the sufferings of the victims of thyroid cancer, leukemia, cataracts, miscarriages and still-births. The increasing incidence of jelly-fish babies which "breathe and move up and down, but are not shaped like a human being but rather like a bag of jelly" (Ibid. 1984, 16) is another consequence of radiation. It is expected that the peak period of radiation related cancers will come in the 1990s, 40 years after the exposure.

The British also tested nuclear devices in the 1950s and 1960s in the Pacific. They exploded 35 such devices in Australia (at Monte Bello Islands, Woomera and Maralinga) and in the Christmas Island. Technicians, scientists and military personnel who were present at the test sites have suffered from radiation and are presently taking court-action against the British government. Hundreds of Aboriginal people who frequented these sites or who were in the vicinity of these sites at the time when the tests were being conducted have been suffering and dying from radiation related ailments. At the Pacific Peoples Solidarity Conference for a Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific held in August this year, an Aboriginal participant, Shorty O'Neal spoke about the victims of these tests and the great difficulty in documenting the numbers involved.

More recently the plans to incinerate toxic substance in Central Australia have provoked widespread protest from

Aboriginal inhabitants of that region. A petition opposing this project is being circulated to staff and students of the University.

Since 1966 the French have been conducting nuclear tests on Mururoa and Fangataufa in the Eastern Pacific. Up till 1974, the French, like the Americans and the British conducted atmospheric tests. There were 41 such tests and after the mid-1970s the French have conducted 37 under-ground tests in these atolls. Altogether 166 nuclear devices have been tested in the atmosphere and a further 41 have been tested underground. In all more than 200 nuclear bombs have been tested in the South Pacific. None of these tests were conducted by Pacific peoples, they have been done by imperial powers. The consequences of these tests - both manifest and latent are suffered by Pacific Islanders.

The French stubbornly continue the tests, arrogantly disregarding the feelings of Pacific peoples. They are prepared to engage in terrorism to enforce their will on the Pacific as was exemplified in the RAINBOW WARRIOR incident. This nuclear colonialism on the fragile atoll ecosystem has serious implications for our marine resources. According to Oscar Temaru, the Mayor of Fa'aa, several cases of radiation related cancers have emerged in Tahiti but these have been covered up. The victims have been taken to France. One wonders if they are being handled as nuclear guinea pigs like their counterparts in the Micronesian Trust Territories.

The Pacific has been used to test Intercontinental Ballistic

Missiles (ICBMS) (See Map on Missile Testing on the Pacific). The United States has been bombarding Kwajalein for more than 25 years with missiles such as the Minuteman, Poseidon, Polaris, Trident and the MX. This atoll has the distinction of being the greatest contributor to the arms race. The Soviet Union and China also violate the rights of Pacific peoples by testing their missiles in this region. Between 1963 and 1985, the USSR tested 23 missiles in the Pacific. These missile tests make nuclear weapons more refined and accurate thereby contributing to the technologically sophisticated arms race. It has been pointed out that these missile testing powers have a tacit agreement to accept each other's tests. The losers in this regard are the islanders whose wishes are ignored by these powers.

Meanwhile the indigenous inhabitants of Kwajalein Atoll live on Ebeye an island of 66 acres, and a population of 8,500. Overcrowding, insanitary conditions, and a lack of basic facilities make Ebeye, a slum. This is in sharp contrast to Kwajalein where 3,000 Americans live in comfort on 900 acres of land which is replete with air conditioned houses, shopping centres, bowling alleys, a golf course, basket ball and hand ball courts, baseball fields, swimming pools and free services. The inhabitants of Ebeye must have official passes to enter Kwajalein and must leave the island by sunset or face being arrested by the military police.

Most Pacific peoples would be aware of the Japanese and American design to dump low-level radioactive waste-materials

into the Pacific. Both these nations had already dumped nuclear wastes into the northern Pacific but the unanimous outcry against dumping in the South Pacific has given us some respite. The London Dumping Convention has agreed to place a moratorium on all sea dumping for the next few years. The danger is not over yet because nuclear waste disposal remains a major problem and currently scientists employed by the nuclear industry are making strenuous efforts to make radioactive waste-containers "safe". The French have dumped radioactive wastes on Mururoa for a long time. Cyclones in the past have ripped open the asphalt cover on the waste and allowed waves to carry radioactive elements into the surrounding sea.

Threats to Pacific peace are presented by the two super-powers, the United States and the Soviet Union whose western and eastern boundaries respectively is formed by the Pacific ocean. These two states have installed over ten thousand nuclear missiles on land and in ships and aircrafts in the northern Pacific. Unlike in Europe, where European states have mediated to restrict the number of nuclear arsenals in their region, in the northern Pacific there has been a free for all. The shooting down of the Korean Airline 747, believed to be on an American-planned spying mission, exemplified the lack of regulation in the northern Pacific.

