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PREM 19/689

SECRET

42/9

PART 1

Confidential Filing

Home Defence Review.

DEFENCE

March 1980

Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date
<del>10.3.80</del>		3.3.82					
<del>20.3.80</del>		- Pt Ends -					
<del>2.5.80</del>		<del>X</del>					
<del>13.5.80</del>							
<del>15.5.80</del>							
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<del>11.10.80</del>							
<del>2.2.81</del>							
<del>5.2.81</del>							
22-1-82.							
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PREM 19/689



PART 1 ends:-

ASC to Home Office 3.3.82

PART 2 begins:-

Earl of Kimberley to PM + att 12.3.82





## Published Papers

The following published paper(s) enclosed on this file have been removed and destroyed. Copies may be found elsewhere in The National Archives.

1. House of Commons Hansard, 7 August 1980,  
columns 790-792 "Civil Defence"

2. House of Commons Hansard, 3 March 1982,  
columns 273 - 282 "Reserve Forces and  
Adventure Training Scheme"

Signed Wayland Date 9 August 2012

PREM Records Team

Defence

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3 March 1982

The Prime Minister was grateful for the Home Secretary's letter of 26 February about the work of the Home Defence Sub-Committee of OD. She has taken note of its contents.

JC

J.F. Halliday, Esq.,  
Home Office.



CONFIDENTIAL

Prime Minister

To note



QUEEN ANNE'S GATE LONDON SW1H 9AT

26. February 1982

My dear Prime Minister.

mt

You will recall that in May 1980 you established a Home Defence Sub-Committee of OD under my chairmanship to consider urgently our policy on civil home defence. Following my report to OD we announced in August 1980 a programme of measures, significantly increasing the allocation of resources to civil home defence, which was welcomed by our supporters in Parliament and elsewhere. We have recently reviewed the progress made by officials in developing this civil preparedness programme: I can report that in a number of areas matters have been carried well forward and that in general we have raised the level of war emergency planning effort throughout the country.

I must, however, sound a less optimistic note about our relations with Labour-controlled local authorities. There are, as you know, serious difficulties in the presentation of civil home defence policies; particularly because we have to refute the argument that the Government's nuclear deterrent policy makes planning for nuclear war a necessity. Several local authorities have come out strongly against any more than the minimum planning for the aftermath of a nuclear attack on the United Kingdom. The thrust of much of our current planning is, however, in connection with the threat of conventional war and this work is closely related to contingency planning for large scale civil emergencies generally - the need for which is accepted by all. The Secretary of State for Defence has taken the lead in co-ordinating the presentation of our military and civil defence policies to the public.

My Sub-Committee has now established five key areas of work to which officials are to give priority: war emergency legislation, home defence planning assumptions, the structure of regional government, key point protection and shelter and evacuation policy. I expect to report on this work in the autumn and to include in this a number of issues mentioned in the paper I put before OD in July 1980. There are four further important areas of work on which officials are to report by the end of 1982: revised guidance to local authorities, defence planning in the non-oil energy industries, the requirement for key industrial materials and the related work on strategic stockpiles.

You will recall that work on a policy for strategic stockpiles was commissioned at an ad hoc meeting under your chairmanship in January last year, at which proposals to sell off the Government oil stockpile and parts of the food stockpile were considered. The meeting agreed that the oil stockpile should be



CONFIDENTIAL

2.

disposed of and that disposals of food for 1981-82 should proceed, but that any further sales from the food stockpile should be considered as part of a review of our stockpile policy. The Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food has advised me that he needs a decision on the food stockpile in the Spring. My Sub-Committee has therefore agreed that, rather than upset the programme of work now established, we should look at the food stockpile in isolation next month. We have also still to make recommendations on the possibility, which your meeting left open, of some limited reallocation to civil home defence of savings realised by stockpile disposals. I plan to cover this point in my further report to OD.

I am copying this letter to my OD(HD) colleagues, to the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, to the Ministers of State, Northern Ireland Office and Departments of Industry and Energy, and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

*John  
Waller*

CONFIDENTIAL





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1234567890  
1234567890

26 FEB 1962



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16  
Defence

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Principal Private Secretary*

SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONG

Machinery of Government in War

The Prime Minister has seen your minute, AO4166, of 2 February 1981 and agrees that you should arrange for the Home Secretary and Mr. Patrick Mayhew to be given the briefing on arrangements for central Government in time of war which Mr. Brittan received earlier.

JAW.

5 February 1981



SECRET



Prime Minister.

15

Ref. A04166

Agree?

PRIME MINISTER

AM

3ii

Machinery of Government in War

On 6th October 1980 (Ref. A03159) I sought your authority to give Mr. Leon Brittan, then Minister of State, Home Office, a briefing on arrangements for central Government in time of war. Mr. Whitmore conveyed your approval in his minute of 7th October.

2. The Home Secretary has now asked that a similar briefing should be given to Mr. Brittan's successor at the Home Office, Mr. Patrick Mayhew. The Home Secretary has also asked that he himself should receive a briefing. The briefing would be on the same conditions as that given to Mr. Brittan.

3. May I have authority to proceed accordingly?

Yes mb

RA

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

2nd February, 1981

SECRET

CONFIDENTIAL

es

Defence.

SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONG  
CABINET OFFICE

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Machinery of Government in War

The Prime Minister has seen your minute A03488 of 10 November 1980 and agrees that Mr. Whitelaw should be briefed on the machinery of Government in war on the same lines as Mr. Brittan.

14 November 1980

CONFIDENTIAL

GC





CONFIDENTIAL

Ref. A03488

PRIME MINISTER

Prime Minister

I am sure it is right that  
Mr Whitelaw should be briefed. I  
have only suggested that it has not  
been done before.

*Agreed  
MS*

*AMU*

*11x1*

Machinery of Government in War

In my minute A03159 of 6th October I sought your agreement to Mr. Leon Brittan being briefed on arrangements for central government in time of war. Your agreement was conveyed in Mr. Whitmore's minute of 7th October, and the briefing was duly given on 16th October.

2. In the light of what he heard, Mr. Brittan has suggested that the Home Secretary should be similarly briefed. In view of Mr. Whitelaw's field of responsibilities, he plainly has a need to know, and I recommend that he should be briefed on the same lines as Mr. Brittan.

3. I should be grateful for your agreement to proceed accordingly.

(Robert Armstrong)

10th November, 1980

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SECRET

14

Defence

SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONG

MACHINERY OF GOVERNMENT IN WAR

The Prime Minister has seen your minute AO3159 of 6 October 1980 and is content that Mr. Leon Brittan should be briefed on the machinery of government in war in the way you propose.

C. A. WHITMORE

7 October 1980

SECRET

TR





SECRET

Prime Minister.

13

This seems sensible.  
Content?

MM

6.x.80.

Agreed  
ms

Ref. A03159

PRIME MINISTER

Machinery of Government in War

In order for him to be able to play a full part in the current review of civil home defence policy, the Home Secretary wishes Mr. Leon Brittan, who has particular responsibilities in this field, to be briefed on arrangements for central government in time of war.

2. This contingency planning is subject to very strict security for obvious reasons. It is co-ordinated by an official committee run by the Cabinet Office. In the past various Ministers who needed to know about different aspects of the subject have been provided with oral briefings and I recommend that this should be done on this occasion. Such briefing will need to avoid reference to precise locations and identities which represent the most sensitive aspects of these plans and which are in any case subject to change with the passage of time and varying circumstances.

3. I should be grateful for your agreement to proceed on these lines.

(Robert Armstrong)

6th October, 1980

SECRET

Defence

2



10 DOWNING STREET

PRIME MINISTER

Here is another note (dated 6/8)  
from Lord Kimberley enclosing  
a Report on a Lords Seminar  
on Civil Defence addressed  
by Lord Chalfont.

M 5

A large, stylized handwritten signature in blue ink, possibly reading 'M 5' or similar.

8 August 1980



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**CONFIDENTIAL**



NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE  
GREAT GEORGE STREET,  
LONDON SW1P 3AJ

SECRETARY OF STATE  
FOR  
NORTHERN IRELAND

The Rt Hon William Whitelaw CH MC DL  
Home Secretary  
Home Office  
Queen Anne's Gate  
London S W 1

PA  
MS

7 August 1980

*Dear Willie.*

**CIVIL DEFENCE: STATEMENT TO PARLIAMENT**

Thank you for sending me a copy of the statement you propose to make on Civil Defence on 7 August.

I am in full agreement with your proposed statement except for one point in paragraph 9 where reference is made to the additional cost of the immediate measures in Great Britain. I would prefer if you could see your way to amending 'Great Britain' to 'the United Kingdom'. I am well aware that the additional costs for civil defence in Northern Ireland that fall to me are small but I would not like it to be thought that your review of civil defence ignored Northern Ireland. Furthermore measures such as the improvements to be made to the UK Warning and Monitoring Organisation do apply to Northern Ireland.

I am copying this to the recipients of your minute.

*Yours ever*

*Humphrey*

**CONFIDENTIAL**



TO BE CHECKED  
AGAINST DELIVERY

HOME SECRETARY'S STATEMENT ON CIVIL DEFENCE

With permission, Mr Speaker, I should like to make a statement on civil defence.

On taking office last year, the Government decided to accord high priority to the defence of the Nation; and a review of civil preparedness for home defence was set in train so that this important element of our defence strategy could be considered as part of the improvement of our general defence effort. The review has been wide-ranging, embracing the responsibilities of many of my rt hon Friends as well as my own. As a result I am now able to announce certain immediate steps which the Government judge to be necessary; these will extend as appropriate to Scotland, and my rt hon Friend the S of S for Scotland will be responsible for them there. I will also refer to parts of the review which are still continuing.

I begin by emphasising that, despite the difficulties of the present international situation, the Government does not regard armed conflict with the Warsaw Pact countries as probable, let alone inevitable or imminent, provided that we maintain, as we

/intend, a firm



intend, a firm commitment to peace while ensuring that our defence forces remain balanced and effective. We believe that to be seen to be prepared at home, as well as capable of military deterrence and defence, will make war less likely. Nevertheless, I would remind the House of what my rt hon Friend said in paragraph 110 of his statement on the Defence Estimates 1980. He said that Soviet strategists hold that any war in Europe is likely to escalate into a nuclear exchange, though it might start with conventional warfare, and that the warning time we might receive could be very little. This period of warning might, we believe, be measured in days rather than weeks.

Against this background the Government consider that an expanded civil defence programme is both prudent and necessary to achieve an appropriate balance in our defence capability. To this end we propose to take the following immediate steps.

First, with regard to the United Kingdom Warning and Monitoring Organisation, which exists to give the public warning of air attack and, in the event of a nuclear attack, to give warning of the approach of radioactive fallout and subsequently to monitor the intensity of fallout radiation: the Organisation will now modernise its communications, replace certain obsolescent

/equipment and



equipment and improve the allowances paid to the volunteers of the Royal Observer Corps who play a vital part in maintaining the warning and monitoring systems. There will also be additional expenditure on the completion of the Organisation's administrative headquarters and the sub-regional headquarters for decentralised government. Extra expenditure will be incurred on the associated communications network, and on improvements to the arrangements for the wartime broadcasting service which if the need ever arose would be established to ensure the continuation of public broadcasting facilities even after large scale attack.

A great deal of civil defence work must be done at local level, and the Government propose to double the money available for this purpose. We will consult the local authority associations about the allocation of additional resources for local planning and for training, and for the adaptation of premises by district councils to complete the pattern of local authority wartime administrative headquarters and communications. Effective civil defence arrangements depend upon co-operation between central and local government. I know that some concern has been expressed about variations in civil defence arrangements in different parts of the country. I am satisfied that the

/Government have



Government have adequate powers to ensure that proper standards of protection are provided throughout the country, and it will naturally be our aim with the local authorities to see that that is done.

