



Ka Leo O I

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French symposium

Protesters blast nuclear testing in demonstration at UH law school

by Judy Ma
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Angry protest cries of genocide disrupted a symposium on French nuclear testing in Tahiti, as members from the Hawaii chapter of the Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific barged into the forum at the UH William S. Richardson School of Law Wednesday.

A protester read an eviction notice to French Consul Antoine Frassetto demanding France to cease all nuclear testing and leave Tahiti. Other demonstrators distributed pamphlets and urged the audience to leave.

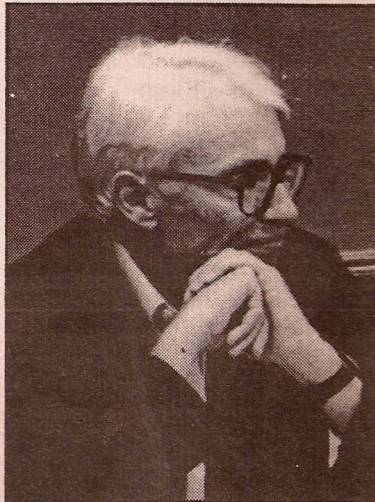
The symposium discussed the environmental impact, moral and international legal issues raised by the testing of nuclear weapons at Moruroa in Tahiti.

Dr. Steven Halepua, director of the Pacific Islands Development Program, said Pacific Islanders feel they are entitled to make to final decision on nuclear testing.

"They (Pacific Islanders) feel that as people of the region, they are the guardians of the environment," Halepua said. "So they feel that they have the moral right and obligation to make the final decision, not the French government."

Halepua said Pacific Islanders do not feel it was right for France to continue nuclear testing in Tahiti.

Law professor John Van Dyke said France is violating interna-



Antoine Frassetto

tional law by testing nuclear weapons and producing nuclear pollution.

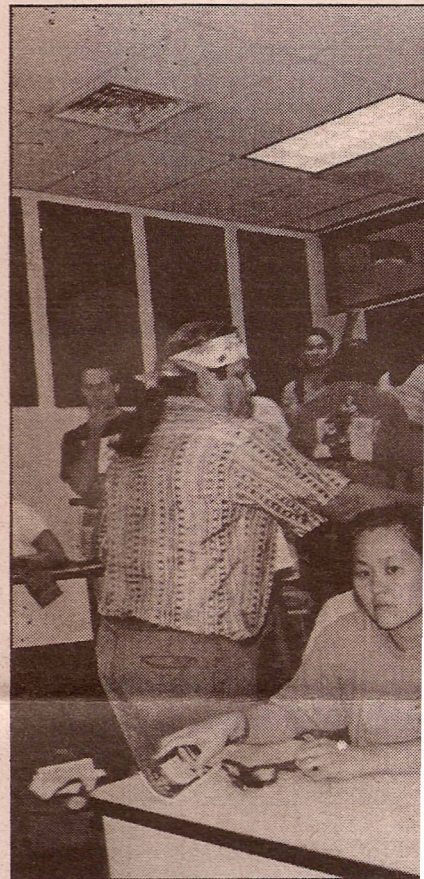
"There are now treaties that prohibit testing and France and China are the only countries that still tests," Van Dyke said. "So I think you can make an argument that it (nuclear testing) is prohibited under international law at the present time. In any event, the pollution is certainly a violation of international law."

However, Frassetto said France has not broken any international laws.

"From the legal point of view, we don't see any violation by the French government," Frassetto said. "We (France) did not break any international law. We did not break any international commitments."

Frassetto said the nuclear testing will end in four months.

"Today, we are exactly within four months of the closure of the center (in Moruroa), and we are within four months of the ending of any nuclear tests," Frassetto



Representatives of the Tahitian communities in the South Pacific at a symposium.

said. Dr. Michael Jones of the UH physics department said structural damage to the reef and underlying mountains has occurred. Jones added that the presence of plutonium has been detected both in the lagoon and in the surrounding oceans of the Moruroa atoll in Tahiti.

