

**UNITED STATES**

**NUCLEAR TESTING PROGRAM**

**CHRONOLOGY**

**JUNE 18, 1992**

# U.S. NUCLEAR TESTING PROGRAM

## Chronology

<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>
January 1939	German scientists Hahn and Strassmann published results of their 1938 experiments with which they discovered the fission process.
September 1, 1939	Nazi Germany invaded Poland; World War II began.
December 7 & 15, 1941	United States entered war with Japan and Germany, respectively.
August 13, 1942	Manhattan Engineer District established to produce nuclear weapons.
December 2, 1942	Physicists under direction of Enrico Fermi at the University of Chicago's Metallurgical Laboratory created the first controlled, self-sustaining nuclear chain reaction.
March 15, 1943	Weapon laboratory established at Los Alamos, New Mexico. Now called Los Alamos National Laboratory.
July 16, 1945	First atomic bomb, <u>Trinity</u> , detonated at Alamogordo, New Mexico by the Manhattan Engineer District.
August 6, 1945	First atomic bomb "Little Boy" dropped on Hiroshima, Japan.
August 9, 1945	Second atomic bomb "Fat Man" detonated over Nagasaki, Japan.
August 14, 1945	The government of Imperial Japan accepted the Potsdam Declaration and surrendered.
January 26, 1946	The United Nations General Assembly in London established the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission.
June 14, 1946	Bernard Baruch, U.S. delegate to the U.N. Atomic Energy Commission, proposed a plan to outlaw the manufacture of atomic bombs, dismantle those already existing, and share atomic energy secrets with other nations. The Soviet Union rejected the plan and it failed.
June-July 1946	The Manhattan Engineer District conducted Operation <u>Crossroads</u> , detonating two shots in the Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands.
August 1, 1946	Atomic Energy Act signed by President Truman established the Atomic Energy Commission and transferred the Army's Manhattan Engineer District atomic programs and facilities to the five member commission.

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January 1, 1947	Atomic Energy Commission officially began operation under Chairman David E. Lilienthal.
March 12, 1947	President Truman proposed U.S. aid to Greece and Turkey (the Truman Doctrine).
June 5, 1947	Plan for economic aid to Europe proposed by Secretary of State George Marshall, later called the "Marshall Plan."
April-May 1948	The Commission conducted Operation <u>Sandstone</u> , firing three shots on Enewetak in the Marshall Islands.
February 1948	A communist coup in Czechoslovakia took control of the government.
June 23, 1948	Berlin Blockade declared by the Soviet Union; lifted in May 1949.
August 29, 1949	Soviet Union detonated its first atomic device. President Truman announced it on September 23.
September 30, 1949	Communist Mao Tse-Tung established the Peoples Republic of China.
January 31, 1950	President Truman announced program to develop the thermonuclear bomb.
February 2, 1950	Klaus Fuchs, British atomic scientist, confessed to British investigators that he betrayed secrets of the atomic bomb project to the Soviet Union.
June 25, 1950	North Korean troops invaded South Korea, starting the Korean War.
July 11, 1950	Gordon E. Dean became chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission.
July 17, 1950	Julius Rosenberg was arrested by the FBI and charged with conspiracy to commit espionage. His wife, Ethel, was arrested in August. On June 19, 1953 they were executed.
October 9, 1950	President Truman approved an expansion of Commission facilities which produced uranium and plutonium for nuclear weapons.