We recognise that many county and regional councils at present lack the resources to plan for community involvement in civil defence below district level. The Government are ready to make more money available to meet this need and will discuss with the associations the most effective ways of doing so. We are anxious in particular to enable local emergency planners to maximise the contribution made by the large number of citizens, both individuals and members of organisations, who wish to add their efforts to civil defence planning on a voluntary basis. Many individual volunteers are already active in the civil defence field and certain voluntary organisations are keen to play a fuller part. The harnessing of volunteer effort will be an important feature of our plans and I intend to make a special appointment of a person of high standing for this purpose. There will be a separate appointment in Scotland.

At the same time there will be greater involvement in civil defence planning and training on the part of Central Government  
/Departments,



Departments, the emergency services, the Post Office and the National Health Service. There will be an increase in central training facilities for the senior staff at local and other authorities, including an expansion of the Home Defence College at Easingwold. There will also be improvements in the arrangements for the operation of emergency port facilities. The stock of emergency fire appliances is being refurbished this year.

The total additional cost of these immediate measures in Great Britain over the next 3 years will be about £45 million, and by 1983/84 expenditure on civil defence will have risen from £27 million a year before the review to £45 million a year, an increase of over 60 per cent. The additional costs will be covered by a reallocation of resources within existing programmes and without adding to the total of public expenditure.

I turn now to certain general policy matters and further studies which are still in progress.

In the face of an attack, dispersal is not a practicable policy, and in any event no part of the country could be regarded as safe from both direct and indirect effects of nuclear weapons.

/A study is



A study is being made of domestic or family shelters, and advice will be available to the public later this year on a range of structures which would provide improved protection at relatively low cost. This guidance will consist of design outlines for five different types of shelter, and the degree of protection provided by each. We propose that, additionally, a survey of existing structures suitable for communal shelter purposes should be conducted, and we will discuss with the local authority associations how best to do this.

We have also decided that it is right for information about civil defence and the likely effects of a future war involving the United Kingdom to be made generally available in peacetime. The public has a right to knowledge of these matters. We have already published *Protect and Survive*, and we will be examining ways of making more information available.

The Government will also be studying the role and closer involvement of industry in defence planning.

Finally, the review has emphasised the need to promote effective co-ordination at all levels and between all those with responsibility for civil defence. Ministers will be attending

/some of the

some of the conferences already planned in various parts of the country for this purpose.

Mr Speaker, the measures I have announced today are an important contribution to improving our civil preparedness: they are positive and cost effective. The Government are confident that they will be widely supported in this House and in the country.



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From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY

cc Press Office  
NJS

CONFIDENTIAL



HOME OFFICE  
QUEEN ANNE'S GATE  
LONDON SW1H 9AT

6 August 1980

*MB*

Prime Minister

Dear Mike,

CIVIL DEFENCE

The revised statement puts 'the threat' in much better perspective, and handles "stay put" more tactfully.

MAR 6/8

...

I am circulating with this letter for information copies of the draft statement for the Home Secretary to make on civil defence, which he has revised in the light of the comments made by the Prime Minister and his other colleagues.

I am copying this to the Private Secretaries to other members of the Cabinet, the Minister of Transport and Sir Robert Armstrong.

Yours ever,

(J F HALLIDAY)

M A Pattison Esq

CONFIDENTIAL

-6 AUG 1980





## HOME SECRETARY'S STATEMENT ON CIVIL DEFENCE

With permission, Mr Speaker, I should like to make a statement on civil defence.

2. On taking office last year, the Government decided to accord high priority to the defence of the Nation; and a review of civil preparedness for home defence was set in train so that this important element of our defence strategy could be considered as part of the improvement of our general defence effort. The review has been wide-ranging, embracing the responsibilities of many of my rt hon Friends as well as my own. As a result I am now able to announce certain immediate steps which the Government judge to be necessary; these will extend as appropriate to Scotland, and my rt hon Friend the S of S for Scotland will be responsible for them there. I will also refer to parts of the review which are still continuing.

3. I begin by emphasising that, despite the difficulties of the present international situation, the Government does not regard armed conflict with the Warsaw Pact countries as probable, let alone inevitable or imminent, provided that we maintain, as we intend, a firm commitment to peace while ensuring that our defence forces remain balanced and effective. We believe that to be seen to be prepared at home, as well as capable of military deterrence and defence, will make war less likely. Nevertheless, I would remind the House of what my rt hon Friend said in paragraph 110 of his statement on the Defence Estimates 1980. He said that Soviet strategists hold that any war in Europe is likely to escalate into a nuclear exchange, though it might start with conventional warfare, and that the warning time we might receive could be very little. This period of warning might, we believe, be measured in days rather than weeks.

4. Against this background the Government consider that an expanded civil defence programme is both prudent and necessary to achieve an appropriate balance in our defence capability. To this end we propose to take the following immediate steps.

5. First, on the United Kingdom Warning and Monitoring Organisation, which exists to give the public warning of air attack and, in the event of a nuclear attack, to give warning of the approach of radioactive fallout and subsequently to monitor the intensity of fallout radiation: the Organisation will now modernise its communications, replace certain obsolescent equipment and improve the allowances



paid to the volunteers of the Royal Observer Corps who play a vital part in maintaining the warning and monitoring systems. There will also be additional expenditure on the completion of the Organisation's administrative headquarters and the sub-regional headquarters for decentralised government. Extra expenditure will be incurred on the associated communications network, and on improvements to the arrangements for the wartime broadcasting service which if the need ever arose would be established to ensure the continuation of public broadcasting facilities even after large scale attack.

6. A great deal of civil defence work must be done at local level, and the Government propose to double the money available for this purpose. We will consult the local authority associations about the allocation of additional resources for local planning and for training, and for the adaptation of premises by district councils to complete the pattern of local authority wartime administrative headquarters and communications. Effective civil defence arrangements depend upon co-operation between central and local government. I know that some concern has been expressed about variations in civil defence arrangements in different parts of the country. I am satisfied that the government have adequate powers to ensure that proper standards of protection are provided throughout the country, and it will naturally be our aim with the local authorities to see that that is done.

7. We recognise that many county and regional councils at present lack the resources to plan for community involvement in civil defence below district level. The Government are ready to make more money available to meet this need and will discuss with the associations the most effective ways of doing so. We are anxious in particular to enable local emergency planners to maximise the contribution made by the large number of citizens, both individuals and members of organisations, who wish to add their efforts to civil defence planning on a voluntary basis. Many individual volunteers are already active in the civil defence field and certain voluntary organisations are keen to play a fuller part. The harnessing of volunteer effort will be an important feature of our plans and I intend to make a special appointment of a person of high standing for this purpose. There will be a separate appointment in Scotland.



8. At the same time there will be greater involvement in civil defence planning and training on the part of central government departments, the emergency services, the Post Office and the National Health Service. There will be an increase in central training facilities for the senior staff at local and other authorities, including an expansion of the Home Defence College at Easingwold. There will also be improvements in the arrangements for the operation of emergency port facilities. The stock of emergency fire appliances is being refurbished this year.
9. The total additional cost of these immediate measures in Great Britain over the next 3 years will be about £45 million, and by 1983/84 expenditure on civil defence will have risen from £27 million a year before the review to £45 million a year, an increase of over 60%. The additional costs will be covered by a reallocation of resources within existing programmes and without adding to the total of public expenditure.
10. I turn now to certain general policy matters and further studies which are still in progress.
11. In the face of an attack, dispersal is not a practicable policy, and in any event no part of the country could be regarded as safe from both direct and indirect effects of nuclear weapons. A study is being made of domestic or family shelters, and advice will be available to the public later this year on a range of structures which would provide improved protection at relatively low cost. This guidance will consist of design outlines for 5 different types of shelter, and the degree of protection provided by each. We propose that, additionally, a survey of existing structures suitable for communal shelter purposes should be conducted, and we will discuss with the local authority associations how best to do this.
12. We have also decided that it is right for information about civil defence and the likely effects of a future war involving the United Kingdom to be made generally available in peacetime. The public has a right to knowledge of these matters. We have already published Protect and Survive, and we will be examining ways of making more information available.
13. The Government will also be studying the role and closer involvement of industry in defence planning.



14. Finally, the review has emphasised the need to promote effective co-ordination at all levels and between all those with responsibility for civil defence. Ministers will be attending some of the conferences already planned in various parts of the country for this purpose.

15. Mr Speaker, the measures I have announced today are an important contribution to improving our civil preparedness: they are positive and cost effective. The Government are confident that they will be widely supported in this House and in the country.





✓  
MAD

Treasury Chambers, Parliament Street, SW1P 3AG

John Halliday Esq  
Private Secretary to the  
Home Secretary  
Home Office  
50 Queen Anne's Gate  
London SW1H 9AT

6 August 1980

Dear John,

CIVIL DEFENCE: STATEMENT TO PARLIAMENT

Following the Chief Secretary's letter to the Home Secretary of 4 August, you raised two points on the phone, and this is to confirm the Chief Secretary's response.

First, you said that the Home Secretary would prefer not to include in his statement the proposed sentence making clear that there would be no addition to total public expenditure, but to use it only if asked in supplementaries. He hoped in this way to avoid questions on what reductions he had made to pay for additional civil defence activities.

The Chief Secretary has considered this carefully, but still considers that the sentence on the line suggested should be included in the text of the statement itself. The Chancellor shares this view, and indeed attaches considerable importance to this point.

Secondly, you understood that policy approval for the proposal to appoint a person of high standing to harness volunteer effort was given in OD(HD). I am afraid the Chief Secretary was unaware of this, since the point was not recorded in the minutes of the meeting. Provided any costs are met from agreed expenditure provisions, however, he is now content for the proposal to be announced, but would be grateful if Treasury officials could be consulted about the detailed arrangements.

I am sending copies of this letter to Mike Pattison and to Private Secretaries of other Members of the Cabinet, the Minister of Transport and Sir Robert Armstrong.

Yours sincerely,  
A C Pirie

A C PIRIE  
Private Secretary

6 AUG 1980







House of Lords

Re Rt Hon  
Margaret Thatcher, M.P.  
10 Downing St.  
S.W.1.

6.8.80

My Dear Prime Minister,

I am sending the enclosed minutes of a Seminar on Civil Defence held on July 23rd 1980, in the hope that you will find them of interest.

Yours very sincerely

Theresa Winfrey

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY.

Hon Sec.

HOUSE OF LORDS  
ALL PARTY  
DEFENCE STUDY  
GROUP

Lord Chalfont, Vice Chairman of the Study Group, was introduced by the Earl of Kimberley.

Lord Chalfont said that there had been two recent developments since the debate in the House of Lords which were relevant to the meeting.

Firstly, the Government's new policy statement on home defence was likely to be delayed and it appeared, from indications from the Home Secretary, that there would be no substantial changes in the Government's position.

Secondly, the decision to buy the Trident missile system at a cost of £5,000 million indicated that the Government had accepted a different set of strategic assumptions in regard to the Soviet Union's possible behaviour in the next decade or two.

There was indeed a new strategic climate and we ought to follow the new assumptions to their logical conclusion as regards civil and home defence policy, which had hitherto been based on a series of obsolete assumptions.

We could assume that in the 1980s there would be a very difficult period for the West in terms of confrontation or relationship with the Soviet Union. Because of the way in which the West and the Soviet Union had behaved in building up military capabilities, there would be an unavoidable period when the Soviet Union had positive strategic superiority over the West and it was likely that the "window of vulnerability" would appear in the region of 1984-1990.

There had been a general build-up of Soviet nuclear and conventional strength, but the important thing was a change in the balance of nuclear power and thinking on civil defence. The Russians did not subscribe to the theory of



the "balance of terror". They had never believed that a nuclear war was unthinkable or unwinnable. No-one could be in any doubt that the Soviet Union believed a nuclear war was not only a military possibility, but winnable, if they managed their affairs right. The West's belief in the "balance of terror" was never shared by the Russians. The Soviet Union, by developing an offensive nuclear force and active defence against nuclear weapons, had demonstrated a war-winning, as opposed to a stand-off capacity.

