



MO 11/2/2

PRIME MINISTER

Yes - we
should. Next
weekend
not

Defence ^{RTJ}
Prime Minister
I wonder whether you should not
have a meeting to consider the likely
events over the Easter weekend. The
situation looks pretty serious to me.

A. J. C. 18/3

POLICING OF DEMONSTRATIONS AT MILITARY BASES

I am forwarding a copy of the report which has been produced by MOD and Home Office officials following the Home Secretary's minute to you of 9th March.

2. I have personally reviewed the security arrangements at these sites in the light of the threat as it is currently perceived. There is no doubt that there is cause for concern. Greenham Common, Aldermaston and Burghfield cover extensive areas and the degree of protection provided by the perimeter fences is, in some cases, inadequate. As the report reveals we shall be doing all we can to strengthen our defences over the next few days. But there is no way in which the full measure of protection required to rule out the possibility of incursions can be provided within that time.

3. Therefore, while the arrangements to protect the most sensitive installations within the establishments should be sufficient to deter intruders, there remains scope for determined demonstrators to break through the fences and make considerable propaganda out of "occupations", however short lived of less sensitive areas. CND have stated that they intend to conduct the demonstrations in an orderly and law-abiding way. If they keep to this the increased security measures described in the report and the resources of civil, service and Ministry of Defence police which have been allocated should be sufficient. But the possibility of maverick action by peace women or other extremist elements cannot be ruled out. We shall be monitoring the threat closely as it develops over the next few days. If necessary increased resources of manpower will be allocated. In the longer term I am in no doubt that we shall need to devote increased resources to the provision of enhanced security measures both within and outside our sensitive installations.



4. I am copying this minute to the Foreign Secretary, the Home Secretary, the Secretary of State for Scotland and the Attorney General and Sir Robert Armstrong.

WJH

Ministry of Defence

18th March 1983

POLICING OF DEMONSTRATIONS AT MILITARY BASES

INTRODUCTION

1. Following the Home Secretary's minute of 9 March 1983 to the Prime Minister, officials in the Ministry of Defence and the Home Office were invited to review very urgently the physical defences of Greenham Common and Upper Heyford and policing arrangements both inside and outside the establishments concerned. This review is now complete.

SUMMARY

2. The joint report
- a. summarizes the various threats at Greenham Common, Aldermaston and Burghfield.
 - b. describes the configurations of the Establishments and the police forces which will be available over the Easter period both within the Establishments, and at the disposal of the civil police.
 - c. outlines certain further measures which will or could be taken to increase security at Greenham Common.
 - d. stresses the special circumstances at Aldermaston and Burghfield and the existence of armed Ministry of Defence Police, with particular precise instructions for the protection of special material.
 - e. draws certain general conclusions.
 - f. refers to certain special points about the use of helicopters.
 - g. concludes that nothing can be done about the peace camp on Department of Transport land before Easter.
 - h. discusses the different problem at Upper Heyford, its later timescale and action set in hand to study further security improvements.

CO-OPERATION

3. Before discussing security arrangements in detail, we should say at the outset that in respect of all four establishments we are impressed with the good relations between the Thames Valley Police and the MOD and USAF authorities concerned. These relations go deeper than just goodwill; they extend to close administrative and operational cooperation. This is of course extremely important given the considerable number of organisations involved; RAF and USAF Commands, the Ministry of Defence Police and RAF Police and civil police in the field, and of course the policy and PR arrangements both at Whitehall and at local level. Steps have already been taken to draw up and define clear responsibilities and chains of command.

4. Greenham Common/Aldermaston/Burghfield

We should first outline the threat at Easter as it is at present known to the Thames Valley Police. The principal organisers are the CND who, in line with their general policy, are in touch with the police about their plans. But a significant part is to be played by the women's peace movement, who are well organised but refuse to deal with the police and whose actions can be unpredictable. The plan for Thursday 31 March is to blockade Greenham Common and Burghfield from 6 am, without Aldermaston being blockaded as such. The blockade at Greenham Common will be undertaken by up to 2,000 women. The size of the blockade at Burghfield cannot yet usefully be predicted, but the event will be organised by the CND, with demonstrators of both sexes. The blockade will continue overnight and until 6 pm on Friday 1 April; and in the afternoon CND hope to assemble between 40-80,000 people to form a human chain linking all three establishments. In policing terms the main problem seems likely to be maintaining access to Greenham Common on the Thursday. This will be a normal working day when large numbers of contractor and service personnel must enter and leave the base. The demonstrators are likely to blockade the gates and try to prevent the passing of vehicles. They may also try to penetrate the perimeter fence to gain access to the base for publicity purposes. On Friday the base will not be working (the Americans have agreed to observe a holiday) and there will be few vehicles passing through the gates. The 14 mile human chain is likely to be peaceful; but the very large numbers involved will present public order and traffic problems for the police, and there may be further attempts to gain access to Greenham Common or to Burghfield or Aldermaston. Although the main focus of activity will be over these two days, the possibility of difficulty at Greenham will of course continue both before and after then.

