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Highland to make War Book public

Secret documents in the hands of the BBC over plans for dealing with emergencies in the Highlands after a nuclear war will eventually become available to the public, councillors heard yesterday.

Councillor Peter Peacock told Highland Region's general purposes committee he had been alarmed to hear on the radio of the existence of the documents which had never been put before the council.

The chief executive, Mr Ron Stevenson, said that the documents, entitled the War Book, had been handed out to some members of the council at a private meeting. A BBC reporter, had he understood, been handed the documents by a member of staff. The emergency planning officer, Mr George Milligan, said however, that it appeared the documents had been left lying about and that the reporter had lifted them from a table.

The documents would not remain a secret, the chief executive said. "The plans will be put before members in a suitable form and will be made available for public scrutiny."

The War Book has been drawn up by the emergency planning officer using Government recommendations and includes 100 sections, one of which stated that feeding survivors of a nuclear holocaust would be a major problem and recommended the first priority to be the provision of hot tea and biscuits or soup and bread

When the sirens rocked a whole county

Sir, — W. B. Hampston (Letters, July 3) will be interested to know that all cities do, in accordance with civil defence regulations, have early-warning systems of nuclear attack. Three weeks ago, just days after the Chernobyl disaster, these early-warning sirens went off all over Devon. People were absolutely terrified. Many suffered from shock; many were physically sick. The police said the sounding of the sirens was the result of a "malfunction" in their lines of communication and the Royal Observer Corps. While I would not like to offer any advice as to what Mr Hampston should do if he hears the sirens, may I suggest that he dedicate some time to supporting those working for a society in which such sirens will be utterly redundant. Rosalind Gill, 42 Regents Park, Exeter. 67867

THE £24 MILLION SILLY SIREN

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Wales and the Home and Health Department in Scotland.

This National Air Attack and Fall-out System is expected to serve Civil Defence well into the next century. The Scottish system is being extended to include the Highlands

and Islands and will give coverage to 90 per cent of the country.

When asked why completion would not be followed up with national publicity or pre-alarm precautions and after-alarm, last-ditch emergency measures, the Scottish Office said: "There is already a great deal of literature

available to the public through the police and local authorities.

"Many organisations, like the Boy Scouts and Boys' Brigade, regularly attend lectures on the subject."

Mr Malcolm Spaven, of the Armaments and Disarmament Information Bureau and Sussex Un-

iversity, said: "In the few minutes remaining, TV and radio will have pre-recorded tape messages for families to get hold of all the sandwiches they can and whitewash window panes.

"It is as absurd as that and is just another Civil Defence folly in the face

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