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November 26, 1950	Chinese troops entered the fighting in Korea.
December 16, 1950	President Truman declared a National Emergency due to the fighting in Korea.
December 18, 1950	President Truman approved the Commission's recommendation to establish a continental proving ground.
January-February 1951	Operation <u>Ranger</u> , the first continental nuclear test series conducted at the Nevada Proving Ground, now called Nevada Test Site, 60 miles north of Las Vegas, Nevada. Five shots were fired.
April-May 1951	The Commission conducted Operation <u>Greenhouse</u> at Enewetak, detonating four tests.
October-November 1951	The Commission conducted Operation <u>Buster-Jangle</u> at the Nevada Test Site, which consisted of seven tests.
January 11, 1952	United Nations Disarmament Commission established.
January 16, 1952	The National Security Council approved second major expansion of the Commission's nuclear production facilities.
April-June 1952	The Commission conducted Operation <u>Tumbler-Snapper</u> at the Nevada Test Site, detonating eight nuclear tests.
June 1952	University of California's Livermore Laboratory, now Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, established by the Commission.
November 1, 1952	The first thermonuclear device, code named "Mike," detonated by the Commission at Enewetak, during Operation <u>Ivy</u> . The device exploded with a yield at 10.4 megatons.
March-June 1953	The Commission conducted Operation <u>Upshot-Knothole</u> at the Nevada Test Site, detonating eleven explosions including shots "Simon" and "Harry."
July 2, 1953	Lewis L. Strauss became new chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission.
August 20, 1953	The Soviet Union detonated a large fission weapon which burned some thermonuclear fuel. The United States called the shot <u>Joe 4</u> .

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November 28, 1953	U.N. Disarmament Commission created subcommittee of Five; members were United States, the Soviet Union, Canada, France, and Great Britain.
December 8, 1953	President Eisenhower delivered "Atoms for Peace" speech before the United Nations.
January 21, 1954	U.S.S. Nautilus, the first nuclear powered submarine, launched by the Navy.
February 1954	In a Memorandum of Understanding signed by the Commission, the Public Health Service accepted responsibility for monitoring off-site radiation.
March-May 1954	The Commission conducted Operation <u>Castle</u> at the Marshall Islands, which consisted of six tests.
March 1, 1954	"Bravo," the first shot of <u>Castle</u> , exploded with a force of fifteen megatons, the largest announced U.S. nuclear test.
June 29, 1954	The Commission announced that it denied Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer access to restricted data.
August 30, 1954	President Eisenhower signed the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, a major revision of the 1946 Act, which gave added emphasis to development of peacetime uses of atomic energy, and encouraged private and public groups to build, own, and operate power reactors.
February-May 1955	The Commission conducted Operation <u>Teapot</u> at the Nevada Test Site, detonating fourteen tests.
February 15, 1955	"A Report by the United States Atomic Energy Commission on the Effects of High Yield Nuclear Explosions" was released.
April 15, 1955	Joint Committee on Atomic Energy held hearings on health and safety problems associated with atmospheric nuclear testing.
May 14, 1955	The Commission and the Department of Defense conducted Operation <u>Wigwam</u> , an underwater nuclear test 500 miles southwest of San Diego, California.
July 21, 1955	President Eisenhower proposed an "Open Skies" policy of mutual aerial inspection during a summit conference held in Geneva, Switzerland between the United States, Great Britain, France, and the Soviet Union.

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August 8-20, 1955	The United States participated in the first International Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy, in Geneva, Switzerland.
May-July 1956	The Commission conducted Operation <u>Redwing</u> at the Marshall Islands, firing seventeen nuclear test shots, including the first airdrop of a U.S. thermonuclear weapon.
July 26, 1956	Egypt nationalized the Suez Canal which provoked the "Suez Crisis" and an attack on Egypt by Israel, Great Britain, and France, October 29-November 6.
November 4, 1956	Soviet Union crushed demonstrations in Hungary.
February 1957	First Plowshare symposium held at Livermore Laboratory.
March 18, 1957- September 6, 1957	U.N. Disarmament Subcommittee ("of Five") held last series of negotiations in London.
May 27, 1957- June 7, 1957	Joint Committee on Atomic Energy held hearings on radioactive fallout and its effects on man.
May 1957-March 1958	The Commission conducted Operation <u>Plumbbob</u> at the Nevada Test Site, firing thirty-three tests including shot "Rainier," the first detonation contained underground. Shot "Smoky" was also detonated.
April-August 1958	The Commission conducted the thirty-five shot Operation <u>Hardtack I</u> in the Marshall Islands.
July 1, 1958- August 21, 1958	The "Conference of Experts to Study the Possibility of Detecting Violations of a Possible Agreement on the Suspension of Nuclear Tests" held.
July 14, 1958	John A. McCone became chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission.
August 22, 1958	President Eisenhower announced moratorium on weapon testing to begin October 31.
August-September 1958	The Commission conducted Operation <u>Argus</u> in the South Atlantic, detonating three high-altitude nuclear tests.
September 1-13, 1958	The United States participated in the second United Nations International Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy in Geneva, Switzerland.