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, while Western developments were virtually at a standstill, the Soviet Union was going ahead at a very high rate.

Lord Chalfont used a model to show the disparity in the development of weapons between the Soviet Union and the West.

	<u>Soviet Union</u>	<u>The West</u>
1960-70	SS7, SS8 SS9, SS11, SS13	US Minuteman 2 US Minuteman 3
1970-73	- Very little happened -	
1973-78	SS13, SS16, SS17, SS18 SS19, SS20	

In the next generation:

The new SS11, SS16, SS17, SS18, SS19	US M.X.
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The Soviet Union might seek to destroy the US land based missile force by a surprise attack and could do this through the "window of vulnerability". If the US were to retaliate, the Soviet Union could use the threat of superiority.



The "counter force" theory involves defending your own cities and protecting your population. While the United States and the West were doing virtually nothing about ballistic missiles, as agreed in SALT, the Soviet Union was engaged in a substantial, expensive and highly organised civil defence programme. This the West had not done.

All our civil defence policy was based on the assumptions of the 1960s - that an attack on the UK was the least likely possibility and if this ever happened, there would be considerable warning, perhaps as much as 14 days. In 1966, there was a 25% cut in the civil defence programme. 1968 marked its virtual disbandment, when it was put on a care and maintenance basis. In 1977, the Government said that civil defence was a matter for local authorities. There had been no major policy change since that time. Lord Chalfont did not believe that the assumptions of the 1960s, which had been of doubtful validity then, had any validity now; in fact, an attack on the UK, though not necessarily nuclear, was a strong contingency now.

At worst, there could be an all-out nuclear attack on 80 targets, using up to 200 megatons, resulting in 20 million casualties. The least serious attack, with Soviet land bombers and strategic systems, using conventional weapons, high explosives and possibly chemicals, might knock out our strategic assets, but it would probably also result in massive casualties. We must therefore look at civil defence in a new light and consider the new possibilities.

A serious dialogue with the people of this country was needed. People were seriously worried and did not know what to do about it. Misleading and frightening information was on sale, for example, the Ecology Party's booklet, "How to survive in a nuclear age" and this would be believed until something was done by the Government. The Government's own document, "Protect and



"Survive", which had been designed to be distributed to every household in a time of danger, was also on sale now, but it was misleading, too, in its way. It was really only useful to those living far away from the main points of attack and it also assumed everyone would have 14 days' supply of food.

Lord Chalfont did not want to propose massive spending on civil defence, but he said that if we could afford to spend £5,000 million on Trident, we should think much more seriously about protecting the population and could surely afford more than £22 million budget.

The Earl of Kimberley thanked Lord Chalfont for his excellent address and opened the meeting for questions and discussion.

Mr. Archie Hamilton, M.P. for Epsom & Ewell, drew attention to the planning regulations in Sweden and particularly Switzerland, which required new private housing and public buildings to have fall-out shelters.

Mr. Robert Banks, M.P. for Harrogate, believed that the issue of 150,000 copies of "Protect and Survive" was a mistake. It would have been better to hold it back. The central aim of Government policy must be for long term provision. The European countries had shown a lamentable lack of determination to deal with the situation so far. He said that there was a danger that people might move out of areas where they believed a nuclear attack was inevitable. He stressed that we must look at the problem from a NATO standpoint.

Lord Hanworth said that we must realise that funds were limited and passive measures, e.g. shelters, were of limited value. We must bear in mind the psychological effect, but we must recognise that if there was a nuclear attack, the UK would be able to support only a very reduced population and we must think about those who would be left.



Lord Murton said that time was against us for building shelters and we should set up the appropriate corps to deal with the problem of those who would be left after a strike, to prevent panic. If the population was out of control, would the Government have the strength of will to redouble its efforts to retaliate?

Lord Chalfont said that the Soviet Union had made one of its first requirements the protection of its population. The US nuclear strike force could not be effective unless there was also adequate protection for its citizens.

Mr. James Pawsey, M.P. for Rugby, who was Secretary of the Conservative Sub-Committee on Civil Defence, a sub-committee based on the Parliamentary Home Affairs and Defence Committees, mentioned the report, which had recently been produced by his Sub-Committee and submitted to the Home Secretary. Copies would also be made available to the Earl of Kimberley for members of the Study Group. The report said that a great deal could be done to protect the population. General evacuation would not work, but shelter provision should be encouraged with grant aid and VAT discount, as well as bye-laws and planning regulations. There must also be a programme of education and strengthening of existing voluntary organisations concerned.

Lord Chalfont recommended a paper by the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE), and Mr. Pawsey said that his Sub-Committee had also taken evidence from them.

Lord Clifford of Chudleigh, who had initiated the debate on 5th March, Chairman of the Devon Emergency Volunteers, said that if we did not start getting people on the spot, all previous points made would be useless. There should be a Home Defence Adviser in every community.

Sir Nicholas Bonsor, M.P. for Nantwich, stressed the need for shelters - Government policy would not work if the population panicked - and adequate food supplies. In theory, we had 6 months' supply, but in practice there was less than a week's supply. In contrast, the Swiss had three years' supply.



61  
Lord Gainsford stressed the importance of morale and said that one's home was safer than one thought.

Lord Chalfont agreed in the case of older houses, but said that one of the major weaknesses of "Protect and Survive" was that many people now lived in high-rise flats or caravans and there was no adequate protection in these.

The Earl of Avon said that the Government were looking for funds from the home budget as opposed to the defence budget. He said that during the 1960s, the Territorial Army had been trained in civil defence, which had worked well, and we should aim at this sort of level.

Lord Leatherland believed that the T.A. would run civil defence more effectively than local authorities.

Lord Chalfont said that there was still a Home Defence College. He agreed that there was a strong body of opinion that civil defence should be under the Ministry of Defence, rather than the Home Department.

Lord Duncan-Sandys believed that a nuclear war was unlikely. The Russians had enormous conventional superiority and could mount a conventional attack, virtually without warning. The US would, in this event, hesitate to use its strategic weapons, the UK would hesitate to act, except in conjunction with the US, and the Russians would be able to get as far as the Rhine, by which time the US would want to talk about it. Civil defence was an important deterrent. Indeed our weapons were not credible without civil defence. We ought to consider shelters for nuclear and high explosive attack, the latter of which was more likely. There was the problem of physical difficulty and cost. People would mainly be living in existing buildings.

Lord Chalfont said we must be seen to be making a serious effort on civil defence and we ought to design shelters against high explosive as well as nuclear attack and fall-out.

In conclusion, he quoted a leading American General, who had said that the major imbalance lay in the Soviet Union's provision for protecting its civilian population.

The Earl of Kimberley ended the meeting with thanks to the speaker and the secretary.



CONFIDENTIAL



✓ MA

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB

TELEPHONE 01-218 9000  
DIRECT DIALLING 01-218 2111/3

MO 2

5th August 1980

Dear Willie

CIVIL DEFENCE: STATEMENT

Thank you for sending me a copy of your minute of 30th July with a text of your proposed Statement.

I very much share the concern that has already been expressed by the Prime Minister and by John Biffen. I wonder if the best course might not be simply to omit paragraphs 3 and 4 from the Statement altogether. Certainly this would be my own preference. The paragraphs do not seem to me to be needed and in particular I believe that the references to likely nuclear escalation (paragraph 3, lines 3-5) and the present international situation (paragraph 4) are unwise in this context and could only detract from the presentational effect of the proposals in the Statement.

I am sending a copy of this letter to the recipients of yours.

James  
John Biffen

Francis Pym

The Rt Hon William Whitelaw CH MC MP

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✓ MNP  
Dafine

Treasury Chambers, Parliament Street, SW1P 3AG

The Rt Hon William Whitelaw CH MC MP  
Secretary of State  
Home Office  
50 Queen Anne's Gate  
London SW1H 9AT

4 August 1980

*Dear Wilkie,*

CIVIL DEFENCE: STATEMENT TO PARLIAMENT

In your minute of 30 July to the Prime Minister, you sought agreement to the text of your proposed statement on civil defence.

I recognise that you want your statement to be as forthcoming as possible in order to satisfy backbench opinion and public concern. But there is a difficult balance to be struck here between, on the one hand, satisfying the public at large of the need for additional expenditure on civil defence at a time when other important programmes are being cut and, on the other, not exacerbating public fear of the likelihood of war. I feel that your paragraph 3, as drafted, is likely to cause alarm, which the latter part of your paragraph 4 will do little to dispel. I suggest, therefore, that it would be better to shorten paragraph 3 and to begin it with a reassuring statement that war is not likely in the foreseeable future provided that  
..... we continue our policy of peace through strength. I attach a redraft of paragraphs 3 and 4 for your consideration.

My officials are discussing with yours the precise figures to be used in paragraph 9 and I am content to leave this to them. But it is important that this paragraph should make it clear that these sums will not involve a net increase in public expenditure. I suggest therefore adding a sentence to read:-

"The additional costs will be covered by a reallocation of resources within existing programmes and without adding to the total of public expenditure."

Finally, two lesser points. First, I think that the final sentence of paragraph 7 should end after "plans", since the proposal to appoint a person of high standing to harness volunteer effort has

not been discussed at official level or in Cabinet. I am not necessarily opposed to this suggestion but it needs further study and an announcement at this stage would be premature.

Secondly, I should prefer the last sentence of paragraph to read:-

"The Government will also be examining ways in which industry can contribute to the civil defence effort."

Studies by officials have been approved and they should be allowed at least to do the basic groundwork before industry is brought in: I would not want undue hopes raised in industry that further funds will be made available as a result of these studies.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Prime Minister, other members of Cabinet, the Minister of Transport and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

*Yes*

*John Biffen*

JOHN BIFFEN



SUGGESTED REDRAFT OF PARAGRAPHS 3 AND 4

3. I must begin by emphasising that, despite the difficulties of the present international situation, the Government does not regard armed conflict with the Warsaw Pact countries as either inevitable or indeed likely in the foreseeable future provided that we maintain, as we intend, a firm commitment to peace while ensuring that our defence forces remain balanced and effective. Nevertheless, I would remind the House of what my rt. hon. Friend said in paragraph 110 of his statement on the Defence Estimates 1980. He said that Soviet strategists hold that any war in Europe is likely to escalate into a nuclear exchange, though it might start with convention warfare, and that the warning time we might receive could be very little. This period of warning might, we believe, be measured in days rather than weeks.

4. Against this background the Government consider that an expanded civil defence programme is both prudent and necessary to achieve an appropriate degree of balance in our overall defence capability. To this end we propose to take the following immediate steps.

24 AUG 1980





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10 DOWNING STREET

cc	LCO	LPS	CBL	TMP
	F20	MAFF	DOT	
	HMT	DOE	D/EM	
	D/Ind	SO	DES	
	MOD	WO	CEO	
	LPO	NIO	PSO	
	D/Temp	JUSS	D/Trans	
		CO		

From the Private Secretary

4 August 1980

*Dear John*

The Prime Minister has seen the Home Secretary's minute of 30 July, with which he enclosed the draft of the statement on Civil Defence which he is scheduled to make on Thursday, 7 August.

The Prime Minister is a little concerned that paragraph 3, summarising the threat, sounds alarmist, and may give the impression that there has been a sudden increase in the threat. She has asked that the Home Secretary should consider whether the statement could be on the basis that there is a widespread feeling that we are not doing enough in view of the efforts of other nations in the area of civil defence.

The Prime Minister has also asked whether the statement might not usefully include more justification for the 'stay-put' policy, as earlier Ministerial discussion suggested that the arguments in favour of this approach were not widely appreciated.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Private Secretaries to Members of the Cabinet, including the Minister of Transport, and to David Wright (Cabinet Office).

