

Scotland's nuclear targets

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THE WORST DEVASTATION in all of Britain, which Ministry of Defence planners assume will be the consequence of a Soviet nuclear attack, struck the Clyde estuary and Glasgow. Eight missile-borne nuclear weapons, including one of the only two giant five Megaton warheads anticipated, were 'fired' on the Clyde during the *Square Leg* exercise last September. The hitherto unavailable *Square Leg* plans for Scotland are shown on the map (adjacent); the same details for England and Wales were previously published here (NS 3 October 1980). (We regret that the map shown on that occasion was labelled 'Britain'.)

The US Poseidon submarine base at Holy Loch, and the British Polaris base at Faslane, near Garelochhead were wiped out by early strikes. Two further one megaton bombs were aimed at the underground nuclear missile storage site at Coulport, midway between the two bases. However, the exercise planners, the Directing Staff of UK Land Forces HQ near Salisbury, also anticipated two relatively unusual underwater attacks. A one MT bomb at the end of the Gareloch would seal off the channel and destroy any British submarines which might have tried to put to sea at emergency speed after the nuclear 'Attack Warning Red' had been given at noon on 19 Sept.

A further one MT explosion in the mid-Clyde estuary between Greenock and Helensburgh would — apart from generating huge volumes of wet fallout — create enormous water surges to flood the upper Clyde and Glasgow. A similar attack was anticipated against London during *Square Leg*; in that case, a five MT bomb close to the Canvey Island refinery.

All of Scotland's industrial cities were assumed to be destroyed as Soviet targets: Glasgow with two bombs, and Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Dundee with one each. Also a prime industrial target was the refinery, power stations, bridge and industrial development in the Grangemouth area.

Among the military targets, the airfields at Machrihanish, Prestwick and Lossiemouth (together with nearby Kinloss) were particular targets. Machrihanish is a major nuclear weapons store for US and some NATO anti-submarine warfare aircraft which would attack Soviet submarines and shipping in the Atlantic. Lossiemouth has also been and will again be a nuclear weapons store for Buccaneer aircraft whose main target is the Soviet Navy in the region. Buchan is an RAF radar station, while Leuchars is the main fighter defence base under its control. Rosyth is a major naval base.

It is surprising on military grounds that Stornoway has been omitted, as this would be a major forward air base in wartime. However, the inclusion of Stornoway would be politically controversial if the plans leaked (as they have) since the MoD are currently trying to win the Hebrideans acceptance of major new development of this airfield. The rather unlikely inclusion of Inverness, which has a minor airport, may be as a substitute for Stornoway.

The attack on Dounreay is due to the presence there of many bombs worth of plutonium, which fuel the two fast breeder reactors located at the station. Like the destruction of Windscale reprocessing centre, this would disperse the large inventory of long lived radioisotopes in the reactors and stores to the environment

— in the case of Windscale, poisoning much of northern England and central Scotland for decades.

Like the *Square Leg* plans for England, details are entirely in accordance with well understood Soviet targetting intentions. A few important targets are missed — but then this, too, is authentic since even US missiles are not expected to strike more than 70 per cent of the time. The plans confirm, once again, the hypocrisy of the government's 'stay at home' policy, repeatedly advocated by ministers and in its absurd pamphlet, *Protect or Survive*. Residents of Glasgow and of other cities and target areas are, by implication, invited to commit mass suicide.

As can be imagined, casualties were huge. Within the first 24 hours of the attack, some 20 per cent of the population of Strathclyde Region (2.5 million) dead, and 20 per cent were seriously injured therefore doomed without medical aid. This excluded the large number of the surviving 60 per cent would die from radiation sickness, exposure, mutation or disease.

The location and existence of five government bunkers to administer what remains of Scotland revealed in several Scottish Regional War Plans in the Aberdeen City War Plan, all obtained by *New Statesman*. A Scottish Central Control at Newton would house the Scottish Secretary around 300 others. Other Subordinate Zone HQ up to 200 officials are revealed to be at Anstruther, Fife, and East Kilbride. The General appointed Scottish Military Commander would also have his own Armed Forces HQ.

The revelation of the Scottish targets of *Square Leg* brings the totals for the attack which the MoD anticipates for Britain to 125 weapons with a total yield around 200 Megatons.

This of course excludes Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Earlier this week, we asked the Army HQ in Northern Ireland for this final piece of information, but the Ministry of Defence blocked any reply — and has so far offered the information itself. With the MoD's own new campaign against CND being launched last week, they doubtless wish to avoid dwelling on the realities of nuclear weapons and their use.