

If All Else Fails...
SURVIVAL

Protect and Survive and the End of the World in Thatcherite Britain

by

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Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

Abstract

If All Else Fails... Survival, is a thorough examination of the creation of Britain's 1980s nuclear civil defence program, Protect and Survive. The programme's role as a significant political and cultural influence in Britain throughout the decade, and as a prominent construct of Cold War memories, are evidenced. The Conservative Party's release of the programme was a defining moment in British history, that carries political, social, cultural, and psychological ramifications. However, this research establishes that the programme's legacy as the creepy cartoon that advised families to hide from nuclear bombs in DIY shelters is misunderstood and oversimplified.

Protect and Survive's pragmatic simplicity (still associated with the Conservative Party) was symptomatic of a long, clandestine history of nuclear proliferation and civil defence cuts spearheaded by Labour Ministries as a means of bolstering support for the nuclear deterrent. The programme sparked concerted criticisms and its questionable efficacy was considered to be indicative of government efforts to remain a nuclear power, at the expense of public survival. The many policies, protests, and media that emanated from Protect and Survive provide unrivalled examples of discourses between governments and citizenry during the Cold War, indelibly capturing how British leaders covertly prepared themselves for the end of British civilization. Also brought to light is the unprecedented alliance between scientists, artists, doctors, Labour, academics, the CND, socialists, and Local Authorities (principally the Greater London Council) to assail the Thatcher government through the weak point of Protect and Survive's dubious credibility.

Being released in early 1980, Protect and Survive became a remarkable focal point of Thatcherite conservatism, nuclear disarmament, and British neoliberal culture at national and municipal levels. The remarkably negative public reaction to the program facilitated extraordinary debates and media on Britain's status as a nuclear power. Also considered are the cultural and political realities of 1980s British society through the relationships between federal and municipal governments with civil defence and the protection of its citizenry. British concepts of nuclear danger are explored as well as how the fear of annihilation informed ideas of Britishness, community, mental health, class, culture, and the role of government. Also rationalized is the processes through which Protect and Survive shaped the everyday experience of British life during the Cold War as part of a complex correlation between politics and culture that was endemic within Cold War Britain.

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Dedication

To Mom, Dad, Nadia, Nonna, and Missy

Thank you for making this possible

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List of Abbreviations

AMA: Association of Metropolitan Authorities
BBC: British Broadcasting Corporation
BMA: British Medical Association
CDA: Civil Defence Act
CDC: Civil Defence Corps
COI: Central Office of Information
CND: Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament
DHSS: Department of Health and Social Security
DIY: Do It Yourself
DOE: Department Of Environment
DTI: Department of Trade and Industry
END: European Nuclear Disarmament
FCO: Foreign and Commonwealth Office
GLAWARS: Greater London Area WAR Risk Study
GLC: Greater London Council
HDC: Home Defence College
HDR: Home Defence Review
HMSO: His/her Majesty's Stationary Office
HO: Home Office
JIC: Joint Intelligence Committee
MAFF: Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Fisheries
MCANW: Medical Campaign Against Nuclear Weapons
MOD: Ministry Of Defence
NATO: North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NFZ: Nuclear Free Zone
NHS: National Health Service
PF: Protective Factor
PRB: Public Relations Branch
PSM: Protect and Survive Monthly
ROC: Royal Observer Corps
SAB: Scientific Advisor's Branch
SANA: Scientists Against Nuclear Arms
SHHD: Scottish Home and Health Department
SRDB: Scientific Research and Development Branch
SRHQ: Sub-Regional Headquarters
TAVR: Territorial and Army Volunteer Reserves
UKCICC: United Kingdom Commanders In Chief
UKWMO: United Kingdom Warning and Monitoring Organization
WTBS: WarTime Broadcasting Service

Introduction:

Protect and Survive

What was Protect and Survive? The simplest answer is a nuclear civil defence programme. It was emergency public education comprised of a classified booklet, later published in 1980, and a series of video episodes which remained classified. During an international crisis, where the threat of nuclear attack appeared, the booklet would be distributed to the public while the BBC would convert to the Wartime Broadcasting Service, airing the video episodes on a continual loop. Panicked Britons would read the printed warnings admonishing them to keep their families in cramped DIY shelters while watching unnerving cartoons explaining the symptoms of radiation poisoning. Protect and Survive was to be the voice of the national government in a crisis, a one-way dialogue providing advice and refuge. The programme's contents are best summarized by one word: pragmatic.

What then is civil defence? In the most basic terms, it refers to non-combat, pre-emptive measures taken by a government to counter a hostile force. These measures are often organized before an attack has occurred and are designed to protect the citizenry of a nation, separate from military defences. In Britain, the concept has long roots, interwoven with symbolic national identities as an island state protected from outsiders by the surrounding seas. For centuries, Britons had little experience with the scourge of foreign invasion. As Shakespeare wrote, "This fortress built by Nature for herself, Against infection and the hand of war... This precious stone set in the silver sea, Which serves it in the office of a wall, Or as a moat defensive to a house ... Whose rocky shore beats back the envious siege" (King Richard II. Act 2 Scene 1).

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This splendid isolation would dramatically end with the technological advancements of the Twentieth Century. Civil defence took on a tangible meaning to Britons with the 1916 German aerial bombardment of England during the First World War. For the first time, deliberate civil defence measures were introduced to Britain during the interwar period, as the government began to consider public shelters and warning systems. These civil defence measures most famously came into effect during the Blitz, a period of tremendous cooperation and dialogue between governments and their citizenry. Thousands later recalled, with surprising fondness, the pride of growing vegetables above their Andersons (garden shelters), the reassurance of eating dinner on top of their Morrisons (fortified table shelters), and the comradery of Londoners sheltering in Underground stations.

While government provisions were made to organize materials and instructions, Britons associated this era with community and volunteerism, despite the necessity of building their own shelters. Independent or communal, civil defence helped Britain survive the Blitz, and perhaps also the War. However, the World War II constructs of civil defence became obsolete with the establishment of nuclear weapons. Simple shelter designs, lifesaving during the Blitz, would need to be rapidly advanced to withstand the devastating destructive potential of the atom bomb. Garden shelters and sleeping in Tube stations had become antiquated. Britain codified civil defence with the 1948 Civil Defence Act, which defined civil defence as non-combat measures taken before, during or after an attack to defend against, or deprive the means of, foreign attack. The Act also provided new powers and function to Ministers, enabling them to organize stockpiles and resources for the purposes of preparedness and to delegate these duties to Local Authorities and the police.

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The 1948 Act was legally binding legislature that informed the civil defence responsibilities of Local Authorities until its amendment in 1983. Under the Act, Local Authorities could be reimbursed up to 3/4 the costs of civil defence measures and were now “under a duty to comply with requirements as to training for and taking part in any form of civil defence for the time being recognised by the designated Minister”.¹ After the prominent role played during their creation, the United Kingdom became the third nation to possess nuclear weapons in 1952. By this time, the Superpowers had undertaken the technological leap from atomic or fission bombs to the exponentially more powerful fusion, hydrogen or thermonuclear bombs. The awesome power of fusion bombs once again required British civil defence concepts to be reconsidered.

In 1955 the Ministry of Defence (MOD) organized the Strath Committee, chaired by Cabinet Minister William Strath. The task set out for the Committee was to conceptualize a thermonuclear attack on Britain and the resulting casualties amongst the civilian population. The establishment of the Committee itself showed direct governmental concern for citizenry and civil defence. As expected, the findings were discouraging. The Committee concluded that with less than a dozen thermonuclear bombs the entire nation could be functionally crippled and British civilization itself would be unlikely to recover. Two years later, following the disastrous Suez Crisis, Defence Minister Duncan Sandys authored a White Paper based on the 1957 Home Defence Review.

The White Paper agreed little could be done to protect the public from a thermonuclear blast, but it stringently argued this was not an excuse to neglect civil defence completely. The Sandys Defence White Paper of 1957 put forward the humanitarian tenet that the government

¹ Civil Defence Act 1948 (12 & 13 Geo. XI c.5).

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had a duty to protect its populace from nuclear threats. Sandys' directive incorporated a moral obligation into civil defence rational and the role of the nuclear deterrent. There was now a just, and an unjust, decision successive governments would have to make if they wanted to maintain Britain's nuclear arsenal. An imperative was established that if Britain was to be a nuclear nation, it had an obligation to provide some measure of defence to the public. As Sandys stated, "it would be wrong not to take some precautions to minimise the effects of nuclear attack, should the deterrent fail to prevent war".²

Pressing forward, Britain continued to support civil defence, though this was mostly limited to food stockpiles, and the volunteer based Civil Defence Corps (CDC), Royal Observer Corps (ROC) and the United Kingdom Warning and Monitoring Organization (UKWMO). The cost of these preparations represented a fraction of the expenses of the nuclear deterrent. This period is summarised by historian and journalist Peter Hennessy as the rise of "the secret state".³ In his book, *The Secret State*, Hennessy focuses on the establishment of classified post-attack contingencies from the use of the atom bomb in 1945 to the hydrogen bomb circa 1955. During the 1950s, underground bunkers from the War were renovated to house the nation's government. Preparations were made to fragment the nation during an attack, into a dozen pieces, each with a Minister as the highest authority. This compartmentalization of administration, the so-called machinery of government, was thought to provide the best chance of maintaining law and order once communications with a central government were severed. Ministers would command from fortified Regional or Sub-Regional headquarters, serving as the hidden manifestation of civil defence. For the public, civil defence was left to the actions of the CDC and leaflets on avoiding

² The National Archives (TNA): CAB 129/86, "Statement on Defence, 1957", March 15 1957.

³ Peter Hennessy, *The Secret State: Preparing For The Worst 1945 - 2010* (Penguin UK, 2014).

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fallout and putting out fires. While perhaps meager efforts, actions were still being taken to protect the public.