*Yours ever*

*Mike Pattison*

J.F. Halliday, Esq.,  
Home Office.

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*JS*





✓ MND File with NJS

PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE  
WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1A 2AT

1 August 1980

Rt Hon William Whitelaw CH MC MP  
Home Secretary  
Home Office  
50 Queen Anne's Gate  
London SW1

Dear Willie,

CIVIL DEFENCE: STATEMENT TO PARLIAMENT

I have seen your memorandum to the Prime Minister of 30 July, covering the draft of your proposed statement to the House on Civil Defence. I have one serious comment on the draft.

I am very unhappy about the second sentence of paragraph 4, which seems to me unduly compressed and likely to create more alarm than it allays. I suggest the following amendments to the draft:

- 1 in paragraph 3, line 3, for 'is likely' substitute 'would be likely'.
- 2 delete paragraph 4 and substitute:  
'4 This does not, of course, mean that the Government regard war as probable, let alone inevitable or imminent. On the contrary, we believe that to be seen to be prepared at home, as well as capable of military deterrence and defence, will make war less likely. We therefore propose to take the following immediate steps to expand our civil defence programme.'

I am copying this only to the Prime Minister and Francis Pym.

Yours ever,  
Angus

ANGUS MAUDE





**Civil Service Department**

Whitehall London SW1A 2AZ

01-273 4400

31 July 1980

✓  
MAD

S Boys Smith Esq  
PS/Home Secretary  
50 Queen Anne's Gate  
LONDON SW1H 9AT

*Dear Stephen*

CIVIL DEFENCE

The Lord President has seen a copy of Mr Whitelaw's minute of 30 July to the Prime Minister. He has no objection to the proposed statement on civil defence which the Home Secretary intends to make on 7 August.

Copies of this letter go to Private Secretaries to other members of the Cabinet, to Tony Mayer (Transport) and to David Wright (Cabinet Office).

*Yours ever*

*E G M Chaplin*

E G M CHAPLIN  
Private Secretary

CONFIDENTIAL

Ref. AO2774

PRIME MINISTER

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CIVIL DEFENCE: STATEMENT TO PARLIAMENT

The Home Secretary sent you and other members of the Cabinet on 30 July his proposed Parliamentary statement on civil defence. The statement is entirely in line with the conclusions reached by the Defence and Overseas Policy Committee on 8 July and with the subsequent discussion on the public expenditure aspects of the matter in Cabinet on 10 July. In accordance with the Cabinet decision the costs of the proposed measures have been absorbed into the programmes of the various Departments concerned. There have been some minor variations in the costs of the additional measures considered by OD as a result of further refinement, but these are not significant.

2. A particular point in paragraph 7 of the statement which will attract interest and questions concerns the "special appointment of a person of high standing" to harness volunteer effort in the civil defence field. The Home Secretary is still considering what would be the best sort of person to fill this appointment. He intends to discuss the appointment with the Local Authorities Association and also with the Secretary of State for Scotland to see if it would be possible to make a single appointment to cover England, Scotland and Wales. It seems probable that the person eventually chosen will be a senior retired Service Officer. Someone like General Sir Robert Ford, the present Adjutant-General, is the sort of candidate the Home Office have in mind. The appointment will not be made before the autumn.

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3. I recommend that, subject to any points raised by other members of the Cabinet and the Minister of Transport, you should agree to the proposed statement.



(ROBERT ARMSTRONG)

31 July 1980



- 1. MR. SANDERS
- 2. PRIME MINISTER

The criticism will be that E15m a year compared with a defence budget of over E10.1 billion is a drop in the ocean  
 I am a little concerned that MS para 3 does sound clear-cut and as if there has been a sudden increase in threat level

Here is Mr. Whitelaw's proposed statement on Civil Defence scheduled for Thursday 7 August.

I think that the public reaction to this statement will depend on three elements: the new money involved, the stay-put policy, coupled with advice on domestic shelters, and the opportunity to harness voluntary effort.

Statement is on the basis that there is a widespread feeling we are not doing enough to win the war effort & other related things!

On the first point, I think that the draft statement does imply a worth-while increase in the scale of the Government's financial commitment.

On the second, Mr. Whitelaw proposes simply to reiterate that "stay put" is the cornerstone of the Government's policy, and to say that advice on sensible shelter design will be made available later in the year. At an earlier stage of this discussion, the view was widely expressed that the Government should do more to educate the public on the virtues of the stay-put policy, whilst quietly making provisions to cope with the self-evacuees, especially those who had family or friends to descend upon. Surely the statement should say a little bit more about the reasons for staying put, and the possibility of evacuation to a place where the individual knows that facilities are available to the family? This has been one of the key areas of doubt in the public mind about civil defence policy.

On the question of harnessing voluntary effort, the Home Secretary makes it clear in paragraph 7 that this is to be an important part of the renewed Government efforts in the civil defence field, and he intends to appoint "a person of high standing" to take charge. But this is a long statement, and I hope that this message will not be lost behind the detail of the threat assessment and the improvements planned for formal organisations involved in this work.

See also Sir Robert Amshang's note.



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PRIME MINISTER

CIVIL DEFENCE: STATEMENT TO PARLIAMENT

I have arranged with the Leader of the House to make my statement on civil defence on Thursday 7 August. Enclosed is ... the draft of what I propose to say. I should be grateful for your agreement and that of our colleagues.

The financial figures in the statement assume that all our colleagues involved in the proposed measures will find the additional resources within their existing programmes.

I am sending copies of this minute to other members of the Cabinet, the Minister of Transport and Sir Robert Armstrong.

*WSD*

30 July 1980

CONFIDENTIAL

30 JUL 1980





DRAFT

With permission, Mr. Speaker, I should like to make a statement on civil defence.

2. On taking office last year, the Government decided to accord high priority to the defence of the Nation; and a review of civil preparedness for home defence was set in train so that this important element of our defence strategy could be considered as part of the improvement of our general defence effort. The review has been wide-ranging, embracing the responsibilities of many of my rt hon Friends as well as my own. As a result I am now able to announce certain immediate steps which the Government judge to be necessary. I will also refer to parts of the review which are still continuing.
3. First, as to the threat, I would remind the House of what my rt hon Friend said in paragraph 110 of his statement on the Defence Estimates 1980. He said that Soviet strategists hold that any war in Europe is likely to escalate into a nuclear exchange, though it might start with conventional warfare; that the Soviet leaders have at their disposal the forces to conduct almost any form of campaign they may regard as necessary; that their ability to prepare rapidly for war, and to attack at a time and place of their own choosing, has improved and is still improving; and that the warning time we might receive of the outbreak of war could be very limited. This period of warning might, we believe, be measured in days rather than weeks and it is now necessary to plan our civil defence measures on this basis.
4. In the light of the threat assessment to which I have just referred and the present international situation the Government consider that an expanded civil defence programme is required. To this end we propose to take the following immediate steps, although I would emphasise that this does not mean that the Government regard war as imminent or inevitable.



5. The United Kingdom Warning and Monitoring Organisation exists to give the public the best possible warning of air attack and, in the event of a nuclear attack, to give warning of the approach of radioactive fallout and subsequently to monitor the intensity of fallout radiation. The Organisation will now modernise its communications, replace certain obsolescent equipment and improve the allowances paid to the volunteers of the Royal Observer Corps who play a vital part in maintaining the warning and monitoring systems. At the same time, there will be additional expenditure on the completion of administrative headquarters for the Warning and Monitoring Organisation and on sub-regional headquarters for decentralised government. More resources will also be devoted to the associated communications network and to improving the arrangements for the wartime broadcasting service which at the appropriate time would be established to ensure the continuation of public broadcasting facilities even in the event of large scale attack.
6. A great deal of civil defence work must be done at local level and the Government propose to double the money available for this purpose. We will consult the local authority associations about the allocation of additional resources for local planning and for training, and for the adaptation of premises by district councils to complete the pattern of local authority wartime administrative headquarters and communications. Effective civil defence arrangements depend upon co-operation between central and local government. I know that some concern has been expressed about variations in civil defence arrangements in different parts of the country. I am satisfied that the government has adequate powers to ensure that proper standards of protection are provided throughout the country, and it will naturally be our aim with the local authorities to see that that is done.
7. We recognise that many county and regional councils at present lack the resources to plan for community involvement in civil defence below district level. The Government are ready to make more money available to meet this need and will discuss with the associations the most effective ways of doing so. We are anxious in particular to enable local emergency planners to maximise the contribution made by the large number of citizens, both individuals and members of organisations, who wish to add their efforts to civil defence planning on a voluntary basis. Many individual volunteers are already active in the civil defence field and certain voluntary organisations are keen to play a fuller part. The harnessing of volunteer effort will be an important feature of our plans and I intend to make a special ~~individual~~ appointment of a person of high standing for this purpose.



8. At the same time there will be greater involvement in civil defence planning and training on the part of central government departments, the emergency services, the Post Office and the National Health Service. There will be an increase in central training facilities for the senior staff of local and other authorities, including an expansion of the Home Defence College at Easingwold. There will also be improvements in the arrangements for emergency services at key railway and port installations. The stock of emergency fire appliances is being refurbished this year.
9. The total additional cost of these immediate measures in Great Britain over the next 3 years will be about £45 million, and by 1983/84 expenditure on civil defence will have risen from £24 million a year before the review to £41 million a year, an increase of over 70%.
10. I turn now to certain further studies which are still in progress.
11. As the House knows, the Government's general policy is that in the face of air attack people will be advised to stay put and as far as possible to protect themselves in their own homes. However, a separate study is being made of domestic or family shelters and advice will be available to the public later this year on a range of structures which would provide improved protection at relatively low cost. This guidance will consist of design outlines for 5 different types of shelter and in each case the degree of protection provided will be specified.
12. We propose that a survey of existing structures suitable for communal shelter purposes should be conducted and we will discuss with local authorities how best to do this.
13. We have <sup>also</sup> ~~already~~ decided that it is right that information about the nature and effects of any future war should be made generally available in peacetime. The public very properly has a right to knowledge of these matters.
14. Finally, the review has emphasised the need to promote the most effective co-ordination at all levels and between all those with responsibility for civil defence. A series of conferences is already planned in various parts

of the country and I myself and my Hon<sup>o</sup> Friend<sup>learned</sup> the Minister of State will be attending a number of these. The Government will also be building up consultation with industry whose involvement in civil defence must be strengthened.

15. Mr Speaker, the Government are determined to ensure that civil preparedness for home defence is in line with our general defence capability. The measures I have announced today are an important contribution to improving that preparedness: they are positive and cost effective. The Government are confident that they will be widely supported in this House and in the country.



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Defence

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

23 July 1980

The Prime Minister was pleased to note that the Home Secretary has been able to obtain the agreement of colleagues to the funding of Civil Defence Priority 1 items, as recorded in his minute of 23 July. She hopes that the remaining difficulty over the Secretary of State for Scotland's contribution can be resolved.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Godfrey Robson (Scottish Office), Alistair Pirie (Chief Secretary's Office) and David Wright (Cabinet Office).

M. A. PATTISON

John Halliday, Esq.,  
Home Office.

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2.



PRIME MINISTER

Prime Minister

The Home Secretary has persuaded colleagues to fund the Priority I items in the Civil Defence proposals.

ms

CIVIL DEFENCE

MFD  
22/7/70

We agreed at Cabinet on 10th July that the aim should be to finance the enhanced civil defence programme within existing budgets and colleagues were asked to let me know whether they could find the money for their particular measures. The Secretary of State for Scotland is still in some difficulty over this, but I believe that it should be possible to resolve the matter, subject to the Chief Secretary taking account of this factor in his bilateral discussion with the Secretary of State for Scotland. I am glad to say that all our other colleagues are prepared to make available from planned allocations the funds necessary for the Priority 1 measures.

