

HAROLD JACKSON in Washington on post-third world war planning

Protect, survive, do business

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Vice-president of American General Telephone and Electronic Corporation, Mr. Carl Carwell, is in no doubt about the firm's priorities in the aftermath of World War III. "If the war doesn't end," he remarked, "we would like people to pay their phone bills within a reasonable period of time."

His comment is enshrined in a remarkable study just published in America of governmental and corporate planning for the post-nuclear world. Edward Zuckerman, an investigative reporter, in three years talking to engineers, scientists, strategists, and anyone else needed to ensure that the United States carries on — if not again, if the Pentagon has anything to do with

defence Guidance is that America "intends to maintain in reserve under all circumstances, nuclear offensive capabilities so that it would never emerge from a nuclear war without nuclear weapons."

As Mr Zuckerman reasonably points out, the post-war planners are on a hiding to nothing. If they do try to lay down procedures for the survivors they will inevitably be accused of living in a wonderland. Not to draw up such schemes, on the other hand, could be seen as gross dereliction of duty. For years, in fact, the advocates of a strong America have been pointing to the civil defence gap with the Soviet Union, where the Kremlin has devised elaborate schemes to disperse most of its population in an emergency.

But President Reagan's America is not simply at the planning stage. The federal government regularly observes precautions in case of a pre-emptive nuclear strike. The Central Locator System keeps a 24-hour track of the President and his 16 possible successors. Constitutionally, all President Carter's Cabinet officers lost their jobs at 12.01 pm Eastern Standard Time on January 20, 1981 — except one. Mr Harold Brown was kept on as Defence Secretary (and potential President) in case everyone else was wiped out by the Russians at the inauguration ceremony on Capitol Hill. He did not bow out until the Reagans were safely installed.

This planning for the survival of a constitutional government could lead to some awkward moments in the chaos of nuclear war. Mr Zuckerman discovered that, once the Speaker of the House or any of the other designated successors has been sworn into office, it

won't help Vice-President Bush if he later crawls out alive from the rubble of his home on Massachusetts Avenue. There is no legislative provision to unswear the new man.

In the wonderful world of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, nothing has been left to chance. Deep in some government vault is federal emergency Plan D, containing the texts of all decrees likely to be issued by the government once the balloon has gone up. Fine details are dealt with in a separate plan known as Other Than D, which prescribes, for instance, that the Internal Revenue Service may waive penalties against taxpayers filing late returns "due to reasonable cause."

Every year the Pentagon runs a military chaplain's nuclear training course, in which the participants are assured that "since nuclear science is a gift from God, it is inherently good." Well, some of the time, anyway. The chaplains are also cautioned that "in ministering to radioactive casualties, wear gloves if possible, preferably rubber."

The Federal Reserve System, America's central bank, is also well-prepared, commenting in a booklet distributed to member institutions that "victory in a nuclear war will belong to the country which recovers first." So it has stashed several billion dollars in a secure place in Cupeper, Virginia, ready for post-war distribution.

It also has a draft order requiring all banks to be open for business "during their regularly established hours without regard to whether the head office or any other branch or branches are functioning."

The US postal service, for its part, has prepared a recorded message to be broad-

cast as soon as possible after an attack. Welfare offices and post offices which are still functioning "will furnish persons whose regular post offices or home addresses are no longer usable with two types of important cards and instructions for filling them out. One is called a safety notification card and the other an emergency change of address card."

The private sector is apparently not quite so organised as the Government, but it is certainly doing its bit. Much of the official post-war communication will go over commercial phone lines. All those Bell Telephone Company advertisements on the wonders of its new optical fibre connections are not simply to do with calling Aunt Mary in Spokane. Unlike copper wire, the new connectors are immune from the disabling electromagnetic pulse of a nuclear explosion.

The survival book store in North Hollywood sells primers on how to cope in the post-nuclear world, including a series of five volumes on "how to kill." The emergency planner for the Socony Mobil Oil Company commented that the company's strategy "is predicted on the idea that... our way of life, including free enterprise, the oil industry, and the Socony Mobil Oil Company can survive, recover, and win with it."

There are, in fact, always those who will see the silver lining, even in a mushroom cloud. Mr Lloyd Addington, a strategic analyst, was asked to determine if the post-war American economy could underpin the military operations necessary to maintain the US as a world power. His report found that it could. The civilian economy, he noted, "will have about 100 million fewer people to support."



A-SHELTER PROGRAMME

IN FRANCE

By MICHAEL FIELD
in Paris

FRANCE is preparing an extensive civil-defence programme including the building of shelters against nuclear blast and fall-out as a complement to its arsenal of nuclear weapons.

An order has gone out to prefects throughout France to list all existing shelters available in case of nuclear attack and to see that all new buildings are in future equipped with adequate shelters.

A directive marked "Confidential Defence," was sent out last October 13 by M. Pierre Mauroy, Prime Minister, setting out Government policy on civil defence, according to the independent socialist daily, *Liberation*, which also published a photocopy of its first page.

Orders to prepare nuclear-proof bomb shelters mark a departure in French defence policy which has hitherto relied exclusively on the deterrent factor of the country's independent nuclear arsenal.

The disclosure that the Government has decided to provide at least minimum protection for the population in case of nuclear war, comes shortly after President Mitterrand's reply last week during a television phone-in to the many viewers who asked him what protection they would have.