

Death toll from nuclear strike on UK put at 12m

OFFICIALS feared 12 million people would be killed instantly and four million seriously injured in a nuclear attack on Britain in the 1950s and 60s, according to newly unveiled documents.

Papers passed to the Cabinet outlined the consequences of a massive nuclear attack which could have annihilated around a quarter of the population in the event of a Soviet strike.

Military officials also made detailed plans to govern Britain from a series of highly fortified bunkers - one of which would be located in Edinburgh - and made contingency plans about how to launch retaliatory action in the event of the Prime Minister's death.

Many of the plans were so sensitive that even Cabinet ministers would only have been shown details on a need-to-know basis.

The details emerged at the Secret State exhibition at the National Archives at Kew, in south-west London, due to open tomorrow.

The exhibition also details how 210 senior Whitehall staff and ministers would have been evacuated to a top-secret bunker, believed to be situated at Corsham Quarry in the Cotswolds, currently the site of RAF Rudloe Manor.

The rest of the country would have been governed principally from a series of 12 regional centres - including one in the Capital - housing a total of 350 officials.

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