As the post-War economic boon ended by the 1970s, Britain continued to cling to its nuclear consensus and maintain the deterrent. This period of civil defence conflict between finance and obligation is covered in historian Matthew Grant's book, *After the Bomb*.⁴ Grant's book carries the story of British civil defence forward from that covered in *The Secret State* to the watershed decision to abolish the CDC and place civil defence on a care and maintenance basis in 1968. The 1960s were a tumultuous era for British civil defence which saw it treated as a burdensome, and expensive, requirement affixed to the nuclear deterrent. Then, more than ever before, the door was open for Britain to exit the nuclear club.

Britain's bomber-based missiles were obsolete in the era of ballistic missiles. Complicated and expensive accords would have to be reached with the United States to obtain their submarine-based Polaris missile systems, calling into question Britain's nuclear independence. Successive governments and Labour Prime Minister Harold Wilson chose to maintain Britain's deterrent and purchased the Polaris submarine systems. The financial trade off to afford the new launch systems and submarines was weak civil defence. At this time, the British public appeared apathetic about civil defence. Britons tolerated paternal government film reels and booklets such as *Advising the Householder*, assured the CDC would save the day once again if called upon. In 1968 a cash-strapped Wilson placed civil defence into a kind of stasis titled care and maintenance. Care and maintenance amounted to selling off food stockpiles, letting equipment rot and running civil defence down to almost nil. Importantly, care and

⁴ Matthew Grant, *After the Bomb : Civil Defence and Nuclear War in Britain, 1945-68* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

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maintenance also saw the CDC disbanded, and with it, the lingering carryover of communal civil defence from the Blitz.

As civil defence interest cooled during the lull of détente in the 1970s, it returned to cultural prominence in 1980s. The renewed interest was not unique to Britain as Cold War tensions reached levels unseen since the Cuban Missile Crisis. Even in-situ historians made note of the rising anxieties, calling this period the “Second Cold War”.⁵ The international crises of the early 1980s fell rapidly in succession: the 1979 Soviet-Afghan War, the election of conservative hardline Cold Warriors Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan, the 1980 Iranian Hostage Crisis, CND expansion, Cruise Missile deployment to Great Britain, a renewed nuclear arms race, and the Falklands War, to name a few. The unprecedented global anxieties provided an ideal ecosystem for Protect and Survive to enter public consciousness.

What came next? This dissertation answers this question, providing an unofficial conclusion to a thematic trilogy on British civil defence started by Hennessy and Grant. Beginning in 1968 with care and maintenance, the study moves forward quickly to 1974-75, and the creation of Protect and Survive. Protect and Survive was created during Harold Wilson’s second Labour Party administration as the cost-effective solution to an unsolvable problem. By 1980, British civil defence would leave the shadows of the secret state and step directly into public discourse, pitting government against their charges. In the halls of the Home Office’s F6 Division (Emergency Services and Civil Defence), a blunt and ambitious assistant secretary named Duncan Buttery took it upon himself to restore Sandys’ imperative of civil defence. As the nation’s fortunes began to dwindle in the decade of decline, new ideas emerged that more had to be done, and the result was Protect and Survive.

⁵ Fred Halliday, *The Making of the Second Cold War* (London: Verso, 1983).

As nuclear matters came to forefront of the 1980s, any study of Cold War Britain is lacking without the study of nuclear civil defence. One of the most straightforward goals of this study is to correct to the many misconceptions that have developed around Protect and Survive. As the research on Protect and Survive continues to expand, new information will begin to fill in the gaps of our understanding. This study is the first to consider Protect and Survive in its entirety, to collect and analyse all available sources and cultural reverberations and place the programme into the broader history of the Cold War. Currently, Protect and Survive is undoubtedly misinterpreted in the historiography. Until recently, documents surrounding the creation of the programme were unavailable and the public (as well as historians) filled in the voids with their own assumptions, often projecting sinister intentions on the Conservative government. Through careful exploration of previously classified Home Office documents, as well as the most in-depth collection of cultural references to date, this study disproves these misinterpretations of the programme to categorize Protect and Survive as the product of basic bureaucratic pragmatism.

To date, only a handful of academic studies of Protect and Survive have been produced, all of which make fruitful inroads, though some continue to perpetuate prevalent negative assumptions. For this study, the most influential work is an impressive 2012 article by historian James Stafford.⁶ Stafford provides the crucial first looks into the creation of Protect and Survive, though the emphasis is on the efforts of historian EP Thompson and the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament to invalidate the programme. Through Stafford's research, the historiography gained insight into the programme's authorship, including a brief, though memorable, discussion

⁶ James Stafford, "'Stay at Home': The Politics of Nuclear Civil Defence, 1968–83," *Twentieth Century British History* 23, no. 3 (January 9, 2012): 383–407.

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of Duncan Buttery. Stafford credits the decision to publish *Protect and Survive* to a Home Office and Ministry of Defence desire to educate the public on their roles during a nuclear crisis following Secretary William Whitelaw's 1980 Home Defence Review. However, much is left unsaid about Duncan Buttery despite the realization that it is primarily through analysis of Buttery, and his unrelenting practical personality, that the intentions of *Protect and Survive* become evident. This dissertation exhaustively delves into Buttery's work to create *Protect and Survive*, revealing a rare occasion when government policy can be attributed to the efforts of an individual.

Stafford provides an important entry point into *Protect and Survive* history which this study carries forward with further research and historiographical expansion. In Stafford's article, attention is called, rightfully so, to the correlation of the ethos of Thatcherism with the pedagogy of *Protect and Survive*. The programme is depicted as an obvious product of its time, the 1980s, with its combination of neo-liberal, survivalist, individualistic, paramilitary advice. Much of the self-made, national revival rhetoric espoused by Thatcherism is embodied in *Protect and Survive* as it encouraged individuals to take responsibility for the protection of their families, which Stafford interconnects with the decade. However, despite its status as a paragon of Thatcherism, the programme was created in the mid 1970s during Harold Wilson's second Government. Stafford acknowledges this, though the effort to pull the programme out of its comfortable home of the 1980s to place it properly into the 1970s is lacking. A proper consideration of the programme's creation, to graft the iconic neo-liberal values of Thatcherism back to their true origin provides part of the originality of this study to the historiography. While the Conservatives were undoubtedly pro-civil defence, Labour's intense opposition to the programme is not localized in the broader anti-nuclear politicization of civil defence inherent to the 1980s.

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Stafford's article also attributes the common characteristics of "incompetence or outright malice" to the authors of Protect and Survive. This is the predominate view of the programme that often overshadow the historiography. These negative suppositions are the result of the current historiographical focus on anti-nuclear protest cultural, as these were the sources commonly available. 1980s British popular culture undeniably strengthened the anti-nuclear, anti-government rhetoric of the left-wing institutions that campaigned against Thatcher (Labour, CND, academia, artists, journalists, etc.). Relying on these sources without corresponding pro-civil defence materials obscures the historiographical conclusions drawn from Protect and Survive. Stafford draws many insights from the works of anti-nuclear activist EP Thompson and the CND, both of whom argued that Protect and Survive was in fact a Machiavellian Conservative scheme to inculcate the public into accepting the possibility of nuclear war and annihilation. However, this projection become untenable when considering the realities of the programme's creation and the scientific research that dictated 1980s disaster education. Other misconceptions, such as pervasive media leaks forcing the Government to publish a knowingly ineffective civil defence programme are repeated in the article, which are addressed by this study. Through Home Office documents, as well as civil scientist communications, newsprint, journals, and forgotten pop culture artefacts, this study replaces common conventions of malice with pragmatism, financial limitations, and bureaucratic reality.

However, it must be stated that many excellent and innovative arguments are raised by Stafford, and these are elaborated upon in this study. Stafford provides useful examples of the overwhelmingly negative reception Protect and Survive received in popular culture, however, the examples are cursory and unconnected to the sensationalism and politics at work behind the material. Stafford indelibly captures the sense of helplessness felt by both the Home Office and

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the public to resist the terrifying possibilities of nuclear fallout blanketing the nation. Though Stafford attributes the neo-liberal self-help advice of Protect and Survive to a Home Office that was “unwilling or unable” to protect the nation, this work conclusively evidences the financial limitations and political conflicts that left both Labour and Conservative governments few options for public survival.⁷

Another crucial study within the historiography is provided by education historian John Preston. Preston engages with Protect and Survive in several works, though he utilizes different methodologies than this study. Preston’s work on disaster education examines the cultural meanings of government education programmes, and crafts postmodern arguments. Some of these arguments include the belief that Protect and Survive has racist undertones that project a dominant white, middle-class cultural hegemony by British government.⁸ This dissertation does not contribute to this debate, though accusations of inherent racism in the Protect and Survive logo, the “white” family, fail to address the less sensational reality of Home Office documents in which the white on blue logo was chosen for simple ease of visibility.⁹

In relation to this study, one of Preston’s most significant contributions is his astute categorization of Protect and Survive as a form of “public education”.¹⁰ Protect and Survive was ultimately an attempt at public education, though politics undoubtedly played a significant role. In a perceptive 2015 article, Preston focuses on the discourse between government institutions and public microactors which shaped the pedagogy of Protect and Survive. More specifically, Protect and Survive is categorized as a form of surge pedagogy. Protect and Survive was never

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ John Preston, “Protect and Survive: ‘Whiteness’ and the Middle-class Family in Civil Defence Pedagogies,” *Journal of Education Policy* 23, no. 5 (September 1, 2008): 469–82.

⁹ TNA: HO 322/776, “Protect and Survive Companion Manual,” 1976.

¹⁰ John Preston, “The Strange Death of UK Civil Defence Education in the 1980s,” *History of Education* 44, no. 2 (2015): 225–42.

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intended to provide ideal shelter for all citizens, nor was it intended to be studied at leisure.

Buttery's programme was created to impart as much information as fast as possible, explaining the austerity of the advice in the booklet and videos.