I shall be circulating within the next few days a draft of the Parliamentary statement which I propose to make before the Recess.

I am sending copies of this minute to other members of the Cabinet, the Minister of Transport and Sir Robert Armstrong.

hwl

23 July 1970

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23 JUL 1980





Defence

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & SOCIAL SECURITY  
Alexander Fleming House, Elephant & Castle, London SE1 6BY

Telephone 01-407 5522

From the Secretary of State for Social Services

The Rt Hon William Whitelaw CH MC MP  
Secretary of State for the Home Department  
Home Office  
50 Queen Anne's Gate  
London SW1

22 July 1980

Dear Willie,

CIVIL HOME DEFENCE

OD (80) 14 & Mig item 2

Following our discussion at OD Committee on 8 July and in Cabinet on 10 July I understand that you would like an urgent indication of how far my programme can absorb the Priority I and Priority II recommendations set out in the Annex to your Memorandum OD(80)5.

OD(80) 501

Given the priority accorded by the Government to this subject I am prepared to find £0.5 million with existing planned spending levels to meet the Priority I recommendation for additional NHS and DHSS staff. However, maintenance of health spending is also a priority area and I could not justify diverting more resources from immediate patient care. To meet the Priority II recommendation of building up emergency medical supplies, cost 1981-82 £1 million, 1982-83 £2 million, 1983-84 £2 million would therefore require specific additions to my programme.

I am copying this letter to Cabinet colleagues.

Your  
Patrol



SECRET

In PM's folder  
8/7



From the Minister

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FOOD  
WHITEHALL PLACE, LONDON SW1A 2HH

||

8 July 1980

PRIME MINISTER

Dear Prime Minister

REVIEW OF CIVIL HOME DEFENCE POLICY

I feel I should record my views on the memorandum by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, OD(80)50, which is to be taken by the Defence and Overseas Policy Committee later today.

I support the main recommendation of the memorandum which endorses the Sub-Committee's conclusions that the cost options set out in Annex E should be incorporated by Departments in their forward-planning. For my Department, the main items are the addition of some 35,000 tonnes to the sugar stockpile to bring it up to the recommended level and the printing of food control documents, the need for which will arise when the review of food control measures currently in hand is completed and detailed plans worked out. Both items are important features in our preparations against the possibility of attack: the review of food control measures, in particular, is a direct result of the current interpretation of the threat we face in terms of the possibility of having to deal with a period of conventional attack which could start at short notice, during which we should have to take rapid steps to control food supplies.

I agree entirely with the point made in the memorandum that the division into two priorities is somewhat artificial and I would prefer to see only one category. If the decision is to retain two categories and to proceed only with those measures in Priority 1, however, I strongly urge that the printing of food control documents (£0.4m a year for five years) should be included in that category.

Although Annex E spreads the expenditure equally over five years the timing, both for the food control documents and the purchase

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of sugar, is more flexible and there could be savings if there were some discretion in the placing of contracts. This is something that can, perhaps, be considered when our plans are somewhat firmer.

My most serious reservation arises from the suggestion that any expenditure should be met within Departmental programmes. The proposal on the food stockpile does not concern a new activity but simply represents a return to the earlier situation. Expenditure on the management of the food stockpile is virtually the only part of programme 9 (defence) expenditure that falls within my responsibilities. I do not know what opportunities there may be for covering the proposed costs from elsewhere in programme 9, but I am unfortunately unable to find any offsetting savings from my Department's other programmes. If necessary, I think that the expenditure should be treated as a bid on the contingency reserve. I note that it is proposed in paragraph 7 that if the matter cannot be resolved it should be referred to Cabinet for examination in the context of the public expenditure review.

I am copying this letter to the members of OD Committee and Sir Robert Armstrong.

*D. E. Jones*

for PETER WALKER

(Approved by the Minister  
and signed in his absence)

SECRET



Ref A02550

PRIME MINISTERCIVIL HOME DEFENCE POLICY

OD(80) 50

## BACKGROUND

When OD considered "Civil Preparedness for Home Defence" at their meeting on 15 May, it was agreed that urgent work was required to assess the requirements and the arrangements needed to meet them. The Home Secretary was invited to chair a Ministerial Sub-Committee. This is their report.

2. The Home Secretary feels himself under a strong obligation to make a Parliamentary statement before the recess to announce decisions, in the face of a certain amount of unease both among the Government supporters in the House and in the country. The report attached to the Home Secretary's paper is almost entirely agreed between Departments except for the important question of how the proposed additional measures should be financed. The Chancellor of the Exchequer is likely to argue that this point must be settled before OD can seriously address itself to the desirability of what the Home Secretary is proposing. The Home Secretary on the other hand is likely to argue that the measures that he is proposing are a political imperative, and that OD should therefore first decide that they represent the right course of action to be adopted in the face of the threat and the attendant circumstances, and only thereafter consider the question of finance.



3. The alternatives seem to be -

1. for each Department to make room for its share of the expenditure within its existing programme, by making savings elsewhere;

2. to raise the Defence Budget;

3. to draw on the Contingency Reserve.

Some of the measures will fall on the budgets of civil Departments which have little interest in civil home defence, and it is the Home Secretary's obvious fear that if the financial issue is taken first, his proposals will run the risk of facing the opposition of many of his Cabinet colleagues. The defence budget could be an alternative source of money, particularly in view of its overall size, the relatively small cost of the options being proposed by the Home Secretary, and the fact that many expensive military home defence measures will be negated if more is not done for the protection of the civil population. But you will have discussed the problems of the defence programme under the previous item on the agenda and formed a view about the kind of financial pressure which it is already suffering. If this is to be a candidate for the contingency reserve, it should be looked at alongside other candidates, and this should be done in Cabinet.

4. It is proposed subject to your agreement, to invite the Secretaries of State for Industry, the Environment, Scotland, Wales and the Social Services, the Minister of Transport and the Chief Whip, as well as the Chiefs of Staff, to be present for this item to deal with the subject's many facets.

#### HANDLING

5. You will wish to invite the Home Secretary to introduce his paper. He is likely to suggest that OD should deal with the five sections identified in his opening paragraph. The discussion might therefore cover the following points -





a. The Threat

i. Does the Defence Secretary agree that this is a fair assessment of the Soviet threat to the United Kingdom? If the Soviet Air Force made available 180 aircraft for conventional operations against the United Kingdom base, would they not concentrate on British and American nuclear forces in this country and reinforcements going to the Continent? Would they not suffer heavy losses from the United Kingdom air defences? In these circumstances, how genuine is the risk to the civil population from conventional attack?

ii. What is the probability of a Soviet attack using chemical weapons? Is it possible to provide realistic civil home defence against this threat?

iii. If the nuclear threat was judged to be so serious in the 1960s that it was not worth trying to defend the civil population against it, is it worth doing so now when it has presumably got even more serious?

b. Voluntary Efforts. The Home Secretary and other members of his Ministerial Sub-Committee regard this as the key issue.

i. What would the appointment of civil defence co-ordinators at the national level involve in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland?

ii. What is the likely response by local authorities to exhortations to do more local civil defence planning in conjunction with local voluntary organisations?

iii. Is the current Territorial Army review likely to lead to the conclusion that more resources from this source can be made available to help local authorities?

L20-  
Furth L20-  
wednesday 16th.

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C.P. 204





- ✓ iv. Are the Womens Royal Voluntary Services, British Red Cross Society and St John's ready and willing to take on a bigger role in civil home defence planning? What assistance do they need at local and national level?
- c. Population Dispersal and Associated Strategy
- i. Is it realistic to believe that the population in threatened areas can be persuaded to "stay put" in a period of emergency? Will not the irrelevance to nuclear attack of any shelter policy we may have the resources to undertake be very obvious?
- ii. What are the best arrangements for giving the general public technical advice on such matters as shelters which will at least prevent people spending money on some of the more doubtful commercial products?
- d. The objectives of home defence planning
- i. Is it realistic to indicate a willingness to take statutory powers unless this is accompanied by a substantial redirection of resources? How will proposals to local authorities to do more be reconciled with exhortations to employ fewer people and spend less?
- ii. What is the strength of feeling on this whole subject among the Government supporters?
- e. Some costed options to achieve the objectives
- i. Do these make sense as a co-ordinated programme or are they a selection of high priority but random measures suggested by different Departments?
- ii. Is there any real significance in the sub division between first and second priority?
- iii. To what extent are Departments able and willing to accommodate these additions in their PESC bids within their existing programmes of Public Expenditure?





## CONCLUSION

6. In his paper, the Home Secretary suggests that this subject may have to be referred to Cabinet to be considered in the context of the forthcoming Public Expenditure Survey. This seems to be a likely outcome. But, subject to points made in discussion, you may find it possible to guide the Committee to agree on sufficient measures to provide the Home Secretary with the material he needs for a Parliamentary statement before the recess. You will also wish to agree that he should report on the outcome of further studies in due course.

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

7 July 1980

*M*

PRIME MINISTER

Civil defence is on the OD agenda again this week. You might like to have a glance over the weekend at this long paper.

The key decisions will be public expenditure issues, and will presumably need to be referred to Cabinet. The financial alternatives are summarised in paragraph 23 of annex E.

The conclusions of the study in terms of activity turn on two points:-

- 1) There is scope to harness the potential voluntary effort, but without resurrecting the old civil defence organisation, which is considered costly and bureaucratic;
- 2) The "stay put" policy will remain the main plank of policy, with much more emphasis on effective expansion, and with better planning for the inevitable self evacuation of those who have places to go to outside the city centres.

*MAD*

4 July 1980





NBPM yet - BF when subject  
 comes back to OD. MP 16/6/80

2 MARSHAM STREET  
 LONDON SW1P 3EB

*Defence*

My ref: H/PSO/14301/80

Your ref:

16 June 1980

*Dear Sir*

John Nott sent you on 22 May an interesting paper on Civil Defence. The problems he raises are in my view for consideration in preparation of official papers but I would make 2 brief points.

First, I very much doubt if increasing the present specific grant from 75% to 90% will induce those authorities which do not at present take civil defence seriously to bring their performance up to meet whatever new objectives we may set. If we are in earnest about civil defence the only credible approach seems to me to give authorities unambiguous statutory duties and pay them in full to act as our agents. Needless to say this conflicts with many of our mainline objectives but I don't think these would stand in the way of necessary civil defence measures.

Second, civil defence expenditure is a matter for discussion not losing in my Department's budget.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, to other members of OD and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

*Yours*

*MHE*

MICHAEL HESELTINE



Defence



ms

PRIME MINISTER

Mr Nott's personal view of a realistic approach to Civil Defence. You may think that his political judgement of the requirement is correct.

MAP 22/v

HOME SECRETARY

CIVIL PREPAREDNESS FOR HOME DEFENCE

Having commented that your proposals were politically insufficient at OD I feel that it is incumbent upon me to set out a few personal thoughts about civil defence. These are very much laymen's views but they may give some indication about the feelings of those outside the immediate circle of the emergency planners.

My comments draw largely on knowledge of my own county, and although the arrangements there are, in my view, too modest I am conscious that the position in many areas is probably a good deal worse than in Cornwall. The biggest problem must be the urban areas, where the numbers of people are so much larger, the probability of direct attack is somewhat greater and the availability of volunteers with the necessary skills less certain.

I am sure that the most important aspect of the whole affair is the extent of the Government's commitment. I agree wholly with your view that this is not necessarily a question of money, but I believe that the £5m not only is insufficient to meet the necessary minimum requirement, but more important is insufficient to convince the nation that the Government even accepts a genuine commitment. At the present time the arrangements appear to be on a optional basis. Authorities receive a 75% grant for relevant expenditure, but the actual size of the team and of the resources involved depends very much on the attitude of Councillors. In the West Country a tremendous amount of energy has been put into the planning process, but I am quite sure that the arrangements are very patchy. In the event of a major civil emergency, or a war emergency, it would be vital that the rural areas at least have a consistent organisation to tackle the problems on the ground. Should we not think of perhaps 90% funding rather than 75%? Indeed, in a way there is a argument for making





local authorities statutorily responsible for civil preparedness, although of course this militates rather against Michael Heseltine's attempts to cut down on circulars. Yet surely home defence planning merits a circular.