5. It is understood that CND will encourage their supporters to travel to Scotland for a demonstration in Glasgow on Saturday 2 April. Currently there are no indications that this particular demonstration will affect the Clyde Submarine Base. However, some activity at Faslane is expected over this Easter period and appropriate arrangements are being made to deal with this.

6. The CND customarily organise a demonstration in London on Easter Sunday, but the Metropolitan Police have as yet no information that the demonstration will be held this year, possibly because of the events planned for the preceding days.

7. RAF Greenham Common. There is already a small peace camp outside RAF Greenham Common, currently occupying Department of Transport land (see para 14 below). There have been earlier demonstrations, and minor incursions through the fence onto the base. Greenham Common is a very large airfield with a correspondingly long (10 miles) perimeter delineated by a chain link fence topped with barbed wire. The fence has already been reinforced in places with additional coils of barbed wire (dannert). The physical security of the perimeter has also been improved by the introduction at selected areas of additional sodium lighting which will be supplemented by Easter by the security lighting now being installed in the cruise missile complex which is under construction. This complex has itself been further protected by the completion of the special security fence already planned, dannert

wire and a secure entry check point. Although, of course, there are no sensitive materials yet installed within the cruise missile complex it is important to preserve its integrity partly because of the political embarrassment of incursions by demonstrators into this most sensitive part of the establishment, and partly because of the risk of damage, eg to electrical trunking, which could put back the date of completion. In addition to the USAF security police, (about 30 in number) the MOD Police presence has been reinforced by 40 RAF Police including 9 dog teams. Plans have been made for the UK security force to be substantially augmented from the outset of the Easter period. The MOD Police plan to have 100 men plus 10 dogs available on site by day reducing to about 70 men and 3 dogs by night. A further 60 RAF Police will be introduced, with an additional 40 ancillary personnel, eg RAF firefighters to deal with any minor fires the protestors might start (they have previously evinced a disposition towards this kind of behaviour). Finally about 100 men of the RAF Regiment will be on standby to reinforce the RAF and MOD Police (who will of course be unarmed). This is very much an extra reserve against unexpected contingencies and unlike civilian and Service police the RAF Regiment are not normally trained for or used in the rather special role of handling civilian demonstrations. Measures have been planned in coordination with Thames Valley Police to ensure that necessary access to the base can continue despite the planned blockade. Although security personnel will of course be in position before the blockade takes place and the USAF Commander has cooperated in reducing his planned activities over the period, there will remain a need to move certain essential personnel in and out of the base on Thursday including contractors' personnel. This will be done by arranging convoys of coaches which will move through gates to be selected by the Thames Valley Police who will arrange clearance through the blockade. All gates will of course be locked and guarded and only opened to allow ingress and egress of convoys under police supervision.

8. In the course of this review we have carefully considered what additional physical security arrangements would be valuable and could be in place by Easter. It would be impractical to lay additional barbed wire all round the perimeter; parts of the perimeter are very inaccessible because of scrub and undergrowth which would have to be cleared before the wire could be laid; in other areas the ground is heavily waterlogged. In any case, barbed wire alone offers only minor difficulty and impediment to those determined to make an incursion; unless it were kept under continual observation by personnel lining the perimeter (which would involve very large numbers indeed) it will add little to the physical security of the establishment. There are however particular parts of the establishment where barbed wire could be used with some advantage to improve the protection of particular areas such as the wing headquarters which demonstrators might try to enter and occupy; plans have already been made for such areas to be manned by USAF personnel but in order to minimise the risk of direct confrontation between demonstrators and US personnel, additional barbed wire will now be laid in order to make it more difficult for demonstrators to reach such areas quickly and give the police more time to apprehend them. Thought has been given to the selective clearance of undergrowth inside the perimeter to make unobserved intrusion more difficult. This is a larger-scale task than could be completed by Easter, but a start will be made on high-priority areas. Gate security has already been mentioned and additional measures will be taken to

strengthen it. In addition to the new security lighting which will be available at Easter, the Secretary of State for Defence has given authority to use a helicopter equipped with nitesun to improve the capability of detecting night incursions, and also to employ Service helicopters, if necessary, for carrying in personnel and for command and control.