This dissertation builds from Preston's research on public disaster education, the high nuclear anxieties of the early 1980s, and the unrelenting pessimism and cynicism amongst the British public and popular culture of the era. Similarly, to Stafford, Preston concludes that the straightforward programme was more of a "public relations exercise" to gather support for nuclear deterrence than an honest attempt at protecting citizens. Though support of the programme was thought to secure confidence in the deterrence, the concept of Whitehall knowingly providing useless, and ultimately fatal, advice is repeated without documented merit. The Home Office struggled to provide the best possible advice under severe limitations on what was financially and politically possible in the 1970s and 1980s. National bunkers and massive population relocation were conclusively proven to be untenable in a multitude of Home Office and Scientific Advisory Branch studies, prescribing the simplicity of Protect and Survive.¹¹

Lastly, the most in-depth collection of Protect and Survive popular culture before this study was a successful 2012 article by Daniel Cordle. Though it is a narrower study than this dissertation, Cordle's article persuasively evinces through British literature that the 1980s were a "nuclear decade", fuelled by rising Cold War tensions and media interest in civil defence. Using popular culture as a response to events within the decade, Cordle captures the urgent message by anti-nuclear media to effectively suggest protection was impossible. Cordle argues that British popular culture makes evident that the 1980s were a "distinctive" nuclear culture.¹²

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Daniel Cordle, "Protect/Protest: British Nuclear Fiction of the 1980s," *The British Journal for the History of Science* 45, no. Special Issue 04 (December 2012): 653–669.

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Cordle provides many useful arguments to the historiography that frame civil defence media, or more specifically to this study *Protect and Survive*, as central to the “lived experiences of the 1980s”. Concepts of nuclear culture, though neglected, are a vital component of British history, and the historiography serves to gain from continued inspection and engagement with *Protect and Survive*. Cordle utilizes a bottom-up methodology, exploring influential and apocalyptic British science-fiction as constructs of nuclear culture. The response of artists and counter-cultures to *Protect and Survive* appear ideological, symptomatic of a dissolved social contract as the programme failed to provide any reassurance to the vulnerable populace.¹³

In Cordle’s article, *Protect and Survive* is framed as a tool to project national security and authority, which is common within the historiography. The argument holds that the programme had to impart the vulnerability of the country to attack, in order to foster reliance on the government. However, the insistence on paradigms of vulnerability created a level of insecurity in the public that the Conservative party were unable to quell throughout the 1980s. Thus, the protest culture promoted by CND and popular culture are said to be shared by the majority of the nation during Thatcher’s administration.

While influential, the verisimilitude of anti-nuclear popular culture and CND success provides another misreading within the *Protect and Survive* historiography that this study dispels. All three historians falsely correlate the preponderance of critiques of *Protect and Survive* and the tremendous revitalization of CND in the 1980s as evidence that the majority of the nation shared these values. This study evidences that the lack of support for *Protect and Survive* did not undermine Thatcher, nor did it increase support for unilateralism or the Labour Party. In a multitude of documents and research, it is evident that Labour failed to convince

¹³ Ibid.

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voters that they had a better alternative to civil defence than Protect and Survive and the deterrent. It is conclusively demonstrated in this study that public support for unilateralism in Britain actually declined significantly after the publication of Protect and Survive.

Another important contribution to the historiography by this study is the evidence that Protect and Survive's pragmatic simplicity was symptomatic of a long, clandestine history of nuclear proliferation and civil defence cuts spearheaded by earlier Labour ministries with profound social, political, and cultural ramifications. This theory, dubbed the Nuclear Consensus (Chapter 2), encapsulates the uniquely politicized history of British civil defence. The Nuclear Consensus, the bipartisan acknowledgement and proliferation of Britain as a nuclear state, provides further explanation of Labour's electoral successes and losses. Labour Party leadership had always resisted inner-party movements towards unilateralism, fearing a loss of public support. When the Labour Party unequivocally endorsed unilateralism in the 1980s, they were soundly defeated by pro-deterrent Conservatives. While Labour had strong support amongst large municipalities, particularly London, they had departed the consensus and alienated the rest of the nation. These lessons seem to have been forgotten by Labour in their disastrous 2019 election, validating the relevance of this study to modern political understanding.

What remains unquestioned within the historiography is that the many policies, protests, and media that emanated from Protect and Survive provide unrivalled examples of discourses between governments and citizenry during the Cold War, indelibly capturing how British leaders covertly prepared themselves for the end of British civilization which demand continued scholarship.

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The historiography of Protect and Survive has been served by either top-down methodologies on nuclear strategy and high politics, or bottom-up analysis of popular culture and protest movements against nuclear deterrence. As recently declassified documents demonstrate however, the vast majority of Protect and Survive was created and implemented entirely by the Home Office. It is for this reason that this study developed a middle-out methodology that documents the unconsidered political and cultural power wielded by Western bureaucracies. Working within the strict limitations of 1970s decline and Cabinet objectives, it was the Home Office that adapted and produced what came to be known as Protect and Survive. Successive governments accepted its existence and after publication it was the Home Office programme that inspired the vast production of anti-nuclear popular culture.

With the benefit of the 30-year-rule, this study can consider the position of the civil servants and ministers who authored the programme for the first time. Thus, this dissertation is primarily sourced from these recently declassified Home Office documents on Protect and Survive, held by the National Archives, which reveal the programme's rationale. Further source material includes research from several nuclear bunkers around Britain, along with primary documents from the Thatcher Archives at Cambridge, the CND materials at the London School of Economics and the University of Warwick, and GLC documents from the London Metropolitan Archives. Source material was gathered from national and municipal levels equally, providing a comprehensive analysis of Britain during Thatcherism.

This study has also gathered the largest collection of Protect and Survive cultural media, from television programmes to protest photography, that evidence the indelible memories and importance of Protect and Survive in British culture. This dissertation takes consideration of the often critical, or satirical nature of popular art and views 1980s popular culture as both a distinct

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amalgamation of inherited British values as well a product 1980s nuclear anxieties, British dystopian literature, and organized anti-Thatcherite counterculture. These diverse resources are effectively combined to further the study of the Cold War as well as contemporary British history.

As this study reveals, the instructions within Protect and Survive are imbued with Duncan Buttery's unrelenting practicality, attempting to at least do *something* to help *some* people. The programme was unyieldingly realistic. Protect and Survive promised little more than fallout resistance, though many began to attribute malice to its simplicity. Buttery designed the program for the average man, as well as the below-average man. If an instruction was complicated or intricate, he simply left it out and moved on to something more practical. For better or worse, Buttery's programme adhered to a strict mantra: it was better than nothing. To the government, Protect and Survive was the fulfilment of their civil defence obligations; to the public, it was insufficient, suspicious, and unacceptable. Whether Protect and Survive's lean-to shelters would have saved lives remains unknown, although the reputation it has endured is that it was laughable failure. However, the programme's legacy as the eerie cartoon that advised families to hide from nuclear bombs in DIY shelters is misunderstood and oversimplified.

Protect and Survive is a unique artefact of the Cold War. The programme was a one-of-a-kind combination of politics, culture and society, all focused through a lens of civil defence, that captured the nation's psyche at the height of Cold War tensions. The Conservative Party's release of the booklet and videos was a defining moment in British history, one which carries vivid memories to this day. Protect and Survive touched every facet of British life, including Whitehall, both political parties, local governments, and popular culture. Protect and Survive inspired unprecedented collaborations between scientists, doctors, artists, the media, Labour

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Party members, academics, the CND, socialists and Local Authorities (principally the Greater London Council). This unusual conglomeration came together to assail the Thatcher government through the weak point of Protect and Survive's dubious credibility.

The economic imperative for a cost-effective civil defence programme is clear, though the programme's origins are not. Of the many decisions that allowed the creation of the programme, the majority came from the Labour Party, though Protect and Survive was, and is, considered a paragon of Tory neo-liberalism. Analyzing the policy makers from British decline to Thatcherism reveals the influences behind Protect and Survive and the contest over civil defence. The programme serves as a reflection of both the 1970s and the 1980s in Britain.

Being released in early 1980, Protect and Survive became a remarkable focal point of Thatcherite conservatism, nuclear disarmament, and British neoliberal culture, which can be explored at national and municipal levels. The remarkably negative public reaction to the programme facilitated unprecedented debates and media on Britain's status as a nuclear power. Protect and Survive informed the cultural and political realities of 1980s British society as evidenced in the relationships between federal and municipal governments with civil defence and the protection of their citizenry. British concepts of nuclear danger were expressed through Protect and Survive and this dissertation demonstrates how the fear of annihilation informed ideas of Britishness, community, class, culture and the role of government. Protect and Survive shaped the everyday experience of British life during the Cold War as part of a complex relationship between politics and culture.

Beginning with the early British associations of civil defence and culture which originated before the Second World War, this dissertation proceeds to explain how threadbare post-War civil defence became a compulsory obligation to afford Britain's status as a nuclear

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power. Afterwards, it explores the public perceptions of the reduction of civil defence to a care and maintenance level compared to the billions of pounds invested in the nuclear deterrent. Further concepts are then elaborated: the economic necessity of Protect and Survive during the 1970s, a decade of decline; the Labour Party's financial and military objectives when creating the programme; the programme's pragmatic advice as a function of cultural change from community to individualism; the administrative combat between the Thatcher government and the Home Office to publish the programme; the "bunkers for bureaucrats" phenomenon, the perception that a privileged elite be afforded bunkers and the resulting public objections; the millions of pounds the GLC spent to discredit the programme and, by extension, the Thatcher government through exhibitions, commissioned artwork and civic protests; and the key role Protect and Survive played in the formation of Nuclear-Free Zones.

Significant space is also devoted to the exploration of common criticisms of Protect and Survive in British culture, including in newspapers, magazines, advertisements, television, news specials, literature, music, and films. The historiography of US Cold War culture, particularly the Duck and Cover era, is expansive, yet the British equivalent remains underserved. Recently, some books have plotted out many of the bunkers that were scattered across the United Kingdom, though they do so without discussing their purpose or effects.¹⁴ This study seeks to place these areas of conflict not simply onto maps but within the historiography.

