

UNCLASSIFIEDAEC 663/6June 7, 1956COPY NO. 25ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSIONUK STATEMENT ON THERMONUCLEAR TESTINGNote by the Secretary

The State Department has advised that Prime Minister Eden made a statement on thermonuclear testing to the House of Commons today. The attached copy of Prime Minister Eden's statement is circulated for the information of the Commission by request of the General Manager.

W. B. McCool

Secretary

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U.K. STATEMENT ON THERMONUCLEAR TESTING

"In the statement on defense 1955, Her Majesty's Government announced their intention to manufacture thermonuclear weapons. As I have previously stated, the holding of tests is an essential part of the process of providing ourselves with such weapons. The United States and the U.S.S.R. have already held such tests and Her Majesty's Government have decided to carry out a limited number of nuclear test explosions in the megaton range. These will take place during the first half of 1957 in a remote part of the Pacific Ocean. The explosions will take place far from any inhabited islands and the tests will be so arranged as to avoid danger to persons or property. The tests will be high air bursts which will not involve heavy fall-out. All safety precautions will be taken in the light of our own knowledge and of experience gained from the tests of other countries. The main base of the aircraft of the Royal Air Force taking part will be Christmas Island, and meteorological facilities will be installed there. The Governments of Australia and New Zealand have agreed to make available to the task force various forms of aid and ancillary support from Australian and New Zealand territory.

"In reaching this decision Her Majesty's Government have given full weight to anxieties which exist in regard to indefinite continuance of tests of nuclear weapons without controls and without limitations. I emphasized on December 6 of last year in the House of Commons that Her Majesty's Government were prepared to discuss methods of regulation and limitation of test explosions which take account of their position and that of other powers. This remains the policy of Her Majesty's Government, and I can assure the House we shall seek every opportunity to put it into effect."