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HOME NEWS

Village's civil defence includes armed civilians and barricades

'Gun law' plans to keep order after the bomb

By Paul Brown

Detailed plans for controlling the civil population before and after nuclear war have been drawn up for rural areas. They include lists of civilians licensed to carry guns who could control law and order in the absence of police.

Towns and villages away from likely nuclear targets will be forced to take refugees by law, but once the required number has been reached, barricades will be allowed to be erected to keep more out.

Detailed civil defence plans for an unnamed village of 1,800 people, which must house an equal number of refugees, suggests recruiting 50 special constables to keep order in addition to an existing list of licensed gun holders who will form the volunteer force of armed men to control looting. The village has not been named to protect the source of the information.

The aim of the 100-page plan is to preserve lives and is designed to keep the community going for several months without any outside help.

It works on the assumption that casualties will be heavy and widespread although the majority of people will survive. It also assumes the breakdown of all normal services but ignores the concept of a nuclear winter, assuming that the weather would continue much the same after a nuclear war.

Communications would be by village broadsheet delivered by messenger and the plan involves laying in large stocks of paper for the purpose. To save paper the plan says that large notice boards should also be erected.

A proposed broadsheet has already been written giving details of how to construct a hide in which to spend the first 14 days after an attack. Advice on how to protect radios and deep freezers from electrical discharge produced by nuclear weapons and keeping water free of contamination are included.

Among the advice is the

note that chickens have good resistance to radiation and their coops should be brought into the house with enough food and water for 14 days.

The circular ends: "The peoples of these islands have in times of national stress acted with great courage. In moments such as these our unselfish help to our neighbours and others will uphold that great British tradition."

The locally raised police force is necessary to enforce "unpopular" decisions such as rationing and imprisoning malcontents. Wilful, persistent or violent offenders may have to be detained until they can be expelled.

The circular points out that while it is illegal to form a private army there is no bar to collecting names of volunteers now so they could be recruited at short notice. This is being done.

Lists of occupations of the inhabitants of the villages have been made so that they can be used after the emergency. A survey is being made to see which homes are suitable for use as shelters.

The village is one of the government-designated reception areas being nearly 20 miles from the nearest nuclear base and therefore not expected to be hit in the first blast. Reception areas are expected to absorb refugees into their homes until house occupation reaches three people for every two rooms in the house.

Details of food stock and medicines in local shops have been listed in the village plans. It even suggests "drain cocks" should be fitted to all hot water cylinders in the village so after the attack this "safe" drinking water could be tapped.

The Home Office said that the plans were produced locally in consultation with civil defence planning officers at county council level. The powers conferred at parish level would depend on Parliament at the time of a national emergency passing the necessary legislation. Currently they did not have the force of law.

War plan invites ridicule

17/12/86 MS

GOVERNMENT pamphlets on how to survive a nuclear war are being kept on the shelf because people would "make fun of them," the Home Secretary confessed yesterday.

By JANEY HULME

Douglas Hurd admitted that the "experience over the Protect and Survive pamphlet showed this to be the case — people would make fun of it and throw it in the rubbish."

In a new move nuclear war planning has been merged with natural disaster preparedness — launched yesterday by Mr. Hurd from the Home Office in London under its new label Civil Protection.

Paul Johns, CND chairman, commented: "The Home Office has refused to make public its updated version of Protect and Survive as promised by the Prime Minister, because it is frightened of the public ridicule which would greet its publication."

"But no amount of PR packaging will make people believe the unbelievable," he said.

CND has challenged the government to publish its detailed plans for civil defence against nuclear attack.

The Home Secretary stressed that this new literature was not a replacement for the Protect and Survive pamphlet, as it was not "crisis material."

Asked if such material was not being currently publicised because of the alarm it would cause, Mr. Hurd replied that there was "no immediate threat of crisis."

A video, Civil Protection in Action, was also shown at the launch concentrating mainly on the "all hazards" theme and based on the premise that the nuclear deterrent is alive, well — and working.

Mr. Hurd said that the basic argument about civil protection had been "muffled."

Councillor Roger Barton, chairman of the National Steering Committee of Nuclear-Free local authorities said yesterday: "The government's enthusiasm for 'all hazards' is fraudulent."

"I see no evidence to contradict the view that it is a political manoeuvre to gain public support for civil defence by seeking to change its appearance," he added.

"If the government is serious about preparing for peacetime disasters it should introduce legislation to release funds allowing local authorities to plan more effectively for such disasters."