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J.I.C. (45) 242 (O) (Revised Final)

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10TH AUGUST, 1945

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

JOINT INTELLIGENCE SUB-COMMITTEE

JAPANESE ATTITUDE TO SURRENDER

Report by the Joint Intelligence Sub-Committee

In the annexed report we examined the Japanese attitude to surrender, as it was immediately before the first atomic bomb was dropped on the 6th August. Our conclusions were as follows:-

- "(a) The Japanese realise that their situation is critical in the extreme and there is evidence that the Japanese Cabinet, and indeed the Emperor himself, desire to bring hostilities to an early close. They are prepared to accept peace on the Allied terms provided these avoid the form of unconditional surrender and ensure the preservation of the Japanese "National Structure".
- (b) The Potsdam Proclamation, by interpreting the Allied conception of unconditional surrender as excluding the destruction of Japan as a nation, is recognised by the Japanese as an attempt to make such surrender more acceptable to them.
- (c) The Japanese have, it appears, suspended action on the Proclamation while there is still hope of persuading Russia to receive a Peace Mission, to which the Emperor, Cabinet and Army leaders all attach the greatest importance.
- (d) They intend to use the Proclamation as a basis for negotiations by this Mission, despite the fact that, for internal purposes, Suzuki stated to the Press that the Japanese would ignore it.
- (e) The omission from the Proclamation of any mention of the Emperor, the ambiguity of the wording, and the influence of the extreme militarist element, make it, however, unlikely that it would be acceptable to the Japanese without further elucidation.

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(f) The rulers of Japan would regard the entry of Russia into the war as a fresh disaster of the first magnitude. Behind the present Japanese approaches to Russia is the hope that, by satisfying Russia's ambitions in East Asia, Japan will at least be able to secure her continued neutrality."

2. Since our report was written, there have been two Atomic bomb attacks on Japan and Russia has declared war.

3. We do not feel able confidently to predict the effect on the Japanese of these tremendous events. On the one hand, they may cause them to accept at once the terms contained in the Potsdam Proclamation, perhaps invoking the abnormal nature of the Atomic bomb attacks as a pretext for "saving face". On the other hand, these events may cause them to feel that they must sacrifice their whole material civilisation and fight to the last man against the invading forces of the "devilish" countries who are attacking their divine race and Emperor with Satanic forces.

4. We feel, however, that it would be unwise not to take into account for planning purposes the former of the two possibilities, and that the likelihood of this would be greatly enhanced if the position of the Emperor were known to be safeguarded.

(Signed) J. A. SINCLAIR  
I. M. R. CAMPBELL (for D.N.I.)  
G. W. P. GRANT  
(for A.C.A.S. (I))  
M. J. CRESWELL

Offices of the Cabinet and  
Minister of Defence, S.W.1.

10TH AUGUST, 1945.