

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE WEEKLY SUMMARY

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(b)(3)

25 February 1960

FRENCH NUCLEAR TEST PLANS

The initial series of French nuclear tests is expected to involve three additional explosions of lighter, smaller devices than the one exploded on 13 February. The next shot is planned before May and possibly within a month, [REDACTED]

The third and fourth shots are planned for the fall of 1960, and one may be an underground test, although no site has been selected.

Testing of the lighter and smaller devices is a step toward the development of a nuclear weapon, which is not expected for about a year. The extreme summer heat of the Sahara will slow test preparations and probably explains the relatively long delay forecast between the second and third shots.

Paris may have been encouraged to switch more rapidly

to underground testing by the widespread international condemnation of its first test, particularly in view of De Gaulle's reported sensitivity to world opinion on the question. Underground testing requires considerable preparation, however, and France can be expected to step up its efforts to secure US assistance, especially information on the use of measuring equipment.

There are indications that because of its recently acquired nuclear production and weapons capability, France will push the disarmament plan which it proposed before the UN Political Committee last fall in lieu of a unified Western position. The French plan focuses on elimination of nuclear weapons delivery systems --which France does not possess --rather than a cutoff of production of fissionable materials, as presently envisaged in other Western proposals. [REDACTED]