



## SCOTTISH NATIONAL PARTY

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## NEWS RELEASE

EMBARGO: THURSDAY 25 SEPTEMBER 1986, 10.30 AM

BRITISH TELECOM CHALLENGED ON N-WAR PREPARATIONS

THE SCOTTISH NATIONAL PARTY HAVE CHALLENGED BRITISH TELECOM TO REVEAL THE FULL EXTENT AND COST OF ITS PREPARATIONS FOR THE POSSIBILITY OF A NUCLEAR WAR.

AT A NEWS CONFERENCE IN EDINBURGH THIS MORNING (THURSDAY), THE PARTY PUT ON DISPLAY BOXES OF 'EMERGENCY RATIONS' THAT ARE BEING SECRETLY STOCKPILED IN TELEPHONE EXCHANGES.

SNP VICE-PRESIDENT AND DEFENCE SPOKESMAN ISOBEL LINDSAY TOLD THE CONFERENCE THAT THESE HAD COME FROM A TELECOM EMPLOYEE WHO WAS 'DISGUSTED' AT THEIR PLANS FOR A NUCLEAR WAR. SHE EXPLAINED THAT:

- EACH OF THE BOXES BEAR THE BT LOGO, ARE LABELLED 'EMRAT' (EMERGENCY RATIONS) AND CONTAIN FOOD, MOSTLY TINNED, FOR 1-2 MEN FOR 2 DAYS.
- THEY ARE BEING STOCKPILED IN ALL LARGE AND MEDIUM-SIZED EXCHANGES, ALONG WITH OTHER 'SURVIVAL' ITEMS SUCH AS WATER, MEDICINES AND PROTECTIVE CLOTHING.
- THE STORES ARE CLEARED OUT AND REPLACED EVERY 2-3 YEARS.
- THESE PREPARATIONS HAVE BEEN UNDERWAY SINCE 1979, AND IT HAS BEEN PART OF THE PRIVATISATION DEAL WITH THE GOVERNMENT THAT THEY CONTINUE.
- IN A NUCLEAR CRISIS, SELECTED ENGINEERS WOULD TAKE REFUGE IN SHELTERS STOCKED WITH THESE SUPPLIES IN ORDER TO KEEP 'ESSENTIAL' - PRESUMABLY MILITARY - LINES OF COMMUNICATION OPEN.

MS LINDSAY COMMENTED:

'WE ARE DEMANDING THAT BRITISH TELECOM PUBLISH THE FULL EXTENT AND COST OF THEIR NUCLEAR PLANS, AND WHETHER THEY OR THE GOVERNMENT ARE PAYING. EITHER WAY - THROUGH OUR PHONE BILLS OR OUR TAXES - THE PUBLIC ARE FOOTING THE BILL FOR THIS FRIGHTENING CHARADE.'

SNP NATIONAL EXECUTIVE MEMBER MR KENNY MACASKILL ADDED:

'BRITISH TELECOM /

'BRITISH TELECOM ARE DOING THE TORIES' DIRTY WORK FOR THEM. THEY HAVE SWALLOWED THE LIE THAT NUCLEAR WARFARE IS NOT ONLY POSSIBLE BUT SOMEHOW SURVIVABLE.

'THAT IS THE MOST DANGEROUS DELUSION OF ALL. THERE WOULD BE NO SURVIVORS: THE NOTION THAT THE SELECT FEW COULD EMERGE FROM THEIR BUNKERS AND LIFE WOULD CARRY ON AS NORMAL - TELEPHONES AND ALL - IS SHEER NONSENSE.

'BRITISH TELECOM CANNOT EXPECT US TO BELIEVE THIS HAS ANYTHING TO DO WITH PROTECTING THE CIVILIAN POPULATION. THE SCOTTISH PEOPLE WILL NOT BE FOOLED BY THIS TYPE OF CON-TRICK.'

MR MACASKILL REVEALED THAT THE SNP INTENDED TO DONATE THE BOXES OF FOODSTUFFS TO AN OLD FOLKS' HOME OR SIMILAR ORGANISATION. 'WE ARE MORE CONCERNED WITH HELPING THE LIVING THAN PREPARING FOR A SCENARIO WHERE WE WOULD ALL BE BETTER OFF DEAD', HE CONCLUDED.

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