

# DOOMSDAY DILEMMA

By BOB TOMLINSON

## THE much-acclaimed dramatisation of World War III, "Threads," highlighted the horrors of nuclear war.

It also showed the unbearable pressure which would be placed on local government officials.

For they would have the impossible task of trying to restore order in a situation where normal life did not exist.

In "Threads," shown on BBC-2, on Monday

● THE British Medical Association say, in a report on nuclear war, that 38.6 million people in Britain would die within 300 days. Another 4.3 million would be seriously injured and would die within two weeks.

night, one of the most searching questions raised was: "How could anyone be sure that local government officers would forsake their families for the comparative safety of a wartime headquarters?"

Ian McFarlane, Strathclyde Region's Senior Deputy Executive, will be one of the first men to face such a dilemma.

He will be one of a handful of men allowed to see the Home Office War Plan folder. It will tell

● THE Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, quoting the Medical Campaign against Nuclear Weapons, estimates that an attack on the Clyde Estuary would mean, that of the Strathclyde population of 2,375,410, more than 1.6 million people would die in the first two days.

him what action to take and what powers he has.

In a sense, he has been chosen to survive a nuclear holocaust like other officials.

But would he turn up on the day? He said: "It certainly would be a difficult decision to leave your family behind.

## How our rulers would react in a nuclear war



Chris Jay (left) and William Devenay... both would find it a difficult decision to leave their families

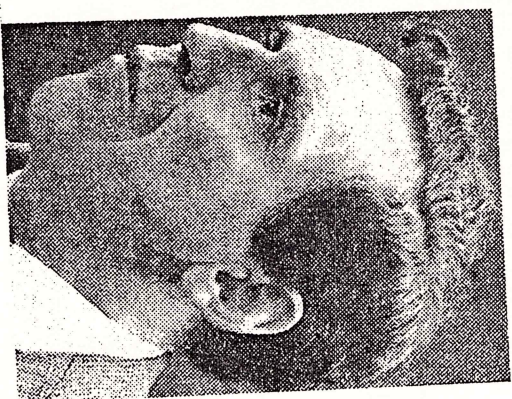
"But the responsibility and the obligation that that places on you would outweigh anything else. Someone would have to make the effort."

Christopher Jay is one of several Strathclyde officials who have attended the Government's "War Games" course at York.

Would he turn up?

"I like to think that I would. It would be a very personal decision for anyone to make.

Deciding to leave my wife alone while I



went to a headquarters-type bunker would be very hard.

"As the officer for homeless people I would

● THE BMA report says that within a month of a nuclear attack there would be only ten million people alive in the UK.

find it impossible not to go and help. Other men would be called up for service elsewhere and I

don't think we are in any more privileged position than they would be.

"I don't think we would have any choice, although it would be a painful decision.

The Director of Water for Strathclyde, William Devenay, would have one of the most awesome tasks in the region's "War Cabinet."

He would have to ensure that fire services and domestic supplies were maintained. Not

● WITHIN two years of an attack it is estimated by the BMA that there would be only 5 million people alive in the UK. Many would subsequently die from malnutrition, disease, and the trauma of the so-called "nuclear winter."

Easy, when scientists say that water in pipes, streams, and lochs within four miles of a nuclear explosion would start to boil within seconds.

Would he turn up?

"I think it would be one of the hardest decisions of my life to leave my wife

"I honestly don't know if I could leave my wife. If I could take her with me, it would be no problem.

"However, I am paid to ensure supplies of

● ONE bomb dropped over the Clyde alone would cause massive fire damage and devastation within a 12-mile radius. Experts estimate that at least eight such bombs would be dropped.

all water for all uses. That is the highest priority of my job. With that in mind, I don't think I would be able to stand back and say 'No.'"

Donald Carruthers, the region's Senior Depute of Roads, would have to bring order out of the chaos that would be widespread throughout the regions 7,500 miles of roads. They would be blocked by rubble, and ablaze in many places. Refugees and emergency services would be seeking to use them.

Would he turn up?

"It would be very difficult indeed to leave my wife and family, but I would certainly go.