At the OD meeting discussion took place about funding and responsibilities, and some of the points which I wish to raise will inevitably involve further expenditure. It does seem that if we are not to make a major breach in the agreed PESC arrangements the only reasonable way in which we could deal with the funding problem is to lose it in either the budget of the Ministry of Defence or the Department of the Environment. In this way the specific sums put aside could be subsumed within the expenditure of these Departments' large budgets.

On the actual plans for an emergency, one of my concerns is that the present official policy is to stay put, but I detect that in the opinion of all of those who are at present in an emergency planning position, self-evacuation will happen. Given a few days' warning of an impending crisis people will set out for the countryside from the towns, and however hard the emergency services may try to prevent it there is likely to be a high degree of chaos unless there is some kind of an official evacuation policy. It will take a major effort to persuade the public that shelters, if they exist, are adequate and that they should not move into the countryside. Yet food supplies, transport and communications will all be significantly affected by whether the population stays put or moves out of the cities. We must ensure that our plans are drawn up on a realistic assumption of how people will actually behave at a time of enormous stress - not on how we would wish them to behave.

Closely associated with this point, I do think we need to have a much more fundamental look at shelter policy. In relation to





individual households, I realise that your booklet will shortly be issued and that the Home Office will be publishing specifications for shelters etc. At the present time there are a number of firms advertising specifications for shelters, but as I understand it none of them have yet received Government approval. On the broader question of whether we ought to have limited shelters at key positions, no-one is suggesting that we could conceivably go in for a shelter programme like the Swiss. I do believe, however, that there is a need for firm recommendations from the Government and the expenditure of significant sums of money for a small network of shelters in key places. For example, ought we not to think about relatively secure underground shelters being made available at sub-district hospital level into which hospital staff could at least shift essential drugs and provide personal protection for themselves pending a critical need for their services? Should not there be some kind of shelter facility at least, at sub-district level, not just for the community planning officers but at least for the emergency committees? At the present time control premises only exist, as far as I understand it, at county level; nothing is planned at district level. This will, of course, mean setting priorities for shelters which could be difficult to determine - and perhaps in the event even more difficult to maintain.

Broadly speaking, I am inclined to feel that the present arrangements for planning teams and their staffs is just about right. Given the right people on the ground with the right degree of enthusiasm and commitment it can certainly work better than a military affair. Apart from anything else, if we put Generals and Colonels in charge they move on with promotion. Moreover, they are not experienced in dealing with volunteers. Continuity is vital on the ground. However, if the Chiefs of Staff feel strongly about our planning for civil defence they presumably would be prepared to put their weight and money behind it. This reinforces the arguments I made earlier for funding and monitoring by MoD and DoE, so long of course as military





responsibility did not lead to the wrong kind of interference. The selection of personnel should I think be left to local authorities who are in a position to maintain the best personal relations with the fire, police and other services at the community level.

I am sure that colleagues were right in emphasising that all emergency planning must be based on the community level. The further down the scale that we can manage to educate people and provide some element of readiness, particularly at Parish and ward level even if it only involves a small team of 10 people, the more likely it is that the system will work. I am sure that education at the parish and urban ward level is crucial.

Again, if I may quote my own local example, the emergency planning officer in Cornwall is full-time and has two full-time assistants. He has been responsible for producing a series of plans on food control, emergency feeding, information services, personal services, communications etc, but in the end this satisfactory, well thought out and voluminous set of plans has to be known and understood at sub-district and parish level. In Cornwall the county has initiated a scheme to obtain 4,000 community advisers. So far it has got 442 volunteers based on an end-February start. Each sub-district council and each parish has been asked to provide an emergency planning committee of councillors under the council, and it is this committee that would use the community advisers. I very much doubt whether this kind of progress has been made in many other parts of the country.

Would it add some momentum to the bringing forward of these volunteers if they were officially recognised by Government? Whilst volunteer help is ideal, it is a little nebulous to rely entirely on such unofficial support. If they had some recognition it would certainly boost their morale and status. Could we not think of helping them at least with travel and training expenses? This is taking place mainly in the local schools and the emergency





officers travel around and hold seminars, but it does become expensive for people in rural areas, yet it is these very community advisers that know the personalities, know the buildings, know the community resources, recognise what effort is likely to succeed down in the grass roots.

This takes me to the next key area, namely communications. In the event of some crisis the vital area is communications upwards, from parish, town and urban wards to sub-district and up to county. Unless this happens a county plan cannot work. Radiation reports, chemical report, etc, will have to flow up from the ground on the basis that the necessary equipment has been dispersed down to parish level. I do not know what guidance the Government is giving to the country insofar as radio communication is concerned. In Cornwall the radio amateur system is linked in to the county emergency plan, and I understand that there are 100 operators who are potentially available to maintain communications throughout the area. But should there be a proposal to link in privately licensed radios and build them into the system at parish level? Communications will be the key to the maintenance of some order in a state of chaos.

The next question which comes to mind is equipment. Apart from the question about emergency radios, cooking facilities, communications equipment already mentioned, is there really sufficient protective clothing particularly in chemical warfare for those actually down at community level? I realise that the existing services such as the police and the fire service have the necessary protective clothing against chemical and possibly against fallout, but should we not contemplate having sufficient protective clothing and conceivably respirators on the basis that at least 10 people in every parish would be able to move around in a contaminated area should such an eventuality arise? Is there adequate shelter for skeleton ambulance and transport equipment? Again, it comes down to having sufficient





equipment available at a low enough level for it to be effectively ready to hand in the event of an emergency.

If there were to be a major crisis there would be a major problem for food stocks. I believe that in Germany, Switzerland and other countries everybody is required to keep 14 days of supply and there is official advice in this country to that effect. But in the event of an impending drama with the British people suddenly confronted with a potential absence of food there would be likely to be a total exhaustion of food stocks in the shops leading to an element of public disorder, at least in the towns. Do we possess, and if not should we have, a major supply of K type food stocks, biscuits etc, at least available in stores to tide over the population at least for 14 days? At this point of time a policy for communal feeding might take over, but as I understand it the whole policy is geared to there being sufficient warning for emergency committees to be able to collect cooking facilities and bulk stocks of food from existing Ministry of Agriculture depots. If I may take my area as but one example, I believe that the nearest stocks of food are situated at Taunton, approximately 150 miles away. Should not there be some equipment and stocks of bulk food at least within range of communities of up to half a million people (likely to swell to many times that figure in the event of an emergency).

This brings me to other arrangements for storage. In the event of a nuclear war I understand that RADIAC instruments would be collected from Home Office depots. In the opinion of those responsible in my part of the world it is a little difficult to envisage these instruments being fanned out in the little time available. There would certainly be a major transport crisis in trying to collect the necessary instrumentation, coupled with food etc, and in many parts of the country there would be attempts to collect essential equipment by road transport at a time when a mass of the population could be moving - against official advice - in the opposite or same





direction thus hopelessly congesting the roads. The question therefore arises as to whether the Home Office depots are sufficiently well dispersed. Would it not be better to get the RADIAC instruments down to at least county storage at this point of time? Of course this would mean a maintenance problem, but to be effective the whole system has to be based on the local community and not on regional control.

Finally, there is a fundamental question of education. I am sure that people are ready and willing to participate in a national programme if the Government can really take the lead in providing widespread education. I appreciate that this is entirely what your exercise had in mind, but would it not be possible to draw in the television companies, the film companies and others into a major Government sponsored programme of this kind? I feel it is an area where the media would be prepared to give their time and money voluntarily in explaining precisely what would happen in a nuclear, chemical or conventional crisis and precisely what people should do about it. Up to now there have been a number of programmes which have generated great popular interest and concern but nothing of a wholly co-ordinated kind.

I do not believe that a nuclear war, even a nuclear confrontation, is probable or, indeed, conceivable. But there are enough dangers in the world to make it necessary for us to plan for such an eventuality. As the Lord Chancellor said, our nuclear deterrent is hardly credible unless we have a better system of civil defence. I understand this to be the view of the Chiefs of Staff. But if a conventional war is more likely we would still need the kind of framework which I have mentioned above, and even if no conventional war takes place it seems possible, if not probable, that in the next decade we will meet with a major peace-time emergency where co-ordination will be absolutely crucial - and co-ordination based as far down the scale as sub-district and parish level. Certainly we have no right to be





as unprepared as present for such an emergency. At the present time Cornwall County Council, admittedly only a small county of 300,000 people, has a budget of £30,000 to spend on the staff, planning and preparation for such an emergency. Personally I think the present situation borders on a culpable negligence by our predecessors, and until we grasp this nettle and take it more seriously we are in a position to be condemned by future historians, in my view rightly, of the kind of unpreparedness from which Baldwin and his team have not yet recovered.

I am copying this minute to the Prime Minister, to other members of OD and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

Department of Trade  
1 Victoria Street  
London, SW1H 0ET

SD  
JN

22 May 1980



22 MAY 1980

*Original GR.*



FILE  
VND  
cc:HO  
Defence

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

13 May 1980

*Dear Mr. Lord,*

Thank you for your letter of 19 April enclosing this one from Miss Josephine Bailey of 134A Church Lane, Tooting, London, SW17 9PU, about the protection of the population in war.

I entirely agree with Miss Bailey that the prospect of a nuclear war is appalling but it is precisely to prevent another war, and hence to preserve our peace and freedom, that our defence policy is devoted. I am sure that Miss Bailey would agree that there is no more worthy aim than that.

Over the past few years the Soviet Union has been relentlessly increasing its military expenditure and military capability to a level which, unlike that of N.A.T.O., is far greater than is required for purely defensive purposes. Clearly, the Government cannot just ignore that threat. Our primary duty is, therefore, to deter any potential enemy from taking aggressive action against us, and to that end it is essential that our Armed Forces are adequately manned, equipped and trained. This is inevitably expensive, and Miss Bailey is right to refer to this, but peace has to be worked for and paid for. In the dangerous world in which we live adequate security must come first. I cannot, however, stress enough that the money devoted to defence is intended to deter aggression and to preserve peace. It is against this background that we have to consider our civil defence policy.

/ Miss Bailey

*RA*



Miss Bailey has reservations about protection from radioactive fallout. I am sure that the Government scientists whose work involves the study of radiation from nuclear weapons and who contribute their knowledge to the protective measures against it, would respect her reservations. However, there are limits to the usefulness of comparisons between the precautions taken in normal times to protect those who may spend their working lives in conditions which may expose them to radiation and those which would be both necessary and practicable in the event of a nuclear attack. Miss Bailey and her colleagues are quite wrong in believing that the "Protect and Survive" measures would be of little use as protection against radiation. Properly applied, they could reduce the level of radiation to only one-fortieth of that in the open and could save many millions of lives. I would mention that there is much useful information about the effects of nuclear weapons in the booklet "Nuclear Weapons" published for the Home Office by Her Majesty's Stationery Office. Although parts of it are rather technical, it does provide a great deal of helpful material in quite straightforward terms.

The estimated cost of providing domestic concrete underground shelters to only ten million homes, based on a design of which we have some knowledge, is between £60,000 million and £80,000 million. In our present examination of shelter design, mentioned in my previous letter, we shall of course be seeking designs likely to cost very much less than the one I have quoted. Local authorities have been asked to make a survey of existing buildings (including any remaining World War II shelters) which could serve as public shelter in the event of a future war.

It is of course true that we have a few buildings to house war emergency communications and small elements of government dispersed in expectation that national government would not be practicable for a while after a widespread nuclear attack. The numbers involved in these contingency arrangements are very small.