¹⁴ N. J. McCamley and Nicholas J. McCamley, *Cold War Secret Nuclear Bunkers: The Passive Defence of the Western World During the Cold War* (Pen & Sword Military Classics, 2002); Wayne Cocroft and Roger J. C. Thomas, *Cold War: Building for Nuclear Confrontation 1946-1989* (English Heritage, 2003); Bob Clarke, *Four Minute Warning: Britain's Cold War* (Tempus, 2005); Nick Catford, *Cold War Bunkers* (Folly Books Limited, 2010); Simon Craine and Noel Ryan, *"Protection from the Cold": Cold War Protection in Preparedness for Nuclear War* (London, England: Wildtrack Publishing, 2011); Nick Catford, *Burlington: The Central Government Emergency War Headquarters at Corsham* (Folly Books Limited, 2012); Nick Catford, *Secret Underground London* (Folly Books Limited, 2013).

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The cultural impact of the phrase “better than nothing” must be considered while unpacking all the powerful connotations to which it was associated. Much of the literature on Protect and Survive highlights the obvious weaknesses of the programme, missing the intentions of the authors. Malevolence was often attributed to what was just bureaucratic expediency. The demystification of Protect and Survive after its publication was predicted by Buttery who authored the programme with selective secrecy in mind. The visible intentions of both parties are analyzed, along with their claims of what the programme could or could not accomplish. This is best revealed through analysis of the conclusive Conservative victories of the 1980s and the established public support of the nuclear deterrent despite Labour’s constant criticism of the programme and the deterrent.

The study of civil defence is integral to the study of Cold War Britain. Through the underserved study of Protect and Survive, this study provides new understandings of the establishment of a British nuclear consensus, the realities of national limitations and bureaucratic logicity, the circumstances around the decision to publish the programme, the partisan politicization of British civil defence, the genesis of Thatcherite neo-liberalism, and popular support for the deterrent at the end of the Cold War.

Chapter 1 (On a Care and Maintenance Basis) begins where Grant concluded his book and considers the state of British civil defence following the 1968 decision to disband the CDC and place civil defence into a holding state. The care and maintenance decision reflected the conflict between the cost of a nuclear programme with national decline and analyzes the

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concessions that had to be made. The chapter introduces concepts of British civil defence that originated in the First World War and the public trust in government that formed during the Blitz. The origins of consensus are revealed as well as the significance of the 1955 Strath Report, the birth of the welfare state, decolonization, the UKWMO and the financial costs of civil defence.

In chapter 2 (The Nuclear Consensus) Labour's unilateral roots are traced back to the 1960s when Labour opposed British reliance on US missile systems. Also discussed is the importance of the 1971 Home Defence Review which suggested the creation of a new mass media civil defence emergency education programme and recommended a slightly increased civil defence budget. The Review positioned the course of British civil defence for the next decade, emphasizing the benefits of secrecy to placate the nation and considered the reality of care and maintenance. Food stockpiles were neglected, equipment was rapidly deteriorating, and there was little care shown and even less maintenance. Action was required before civil defence became more of a liability than an asset. Here several influential suggestions were made such as the establishment of a public advice system and the cost-effective and prominent stay-put doctrine. How could the government move millions of civilians before an attack and where would they move them? With the unpredictability of fallout, it was surmised that cities might be evacuated into areas of even greater danger than the ones they escaped. The proposed solution was stay-put, which required people to stay in their homes before, during and after nuclear annihilation had devastated the nation.

Chapter 3 (Civil Defence Does Not Exist) follows the end of the nuclear consensus and the transition to partisan debates in 1979 after the Conservative victory. The eventual Labour commitment to unilateralism clashed with Conservative nuclear policy at the polls in 1979. With

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decline eroding the national economy, Labour campaigned on a lower defence budget and unilateralism. The tensions of the Cold War had placed Britain on a precipice with the thawing of détente, the Soviets in Afghanistan, unilateralist activists, the Iranian Embassy Siege, the Falklands War, and the Trident and Cruise missile advancements. Against this precarious backdrop, the British public voted in a resurgent Conservative party led by Margaret Thatcher in 1979, 1983 and 1987. The chapter demonstrates that Labour's adoption of unilateralism in 1979 corresponded to their string of electoral defeats that kept Labour out of office until Tony Blair restored the nuclear consensus in 1997.

Chapter 4 (Public Information in a Crisis) charts the origins of Protect and Survive, from national defence to nuclear deterrence and from stay-put doctrine to home shelters. The civil defence intentions of several networks are considered, including Whitehall, NATO, the Department of Health and Social Security, and the MOD. The growing demand to signify the strength of the deterrent through civil defence, and the practicality of the secret state are also explored. As the deficiencies of care and maintenance became apparent in 1973, F6 Division Director Duncan Buttery's first motivations are considered. Sources show a 1960s Canadian civil defence film titled *11 Steps* served as the model from which Buttery based Protect and Survive and produced its iconic visual aesthetic. The influence of the Joint Intelligence Committee's (JIC) new report on Soviet attack probabilities are also explored, as well as the steps taken away from communal Blitz-era defence to the DIY, neoliberalism commonly associated in the 1980s.

Chapter 5 (Paper Bags and Satirical Advice) explores the content and purpose of Protect and Survive. After decades of negative assumptions, the intentions of the authors of the programme are finally visible thanks to the 30-year-rule. Considering the foundational research, early drafts and presentation of information, a clear, honest attempt to save lives with a very

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small budget are revealed through Home Office documents. Sandys' statements in 1957 are revived as Ministers and staff expressed their beliefs that it would be wrong to not provide some form of civil defence, and that governments had an unspoken humanitarian obligation to protect their citizens. The concept of the machinery of government in war and its role as the foundation for post-attack recovery are also explored. The Home Office performed extensive technical as well as psychological research in an attempt to predict the realities of a post-attack Britain, and the harrowing image created from these fears are captivatingly discussed.

Also informing Home Office concepts of a British Armageddon were JIC studies which argued NATO forces could not withstand Warsaw Pact aggression in Europe for more than a fortnight. The amount of warning estimated for a nuclear attack was reduced from weeks to hours. Attack prognostications revealed the societal fears of the nation, particularly the very British fear of the loss of law and order. Each Home Office Department made their own paranoid assumptions of agitators that could exacerbate disorder during a crisis including Soviet saboteurs, Irish separatists, communist sympathizers, unilateral activists, anarchists and punks. All these factors influence the Conservative decision to publish *Protect and Survive* during the 1979 Review of civil defence.

Chapter 6 (*This is Not a Secret Pamphlet*) explores the initial leaks of *Protect and Survive* that led to decision to publish *Protect and Survive* in February 1980. Within this chapter, this study firmly dispels the popular understanding that successive leaks of the programme by the media forced the Home Office to publish *Protect and Survive*. While the historiography asserts that Cold War secrecy lost out to the investigative skills of the British Press who leaked *Protect and Survive* material and shaped British opinions, the reality was unfortunately much more mundane. The chapter documents the Home Office decisions to release small parts of *Protect and*

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Survive to the BBC to minimize internal resistance when the time came to publish the booklet and to promote openness around civil defence. Journalists such as Peter Hennessy and Peter Evans wrote popular, and fully sanctioned, articles that informed the public and opposed the sensationalism of other writers. The letters-to-the-editor columns of several British newspapers are gathered, with authors of all backgrounds, from Professors of War to retired Women's Royal Volunteers, that shared public sentiment on Protect and Survive. and did little to quell leaks which inflated the intrigue of the public's imaginations.

Chapter 7 (Under the Kitchen Table with Tins of Baked Beans) chronicles government machinations that determined the publication of Protect and Survive would be in their best interests. A highly influential secret home defence conference in 1979 is revealed, along with the conclusions it produced. One such conclusion was the Tory campaign of political openness, demystifying civil defence as a way of showing the strength of the nuclear deterrent. The chapter demonstrates how these decisions led Home Secretary William Whitelaw to deliver his pivotal speech to the House of Commons that rejuvenated British civil defence and announced the publication of Protect and Survive. The chapter concludes with the haphazard publication of Protect and Survive, which was so disorganized the Home Office was unsure whether the booklet was even released.

Chapter 8 (A Guide to Armageddon) explores the reactions to Protect and Survive in Britain's notoriously quarrelsome news media. The appearances of Protect and Survive in newspapers are gathered for a unique exploration of civil defence in public discourse. Papers from the Left and Right are contrasted, along with magazines, surveys and write-in columns to document the complicated public opinion of the programme that both disregarded civil defence while also accepting its necessity. A series of popular news-programmes are visited for the first

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academic exploration of their interpretations of Protect and Survive. Lastly, a notable “bunkers for bureaucrats” trope that pitted the public against their government was discovered during research and is discussed through intriguing classified materials.

Chapter 9 (Skeletons, Celtic Rock and Irradiated Sheffield) provides the most comprehensive examination of Protect and Survive influence in popular culture to date, along with the programme’s role in shaping 1980s British society. From obscure songs and theatre productions to memorable films such as *When the Wind Blows* and *Threads*, Protect and Survive inspired a plethora of influential pop culture memories that show the reverberations of Protect and Survive across all demographics of British society. The chapter concludes with an in-depth exploration of negative depictions of Protect and Survive intended to sway public opinion away from nuclear deterrence.

10 (The Woolly Hat Brigade) explores the unprecedented alliance of academics, scientists, communists, doctors, the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, students, unilateralists, socialists, the Labour Party, the GLC, and artists against Protect and Survive. The opening pages highlight what precious little support for Protect and Survive existed, mostly in the form of the Conservative Party and a periodical titled *Protect and Survive Monthly*. Afterwards, the inundation of detractors and their motives are discussed beginning with the Labour Party. The symbiotic intersection between the growing CND and the Labour party are evidenced through their anti-Protect and Survive media. Several notable critics of Protect and Survive, particularly Duncan Campbell and EP Thompson are discussed, as well as their efforts to discredit the programme and the Conservative government. The medical community’s disunion over the efficacy of civil defence are considered, along with the influential British Medical Association report. Labour’s attempts to exert policy control from its metropolitan bastions are chronicled

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along with the formation of nuclear-free zones. No Local Authority was more committed to the anti-Protect and Survive cause than the Greater London Council and their efforts, including art exhibits and the expensive GLAWARS study, are surveyed. The works of academics at the secondary and post-secondary level to ridicule Protect and Survive are collected, along with many of the notable non-fiction texts written against the programme. The chapter concludes with an exploration of the remarkable interrelationship between all the considered detractors against Protect and Survive.