Van Dyke agrees and said scientific studies have indicated the volcanic porous structure of

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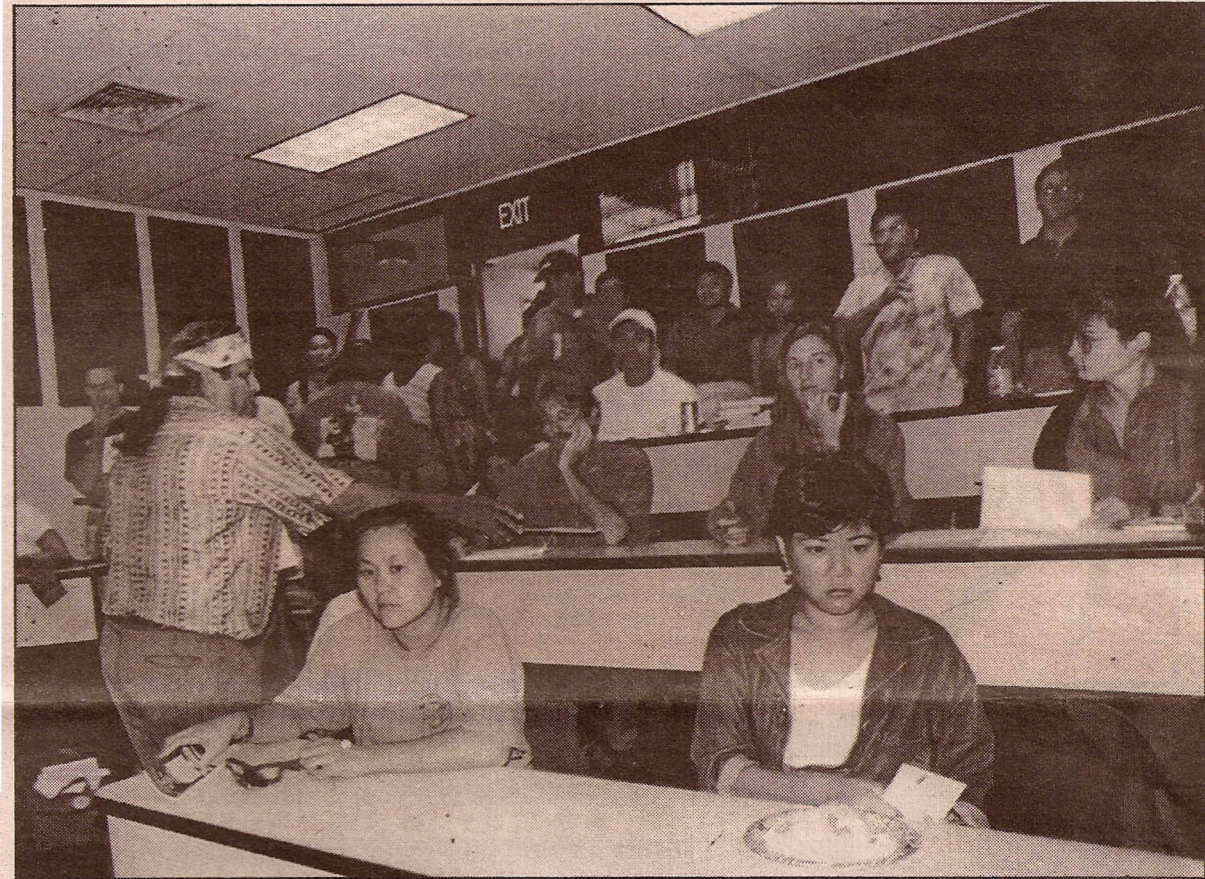


photo by Byron Lee/Ka Leo

Representatives of the Tahitian community, 'OHANA KOA, and HCANT protest French nuclear testing on islands in the South Pacific at a symposium at the UH law school yesterday.

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Dr. Michael Jones of the UH physics department said structural damage to the reef and underlying mountains has occurred. Jones added that the presence of plutonium has been detected both in the lagoon and in the surrounding oceans of the Moruroa atoll in Tahiti.

Van Dyke agrees and said scientific studies have indicated the volcanic porous structure of

the Moruroa is the worse place to conduct the nuclear testing. Van Dyke said the studies have indicated water will eventually move the radioactivity out of the atoll and create a dead zone in the surrounding area.

Van Dyke added that the radioactivity will eventually work its way up the food chain according to the scientific studies.

However, Jones said the environmental impact of the nuclear

testing is difficult to determine because scientific studies did not have sufficient time and resources.

Frassetto argues that scientific studies have found the nuclear testing to be harmless.

Frassetto said France will partially devote the Moruroa center to monitoring the long term environmental effects of the nuclear testing when the testing ends in four months.