



## British war game plans relief of Oman

By David Fairhall,  
Defence Correspondent

For the first time since the Falklands campaign a substantial British tri-service force will be exercising later this month outside its familiar Nato area. The aim is to demonstrate that Britain still retains the ability to airlift a force of brigade size over several thousand miles, with air and naval support, either to fulfil a residual military commitment or go to the aid of a friendly nation.

The setting for the exercise, codenamed Saif Sareea (Swift Sword), is the Arab sultanate of Oman, at the entrance to the Gulf. The premise of the war game is that Oman has appealed for British military assistance against an unspecified "external threat".

The exercise director, Air Chief Marshal Sir Peter Harding, said yesterday that the choice of Oman had nothing to do with conflicts elsewhere in the Middle East. The Sultan's armed forces (to whom 180 British officers and men are seconded) were eager to play host; the British were delighted to take advantage of such an offer.

Some 5,000 men will take part including the headquarters 5 Airborne Brigade, the 2nd Battalion the Parachute Regiment, and part of 40 Royal Marine Commando.

Four Tornado bombers and two air defence Tornados will fly the 4,000 miles to Masirah in mid-air from RAF Tristar and VC-10 tankers. The commandos will be landed from HMS Intrepid, supported by the carrier *Illustrations*.

The cost of Saif Sareea will be £4.3 million.

## HOME NEWS

### Plan for N-war aftermath 'futile'

By Martin Wainwright  
CIVIL DEFENCE authorities in South Yorkshire have told the Government it would be "totally futile" to plan for any sort of normal life after a nuclear war.

Scientists and civil emergency officers, who had been asked by the Government to analyse the likely problems, published their findings yesterday in the area's quaint command bunker at Cusworth Hall, near Doncaster.

A computer flickered with details of an imaginary attack. Next door a table was piled with a fortnight's supply of rations and equipment — creamed rice, peach slices, batteries and string.

Reading matter included a poster from the hall's folklore museum upstairs: "Mexborough Electric Theatre. All seats disinfected with Jeyes Fluid. We present the Harvest of Sin, a thrilling story of the downfall of a bank clerk."

The downfall of South Yorkshire would be fairly complete in a nuclear attack according to the statistics, which the Government has requested from all local emergency authorities. Up to 962,000 people (74 per cent of the population) would be killed. The minimum would be 75,000 dead and 26,000 injured.

## Army shrapnel shot lands in garden

# Miracle of shell-shock village

SHELL-shocked villagers yesterday demanded protection after a shrapnel-packed Army artillery round exploded in a vegetable patch.

Pieces of metal from the 25lb shell struck schoolboy David Halliwell as they flew up to 600 yards in Enford on Salisbury Plain.

But miraculously David, aged 11, was unhurt.

The stray shell landed in the garden of farmer Douglas Lamont and his wife Sarah, leaving a crater six feet deep and five feet across.

Both were out in the fields and their sons Angus, aged 19, and

in the ground, no sign of me and police everywhere.

"The police did not know where I was and you can imagine what he was feeling.

"We were told later that the shell had been fired from Larkhill and should have gone six miles or so to the east. How it ended up here I don't know.

"If my husband had not asked me to help him move some tractors I should have been in the

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home, Chestnuts House, 50 yards from the busy A345 Salisbury-Marlborough road.

Shrapnel hit David Halliwell on the arm but its force was expended and it fell harmlessly into the road outside Enford post office.

His mother Jean, a teacher at nearby Fittleton primary school, said: "Fortunately he was totally uninjured.

"He went home and told my husband, who is a soldier, and he informed the Army right

Tidworth into the Larkhill impact area and we are not happy about these shells flying over our village.

"We have complained all the way to Whitehall but we just came to a dead stop. We were told there was nothing we could do about it.

"It was a miracle no one was killed in this incident. We shall decide what action to take at our next meeting."

An Army spokesman at Bulford Garrison said: "Obviously we are very