Chapter 1 "On a Care and Maintenance Basis": Civil Defence in the 1960s

In 1968, the United Kingdom spent approximately £24 million per year on civil defence. At the end of 1969 that number fell to less than £6 million.¹ The precipitous drop was a result of a new policy introduced by the Labour government in 1968 known as "care and maintenance".² As the reported by the Public Relations Board (PRB) in 1986: "Between 1968 and 1980 successive governments invested no new effort or resources and provided only for the care and maintenance of existing facilities".³ Under care and maintenance, the United Kingdom spent the absolute minimum amount required to prevent civil defence measures from falling into complete disrepair. It was a conscious decision to save funding at the cost of greatly reduced readiness and capacity of British civil defence. There were multiple factors that pressed Great Britain towards care and maintenance, including economic, strategic and social. Care and maintenance was the culmination of years of cutbacks to British civil defence as the nuclear program became more expensive to maintain. Soon after the introduction of care and maintenance, the Home Office began to debate how the government of the day could announce the end of care and maintenance without significantly increasing civil defence spending. However, care and maintenance proved to be a useful pretext for multiple Labour and Conservative administrations to maintain civil defence expenditure. Care and maintenance finally ended after Thatcher and the Conservatives came to power in 1979. The Conservatives set out to end care and maintenance in 1980 with

¹ Mr. Lane, MP. House of Commons Debate, August 7 1972. Vol. 842, Col. 275.

² TNA: HO 322/793, "Implications of Reduced Expenditure on Civil Defence as a Result of 'Care and Maintenance' Policy," January 1, 1969.

³ TNA: INF6/2490, "Civil Defence Information and Publicity Programme," January 15, 1986.

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increased defence spending and a re-organization of civil defence. As with the 1955 Strath Report which documented the devastating power of nuclear weapons, care and maintenance was a milestone on Britain's journey towards Protect and Survive. After a series of studies and reports during the 1960s, the British government turned to care and maintenance as an emergency financial stopgap. The financial restraints led to the decision In the 1971 Home Defence Review to legitimize the controversial policy of "stay-put" that decreed the safest place for Britons during a nuclear crisis was within their own homes. Adherence to stay-put would lead directly to the creation of Protect and Survive.⁴

For three decades, British politics witness bipartisan maintenance of the nuclear deterrent, even at the cost of reductions in civil defence expenditure. This nuclear consensus corresponded with the welfare state consensus which has been well-documented in modern British history.⁵ British finances were fraught throughout the 1960s, particularly with the costly purchase of the Polaris missile system from the US, a series of alarming fiscal reports and the devaluation of the pound sterling. The development of care and maintenance can be witnessed in these watershed moments of British history which became even more taxing as the nation headed into the turbulent 1970s, the decade of decline.⁶

⁴ TNA: INF6/2502, "Protect and Survive Television Script Episode 4 'STAY AT HOME,'" November 5, 1975.

⁵ David Dutton, *British Politics since 1945: The Rise and Fall of Consensus*, Historical Association Studies (Oxford, UK ; Cambridge, Mass., USA: BBlackwell, 1991).

⁶ Geoffrey Kingdon Fry, *The Politics of Decline: An Interpretation of British Politics from the 1940s to the 1970s* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire ; Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

Chapter 1 - "On a Care and Maintenance Basis": Civil Defence in the 1960s

A brief history of the British political consensus on the nuclear deterrent reveals a loose unanimity on civil defence, one that accepted the reduction of the latter to maintain the former. From Britain's first atomic blasts in 1952 there were a series of sacrifices made to civil defence in the name of deterrence that led directly to care and maintenance and, eventually, Protect and Survive. Civil Defence in the time of Protect and Survive was built upon the stay-put doctrine that argued an individual's best chance for survival was to remain in their own homes with some fortifications against fallout. Best, in this sense, is a word with multiple meanings, as the Government arrived at this doctrine after determining that public shelters for that nation were financially improbable. The concept of stay-put was in stark contrast to Britain's civil defence policies decades prior that originated from Blitz-era collectivist concepts of evacuation, numerous volunteers, and public shelter. Even before Britain became a nuclear power, Britain had a long history of civil defence systems that were notably more egalitarian, and government administered.⁷

Since its development in the 1950s, Great Britain had several opportunities to choose between spending more funds to modernize their nuclear weapons program or disarmament. At every opportunity, Great Britain chose to continue investing in their expensive nuclear program and follow a doctrine of deterrence, regardless of political party. The British nuclear program cost hundreds of millions of pounds, leaving only fractions available for civil defence. There were moments when Labour toyed with disarmament, most notably during the dissonant conventions of the early 1960s, and then again in the early 1980s.⁸ At each instance, Labour elected to further invest in the nuclear program, remain a nuclear power and deter the Soviet

⁷ An excellent study of this era of British civil defence history can be found in: Brett Holman, *The Next War in the Air: Britain's Fear of the Bomber, 1908–1941* (Routledge, 2016).

⁸ Jonathan Hogg, *British Nuclear Culture: Official and Unofficial Narratives in the Long 20th Century* (London, UK: Bloomsbury, 2016), 9.

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arsenal with the threat of nuclear reprisal. When Labour reduced civil defence spending to its lowest point, care and maintenance, the Conservative Party did not increase funding until the government of Margaret Thatcher, despite several opportunities and Cabinet studies.⁹

Britain had its first experience with aerial civilian bombardment during the First World War with the Gotha bomber raids of 1916. The sight of bombers in the skies above London proved to be indelible on the nation's psyche. Soon after the War's conclusion, plans were drawn for the protection of the populous from future aerial attacks.¹⁰ On February 24 1939, Lord Privy Seal Sir John Anderson held a conference to discuss home defence as it pertained to air attack. Even earlier than the First World War, Britain had been fretful about the development of flight for war. Later phased out with care and maintenance, evacuation remained a truly viable option during both World Wars. It would not be considered again until 1981. Attendees of the 1939 conference concluded that it was "essential that children should be spared" and some 30% of the population were to be evacuated, mainly priority classes of "expectant mothers, the blind, the bedridden, or the very aged. For such classes, evacuation can be the only right policy". The concept of priority classes proved durable for decades, as even while evacuation plans were shed, mentions of considerations for priority classes remained. Evacuation, however, soon disappeared as a civil defence option following the arrival of nuclear weapons, particularly after care and maintenance.¹¹

The 1939 conference also gave priority evacuation status to Britons living in areas "exceptionally liable to heavy attack". Nearly fifty years later, the efficacy of evacuation of high-

⁹ Dennis Kavanagh, *Consensus Politics from Attlee to Thatcher*, Making Contemporary Britain (Oxford, UK ; New York, N.Y., USA: Blackwell, 1989).

¹⁰ Susan R. Grayzel, *At Home and under Fire: Air Raids and Culture in Britain from the Great War to the Blitz*, Literature in Context (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

¹¹ *Air Raid Shelters: Report of the Lord Privy Seal's Conference* (London, UK: HMSO, 1939).

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risk areas returned as a topic of fierce debate within Whitehall. One of the most notable differences between civil defence plans before and after the Second World War was attitudes towards expenditure. The ministers of 1939 viewed expenditure as a minor consideration in matters of national defence and public survival. They viewed evacuation, and all home defence, as a matter of humanitarian duty. Conference attendees agreed "the problem of cost [was] of relative rather than of absolute importance" when British lives were endangered. The conference regarded the limits of materials and manpower as notably more practical obstacles than expenses.¹²

The Acts and regulations of 1939 predicted daytime air raids and shelters were planned accordingly. During the Second World War, Local Authorities upheld their humanitarian duty to maintain and denote suitable air raid shelters under the terms of the Civil Defence Act of 1939. Local Authorities were to receive reimbursement for the cost of materials for residential shelters and eventually public shelters. Under the Act, buildings that could serve as viable public shelters needed to be identified by local councils with proper signage indicating that all, or part, of the building was designated for public civil defence. All commercial buildings employing more than 50 people were obligated to provide civil defence protection for workers and nearby families.¹³

With the rise of reliable military aviation, the Observer Corps was established and awarded royal assent in 1941 for its role in the Second World War. Composed of uniformed volunteers, their duty was to watch over the nation, vigilant against attacks from 870 field monitoring posts. The Royal Observer Corps, run by the Ministry of Defence on behalf of the Home Office, would soon share duties with the United Kingdom Warning and Monitoring Organization (UKWMO). The Civil Defence Act of 1948 then officially established the Civil

¹² *Air Raid Shelters: Report of the Lord Privy Seal's Conference*. 1939.

¹³ "Civil Defence Act" (1939), http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1939/31/pdfs/ukpga_19390031_en.pdf.

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Defence Corps (CDC), another group of uniformed volunteers who proved invaluable during the War.¹⁴

National shelter designs were developed to protect 10-15% of the population, setup for families at home as well as people caught away from home during bombing raids. Like the bunkers of the nuclear age, shelters were not designed to resist direct impact, but to provide adequate protection from indirect hits, fire, and debris. Civil defence planning also facilitated the development of standardized tube-like bunkers, known as Anderson Bunkers, built for homes and garden trenches. Families who could not afford their own had course to reimbursement for materials. The Anderson Bunker, encasing British families in corrugated metal, became a familiar representation of home defence during the Blitz, still recreated today in British museums.¹⁵ Originally considered for indoor use, they were deployed in gardens or yards and were considered "invaluable" to civil defence during the War and was said to be "practically immune" from casualties for indirect impacts. Unlike the Conservatives of the 1980s, who went great lengths to maintain likely target areas as state secrets, Local Authorities during the War were empowered to provide home shelters, and at times evacuation, for individuals living near high-risk targets such as airfields, depots, factories, etc. In total, the Act is estimated to have provided shelter for 5.8 million people at a cost of £22.2 million.¹⁶

Through habit, Britons during the War developed a routine of going about life during daylight and then seeking shelter at dusk, remaining there until daybreak. In 1940, this nocturnal system of civil defence was officially encouraged by the Government, who made provisions for shelters in commercial buildings that were unoccupied at night, as well as extensions to the

¹⁴ TNA: HO 322/940, "Draft HDO(80)7 Paper," June 1, 1980.

