

# County Hall bunker hit by nuclear bombshell



London's civil defence authorities have been learning what life will be like without computers after a nuclear war.

A week-long top secret civil defence exercise was carried out in the capital last month. Top brass sat around in bomb-proof bunkers in County Hall and other strategic places, playing at being bureaucrats among the radioactive ruins.

To give the whole charade some credibility, the officials had to admit that a nuclear holocaust would probably cause some disruption to council computer services.

A few days into the exercise, the computer operator decided that County Hall's IBM mainframes must surely have run out of clean water or electricity by then so he told everyone that the computers

were being shut down and he was going home for his tea.

While the civil defence brass managed to keep a stiff upper lip over this loss, Backbytes' mole reports that they went beserk when a humble telecoms engineer decided to inject a little realism into the proceedings.

The engineer reasoned that a nuclear war would also have put out the telephone network, so without warning he cut off all phone lines into the bunker.

A Colonel Blimp character stormed out and ordered him to switch the phones on again, shrieking that he couldn't possibly run a civil defence exercise if he couldn't ring anyone up.

Backbytes finds it comforting to know that its safety is in such good hands.

So long as the phone lines are working you won't have to worry

*Computing*

DECEMBER 11 1986