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September 1958	Libby-Cockcroft agreement signed, allowed closer cooperation for mutual defense between United States and Great Britain.
September-October 1958	The Commission conducted Operation <u>Hardtack II</u> at the Nevada Test Site, which consisted of thirty-six tests.
November 1, 1958- September 1961	United States, Great Britain, and Soviet Union abide by moratorium on atmospheric nuclear weapon testing as negotiations continued for a definitive agreement.
May 5-8, 1959	Joint Committee on Atomic Energy held hearings on radiation and fallout from nuclear tests.
November 24, 1959	A Memorandum of Cooperation between the United States and the Soviet Union, signed by Chairman McCone and Professor Vasily Emelyanov, Head of USSR Main Administration for Utilization of Atomic Energy.
March 1, 1961	Glenn T. Seaborg named by President Kennedy to be chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission.
August 13, 1961	East German government began construction of Berlin Wall, which closed all land routes between East and West Berlin.
September 1, 1961	Soviet Union broke nuclear test moratorium, and on October 23 and 30 fired shots estimated at thirty and fifty megatons.
September 5, 1961	President Kennedy ordered resumption of underground nuclear testing.
September 1961-June 1962	The Commission conducted Operation <u>Nougat</u> at the Nevada Test Site, firing thirty-two shots.
December 10, 1961	As part of <u>Nougat</u> shot, "Gnome," the first Peaceful Nuclear Explosion (as part of Project Plowshare) was detonated in a salt cavity in Carlsbad, New Mexico.
April 24, 1962	President Kennedy authorized resumption of atmospheric nuclear weapon testing.
April-November 1962	The Commission conducted Operation <u>Dominic I</u> in the Christmas Island and Johnston Island areas of the Pacific. This was the last U.S. atmospheric test series.

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July 1962 - June 1963	The Commission conducted Operation <u>Storax</u> at the Nevada Test Site; all tests were underground. Operation <u>Dominic II</u> , conducted at the Nevada Test Site during July 1962, was the last above ground test series held in the United States.
July 6, 1962	Project Plowshare's shot "Sedan" was detonated at the Nevada Test Site.
October 1962	Cuban missile crisis.
June 3-6, 1963	Joint Committee on Atomic Energy held hearings on fallout and radiation.
August 5, 1963	The Limited Nuclear Test Ban Treaty signed by the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union, banned nuclear tests in the oceans, atmosphere, and outer space. The Treaty took effect in November 1963.
January 8, 1964	President Johnson announced a 25 percent reduction in the production of enriched uranium and shutdown of four production reactors.
December 10, 1967	Project "Gasbuggy," a Peaceful Nuclear Explosive, was detonated in New Mexico as part of Project Plowshare. It was the first joint government industry natural gas stimulation experiment. Project "Rulison," September 10, 1969 and Project "Rio Blanco," May 17, 1973 were also gas stimulation experiments.
October 2, 1969	The Commission detonated shot "Milrow" at Amchitka, Alaska.
March 5, 1970	Ratification of the Treaty for the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons by the United States, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union, and 45 other nations.
December 18, 1970	Baneberry test detonated at the Nevada Test Site.
August 17, 1971	James R. Schlesinger became chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission.
November 6, 1971	The Commission detonated shot "Cannikin" at Amchitka, Alaska.
May 22, 1972	President Nixon, in the first visit of a U.S. President to Moscow, participated in a summit meeting and signed the SALT I agreement.