/ It is not



It is not possible to make any certain prediction of the targets which an enemy might select for any given attack. I am afraid that it has to be accepted that no part of the country could be considered safe from the direct effects of nuclear weapons and the resultant radioactive fallout. This has been seen as a serious impediment to mass evacuation schemes, and official advice for some years has been that the public should "stay put". This "stay put" policy is, however, purely advisory and there are no plans to take any action against those who choose to ignore it. We are re-appraising our attitude to public evacuation schemes in the course of our current review of civil defence arrangements.

Yours sincerely  
Raymond Stobart

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Tom Cox, Esq., M.P.



2

12 Downing Street,  
Whitehall,  
London, S.W.1

*With the Compliments  
of the  
Chief Whip*

PRIME MINISTER  
Civil Defence comes to  
OO next week  
MIA 9/11.

CONFIDENTIAL

FROM: THE RT HON MICHAEL JOPLING MP



Government Chief Whip

12 Downing Street, London SW1

9 May 1980

I gather your PPS was present at the joint meeting of the Home Affairs and Defence Committees on Wednesday 7 May, when John Belstead spoke about Civil Defence. I am, of course, aware of the forthcoming Paper on these matters, but I am seriously concerned that the Party is getting itself very steamed up about the inadequacies of Civil Defence in the UK. You may recall that I spoke to the Prime Minister about this several weeks ago when you and I met her with Peter Thorneycroft. I have not seen a copy of the Paper which we shall be publishing, but I get the impression that it may cause a good deal of trouble by its inadequacy. My fear is that if we are not seen to be taking the problem sufficiently seriously at this stage, the Party may well force us into expenditure on a very much larger scale in the future, than would satisfy them now.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, Francis Pym and Geoffrey Howe.

The Rt Hon William Whitelaw CH MC MP  
Secretary of State for the Home Department  
Home Office  
50 Queen Anne's Gate  
SW1H 9AT



CONFIDENTIAL

✓ MR DEFENCE



PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE

WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1A 2AT

7 May 1980

John Chilcot Esq  
Private Secretary to the  
Secretary of State  
Home Office  
Queen Annes Gate  
SW1

*Dear John,*

CIVIL PREPAREDNESS FOR HOME DEFENCE

The Paymaster General has seen the memorandum by the Home Secretary about Civil Preparedness for Home Defence (OD(80)40). He commented that one important change should be made to the statement which was attached to the memorandum. This concerns the final paragraph on page 2 of the statement which he thought would be better placed as the penultimate paragraph on page 3. I hope you will bear this in mind when drafting a final version.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries of other members of OD.

*Yours ever*

*R E S*

R E S PRESCOTT  
Private Secretary

- 7 MAY 1980







Ref. A02095

*mf*

PRIME MINISTER

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Civil Preparedness for Home Defence

(OD(80) 40)

BACKGROUND

The Home Secretary has circulated this paper and the attached draft statement on the Home Defence Review to follow up the conclusions of the OD discussion on 20th March. The Secretary of State for Scotland has been invited for this item because of his responsibilities for civil defence in Scotland. The Secretary of State for the Environment has been invited because of the references to local authorities. A number of other Cabinet members have Departmental interests in the subject of civil home defence, but their attendance is not necessary on this occasion. At the OD meeting on 20th March it was agreed that officials should complete their study of the problem of civil defence preparedness in order to provide a comprehensive basis for further Ministerial decisions. The first step in this work is to turn the existing JIC assessment of the threat into a set of agreed assumptions to provide a basis for Departmental home defence planning.

HANDLING

2. You will wish to invite the Home Secretary to introduce his memorandum. You may then care to invite the Secretary of State for Scotland to comment on the Scottish aspects of his proposals and the Secretary of State for the Environment to speak on the local authority aspects. You may also wish to ask for any comments from the Secretary of State for Defence, particularly in view of the interest shown in this subject by Government supporters during the defence debate on 28th-29th April. You may also care to invite the Chancellor of the Exchequer to speak on the financial aspects. You will recall that at the previous OD discussion he said that the Treasury felt that there was a great deal more work to be done by officials before Ministers should be asked to take major decisions.

3. The Home Secretary's proposals in this memorandum do not generally go beyond what OD already agreed at its previous discussion on 20th March. You may therefore care to concentrate the discussion on his proposed draft statement, particularly the following points:-





- (a) Will the proposed draft statement be considered to be a sufficient response by the Government to the threat even as a first step?
- (b) Although the measures covered in the draft statement are relatively modest, will they not create an expectation of more major steps in the future? Is it right to create this expectation in view of the public expenditure implications?
- (c) Is there a risk that a statement along these lines will arouse political disquiet rather than dispel it?

CONCLUSIONS

4. Subject to points made in discussion, you may wish to guide the Committee to agree to -

- (a) Authorise further studies by officials on the remaining options on industrial planning and on shelter and disposal (in effect OD has already taken this decision following its 20th March discussion).
- (b) Note that the outcome of the studies will need to be considered in the light of expenditure priorities.
- (c) Agree to the Home Secretary's proposed draft statement.

RA

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

6th May, 1980



Ref: A01740



Copied to: 3

Defence: Future Policy  
 Defence: Intervention  
 Capability

PRIME MINISTER

UNITED KINGDOM DEFENCE POLICY  
 (OD(80) 22, 23, 25 and 26)

## BACKGROUND

This meeting brings together a lot of work on future defence policy which has been set in hand at various times over the last year.

2. The centrepiece of discussion is the Defence Secretary's paper Defence Policy and Programme (OD(80) 26). This paper arose from the OD discussion on 3 December on Future United Kingdom Defence Policy; but what was envisaged as a study in priorities has been complicated by the excesses which have emerged from the 1980 Long Term Costings of the Defence Programme.

3. The report on the case for an intervention capability outside NATO in OD(80) 25 is a subsidiary issue. It is also relatively straightforward, because the conclusions are fully agreed at senior official level between the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Ministry of Defence, Treasury, Department of Trade and the CPRS who all took part in the Official Group. The recommendations will give rise to some additional expenditure; but the amount is small, the overall size of the Defence Budget will not be affected, and the Defence Secretary agrees in his main paper (Annex para 17) that the reallocation involved would be worthwhile.

4. The Home Secretary's paper on Civil Preparedness for Home Defence (OD(80) 22) and the report by officials on the same subject (OD(80) 23) is another subsidiary issue, even though the Home Secretary is asking for some immediate decisions to be taken. Apart from these, he accepts that there is a lot more work to be done before OD can take comprehensive decisions (which would in any case involve several Ministers who will not be present at OD, eg the Secretaries of State for Scotland, Northern Ireland and Energy and the Minister of Transport). But the subject has important implications for defence policy and therefore for the Defence Secretary's main paper; see paragraphs 9e and f below.



Defence Policy and Programme

(OD(80) 26)

## HANDLING

5. You will wish to ask the Defence Secretary to introduce his paper. You may then care to invite the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary and the Chancellor of the Exchequer to give their views. You may care to base the ensuing discussion on paragraph 10 of the Defence Secretary's paper, covering the following points -

- a. A new strategic nuclear force to replace Polaris? The restricted Ministerial Group (MISC 7), of which only you and the Home, Defence and Foreign Secretaries are members, agreed on this in December; and our general intention was made clear by Mr Pym in the Commons debate on 24 January. The question of a four or five boat force is still open but this has no bearing on the immediate problems confronting the Defence Secretary.
- b. No cut back on defence of the United Kingdom base? As this is an area that has been seriously neglected in the past, you may wish to confirm this point. Proposed expenditure is in any case modest, but you may wish to remind the Committee that civil home defence is part of the same problem and has suffered even greater neglect than military home defence (see para 9e below).
- c. A continuing contribution to the Northern Flank? Your "briefing" in the Cabinet Office on 19 March is likely to demonstrate the vulnerability and importance of this area, for which the Defence Secretary and Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary will both argue that the United Kingdom has a unique responsibility, for historical reasons.
- d. Force Reductions in Germany? This is controversial. Although personally inclined towards such reductions, the Foreign Secretary is likely to argue that any significant reduction in present circumstances is likely to damage the cohesion of NATO. Less important, such reductions in anticipation of a Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction agreement might





prejudice such an agreement ever being achieved. The Defence Secretary is expecting to be told that significant reductions in our forces in Germany is not a realistic option in present circumstances. He will not mind that conclusion; but he will not himself advocate it, since in internal Ministry of Defence terms it involves siding with the Army against the Navy (see f below).

e. A reduction in the non-garrison forces in Northern Ireland? Such a reduction is obviously desirable, and it is already an aim of the policy being pursued by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. It also matches the desire of the RUC, if built up sufficiently in strength, to take over the whole task of maintaining law and order. It will be a big help in military terms if BAOR no longer has to find units for emergency tours in Northern Ireland. But the central question is whether, and if so when, the security situation in the Province will allow such reductions to be made: while such a ~~reduction~~ reduction is a desirable objective, it is not wholly within the power of Her Majesty's Government to decide what ~~reduction~~ reduction can be achieved, or by when. The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (who has not been invited to OD) will need to be fully consulted before a final decision is taken.

f. Reductions in Maritime Forces? If the Committee decide that for political reasons significant reductions cannot be made in Germany, then the only remaining areas of major defence expenditure are -

- i. the sea and air forces in the Eastern Atlantic and Channel and
- ii. the equipment programme as a whole.

The difficulty about reducing i. is that the United Kingdom provides about eighty per cent of the forces in this area, and no other ally is able and willing to take on anything we give up. But the advantage of reductions here is that there is little public knowledge about present force levels, which are in any case subject to adjustment as new ships replace old ones. Furthermore, of all three services the Navy is the most capable of absorbing reductions, when it has to, without cutting down its front line strength, because of the scope for rephasing its programme.



- g. An intervention capability outside the NATO area? You may care to deal with this subject more fully when you consider the next item on the agenda. But the proposition is likely to be generally agreed by the Committee.
- h. More use of reserves? This is a political commitment which found a place in Chapter 6 of the 1979 Manifesto. It is also likely to become increasingly important from a defence point of view as regular uniformed manpower becomes steadily more difficult to recruit during the 1980s for demographic reasons. But the proposal is more likely to enlarge than reduce expenditure. An increased number and role for the reserves will increase the amount of training and equipment they will need.
- i. Reductions in the range of weapons and weapon systems? This is a proposition to which obeisance is frequently made in general terms. But it is difficult to get the armed services to accept its application in any given cases. What particular examples does the Defence Secretary have in mind? Does the fact that real increases in equipment costs are continuing to outstrip the rate of inflation mean that even if the excesses over approved PESC figures are successfully removed this year, they will reappear next year?
- j. The best sources for equipment procurement? The proposals in this sub-paragraph reflect existing policy. It is not clear how agreement to it will provide the Defence Secretary with any guidance on future savings. What does he have in mind?
- k. No cut back in missile and ammunition stocks? Recent studies suggest that present stocks are probably inadequate to support intensive operations that last for more than a couple of days in some areas. But a decision not to reduce stocks closes off a major savings option.
- l. Intensify the drive to cut out waste and improve efficiency? Obviously this is desirable. The defence budget has been under pressure for many years, and it will be surprising if there are many large crocks of gold still to be discovered. But there may be quite a lot of little ones, in a





Department which is by far the biggest in Government and has a wide geographical spread. Does the Defence Secretary have any particular prospects in mind?

m. A discussion with allies on more specialisation of tasks and equipment? This really links up with sub-paragraph i. (proposed reduction in the range of weapons and weapon systems). The trouble is that the Services are always very reluctant in practice to relinquish the whole of our national capability in a particular area and thus become totally dependent on an ally who may not always do what we want. Does the Defence Secretary have any particular examples in mind?