The USSR has 85 major surface combatants, 118 submarines (half nuclear powered and 30 nuclear armed), and 500 planes allocated to the naval aviation in the northern Pacific. In the

Soviet Far East there are 53 Army divisions equipped with 14,900 tanks and 1,690 tactical aircraft (Jones, 1986, 4).

The US has 350 bases in the Asia-Pacific region. It has 200 ships (including 15 Aircrafts carriers) and submarines, 1800 aircrafts and 223,000 military staff in the Pacific. On small Pacific islands there are 184 bases (167 US, 15 French, 1 Chilean and 1 Japanese).

Apart from the presence of these weapons and fighting forces, three other factors make a major confrontation between the two superpowers likely. Firstly, the United States under the Reagan administration, has moved towards the notion of a winnable nuclear war and as a result has supported the development of a new generation of weapons and delivery systems that make first strike, a winnable proposition. To this end, an aggressive forward development policy based on equipping the navy with Trident submarines and Tomahawk missiles is being rigorously pursued. A staggering \$62 billion of the defence budget has been allocated to naval ship-building since 1981. The US plans to have a 600 ship navy in the Pacific. Aircrafts such as the F14, F16, and F18 armed with Air Launched Cruise Missiles are being deployed. The Soviet Union is responding to this escalation by refining its own strategy and equipment.

Secondly, under the aegis of the Commander in Chief of US Forces in the Pacific (CINCPAC), some ninety annual joint-military/naval/airforce exercises of various size and type are held in the Asia/Pacific region. Some of these exercises are

carried out at the doorstep of the most heavily armed regions of the Soviet Union. It has been noted that "ships and planes of both sides sail and fly into each other's manoeuvres", thereby increasing the probability of a major confrontation.

Thirdly, the situation in the Korean peninsula is a likely spot for critical trouble that may exacerbate to a nuclear confrontation. Within a mile of the border between North and South Korea are located nuclear tipped land mines. Forty thousand American troops are based in South Korea and several hundred nuclear weapons are stockpiled there.

Against the wishes of the indigenous Hawaiians, the United States has turned that archipelago into a fortress. Sacred sites such as Kaho'olawe, have been made into target zones; large areas of potentially arable land have been acquired by the military and Hawaii is one of the largest storage sites of nuclear arsenal.

In the South Pacific, the Soviet military machine is not conspicuously present but American bases and warships are. The United States plans to establish bases and training sites in the Marianas and Belau. In spite of the attempts to bully and bribe the people of Belau to change their nuclear free constitution, the United States has not succeeded. Recently the new President's attempt to override the constitution was rejected by the courts. It is likely that plebiscite number five may take place soon.

According to a Disarmament Week posture prepared by the

Ofis Blong Ol Meri, the "United States is expanding its influence in the Pacific by making its navy and airforce six times larger, inviting military officers from Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Tonga, New Zealand and Australia to defence seminars in Hawaii, persuading Tuvalu to sign a Treaty which gives the United States the right to set up bases....., developing a new jungle warfare training ground in Palau, and convincing Fiji to allow nuclear submarines to enter Fiji ports."

Fiji's about turn in 1982 in relation to nuclear powered and armed vessels visiting our ports, at a time when New Zealand was declaring itself nuclear-free, meant that the people of Fiji were incorporated into the global strategies of one super-power. This in turn means that the Soviet attention will now be focused on Fiji. The visits by USS Reid and Brooke, nuclear-armed frigates last year and the nuclear powered submarine USS Portsmouth early this year to Suva, obviously were monitored by the Soviets. The visits by USS Chandler and Whipple, both nuclear capable and HMS Manchester and RAF Bayleaf over the last month have merely contributed to an escalation of this situation.

The presence of sophisticated military surveillance and missile guidance system in Pine Gap, Australia, in addition to the American bases there, also exposes our region to the dangers of a nuclear war. Facilities in Pine Gap act as the central nervous system for nuclear missile warfare and therefore are targetted by the Soviets.

Two recent developments are especially worrying, these are

the use of a new generation of submarines to carry sea launched cruise missiles (SLCMs) and the arrival of NATO forces into the Pacific. The Trident submarines and Tomahawk missiles mean a further escalation of the arms race in the Pacific. RIMPAC exercises, for the first time involved the British and therefore bring another European actor into the Pacific race.

The dubious 75 year celebrations by the Australian navy and the presence at these peculiar celebrations of six nuclear armed ships exposes the hypocrisy of Australia's avowed wish to make the Pacific nuclear free. Australian Labour Government's two-faced character has also been exposed by its approval of renewed exports of uranium to France. The Bank Line's ships are abusing the right to innocent passage through our seas by carrying in their holds Australian uranium destined for Europe.