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February 6, 1973	Atomic Energy Commissioner, Dixy Lee Ray, designated chairman by President Nixon.
July 1974	Threshold Test Ban Treaty signed by the United States and the Soviet Union.
October 11, 1974	President Ford signed the Energy Reorganization Act, abolishing the Atomic Energy Commission and transferring its nuclear weapon program to the Energy Research and Development Administration.
January 19, 1975	Energy Research and Development Administration activated and Robert C. Seamans, Jr., named Administrator.
February 2, 1976	Roberts V. U.S.A. files tort claim (LV-1766-RDF) Plaintiff alleged that (Harley R. Roberts) decedent's death from leukemia was result of radiation exposure while employed by Wackenhut Services at the Nevada Test Site at the time of the BANE BERRY Event, December 18, 1970.
May 28, 1976	Treaty on Underground Nuclear Explosions for Peaceful Purposes signed by the United States and the Soviet Union.
December 27, 1976	Nunamaker V. U.S.A. files tort claim (LV-76-259-RDF) Plaintiff alleged that (William H. Nunamaker) decedent's death from leukemia was result of radiation exposure while employed by Wackenhut Services at the Nevada Test Site at the time of the BANE BERRY Event, December 18, 1970.
August 4, 1977	President Carter signed the Department of Energy Act abolishing the Energy Research and Development Administration and Federal Energy Administration, and transferred their functions to the new Department of Energy. The Department began operation on October 1.
August 5, 1977	James R. Schlesinger nominated as first Secretary of Energy.
October 1978	Department of Energy Nevada Operations Office initiated an Offsite Radiation Review Project (ORERP). The purpose of the project was to consolidate environmental monitoring data regarding weapons testing and, based on that source data evaluate dose assessment for areas of concern in Nevada and its adjoining states.

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November 27, 1978	President Jimmy Carter ordered the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare to establish a program for research on the health effects of low-level radiation exposure to communities in Nevada, Utah, and Arizona.
January 16, 1979 - April 5, 1979	<u>Nunamaker &amp; Roberts v. United States, et al.</u> (BANE BERRY) (LV-76-259-RDF) - Plaintiff alleges that decedents' deaths from leukemia were the result of radiation exposure while employed by Wackenhut Services at the Nevada Test Site at the time of the BANE BERRY Event. The trial was held January 16, 1979 - April 5, 1979.
February 22, 1979	Joseph Lyons published "Childhood Leukemias Associated with Fallout from Nuclear Testing," in <u>The New England Journal of Medicine</u> .
April 19, 1979	House Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce held hearing on the health effects of low-level radiation at Salt Lake City, Utah.
June 8, 1979	Department of Energy, Nevada Operations Office was designated as lead DOE field office for collecting, storage, and dispersion of all relevant historical data and information related to health effects and radioactive fallout from nuclear testing. Additionally, the Nevada Operations Office was designated as the lead office and focal point in the reconstruction of offsite radiological conditions at the NTS and in the assessment of radiation exposures of offsite residents. This was the Department of Energy Headquarters endorsement of the Offsite Radiation Exposure Review Project (ORERP).
August 24, 1979	Charles W. Duncan, Jr., named second Secretary of Energy by President Carter.
August 30, 1979	<u>Allen (Irene), et al v. United States</u> - Tort claim filed (C-79-0515). Plaintiffs, residents of communities downwind of the Nevada Test Site from 1951-1962, allege that exposure of fallout from atomic testing resulted in leukemia and various other cancers.
May 14, 1980	<u>Prescott v. United States</u> - Filed Tort claim (CV-LV-80-143-RDF). Plaintiff, a former NTS worker, alleges that he developed multiple myeloma as the result of exposure to radiation during his employment at NTS during 1961-1969.

