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SPECIAL CIRCULATION

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

ATOMIC WEAPON TRIALS

Report by the Defence Research Policy Committee

Our Sub-Committee on the Military Applications of Atomic Energy has recently been considering lists of requirements by Service and Civil Departments for tests to be included in atomic weapon trials.

2. Many of these tests are of the highest importance to departments, since on their results depend the design of equipment, changes in organisation and administration, and offensive and defensive tactics. The Navy requires information on effects of various types of atomic explosions on ships and their contents and equipment. Although some information is available from the earliest American trials and from HURRICANE there is much to be learned before essential decisions can be taken on the design of future ships. The Army must discover the detailed effects of various types of explosion on equipment, stores and men with and without various types of protection. The primary R.A.F. requirement is for information on the effects against airfields of the atomic bomb that is to be used by the new jet medium bombers. There is also a need to determine the results of the weapon against other important target systems, such as submarine bases and oil industry, so that operational planning may proceed on a firmer basis than is now possible. Finally, there are many tests required by the Civil Defence authorities on structures, utilities and materials of different sorts in order that civil defence planning against atomic attack may proceed.

3. Most of the tests that are simple to carry out and at the same time involve the transport of little heavy equipment were included in HURRICANE or will be included in TOTEM. The bulk of the remainder involve either the transport of heavy or dangerous equipment to the site of a trial or the construction of models of structures, runways etc.

4. We understand that from the point of view of research and of Service development of atomic weapons there is likely to be a requirement for a trial not before autumn 1955 involving two experiments, the dropping from an aircraft of a Mark I bomb from a considerable though not necessarily from an operational height and the explosion of a small bomb on the ground representing a ground burst of a light bomb of the

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