To keep our Pacific genuinely pacific, there is a need for appropriate education to realise the present grave threats that are posed to global peace. A nuclear exchange anywhere will have very severe repercussions the world over, our Pacific region is particularly prone to such an exchange because of the military installations in the northern Pacific and the growing nuclearization of the South Pacific. As inhabitants of the region that has contributed (involuntarily) the most to the global arms race, Pacific peoples lack of awareness and concern is shocking. Much of this has to do with information control and flow which are not in the hands of Pacific islanders. We must demand to know.

Nuclear weapons make no distinction between military and civilian populations. The Three Mile Island and Chernobyl disasters illustrate in a miniature scale what can happen. Innocent civilians, old men, women and children will die horrific deaths just as surely as those men who are involved in fighting the war. Subsequently the areas affected would not be fit for human occupation for generations afterwards. We already have such areas in the Pacific. The threats to Pacific peace have always come from the outside. Today the presence of such unjust regimes as the French administration in Eastern Polynesia and in New Caledonia and the arms race of the two super-powers provide the major challenges to Pacific peoples.

Militarization in the Pacific is also manifested by the presence of standing armies in Fiji, Papua New Guinea and Tonga; joint military exercises and visits by warships (see Editorial, Samoa Times, 19 Sept., 1986); the training of rapid-deployment ("Reaction") forces in the United States, Australia and New Zealand; and the probability of a regional peace-keeping force. The preeminence given to the military has implications for the enjoyment of economic and political rights by the civilian population. Limited resources, better spent on productive activities may be siphoned-off for an unproductive standing army. Political freedom may increasingly be constrained by authoritarian regimes backed by the military.

In Fiji, the predominance in the army of members of one ethnic category who are closely affiliated to the chiefly

hierarchy that welds political power is a matter of concern. There is something immoral and sinister about the arming and training of one ethnic category in a multi-ethnic community. It is obvious that the Fiji army underwrites political power holders in Fiji, the test of democracy will come when the present incumbents are displaced through the electoral process.

To assure the survival of Pacific peoples and the efficient and productive use of their potential and of their natural environment, there is an urgent need to roll back the tide of militarization and nuclearization. The global corporations which have so ruthlessly exploited Pacific resources: the people, the minerals, the forests, the land, and the sea resources (for instance tuna), have done so because they were and are backed by the might of their states. A very significant element of this might is the possession of nuclear arsenal which were partly tested and refined in the Pacific.

Unlike our fathers and our forefathers we are no longer under direct colonialism, we therefore must articulate in no uncertain terms, our wish to control our national resources for the betterment of our people. We need to protect our natural resources against wasteful usage and the threat of nuclear radiation. There are anti-nuclear and peace movements in Australia, Belau, New Zealand (Aotearoa), Japan, Hawaii, the United States, Philippines, Ponape, South Korea and Fiji. There is a need to support these movements and encourage the formation of such movements in other South Pacific islands. The one thing

that the film "Half-Life" tells us is that we cannot afford to be ignorant and naive in matters of militarization and nuclearization.

We should act to ban all nuclear facilities, nuclear testing, nuclear dumping and nuclear armed and nuclear powered vessels from our region. This ban should be binding on all South Pacific nations and therefore go beyond the current South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty. We must stop the Pacific from becoming the nuclear waste dump of the nuclear powers. In order to do all this we have to organize ourselves and act for PEACE.

