

LAST WORDS FROM THE BUNKER

APRIL '83

(To be spoken in an even, almost expressionless voice, as much as possible like that of the M.O.D. "spokesman" during the Falklands War).

Attention, please! You have just heard an Attack Warning: you should have recognised the rising and falling note or, if not, there is a rather elegant diagram of it, like a wriggling worm, in the booklet which I hope you have before you.

Now, you must all keep perfectly calm. Do not become excited, do not rush about, do not shout or make a fuss; you must keep quiet, and listen carefully. You have just four minutes - no, to be precise, three minutes and 45 seconds - to take in what I am going to say.

I do not know where you all are. If you are at home, that is the best place for you to be, in the bosom of your nuclear family. Now is the time to set about those little tasks we have worked out for you: have you painted your windows and drawn the blinds? Have you turned everything off and shut everything down? You should have done so, because there is going to be quite a general shut-down shortly. Now is the time to crawl into your inner refuge: even if it's only inside your mind I hope you have covered it with enough dense materials. Sand will do, or earth, or even some books - some books are very dense indeed. Remember to take the children with you. Have you got your toothbrush? Have you got your toilet paper? Have you got your aspirins? Have you got a calendar? You will wish to know how the days are passing, after time has stopped. Remember, if a death occurs, place the body in another room and cover it as securely as possible. Attach an identification. You should receive radio instructions on what to do next...Always keep the radio tuned for Government advice and instructions...

But some of you are not at home. I believe quite a lot of you are out in the open, and have been making a noise. That is unfortunate. You must keep quiet, and do as you are told, and take cover where you are. Remember, the light and heat will last for up to 20 seconds, but the blast waves will be coming a minute later. Remember, after a nuclear attack, there will be a short period before fall-out starts to descend. Remember, lie down in a ditch, if there is one. Remember your stocks of food and water. Remember your inner refuge. Remember to listen to your radio. Remember, avoid waste. Remember, remember...

Now is the time to do as you have been instructed, and put brown paper bags over your heads. It will be stuffy inside, and you will not be able to see anything, but do not mind; if you have had your heads in the sand for so long you will not notice the difference. Have you got the bags over your heads? Are you waiting comfortably? Now, keep quite calm, and do not worry. Perhaps you should have worried before, but now the time for worry is past.

(Dylan Thomas quotation follows).

*Phrases underlined are actual quotations from Protect and Survive*