¹⁵ In 2012, the Imperial War Museum had a full-size recreation of an Anderson bunker that visitors could enter.

¹⁶ TNA: HO 322/1003, "Civil Defence Joint Planning Staff Working Party on Shelter Policy," June 9, 1948.

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Underground. At this time, all construction costs for the establishment of public and domestic shelters were covered by the Government, no longer just the materials. By 1941, the Ministry of Health provided many subterranean provisions such as bedding, cleaning, lighting, and feeding at larger shelters. Many British citizens remained at their work posts during daylight, entering shelters at night in a trustingly symbiotic relationship between citizenry and government. By 1941, the maximum income to qualify for shelters supplies were increased from £250 to £350 and the Morrison Table was introduced. To create a Morrison Table, families would receive instructions and materials to fortify their dining tables with steel framework. The Morrison Table was developed as wartime research demonstrated there was much less risk of suffocation or fire from collapsed buildings than previously believed. As a system of public advice and individual shelter, the Morrison Table draws some parallels with Protect and Survive. A notable difference, however, was the government funding provided for Morrison shelters and the more than 70,000 workers employed on the development and maintenance of civil defence. Bombing attacks tapered off as the War progressed and public shelters were minimally utilized, though kept in good condition. This proved fruitful with the introduction of rocket bombing in 1944. Many citizens returned to the familiar habit of nocturnal shelter and the growing number of newly homeless individuals were provided access to six new deep-tube shelters in London.¹⁷ After the War, it was estimated that roughly half the public shelters that were created could be returned to attack readiness with minimal effort, though these numbers would collapse with the development of nuclear weapons. However, a nostalgia would later develop around Blitz-era shelters and comradery, noted in several songs, books and films.¹⁸

¹⁷ TNA: HO 322/1003. Ibid.

¹⁸ TNA: HO 322/1003. Ibid.

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Following the attacks and air raids of the Second World War, Britain defined civil defence as "any measures not amounting to actual combat for affording defence against any form of hostile attack by a foreign power".¹⁹ The Civil Defence Act of 1948 attempted to advance many of the successful planning strategies of the War, particularly the CDC. A uniformed and well-funded CDC inspired confidence during the War and onward into the 1950s. New measures were developed from the 1948 Act, large organizations of training schools and civil defence marshals were financed by local authorities, though the Home Office would grant the majority of involved cost. The CDC operated the Civil Defence College (later renamed Home Defence College), and Local Authorities had generous provisions for specialized equipment, vehicles, training, etc. Civil defence, and knowledge of its implementation, was highly valued in the 1950s and early 1960s to protect British lives. Disciplined civil defence organizations developed advanced contingencies and trained regularly, preparing for possible aerial bombardment. During the 1950s, it was common to find squads of mobile columns of emergency personal prepared for immediate post-attack recovery in many city councils.²⁰ The columns were staffed by men and women from all backgrounds, war veterans to shopkeepers. Despite their reputation however, the advance of nuclear weaponry would quickly jeopardize their viability.

In 1951, Clement Attlee's Labour Party further defined the administration of British civil defence. Some local authorities had a separate function to make plans for the provision of either "public civil defence shelter" or "residential civil defence shelter" or for both. This was the start of a subtle, yet constant, initiative to shift greater responsibilities for civil defence to the community level. Public shelters were defined as for the use of the public at large without

¹⁹ TNA: Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF) 250/35, "Civil Defence Act 1948," 1948.

²⁰ TNA: HO 322/932, "Note to Mr. Heaton with Draft Submission to Public Relations Branch and Ministerial Statement," September 29, 1983.

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priority for specific individuals. Residential shelters were intended for specific individuals either in or near their homes. Public shelter would become the responsibility of county and county borough councils while residential shelter would be the responsibility of county districts.²¹

The Home Defence Review of 1955 established a policy of re-appraisal of home defence every five years.²² Later that year, William Strath, a treasury minister, oversaw the first in-depth study on nuclear weapons and civil defence in Great Britain. Strath's report focused on policies that would improve the chances of lifesaving and national recovery. The report chillingly concluded that in the event of war, the Soviet Union would consider the total removal of Great Britain's military capacity as an early priority. The Strath Report was one of the first reports to discuss the terrible effects of fallout on a densely populated island, with as few as ten bombs estimated to effectively wipe out British civilization. The report painted a horrifying picture of post-attack Britain, with uncontrollable firestorms, total infrastructure destruction, societal collapse, and deadly fallout.²³

Evacuation (notably the priority classes of earlier wars), national shelters and massive stockpiles of food and equipment were suggested by Strath's report as the only hope for survival. These measures would require a further developed CDC to administer, which was suggested. Overseeing the CDC, and post-attack Britain, would be a decentralized system of regional governments to maintain the machinery of government in war through the development of what Peter Hennessey refers to as the "secret state".²⁴ These hardened bunkers for regional government were limited in space and room was allotted for a select few government officials.

²¹ TNA: HO 322/871, "The Civil Defence (Shelter) (Planning) Regulations, 1951" (HMSO, August 4, 1951).

²² TNA: HO 322/958, "Report of the Working Party on Communal Fallout Shelters," April 1, 1968.

²³ TNA: CAB 134/940, "Defence Implications of Fallout from a Hydrogen Bomb," March 8, 1955.

²⁴ Hennessey, *The Secret State*.

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This entry selectivity would foster resentment from nuclear protestors for decades who dubbed the concept as "bunkers for bureaucrats".²⁵

Strath's details of nuclear destruction were vivid, yet theoretical. Financial realities, however, remained quite real. The Government began to buckle under the strain of maintaining an expensive nuclear deterrent, withdrawal from the Empire, the National Health Service (NHS) and national welfare. The collectivist measures of group shelters and rescue provided by robust home defence organizations proved to be a luxury Britain could hardly afford. While the Superpowers had seemingly limitless finances, Britain was forced to choose what they could afford to maintain while remaining a nuclear power. However, there was one suggestion Strath provided that proved affordable and set the course for the next fifty years of British civil defence: public emergency education.

Booklets and film reels proved to be the preferred pedagogical approach to national emergency education. *Home Defence and the Farmer* was the first such advice preparation, followed by *Nuclear Weapons* which was published in 1956, one year after the Strath report. The didactic nuclear advice media were, community volunteer based, and were utilized for decades.²⁶ The booklets provided information on nuclear weapons, and more importantly fallout, which was easier to shelter against. The effects of fallout on food, water, crops, shelters, etc. were introduced to the public as simply as possible. The pedagogy provided was cautionary in tone, less specific than *Protect and Survive*, to be available in peacetime.²⁷ Public emergency pedagogy proved to be very cost effective and *Nuclear Weapons* was revised and reprinted for

²⁵ Owen Greene, *London After the Bomb* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), 83.

²⁶ TNA: HO 322/939, "Letter from MAFF to F6 Division," June 9, 1980.

²⁷ *Nuclear Weapons* (London, UK: HMSO, 1956).

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decades as the main source of civil defence information. The booklet had a third edition printed as late as 1974, overlapping with *Advice to the Householder* and *Protect and Survive*.²⁸

Following the Strath Report, the Home Defence White Paper of 1957, referred to as the Sandys Report, proved equally influential on British civil defence. The Paper has been aptly described as the "pivot on which British [civil defence] policy turned".²⁹ The Report took the name of its Chairman, Duncan Sandys, Minister of Defence. Where the Strath Report had possibilities for civil defence, Sandys had stark requirements that would be vital for the maintenance of Britain's posture of deterrence. The Sandys Report also provided alarming descriptions of British nuclear apocalypse, and whereas Strath used this to encourage stronger civil defence, Sandys pushed the policy of deterrence as the only affordable and effective form of civil defence.³⁰

As Matthew Grant proved, British civil defence had been split into two spheres. The first, was the secret state, which focused on maintain national survival, the machinery of government, as much as possible after an attack. Those within the sphere such as government officials, civil servants and the military would have been provided extensive protection, yet in spite of their privileged roles, it was genuinely believed that preserving the machinery of government was good for all as the most probably method of ensure some semblance of central authority could direct national recovery. The second sphere, the vast majority of Britons, were provided with public statements, education programmes, and (objectively) inexpensive provisions for survival.

²⁸ TNA: HO 322/1028, *Civil Defence: The Basic Facts* (London, UK: Home Office Scottish Home and Health Department, 1983).

²⁹ Matthew Grant, "Home Defence and the Sandys Defence White Paper, 1957," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 31, no. 6 (December 1, 2008): 1.

³⁰ TNA: CAB 129/86, "Statement on Defence 1957," March 15, 1957.

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This was, as Grant notes, a necessary façade, a preservation of acceptance that facilitated a harsh rationality of the greater good.

By the mid 1960s, with economic growth winding down, cracks in the system were beginning to form to further strain civil defence. During the 1960s the Home Office frequently complained that many Local Authorities were using their civil defence grants to finance other civic matters. Some councils redirected funds out of necessity, patching tears in the fabric of the welfare state while others simply believed they knew better. Though the Home Office would frequently lament these financial issues, it remained hesitant to fine or otherwise compel the Local Authorities, priorities lied elsewhere. Following the release of Protect and Survive however, these financial reallocations peaked and became fiercely political. Many Local Authorities refused to use grant funds towards civil defence, particularly the Greater London Council (GLC).³¹ The redirections of the 1960s were less political than the 1980s, as there were other difficulties in the 1960s that would hasten the arrival of care and maintenance, each pressing the necessity to reduce civil defence expenditure. These included the 1962 decision to upgrade to the Polaris missile systems from the US, the 1964 shelter survey, the Defence White Paper and Home Defence Review of 1965, the devaluation of the pound in 1967, and the Working Party Review of 1968.³²

In 1962, Prime Minister Harold Macmillan signed the Nassau Agreement with US President John F. Kennedy. Under the terms of the agreement, Great Britain would purchase components of the American Polaris nuclear launch system. The British nuclear programme at

³¹ TNA: HO 322/932, "Note to Mr. Heaton with Draft Submission to Public Relations Branch and Ministerial Statement," September 29 1983.