6. You will wish to ask the Secretary of State for Industry about the industrial implications set out in paragraph 29 of the Annex to the Defence Secretary's paper. How serious are these? He seems likely to reply that, though they will be serious for the firms directly concerned, the consequences will only affect a relatively small area of British industry.

7. Finally you will wish to ask the Defence Secretary and Foreign Secretary for their views on the best way ~~of~~ presenting this problem to the Government's supporters, to the general public and to our allies. How can these apparent programme reductions be best reconciled with the Government's avowed policy? How can the United States be persuaded that the United Kingdom is right to replace its strategic nuclear deterrent when we cannot apparently maintain our planned level of conventional force?



Intervention capability outside NATO

OD(80) 25

## HANDLING

8. As the main input to this study came from the Foreign Office, you may care to ask the Foreign Secretary to introduce the paper. You may then care to ask the Defence Secretary, Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Secretary of State for Trade, all of whose Departments were represented in the Official Group, whether they are in general agreement with the paper's arguments and conclusions. The points to establish in subsequent discussion, which can probably be fairly brief, are:-

- a. Are there circumstances which may still give rise to a need for a British intervention operation outside the NATO area? Almost certainly "yes". It is impossible to be precise about the future but it must be probable that such situations will arise in a third world which is becoming less rather than more stable with the passage of time.
- b. Does the United Kingdom already have some forces available for this purpose? Again "yes". But because intervention outside the NATO area has not been a properly defined aspect of our defence policy since 1974, these forces are not as well organised or prepared for intervention operations as they might be.
- c. Is there a case for devoting more resources to an intervention capability outside the NATO area? Not on a large scale. We could not afford extra resources; and any major diversion of our effort away from NATO would damage our most important security and foreign policy interests. But there is a good case for a small-scale diversion and for some "double earmarking" of forces primarily committed to NATO.
- d. Scope for consultation with the United States and France? Certainly the United States are likely to welcome a more forthcoming attitude on the United Kingdom's part, provided that it does not represent a significant reduction in our commitments inside the NATO area. It will be less easy to establish a constructive dialogue with France, but the French are showing considerable interest in the subject and it would be useful politically if Anglo-French co-operation could be developed.





Civil Preparedness for Home Defence and Civil Home Defence

OD(80) 22 and 23

HANDLING

9. You will wish to ask the Home Secretary to introduce this subject. You may then care to invite the Chancellor of the Exchequer to comment in view of misgivings about the new definition of the threat already expressed by his officials. You may also wish to ask for any comments from the Defence Secretary and from the Secretary of State for the Environment, who has been invited for this item because of the local authority aspects. Points to establish in subsequent discussion are:-

- a. Is it agreed that the threat has developed since 1968 to such an extent that more must now be done for civil home defence? There is likely to be general agreement that there have been developments in the threat. But it will be much less easy to agree on the extent of the increase in the threat, particularly the conventional threat as it applies to this country. More work needs to be done on this.
- b. Despite possible disagreement on the development of the threat, are the minimum measures proposed by the Home Secretary right in present circumstances? This "bare minimum" seems likely to be agreed on the basis that the Home Secretary himself finds offsetting savings elsewhere. But problems about resources will become much more acute when further home defence measures are proposed.
- c. Financial implications of the Home Secretary's proposals? What will cutting the provision for law and order involve in concrete terms? What are the views of the Secretary of State for the Environment on the proposals in paragraph 7 for funding the local authority expenditure? How are the local authorities themselves likely to react?
- d. What are the public sector manpower implications of these proposals? The Home Secretary's initial proposals plainly involve very small additional numbers either in central government or in the local authorities. But there will be some extra. Some of the other measures which are likely to come



forward on home defence in due course will involve bigger manpower increases. Although it can be argued that there must be growth areas under any government's policy, will there not be presentational difficulties, for example with NALGO and the Civil Service staff associations, when the Government is making such a well publicised effort to reduce public sector manpower?

e. Consistency between civil home defence and military home defence?

This should be further studied by the Official Committee on Home Defence (as proposed in the cover note to the officials' paper OD(80) 23). As noted above, Mr Pym is understandably worried about our military capacity to defend the United Kingdom base, particularly against conventional air attack during a conventional warfare phase lasting several weeks. But our military capacity, even as it is, far exceeds any civil home defence capacity we are likely to be able to afford. What is the point of spending money to enable the services to fight over several weeks the sort of conventional war for which we have virtually no civil defence capability and in which civilian morale could therefore crack in a matter of days?

f. Credibility of nuclear deterrence undermined? Do the Committee regard this as a real problem? If so, do they see it primarily as a military and foreign policy problem? or as one of domestic public relations?

g. What exactly will the Home Secretary announce after Easter? Is there not a risk in initiating a public debate in an area where the Government does not yet know where it is going, how fast it is going to travel, or how the trip is going to be paid for?

CONCLUSIONS

10. Substantively you may wish to guide the Committee to agree -

a. On the Defence Secretary's main paper, that his general approach be endorsed, subject to the discussion and in particular to any reservations about cuts in Germany; and that he should on this basis put forward specific proposals as he suggests.





b. On the intervention capability paper, that the political case is made out; and that the Defence Secretary should now proceed to work on the military implications as originally envisaged.

c. On the civil home defence paper, that the Home Secretary should proceed as he proposes, at his own Department's expense; that he should report further when official studies are complete; and that such studies should cover military as well as civil home defence, as proposed in the cover note to the officials' paper.

11. Procedurally, there will be considerable work to be done in translating the broad decisions of policy and direction into specific decisions on allocation of resources and on projects. You will wish to indicate to the Committee whether in the light of this preliminary discussion of this large and difficult subject you wish, before further substantive decisions are reached, to arrange for a discussion of the issues in greater depth at a Chequers "day", or perhaps at a full half-day one Friday: one formula that has worked well in the past is to hold the meeting at 10 Downing Street on a Friday, start it at 10.00 am, and carry it on through a working lunch.

LONG  
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RA

(ROBERT ARMSTRONG)

19 March 1980



to 15  
reference

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

10 March 1980

~~B/F 19/380  
12/09~~

The Prime Minister has seen the Home Secretary's minute of 6 March about the Home Defence Review. She has noted that these matters are scheduled for discussion in OD on 20 March.

I am sending copies of this letter to George Walden (Foreign and Commonwealth Office), Brian Norbury (Ministry of Defence), John Wiggins (HM Treasury) and David Wright (Cabinet Office).

M. A. PATTISON

J.A. Chikot, Esq.,  
Home Office.

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(5)

PRIME MINISTER

*Bonnie Amster*  
*Paul*

HOME DEFENCE REVIEW

During the next few weeks we shall as a Government have to take some major decisions about the state of home defence. Home defence in this context means rather more than what used to be called civil defence: it embraces the whole range of the nation's readiness for war; it is closely related to military readiness, since adequate civil preparedness is essential to our deterrent strategy.

In 1968, expenditure on home defence was reduced by two thirds, and it was put on a care and maintenance basis. It now costs about £22m a year, mainly on the warning organisation, food stockpiles and planning by local authorities and Government Departments.

Revised NATO assumptions about a shorter warning period and a longer period of conventional war, together with our Party commitment, prompted me last Summer to initiate a review of home defence arrangements. The recent upsurge of public concern on the subject has obliged me to accelerate the review.

On 20 February there was an adjournment debate initiated by Robert Banks. And on 4 March there was a debate in the Lords, initiated by Lord Clifford of Chudleigh. We have responded to these and other expressions of Parliamentary concern by reference to the review, by seeking to encourage more use of volunteers within the local government framework, and by a new willingness to be open about these issues and their cost. I believe that this last point is particularly important.

I have let it be known that I hope to announce the outcome of the review soon after the Easter Recess. Meanwhile, arrangements have been made for OD to consider a report by the Official Committee on Home Defence on 20 March. We may well decide that we need to spend a little more money in this area (but probably not very much), and if so OD will need to consider whether offsetting savings can be found.

I am sending a copy of this minute to the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, the Defence Secretary and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

*[Handwritten signature]*

6 March 1980

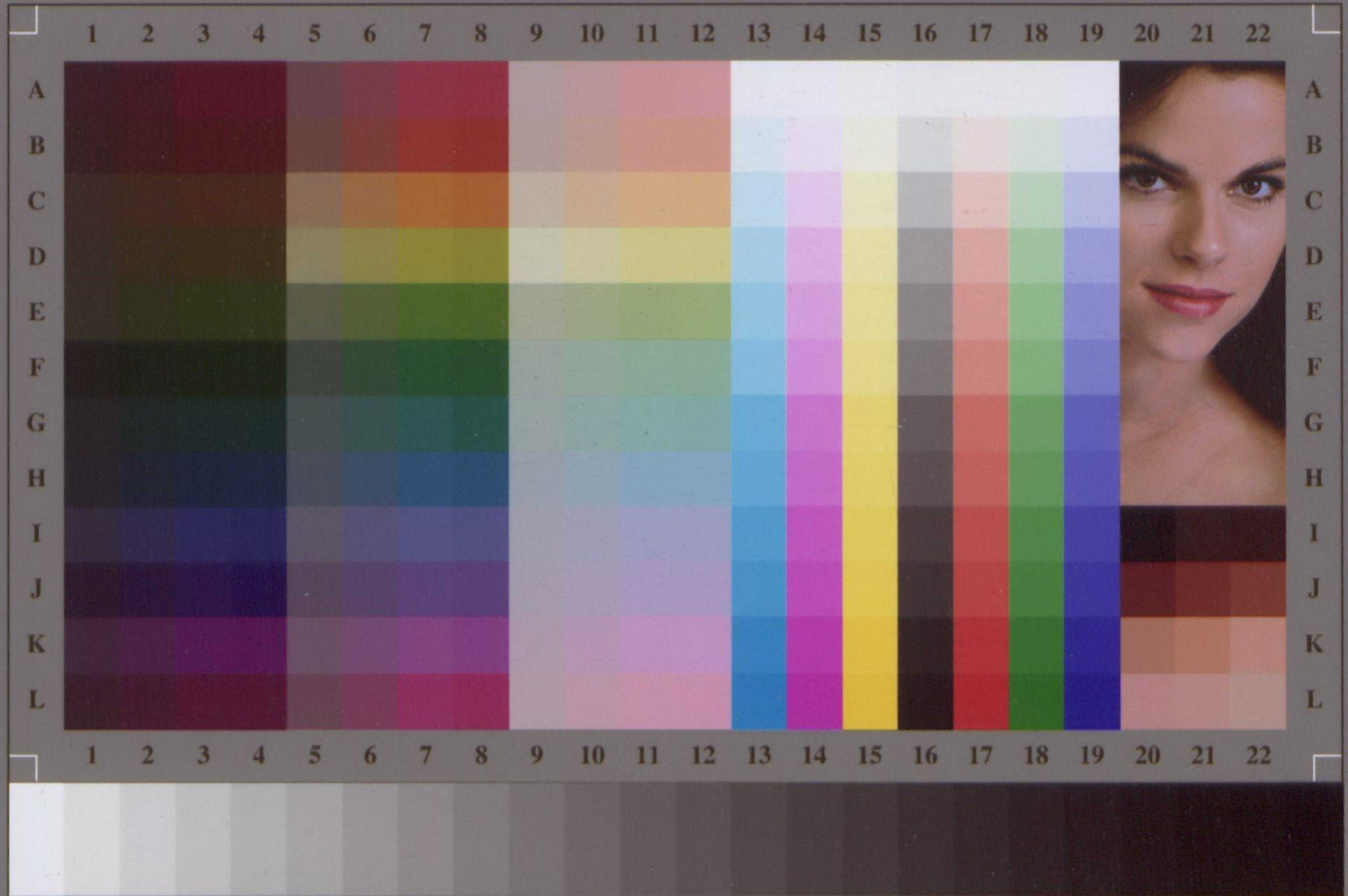
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