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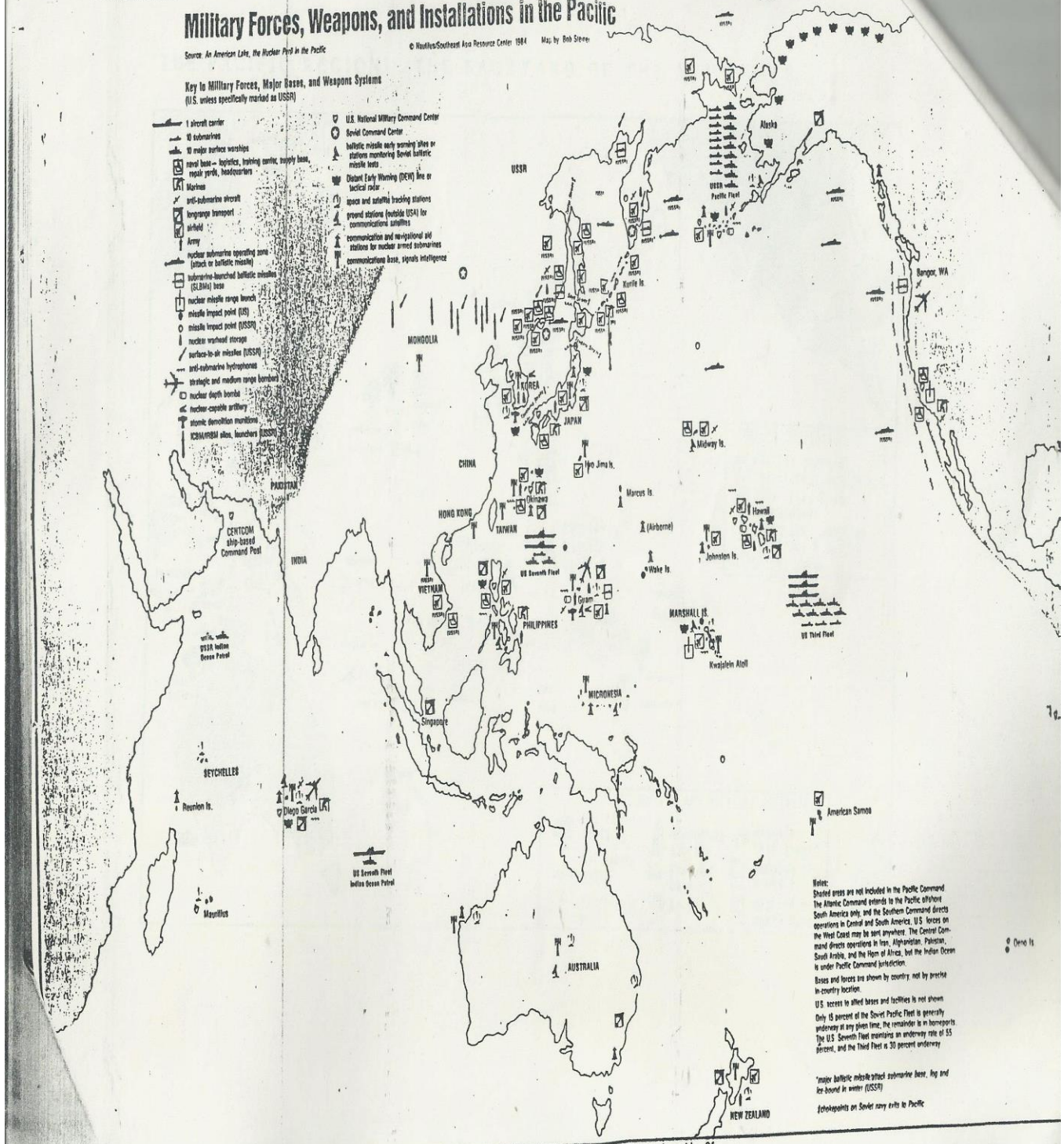
Military Forces, Weapons, and Installations in the Pacific

Source: *An American Lake, The Nuclear Fleet in the Pacific*

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Key to Military Forces, Major Bases, and Weapons Systems (U.S. unless specifically marked as USSR)

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 aircraft carrier 10 submarines 10 major surface warships naval base - logistics, training center, supply base, repair yards, headquarters Marines anti-submarine aircraft long-range transport airfield nuclear submarine operating zone (attack or ballistic missile) submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM) base nuclear missile range launch missile impact point (US) missile impact point (USSR) nuclear warhead storage surface-to-air missiles (USSR) anti-submarine hydrophones strategic and medium range bombers nuclear depth bombs nuclear-capable artillery atomic demolition munitions KORANGUM sites, launchers (USSR) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> U.S. National Military Command Center Special Command Center ballistic missile early warning sites or stations monitoring Soviet ballistic missile tests Distant Early Warning (DEW) line or tactical radar space and satellite tracking stations ground stations (outside USA) for communications satellites communication and navigational stations for nuclear armed submarines communications base, signals intelligence |
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Notes:
 Shaded areas are not included in the Pacific Command.
 The Atlantic Command extends to the Pacific off the South America coast, and the Southern Command directs operations in Central and South America. U.S. forces on the West Coast may be sent anywhere. The Central Command directs operations in Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and the Horn of Africa, but the Indian Ocean is under Pacific Command jurisdiction.
 Bases and forces are shown by country, not by precise in-country location.
 U.S. access to allied bases and facilities is not shown.
 Only 15 percent of the Soviet Pacific Fleet is generally underway at any given time. The remainder is in harbors.
 The US Seventh Fleet maintains an underway rate of 55 percent, and the Third Fleet is 30 percent underway.
 *major ballistic missile attack submarine base. May and ice-bound in winter (USSR)
 †photopoints on Soviet navy entry to Pacific

THE PACIFIC REGION: THE BACKYARD OF THE ARMS RACE.