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9. AWRE Aldermaston. As mentioned above, there are no indications of any planned blockade at AWRE Aldermaston although on Friday it forms the pivotal point of the 14 mile human chain. Aldermaston has a $4\frac{1}{2}$ mile perimeter, fenced off in much the same manner as Greenham Common. Within the site itself, sensitive buildings - in terms of radio-active or explosive materials, classified documents or power station facilities providing vital safety services are wide-spread - as opposed to the closely segregated sensitive compounds at eg Greenham Common and Upper Heyford. Within the perimeter fence there are a number of compartmented areas with intruder detection devices but the planned internal security fence will not be complete by Easter and the internal fences which do exist can at best confuse and delay intruders. The Aldermaston authorities are however endeavouring to make some further improvements before Easter. Over the holiday period, policing arrangements will comprise a Ministry of Defence complement of 184, some with arms, deployed as at Greenham Common; that is, about 110 by day and a slightly smaller number at night all working 12-hour shifts, and the force includes 10 dogs. The Secretary of State for Defence has already been made aware of the arrangements which will be made to minimise the risk that demonstrators will come into direct confrontation with armed Ministry of Defence Police but clearly there can be no relaxation of the rigorous security arrangements necessary to protect radio-active materials. Armed officers will be fully aware that they are issued with their weapons under the same conditions as normal and not for the purpose of dealing with demonstrators whose intention may be only to gain publicity and embarrass the authorities by penetrating the perimeter fence. A weapon will not be drawn or used in such circumstances and an armed officer who is so confronted will take any necessary immediate police action short of armed force and summon unarmed officers to his assistance.

10. ROF Burghfield. ROF Burghfield will be blockaded from Thursday until Friday, and on Friday it forms one extremity of the human chain. It is less than half the size of AWRE Aldermaston, and its chain-link perimeter fence is already thickened with coiled barbed wire. Within the perimeter the key weapon assembly and storage areas, and the areas containing classified documents are protected by a special security compound with microwave and TV devices. The normal MDP complement of 101, some with arms, and 4 dogs will be augmented to provide 100 on duty by day and about half that number by night. Again, although steps are planned to minimise the risk of direct confrontation between demonstrators and armed police the defence of nuclear material must take overriding priority in the event that any real threat is presented.

11. In addition to the Ministry of Defence police numbers already described at each of these three establishments, the Chief Constable MOD Police will have on call a strategic reserve of about 170 men who could be deployed to any particular point of threat by helicopter (following Ministerial approval of the submission already made to this effect).

12. Thames Valley Police. The Thames Valley Police plan to deploy a total of just under 1,000 police officers on Thursday with an additional 200 on the Friday. They have already been in touch with

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neighbouring forces about the provision of reinforcements, if necessary, under the mutual aid system, and have details of the numbers who could be made available at one, two and three hours' notice. The force will be using a rented helicopter. As to liaison with the military, there will be a military liaison officer at the headquarters of the police operation at Newbury, and a police Liaison Officer inside the Greenham Common base.

13. In general, we conclude;

- a. The combination of physical security arrangements and a greatly reinforced military and civil police presence inside and outside the establishments is the most that can reasonably be done and should be adequate to prevent serious incursions unless events take a totally unforeseen course;
- b. at Greenham Common, the security of the 10 mile perimeter cannot be guaranteed; but action is in hand to protect the GLCM area and other sensitive points; additional barbed wire, lighting, gate security measures and scrub clearance to be undertaken by Easter should make it easier to prevent or deal with incursions and to maintain access to the base;
- c. the security of sensitive areas of AWRE Aldermaston appears adequate against the foreseen threat although, because of the physical nature of the site, the manpower will be stretched;
- d. the sensitive area at ROF Burghfield is adequately defended;
- e. the substantial civil police presence planned should be sufficient to maintain public order outside the bases; but the blockade of Greenham Common could present serious problems and lead to large numbers of arrests, while the human chain on Good Friday is likely to cause serious traffic disruption.

14. Additional Points. Importance is attached by all concerned to the use of helicopters, for intelligence, mobility of MDP reinforcements, and command and control. Secondly, we consider that adequate measures have been taken to minimise the risk of confrontation between demonstrators and armed MDP personnel without in any way compromising the overriding requirement for the security of special materials. Thirdly, we have considered with the Department of Transport the question of the peace camp at Greenham Common which has now moved back onto Department of Transport land. The Department of Transport has powers under the 1980 Highways Act to remove them from the land, as they did in September 1982, although the procedures would take about six weeks to complete. From an administrative and security point of view, however, the fact that the campers are now on Department of Transport land is of no significance in the view of both the civil police and MOD authorities. They could not in any case be moved before Easter because of the time required for the legal steps necessary; and indeed the Department of Transport, whose current assessment is that the campers do not constitute a physical obstruction of the highway, would wish carefully to consider the grounds on which legal action could be brought. They will submit this issue separately to their Ministers who will themselves wish to consult colleagues.