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July 11, 1980	Dose Assessment Advisory Group (DAAG) is established to oversee the Offsite Radiation Exposure Review Project (ORERP).
January 22, 1981	James B. Edwards named third Secretary of Energy by President Reagan.
July 17, 1981	Coordination and Information Center opened in Las Vegas, Nevada.
November 3, 1981	Public Law 97-72, "Veterans' Health Care, Training, and Small Business Loan Act of 1981" signed into Law.
June 8, 1982	<u>Nunamaker &amp; Roberts v. United States, et al.</u> (BANE BERRY) (LV-76-259-RDF) - In a partial decision handed down, the court found no negligence in pre-venting activities, but did find negligence in post-venting evacuation and decontamination.
September 13, 1982	<u>Irene Allen v. United States</u> - Trial of 24 representative cases began in Salt Lake City, Utah. Trial ended December 17, 1982.
November 5, 1982	Donald Paul Hodel named fourth Secretary of Energy by President Reagan.
January 20, 1983	<u>Nunamaker &amp; Roberts v. United States, et al.</u> (BANE BERRY) (LV-76-259-RDF) - The court ruled for the U.S., finding no causation.
December 3, 1983	<u>In re: Consolidated U.S. Atmospheric Testing Litigation</u> (C-84-0022-WWS) - Case filed. This case involved 42 consolidated actions arising out of the alleged exposure to radiation from the bombing of Hiroshima or subsequent atmospheric testing of nuclear weapons in the Pacific or in Nevada.
January 23, 1984	Public Law 98-542, "Veterans' Dioxin and Radiation Exposure Compensation Standards Act" signed into Law.
June 13, 1984	<u>Irene Allen v. United States</u> - Judgement was entered for plaintiffs for 10 cases and for defendant in 14 cases (588 F Supp. 247 (D. Utah 1984)). The U.S. filed Notice of Appeal in the 10th Circuit with respect to the 10 prevailing cases on August 10, 1984.

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January 18, 1985	<u>In re: Consolidated U.S. Atmospheric Testing Litigation (C-84-0022-WWS)</u> - U.S. filed its Motions for Summary Judgment based on <u>Feres</u> and discretionary function on January 18, 1985.
February 7, 1985	John S. Herrington becomes the fifth Secretary of Energy (Ronald Reagan is President).
March 1, 1985	<u>Nunamaker &amp; Roberts v. United States, et al. (BANE BERRY) (LV-76-259-RDF)</u> - Plaintiffs filed a Notice of Appeal.
August 28, 1985	<u>In re: Consolidated U.S. Atmospheric Testing Litigation (C-84-0022-WWSS)</u> - Judge Schwarzer severed <u>Ryder</u> from the consolidated action for further proceedings, finding that Ryder's case was not entirely subject to the substitution provisions of Section 1631, following which the court dismissed all cases under the discretionary function exception and, as appropriate, on the alternative grounds of <u>Feres</u> , the combatant activities exception, and the foreign country exception.
September 19, 1985	<u>Prescott v. United States</u> - Court consolidated the remaining NTS workers under this case. The U.S. filed motion for Summary Judgment based on discretionary function in December 1985. In October 1986, Judge Foley stayed his ruling on the motion, pending the 9th Circuit's ruling in <u>In re: Consolidated U.S. Atmospheric Testing Litigation</u> , and the 10th Circuit's ruling in <u>Allen v. United States</u> .
November 27, 1985	<u>In re: Consolidated U.S. Atmospheric Testing Litigation (C-84-0022-WWSS)</u> - Plaintiffs filed the appeal to August 28, 1985 ruling.
June 1986	<u>In re: Consolidated U.S. Atmospheric Testing Litigation (C-84-0022-WWS)</u> - Court denied plaintiffs' motion for stay pending congressional action on Section 1631 (the Warner Amendment).
October 9, 1986	<u>Prescott v. United States</u> - Judge Foley stayed his ruling on the motion, pending the 9th Circuit's ruling in <u>In re: Consolidated U.S. Atmospheric Testing Litigation</u> .
April 20, 1987	<u>Irene Allen v. United States</u> - The 10th Circuit Court reversed and remanded the lower court decision, holding that "all challenged actions" of the government in the conduct of the atomic testing were protected by discretionary function exception to the FTCA.

