

## HOW IT MIGHT HAPPEN

IN a recent circular to local authorities, the Scottish Home and Health Department made it clear that changes had occurred in strategic thinking, that preparations should be made for conventional as well as nuclear attacks and that the amount of warning of an impending attack might be measured in days rather than weeks.

"For planning purposes", states the circular "it must now be assumed that there may be as little as seven days' warning of an attack; the basic essentials

of plans should be capable of implementation within 48 hours."

Staff would be briefed on their roles before and after an attack.

The public would be requested to stay at home and warned that there would be no food or medical supplies provided if they moved away.

A major public information programme would begin and Government pamphlets "Protect and Survive" and "Domestic Nuclear Shelters" would be distributed.

People would be urged to construct domestic shelters either in their gardens or in their homes.

"Protect and Survive" advises the construction of a "fallout" room in the innermost part of houses as well as a basic shelter inside this room.

Everyone would be instructed to stay inside the basic shelter for 48 hours after the attack and not to leave the fallout room for 14 days after the attack.

## The attack— and death rains from the heavens

THE most accurate information available on what could happen in Strathclyde comes from a computer exercise run last year by Scientists Against Nuclear Arms (SANA), which is an independent organisation formed in 1981 in response to the escalation of the arms race and the consequent danger of nuclear war.

Its membership includes natural and social scientists, engineers and technologists, statisticians and psychologists.

The SANA exercise listed the following targets and the weapons which might be used:

- Machrihanish — a nuclear weapons store and a crisis base for United States anti-submarine warfare aircraft — two 0.15 megaton groundbursts and one 0.15 megaton airburst.
- Clyde Estuary at Tail of the Bank — one 5 megaton missile exploded in the river would destroy Greenock, Gourock and Port Glasgow.
- Glasgow Airport would be destroyed by a 1 megaton groundburst.
- Inverkip Power Station — 1 megaton airburst.
- Glasgow — 1 megaton groundburst.
- East Kilbride — 1 megaton groundburst.
- Bishopton — The Royal Ordnance Factory — 1 megaton airburst.
- Kirkintilloch, which houses the SSEB electricity grid control — 1 megaton airburst.
- Motherwell — 1 megaton airburst.
- The Holy Loch, the US Navy's Poseidon submarine base — 0.5 megaton groundburst. The entrance to the Loch — 0.5 megaton waterburst.
- Faslane, the UK Polaris submarine base — 0.5 megaton groundburst. Entrance to Gareloch — 0.5 megaton waterburst.
- Coulport which stores nuclear missiles for submarines — destroyed by a 0.5 megaton groundburst.
- Glen Douglas, The Finnart Oil Terminal — 0.5 megaton groundburst.
- Hunterston Nuclear Power Station — 1 megaton groundburst.
- Ardrossan oil refinery and port facilities — 1 megaton airburst.
- Prestwick, which houses the USAF military airlift command, USN transport, anti-submarine warfare facilities, Scottish Air Traffic Control and British Aerospace — 1 megaton airburst.



## AND AFTER IT'S ALL OVER...?

IN the aftermath of a nuclear attack, the priorities of the survivors would be to avoid disease and get enough to eat and drink.

Supplies of preserved food would probably be ample to sustain the remaining population for some time but there would be problems of distribution. Immediately after the attack, there might even be a glut of fresh meat as animals would have to be slaughtered before they were affected by radiation sickness.

Foraging in the ruins for cans of food would have to be controlled

and supplies kept in stores run — if the Government's regulations go through — by the local authorities.

The Home Office itself in its publication "Nuclear Weapons" (HMSO 1980) states: "Reasonable assessments of likely overall losses on the harvest following nuclear attack cannot yet be made.

"The early post-strike intensity of fallout could also prevent or delay harvesting operations with consequent crop losses. The sowing and planting of essential crops could similarly be delayed."

Because modern farming is dependent on artificial fertilisers, fuel, pesticides, and sophisticated machinery, most of which would have been destroyed, new systems of food production would have to be devised and these would take time to establish.

Industry, as we know it, would disappear almost completely. Apart from the destruction of plant by the attack, it would be largely irrelevant to the needs of people struggling to produce the food and basic shelter necessary for survival.

## The role Region would have in any conflict

ALL local authorities have special responsibilities in times of an emergency, whether that emergency be a wartime one or a civil one.

They are the organisations which run many of the basic services essential to a community's survival — the supply of wholesome water, the provision of protection against fire and crime, the disposal of waste products, the provision of support for the young, old, sick and those who cannot help themselves.

### Expertise

Local authorities have staff with the expertise to run such services; they are also the people on the spot with experience of organising things in their own area. In an emergency which destroys the normal chain of government they are the people best placed to take local control.

During the 1960s, successive governments ran down civil defence but the present

Government has shown signs of wishing to revive the civil defence service.

Local authorities have been directed by Government to "mitigate as far as practicable the effects of any direct attack involving the use of conventional, nuclear, biological or chemical weapons."

The rundown in civil defence during the 1960s did not, of course, affect the capacity of local authorities to deal with civil emergencies. The Regional Council has a small Emergency Planning Unit which has already assisted in coping with floods, major fires, oil pollution, an ammunition train derailed in a tunnel and other similar serious problems.

In February 1982, the Government issued a circular to local authorities indicating that it had been carrying out a major review of civil defence and was now inviting local authorities to step up their expenditure on it.

New regulations about civil defence will shortly be placed before Parliament.

The proposals expected to be included in these new

regulations will not alter the existing system of national control under which power would be devolved to a number of Regional Commissioners, including one for Scotland (treated as a single Region for this purpose), in the event of central government being unable to continue its functions from its normal peacetime locations.

### Assisted

The Commissioner for Scotland would be assisted by three Zone Commissioners and below these Zone Commissioners there would be two further tiers, i.e. the Regional Controllers who would be the Regional Chief Executives and below them the District Controllers, who would be the District Chief Executives.

Strathclyde Region would be part of the Western Zone which would also include Central Region and Dumfries and Galloway Region.

Regional Councils will also have to make plans, as directed by the Secretary of State, "to deal with population movement in the face of a threat of hostile attack."

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