³² TNA: PREM 11/4147, "Record of Meeting at Admiralty House," December 31, 1962.

that time was the land-based Blue Streak system. By the late 1950s this surface-to-surface missile system was approaching obsolescence. The US had been developing a superior system of bomber-based missiles, codenamed Skybolt, but soon, these too were surpassed by a new missile in development since the 1950s, codenamed Polaris. Polaris missiles were launched from submarines, making it nearly impossible for a nation to pre-emptively disable the missiles before the submarines could emerge and launch their warheads.³³ Some historians have argued that the decision to proceed with Polaris had "no impact" on the establishment of care and maintenance, however, the plethora of discussion around the expenditures to acquire and maintain Polaris demonstrate a clear financial influence amongst the myriad of forces determining British civil defence.³⁴

Both political parties unofficially agreed that their nuclear deterrent gave them agency in geopolitics, even with their rapidly deteriorating economics. There were multiple intervals when the Polaris program could have been downgraded or scrapped entirely. In every instance, regardless of party, the Polaris programme continued. Polaris would have a steep entry cost, yet it was necessary if Britain was to remain a relevant nuclear power. Through this nuclear consensus, an unspoken bipartisan agreement on Polaris and the nuclear deterrent developed. Both Labour and the Conservatives cut expenditures wherever possible to maintain the nuclear programme. It is difficult to imagine what, if anything, the Conservatives would have done differently than Labour when deciding upon the proliferation of the Polaris system, nuclear independence, and the power of deterrence.³⁵

³³ Richard Maguire, "Scientific Dissent Amid the United Kingdom Government's Nuclear Weapons Programme," *History Workshop Journal*, no. 63 (April 1, 2007): 123.

³⁴ Grant, *After the Bomb*, 190.

³⁵ John Baylis and Kristan Stoddart, "The British Nuclear Experience: The Role of Ideas and Beliefs (Part One)," *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 23, no. 2 (June 1, 2012): 342.

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In mid 1960s the Labour party, under Wilson, campaigned on a platform of re-negotiating the sale of Polaris, to improve the terms of contract for Great Britain, or to possibly opt-out entirely. While financial realities were significant, many historians agree that Wilson's flirtation with disarmament was never a credible promise.³⁶ Wilson had argued that the keels of the four nuclear submarines currently under construction were too far along to halt the programme, though this has been said to be entirely untrue by several historians. In his biography, Wilson noted that he agreed to continue the Polaris program as a scheme to strengthen ties with the US and lure away some of their funds to remedy the "serious economic difficulties" that beset his government. As the programme was set to be deployed in 1968, overlapping with the announcement of care and maintenance, the costs associated with Polaris were one of the key factors in the decision to pause civil defence spending.³⁷

Before the activation of Polaris, there were multiple realizations of the costs associated with Polaris and the savings that would have to be found in other areas, such as civil defence. One of the few dissenting voices was the Treasury who thought Polaris was too expensive, whereas most of the MOD and Home Office wondered what programmes they could downsize to afford Polaris.³⁸ As the price of Polaris was being tabulated, the government soon realized that finalizing Polaris would require even more drastic defence cuts than originally estimated.³⁹ As the imbalance between civil defence and economics became apparent, Wilson's Government soon realized some defence cuts would be critical.⁴⁰

³⁶ Peter Hennessy, *Cabinets and the Bomb* (OUP/British Academy, 2007).

³⁷ David James Gill, *Britain and the Bomb: Nuclear Diplomacy, 1964 - 1970* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2014), 74.

³⁸ Richard Maguire, "'Never a Credible Weapon': Nuclear Cultures in British Government during the Era of the H-Bomb," *The British Journal for the History of Science* 45, no. Special Issue 04 (December 2012): 529.

³⁹ TNA: CAB 128/37, "Minutes of Cabinet Meeting January 3 1963," January 3, 1963.

⁴⁰ TNA: PREM 13/26, "Defence Policy Briefing by Sir Burke Trend for Prime Minister," November 25, 1964.

Despite the successful launch of Polaris missiles in 1968, a controversy over the need to already upgrade the Polaris warheads surfaced. Great Britain's Polaris missiles no longer satisfied the "Moscow Criterion" (whether or not a nuclear warhead could penetrate the USSR's anti-ballistic missile systems and strike Moscow). It was believed that if Great Britain's nuclear arsenal was no longer guaranteed to annihilate a large Soviet city, then the deterrent value was rendered null. This created a complicated bipartisan process of debate codenamed project Chevaline to determine if it would be best to upgrade the new Polaris systems, purchase a superior American system or consider disarmament, again. The matter would not be resolved until the Thatcher's decision to purchase the advanced Trident missile system from the United States in the 1980s.⁴¹ Back in the 1960s, the political unanimity of nuclear consensus remained intact and after moving forward with Polaris, both parties persisted in looking for expenditures to expunge to offset the costs of Polaris.

Civil defence during the 1960s was still contingent upon a theoretical evacuation of millions into areas of public shelter, though the actual amount of shelter Local Authorities could provide was nebulous at best. As policy was reconsidered, it became apparent to the Home Office that they should attempt to determine how much shelter actually existed. In 1964 the Home Office attempted to calculate the number of basements and shelters in Britain which would provide a protective factor (PF) of 40 or more against fallout.⁴² The most significant finding of the survey confirmed what was already suspected: that the number of low PF dwellings and suitable PF basement shelters varied wildly between locations. One of the few

⁴¹ Helen Parr, "The British Decision to Upgrade Polaris, 1970–4," *Contemporary European History* 22, no. 2 (May 1, 2013): 253–74.

⁴² Protective factor is the term used by the British government to determine protection against fallout. The number correlates to the amount of radiation that is blocked out by the dwelling. A protective factor of 40, for example, would expose an individual to 1/40th the amount of radiation they would receive in the open. A PF of 100 would reduce radiation exposed to 1/100th, etc.

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commonalities were a deficiency of basements with a high PF in rural areas and the need for most above-ground accommodations to be considerably fortified against fallout. Further assumptions calculated that the readiness of suitable communal shelter in smaller towns was likely deficient, particularly if the billeting of tens of thousands of evacuees were required. Finally, the researchers concluded that they could not create a national PF minimum for communal shelters due to the extensive variabilities within each county. Seemingly, there were no savings to be found in a speculative dispersal scheme and the government began to look elsewhere.⁴³

The opening paragraph of Labour's 1965 White Paper began with the statement that the Government had inherited an "over-stretched and under-equipped" defence force without a clear role. Over £20 billion had been spent on defence since 1952 and were still found to be lacking in the recruitment of volunteers. The focus of the White Paper was undoubtedly on expenditure and once again, there was a clear demand to lower defence spending which was agreed upon by both parties. The Paper argued that the previous administration had made no attempt to connect expenditure to the deteriorating economic stability of the nation. The total defence expenditure was rising 5% per annum since 1963 and looked to continue, while at this same time, the Superpowers were lowering their expenses.

Uniquely, the White Paper positioned Britain's nuclear deterrent as being quite frugal. The figures of the Paper state the British nuclear programme was only taking up approximately 6% of the nation's £2.12 billion defence bill, roughly £128 million. For perspective, operations East of Suez, which would be infamously discontinued as another luxury Britain could no longer afford, were tabulated at £400 million. The deterrent percentages were calculated to rise to 8%

⁴³ TNA: HO 322/871, "1964 Pilot Shelter Survey," 1964.

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with the acquisition of the Polaris missile systems before returning to 5% at the end of the decade. Not only was the deterrent thrifty, it was apparently effective as it was argued that it reduced the likelihood of war and the demands upon home defence.⁴⁴

In Commons, the White Paper was immediately attacked by the oppositional Conservative Party for being a "cheap piece of party-political propaganda".⁴⁵ Despite Conservative election promises that they would maintain Britain's defence expenditure, several Conservative MPs took the Labour Party to task for doing precisely that.

Conservative MP Anthony Kershaw argued that the White Paper's attempted associations between British and Superpower defence funding was useless. Great Britain, MP Hugh Fraser argued, was in a unique situation of having effective defence while desperately searching for savings.⁴⁶ Opposition leader Alec Douglas-Home reminded the House that he had frequently been criticized by Labour for asserting that "the nuclear element in defence was much the cheapest part of it", and now he had been vindicated by the White Paper's formulations.⁴⁷

Prime Minister Wilson defended the White Paper as the House inadvertently found themselves in their frequent habit of belligerently agreeing with one another. Labour confronted the Conservatives for the ineptitude of their policies while the Conservatives derided Labour for using them so commendably. This was the circuitous language of nuclear consensus that often filled the House as it listed towards reduced home defence spending, and eventually, Protect and Survive.

Both parties approved of the nuclear deterrent, and neither had any better remedies for national defence, yet the two sides quarrelled as though they did not both reside within a nuclear

⁴⁴ TNA: CAB 148/19/24, "Defence White Paper 1965," January 27, 1965.

⁴⁵ MP Quintin Hogg, House of Commons Debate, March 4 1965, v. 707, c. 1539.

⁴⁶ MP Anthony Kershaw, House of Commons Debate, March 4 1965, v. 707, c. 1636-1637.

⁴⁷ Leader of the Opposition, Alec Douglas-Home, House of Commons Debate, March 4 1965, v. 707, c. 1545-1547.

consensus. The Labour Party's flirtation with disarmament while constantly perpetuating the programme was characterized by the Tories as "talking nonsense for thirteen years".⁴⁸ In truth, no country has ever relinquished their seat at the nuclear table once they have sat down, the notion of Britain disarming was almost an impossibility. As Kershaw astutely predicted, "once a nuclear power, always a nuclear power, whether we like it or not".⁴⁹

Additionally, Alec Douglas-Home memorably stated, the Labour Party was speaking "to the Left over [their] right shoulder".⁵⁰ Labour argued that it was the Conservatives who had been trying to slash defence spending all along and Labour was in the process of correcting their folly. Prime Minister Wilson brought the argument back to the Sandys White Paper of 1957 and described it as a moment that hobbled British defence, from which they were just now recovering. Sandys was designed, according to Wilson, to cut defence expenditure by £700 million pounds while fortifying the nuclear deterrent. To Wilson, however, the Conservatives and their White Paper had not only failed to find those savings, they increased expenditure by a further £400 million while allowing the British military to fall into obsolescence.⁵¹ To conclude the fierce debate, Prime Minister Wilson retorted that the White Paper was not a "definitive statement of defence policy" and that it was merely a part of set of reviews. One of the reviews was promised to tackle the question of the role of British defence and "the implications of meeting those roles in terms of manpower and equipment and in terms of money". That review was the already drafted Home Defence Review of 1965.⁵²

⁴⁸ MP Quintin Hogg, House of Commons Debate, March 4 1965, v. 707, c. 1646.

