

# New US military hospitals blasted

By TONY CLARK

SECRET deals for two more multi-million US military hospitals were blasted by campaigning health carers yesterday.

The total number of US war contingency hospitals in Britain will now rise to 10, providing no less than 6,500 mothballed beds.

That is when a shocking 36,000 NHS beds have been lost in eight years of Tory rule.

Even worse, an Anglo-US deal signed in 1984 permits the US military to build 15 hospitals here, plus access to a further 40,000 civilian beds during wartime.

The latest two military medical centres are at Winston Barracks near Galsgow and Ritchie Barracks near Edinburgh.

The Medical Campaign Against Nuclear Weapons said: "We deplore the secrecy with which the government has drawn up and implemented its Host Nation Agreement with the US to allow it to build con-

tingency wartime hospitals in Britain."

Yesterday the campaign's annual conference in London overwhelmingly backed an angry resolution expressing its concern at the "establishment of pre-positioned supplies and contingency hospitals."

The Medical Campaign's well attended two-day conference heard top Soviet doctors Angelina Guskova and Andre Baronov

MS (B. 4.87) Emergency Powers

Plans "vital to the wartime effectiveness of the NHS must be capable of implementation within 48 hours," says the Welsh document. Both documents specify which officers should be given places in fallout shelters to run the service, how to link with the Army's wartime communications system, and how patients should be discharged to make way for casualties.

The Scottish circular says, in the first official admission of the possible scale of damage: "After a nuclear attack there would probably be massive dislocation of communications and transport, a very large number of casualties, a reduction in available health service facilities, inability to renew supplies, and difficulty in providing more than the most basic health services."

However, neither plan makes any concrete estimates of the number of casualties which will result from a nuclear attack, nor of how facilities might survive, nor of how doctors are expected to choose between the injured who may be treated and those who will be left to die.

The head of the British Medical Association's science division, Dr John Dawson, said last night: "I don't know what the point is. The plans do not address the problems that people would really face. There would be little that doctors could do."

"I don't think anybody should be under any illusion that they would get anything more than the most basic first aid from a fellow survivor."

The BMA's report on the medical effects of nuclear war said the most likely attack, on the basis of Home Office figures and independent estimates, would consist of 80 bombs delivering a total of 200 megatons of nuclear explosives. That would kill 38 million people and leave about 18 million survivors.

Dr Martin Dace from the Medical Campaign Against Nuclear Weapons said: "In order for the civil defence plans to be even remotely realistic, we have to assume that various

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## HOME NEWS

# Hospitals could not care for nuclear victims

By Andrew Veitch, Medical Correspondent

New health service war plans for Scotland and Wales, copies of which have been passed to the Guardian, admit for the first time that hospitals may not be able to provide more than the most basic health care after a nuclear attack.

Health authorities are instructed by the Government to draw up detailed war plans, including the stock-piling of drugs, to ensure "the effectiveness of the NHS." The Government has taken more than £700,000 from the NHS this year to pay for civil defence.

The plans have been issued by the Welsh Office and the Scottish Home and Health Department. The Department of Health has yet to issue its plans for England.

The Scottish and Welsh plans differ little from the Department of Health's 1985 war health care circular, which was described by the Royal College