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May 20, 1987	Dose Assessment Advisory Group (DAAG) publishes final report on their activities associated with their oversight of the Offsite Radiation Exposure Review Project (ORERP).
June 22, 1987	<u>In re: Consolidated U.S. Atmospheric Testing Litigation (C-84-0022-WWS)</u> - The 9th Circuit affirmed the lower court's decision - under the discretionary function.
July 23, 1987	<u>Irene Allen v. United States</u> - Plaintiff petitioned the U.S. Supreme Court for <u>cert.</u> The U.S. filed its brief in opposition to plaintiffs' petition for <u>cert.</u> on November 30, 1987.
December 8, 1987	<u>In re: Consolidated U.S. Atmospheric Testing Litigation (C-84-0022-WWS)</u> - Petition for <u>cert.</u> was filed in the U.S. Supreme Court.
January 8, 1988	<u>Irene Allen v. United States</u> - U.S. Supreme Court denied <u>cert.</u> On April 9, 1988, Judge Jenkins dismissed the remaining plaintiffs in the case, effective April 30, 1988 (case closed).
February 29, 1988	<u>In re: Consolidated U.S. Atmospheric Testing Litigation (C-84-0022-WWS)</u> - U.S. Supreme Court denied <u>cert.</u>
March 7, 1988	<u>Prescott v. United States</u> - Following Supreme Court denial of <u>cert.</u> in the <u>Allen</u> and <u>In re</u> cases, the U.S. filed an updated list of authorities in support for Summary Judgement. In May 1989, a hearing was held on the Summary Judgement Motion.
May 20, 1988	Public Law 100-321, "Radiation-Exposed Veterans' Compensation Act of 1988," signed into Law.
September 28, 1988	<u>Nunamaker &amp; Roberts v. United States, et al. (BANE BERRY) (LV-76-259-RDF)</u> - Court filed its memorandum decision remanding the case to Judge Foley to determine whether the court has jurisdiction to decide the case (based on the law related to discretionary function).
November 18, 1988	Public Law 100-687, "Veterans' Judicial Review Act," signed into Law.
March 1, 1989	Admiral James D. Watkins becomes the sixth Secretary of Energy (George Bush is President).

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October 27, 1989	<u>Prescott v. United States</u> - The Court Order allowed plaintiffs to proceed to trial on eight theories of liabilities. Court held that the discretionary function did not apply to the specifics of this case. The Court denied the government's motion for Summary Judgement.
February 8, 1990	<u>Prescott v. United States</u> - U.S. motion to reconsider Summary Judgement (filed January 11, 1989) and motion for Interlocutory Appeal is denied. Decision is made to limit test cases to 6 cases and proceed with Discovery phase. Case is set for trial on June 18, 1990. (The trial date was later vacated.)
May 30, 1990	<u>Prescott v. United States</u> - Court date of June 18, 1990 was vacated.
June 19, 1990	<u>Prescott v. United States</u> - Status conference regarding this case was held.
August 29, 1990	<u>Prescott v. United States</u> - A petition for interlocutory certified review concerning the discretionary function was filed by the government and Judge Foley forwarded this case to the 9th Circuit Court for decision on discretionary function.
October 15, 1990	Public Law 101-426, "Radiation Exposure Compensation Act," signed into Law; compensation for (NTS) offsite residents during atmospheric testing era, and uranium miners.
November 5, 1990	Public Law 101-510, "1991 DoD Authorization Act," signed into Law. This law modifies Public Law 101-426 to include "On-Site Participants."
February 12, 1991	<u>Prescott v. United States</u> - Brief for the Appellant (U.S. Government) filed in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit Court.
March 4, 1991	<u>Prescott v. United States</u> - Brief for Appellees was filed (Prescott) in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit Court.
October 9, 1991	<u>Prescott v. United States</u> - Oral Arguments on the Appeal were given in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit Court.
March 24, 1992	<u>Prescott v. United States</u> - U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit Court affirmed the district court order denying summary judgement. The court held that the government does not have a blanket immunity under the discretionary function exception from Federal Tort Claims Act suits for injuries from nuclear testing operations.

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May 6, 1992

Prescott v. United States - Government files Petition for Rehearing with Suggestion for Rehearing en Blanc to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit Court.