

ANTI-NUCLEAR HOME GUARD CALL UP

HUNDREDS of volunteers have answered the Royal Air Force's call for civilians to help guard bases against nuclear protesters, says the Ministry of Defence.

RAF Brampton in Huntingdonshire is seeking 100 men and women aged 17-55 to turn out "in times of emergency."

They will receive tax free bounties at the end of each year on top of a daily rate of pay according to rank. Free uniforms will be issued.

If the scheme is successful, the force will be expanded nationally to 2,000 strong. Other bases looking for recruits are St. Athan, South Wales, High Wycombe and RAF Lyneham in Wiltshire.

Huntingdon residents have protested to Defence Minister, George Younger.

Mrs. Christine Saltmarsh, who lives near the American airbase USAF Alconbury, has asked for details of how the recruits will be weapons trained.

"This is arming vigilante types to the teeth," she said.

A Ministry of Defence spokesman said it hoped to start training the new recruits by November.

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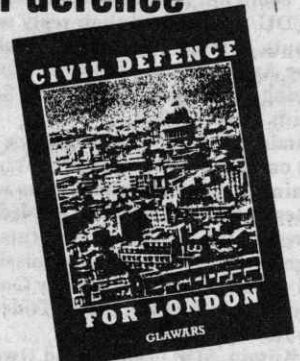


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GLAWARS: London's civil defence



How can a local authority prepare civil defence plans for its area without knowing what the effect of war would be?

The Civil Defence Regulations 1983 require local authorities to draw up civil defence plans. But the Greater London Council could not get enough information from the Home Office on the likely impact of war on London to enable it to draw up such plans. After taking legal advice, the GLC decided to commission the Greater London Area War Risk Study - GLAWARS.

The study's findings make it clear that civil defence is virtually useless in a nuclear state. It shows:

- a war would probably start with a conventional attack followed by a nuclear exchange, leading to an all-out nuclear attack on this country.
- even a relatively small nuclear attack would destroy both London and the UK. A 90 megaton attack would kill 97% of all Londoners.
- the Home Office's policy of planning for all kinds of attack is 'unworkable'.
- the Government's claim that civil defence contributes to deterrence is 'unfounded'.

The study recommends, however, that the GLC should plan for a 'war scare', a conventional attack, and a limited nuclear strike on military installations. This is odd, given that the Study also argues that a conventional attack would lead to full-scale war.

Apart from this minor oddity, the GLAWARS Study lays down some firm guidelines for all the other local authorities about to embark on their own planning assumption studies.

For an overview of the GLAWARS Study contact the NFZ worker, CND, 22-24 Underwood Street, London N1 7JG.

The report will be published by Blackwells at £5.95, in May.

● Charles Searle

Government to enforce civil defence obligations

By Peter Murtagh

Local authorities who persist in their opposition to making civil defence plans will be ordered to do so by the Home Office or face the loss of central government grant.

Few of the 54 local authorities covered by the Civil Defence Regulations of 1983 have put the regulations fully into effect, and three, Mid Glamorgan, South Glamorgan and Avon, have not made "any proper provisions for civil defence." Mr Giles Shaw, the Home Office Minister of State responsible said yesterday.

Mr Shaw said the degree of planning among the local authorities was "clearly not sufficient and not effective." He went on: "The problem is the widespread lack of a committed plan to deal with the 1983 civil defence regulations. There can't be a singular approach to a civil emergency under the civil defence grant system."

This was an apparent refer-

government funds for projects which the Home Office argues are designed to cope with peacetime emergencies only.

Mr Shaw said that in the past civil defence had been related solely to military activity, but it was time to see emergency plans as related to protection against any threat.

Mr Shaw announced that the Government was initiating "a rolling three-year programme setting priorities and a timetable for the implementation of the 1983 regulations."

Under the plan, 20 special communication centres for use during war will have to be built every year, and by October 1989 all local authorities should be in a position to provide accommodation and cope with disease, feeding, and the disposal of bodies.

Mr Shaw said: "The programme emphasises the central importance of detailed operational civil defence plans. It sets six-monthly target dates for their completion."

£13.7 million, and local authorities are reimbursed for 75 per cent of the cost of complying with the regulations.

Under the 1983 regulation local authorities are supposed to have communication centres capable of coping with emergency in a nuclear or other type of war.

County councils in England and Wales were surveyed in 1984 to see to what extent they were complying with the regulations.

Forty-nine counties had communication centres which could be operational within hours of an emergency being declared. Thirty-two had such centres, 10 had one under construction.

Seven had one operational but no site for another. In London where five centres are needed, three sites have been earmarked but there are no plans for the other two.

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