15. Ministers will wish to be aware that arrangements have already been made by the MOD, with USAF and in coordination with the Thames Valley Police, for PR arrangements over Easter. Both sides have a clear understanding of their respective roles and responsibilities and communications links are being set up.

16. Although the main attention at Easter is going to be focussed on Greenham Common, Aldermaston and Burghfield, and thereafter on Upper Heyford, it should be noted that peace camps of various kinds have been established at a number of MOD and USAF bases. For example, there is a small one outside RAF Molesworth, currently an accommodation store but planned to be the second UK GLCM base later on. There have been protests at RAF Alconbury (an active USAF airfield) and a peace camp comprising apparently a combination of peace and animal rights movements activists has very recently been set up outside Porton Down. This is not an exhaustive list. Currently, none of these can certainly be identified as posing an immediately significant administrative or operational problem. But the possibility exists that one or other of them may develop in this way, and all of them are closely watched.

17. RAF Upper Heyford. As mentioned above, RAF Upper Heyford does not currently figure in CND's protest plans for Easter, although both the MOD and the civil police will be alert for any indications of likely trouble. Currently, however, the threat is of an attempted blockade of RAF Upper Heyford from 31 May to 3 June. As the Home Secretary has pointed out, Upper Heyford presents a very great problem in policing terms against such a threat. It is a major USAF strike base housing a large F111 force and the associated weapons. The site is bisected by a public road. To the south of the road lie the base recreational and accommodation facilities in an unfenced enclave. To the north, immediately adjacent to the public road, lie the operational facilities; runways, hardened aircraft shelters, weapons storage area, communications and headquarters accommodation. This northern area is bounded by a perimeter fence of the usual kind ie chain-link topped with barbed wire but there are a number of gates leading from the public road onto the site. At either end of the runway the perimeter fence is very low for flight safety reasons; and for the same reasons cannot be heightened. The weapons storage area is protected to the NATO standard required for such a specially sensitive area. There is an armed USAF police guard with reinforcements available at very short notice. The QRA (Quick Reaction Alert) shelters in which armed aircraft are kept at readiness are similarly protected. Elsewhere the aircraft and other operational compounds are protected by low fencing designed more to delineate the sensitive area than to offer significant resistance to incursion; but within these fences the areas are guarded by armed USAF personnel. In addition, because of the presence of a peace camp on MOD land just outside the northern part of the base, there has been temporarily a small Ministry of Defence police presence. This camp was evicted yesterday and the land totally fenced in.

18. A blockade could pose a real threat to the operational capability of RAF Upper Heyford since, although one or two minor roads approach the base from other directions, effectively the only access is via the /gates

gates fronting on the main public road which divides the base in two. If this road were occupied by very large numbers of demonstrators the civil police would face enormous practical problems of ensuring ingress and egress of the personnel whose presence is necessary to the conduct of flying and other operations. The police do not have legal powers either to close the road or to prevent demonstrators assembling in an orderly manner. Sheer weight of numbers could hinder the civil police from clearing the road by large scale arrest and detention. A number of measures are possible which would enhance the physical integrity of the base; Ministry of Defence police could be deployed from other establishments to help to prevent demonstrators on the public road spilling over into the administrative buildings to the south; and to the north could augment security at the main gates and act as a buffer between any demonstrators who penetrated the wire and the armed USAF police on the base. (There could however be no question of replacing the armed USAF police who protect the special weapons stores, armed aircraft and other operationally vital assets. This is partly because internal security at a USAF operational base, such as this, is accepted administratively as a USAF responsibility; but more importantly, protection of military assets of this kind has to meet NATO standards which in view of the nature of the weapons must be maintained in full).

19. We have considered ways of enhancing the physical protection of the perimeter of the northern part of the base; the first impressions are that additional barbed wire would of itself constitute only a small improvement but the Service security authorities will conduct an urgent survey both into the ways in which some areas might benefit from barbed wire and into any other measures to improve physical security at the runway ends. In addition the Ministry of Defence police are making the necessary contingency plans for the period in question. Essentially, the combined MOD and USAF resources should be sufficient to prevent any significant incursion into the northern area of the base; the real and major problem is the difficulty which the Thames Valley Police may encounter in preventing an effective blockade virtually closing down the operations of the base. The Home Office and Ministry of Defence will remain in close touch with the Thames Valley Police and will review the situation in all aspects in the light of experience at Easter and as intelligence hardens on the plans for 31 May.

17th March 1983.

Defence Feb 83

Priority of Demos at Military Bases

18 MAR 1983

