

Spain's Hunt For A-Bomb Shifts to Sea

By Ron Milligan

Reuters

CUEVAS DE ALMANZORA, Spain, Jan. 23—The search for a missing atomic bomb switched today from farmlands of this corner of south-east Spain to the sea.

Helicopters, planes and a U.S. minesweeper criss-crossed the waters offshore from the spot where a B-52 bomber and a KC-135 tanker plane of the U.S. Air Force crashed during refueling Monday.

The Air Force said the bomber carried unprimed nuclear armament.

The sea activity coincided with Spanish newspaper reports that a U.S. minesweeper yesterday located two objects offshore. A U.S. Air Force spokesman in Madrid declined to comment on the reports.

The Pyresa news agency story in today's newspapers marked the lifting of the government censorship of reports of the crash.

There was still no official confirmation of earlier reports that the searchers had discovered two nuclear bombs and were looking for a third.

Peasants continued to line up at a medical center here for rigorous radiation checks. One man, describing the check, said they were often instructed to burn clothing.

Their lips, hands, feet and backs were examined for traces of radioactivity, he said.

The Catholic newspaper Ya said in Madrid that results of the checks had been totally satisfactory.