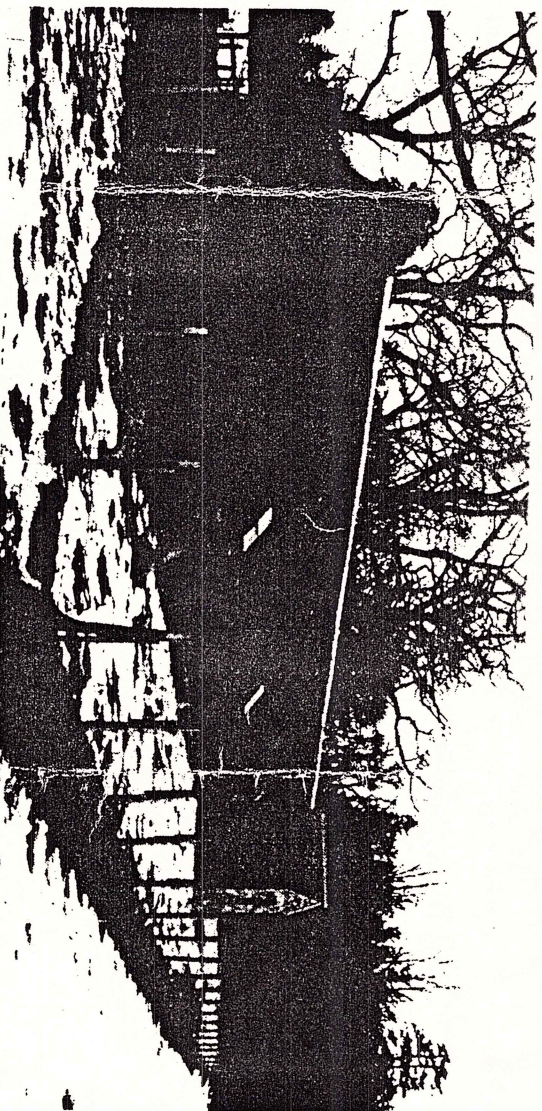


# Blairgowrie Advertiser

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Baldinnie Reservoir near Coupar Angus: the war bunker controversy continues.

## REGION MAY

## APPEAL TO

## SCOTS SECRETARY

## OVER DISTRICT

## NUCLEAR

## BUNKER VETO

PERTH and Kinross District councillors recently gave the environment top priority when they refused Tayside Region planning permission for a technologically advanced war bunker near Coupar Angus. But that's not the end of the story.

In 1983 the region — with full Scottish Office backing — revealed plans for a £360,000 wartime nerve centre at disused Baldinnie reserve, despite protests from the anti-nuclear lobby.

But when proposals for a two-storey emergency control complex came before the district council's development control committee, they were dismissed as an intrusion in a rural area. Concern was also expressed over the likely loss of mature trees.

Yesterday Councillor Ian Mackie, leader of the region's Conservative administration, expressed surprise at the rejection move and

warned that an appeal to the Scottish secretary could not be ruled out.

"We will wait until we see the official terms of the district's refusal," he said. "We may appeal or there could be a meeting to discuss our proposals with the council and, hopefully, reach an agreement."

Mr Mackie felt there may have been a lack of understanding between the two councils.

"We hear talk of a nuclear bunker. But we would be making use of an existing building as an emergency control centre," Mr Mackie explained. "Its function would be to co-ordinate the work of the emergency services in the event of a major incident — a war-time incident, not necessarily nuclear."

Mr Mackie said a control centre was essential on Tayside and the old reservoir made an ideal location. It was away

from a built-up area, most of it was underground and the authorities would make use of the building that was above ground level.

"At the end of the day it might enhance the area," the Tory leader said.

"We have a duty and responsibility to do everything possible to be prepared in the event of a major emergency. We would have to keep in contact with the emergency services and public utilities to restore normal life to the community as quickly as possible," Mr Mackie added.

But yesterday a spokeswoman for Blairgowrie and District CND said she was "horrified" at the prospect of the district council decision being overturned.

"We were relieved when councillors refused planning permission for this emergency wartime headquarters," said Mrs Kristin Barrett, branch chairman. "We were

opposed to the plans from the outset."

Mrs Barrett stressed that CND were not opposed to emergency planning for civil purposes — such as an industrial accident — but they utterly rejected planning for a "nuclear war situation".

In 1984 a CND survey revealed that more than 80 per cent. of adults in Blairgowrie, Coupar Angus and Alyth did not believe they would survive a nuclear attack on Britain.

"For Ian Mackie to talk of restoring normal life to the community as soon as possible is at best a dangerous delusion and at worse a cruel deception," said Mrs Barrett.

"We hope that Perth and Kinross District Council's refusal to give the development the go-ahead will give local people and councillors a chance to reconsider the advisability of planning for nuclear war."