⁴⁹ MP Anthony Kershaw, House of Commons Debate, March 4 1965, v. 707, c. 1637.

⁵⁰ Leader of the Opposition, Alec Douglas-Home, House of Commons Debate, March 4 1965, v. 707, c. 1540.

⁵¹ Prime Minister Harold Wilson, House of Commons Debate, March 4 1965, v. 707, c. 1556.

⁵² Prime Minister Harold Wilson, House of Commons Debate, March 4 1965, v. 707, c. 1561.

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The 1965 Home Defence Review was released February 2nd 1966. When drafting the HDR, the Home Office planned for a worst-case scenario. It was stated that having multiple plans for attacks of varying severity would be expensive and illogical. Going forward the government would assume that fallout would blanket the nation and that no location would be exempt or relatively safe. From this position, they posited three functions of civil defence: casualty prevention, post attack life-saving and survival, and recovery. With limited resources of the British governments of the 1960s, the HDR recommended maximum attention should be put towards casualty prevention as doing so should increase survival and recovery as well. Eliminating post attack life-saving and rescue, the majority of which would be done by the soon to be disbanded Civil Defence Corps, would remove a large financial obligation. The report advocated for the United Kingdom Warning and Monitoring Organization (UKWMO), fallout discipline, public shelter and, still at this stage, population dispersal. In a few years' time, British civil defence would turn to the stay-put policy as an extremely cost-effective approach to civil defence that informed the public to fortify their own homes and follow government advice rather than seeking communal shelter and awaiting evacuation. Perhaps the most significant product of the 1965 HDR was the creation of stay-put policy: "for most people the best protection against radio-active fallout would be achieved by staying in their own home and acting on the advice given to them".⁵³

British civil defence was to become cheaper, more didactic, and individualized, the three main motives that composed Protect and Survive. The 1965 Review concluded by recommending that the population which lived in inferior PF housing should take steps to secure their own access to already existing high PF communal shelter which may be noted by the

⁵³ TNA: HO 322/465, "Home Defence Review 1965," February 2, 1966.

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government, though not created at the government's expense.⁵⁴ On February 2nd, Home Secretary Roy Jenkins provided a statement to Parliament regarding the results of the 1965 HDR.. Secretary Jenkins submitted that their research had demonstrated that civil defence had a vital role in the nation's policy of deterrence and would save lives, ease suffering, and expedite national recovery. Despite the lowered risk of conflict, however, Jenkins supplemented with the addendum that were limits to what the Government could afford "by way of insurance against this risk".⁵⁵

The Government argued they had a humanitarian duty to provide some measure of civil defence, however, spending vast amounts on civil defence when war was unlikely was positioned as financially irresponsible. The Government was cast in the role of national insurance broker, attempting to balance expenses versus risk at the most beneficial rates. Secretary Jenkins contended that through the restriction of civil defence systems to only those elements which would provide meaningful, lifesaving results, the Labour government could create "appreciable savings" by tapering down civil defence expenditure from £22.7 million to £19.7 million per year. A subtle £3 million trim compared to £11 million slashing of care and maintenance to come. As historian Matt Grant argues, the liquidation of the Civil Defence Corps was one of the most defining representations of the evolution of British civil defence.⁵⁶

As the Conservatives duly criticized the Labour Party's Review, their main goal was to suggest that the current level of civil defence was abysmal, without providing any argument as to what they might do better. Conservative MP Mr. Konni Zilliacus joined the debate and asked the House, "what is the purpose of this £20 million charade about civil defence?". Secretary Jenkins

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Jenkins, Roy. Secretary of State for the Home Department. House of Commons, February 2 1966, v. 723, c. 1090.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

countered both possible arguments by arguing in favour of cost-effective civil defence to "do something to relieve suffering and maintain a national framework by sensible and economical preparation". In conclusion Jenkins added that based on the findings of the HDR, a working party had already been established to provide further elucidation.⁵⁷

A month later, the Home Office distributed a circular to Local Authorities recalling Secretary Jenkins' announcement and presenting some of the current findings on civil defence. The slide towards individualized shelter was re-affirmed, as was the disproportionate costs in building shelters to withstand nuclear blasts rather than fallout. The circular went on to reiterate the conclusions of the 1964 study that existing high PF civic buildings should be reserved for citizens in low PF housing, or for people who may be caught out in the open at the time of attack. It was also restated that there was no minimum PF factor, discretion would be used to decide what was "substantial". The circular also noted that American fallout shelters had a minimum of 40 PF and that this level could be achieved in Britain by following the advice in *Civil Defence Handbook No. 10*.⁵⁸ Local Authorities were invited to join the Home Office and the Ministry of Housing in the formation of a working party to produce a report with guidance on the selection of best available shelters, their minimum standards and the distance that people would be expected to travel if dispersal was necessary.⁵⁹

In March 1966, the Home Office Scientific Adviser's Branch (SAB) was invited to join the working party and to prepare a presentation on fallout for Local Authority representatives.⁶⁰

There were multiple meetings of the Working Party, and by November 1966 the Working Party

⁵⁷ Mr. Jenkins and Mr. Zilliacus. House of Commons Debate, February 2 1966, v. 723, c. 1091-1092.

⁵⁸ TNA: HO 322/776, "Notice to Home Office 'Advice to the Public on Protection Against Nuclear Attack,'" November 10, 1972. The unofficial 40 PF minimum would persist until the creation of Protect and Survive which also used this rating.

⁵⁹ TNA: HO 322/849, "Home Office Circular 'Civil Defence: Fall-Out Shelter Policy,'" March 7, 1966.

⁶⁰ TNA: HO 322/871, "Letter to Local Authority Associations from T. Fitzgerald," March 1, 1966.

deliberated on the necessity of the CDC.⁶¹ The following year, SAB completed their contribution to the WPR with a lengthy analysis "on the minimum essentials for survival in ... communal fallout shelters". The study built off the findings of the 1964 survey and the 1965 HDR and accepted their conclusions that 2.5 million Britons were living in insufficient PF housing, while another 10% would be unable to properly fortify their homes. SAB also used some American studies (30 men, women and children incarcerated for 14 days) and their own research to determine basic shelter survival requirements. SAB were asked to work within specific financial restrictions to increase the probability that their standards could be implemented.

Cost and expenses were clearly a significant concern. SAB frequently emphasised that they had produced an absolute minimum of shelter standards "made to relieve severe discomfort to shelter occupants in so far as money" allowed. Now SAB worked from a starting scenario that the shelters would be strictly for individuals in insufficient housing, that they provided their own food and water for a minimum of three days, and that each shelter had a well-trained leader to maintain discipline and safety. The report tabulated heat dispersal, ventilation and filtration, sanitation, sleeping provisions and other standards for incarcerations from 2 to 14 days depending on outside conditions. All manner of recommendations were provided, from qualities of effective leadership to decontamination of drinking water. The report was thorough enough to recommend that pets and smoking should be prohibited in shelters, but conceded it was unlikely people would adhere to those stipulations.⁶²

⁶¹ TNA: HO 322/817, "Letter on Working Party on Communal Fall-out Shelter for Mr. Waddell by Mr. Prior," November 30, 1966.

⁶² TNA: HO 322/958, "Home Office SAB: Final Report of the Working Party on Shelter Survival Requirements," May 1967.

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Work stoppages, financial crises, service reductions and all manner of economic conflagration continually pestered the Labour government throughout 1967. The MOD was already discontinuing all operations "East of Suez", a convincing coda to the Empire and Britain's role in the world.⁶³ Already used as a source of transferable funds, civil defence in Britain was approaching its most dispensable status before care and maintenance was invoked. The ministerial discussions about tapering down organization such as the CDC trebled, and the nuclear programme itself was questioned.

On November 18 1967 Prime Minister Wilson made the decision to devalue the pound sterling. Economists argued the deflationary measure had been required of Wilson, though he attempted to delay its introduction as long as possible. Significant cuts to defence expenditure soon resulted from the decision to devalue the pound against the American dollar. The devaluation of 1967 is often interpreted as a failure of economic policy, and it has become emblematic of the inability of the Labour Party to cope effectively with the reduction of the international role of sterling and Great Britain.⁶⁴ After devaluation, the entire nuclear programme was at its most perilous, though all manner of economic hoops were jumped through to entrench the nuclear consensus and further advance the Polaris system. The already reduced Civil Defence Corps limped onwards following devaluation, though its days were numbered, the Corps would not survive another year.⁶⁵

Once again, one of the lone voices calling for disarmament among the political consensus was the Treasury department. Following devaluation, the Treasury and the Department of

⁶³ Michael Howard, "1945-1995: Reflections on Half a Century of British Security Policy," *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)* 71, no. 4 (October 1, 1995): 705-15.

⁶⁴ Catherine Schenk, *The Decline of Sterling: Managing the Retreat of an International Currency, 1945-1992* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 155.

⁶⁵ Gill, *Britain and the Bomb: Nuclear Diplomacy, 1964 - 1970*, 182.

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Economic Affairs were very concerned with the "magnitude of the economic tasks" Great Britain was struggling with and expressed their opinion that maintaining the nuclear deterrent was not worth the cost. To the Treasury, it was the spiraling economy, not nuclear weapons that affected "the credibility, in political terms, of much of our foreign and defence policy".⁶⁶

Devaluation was less a cure-all and more an inevitability, many programmes were downsized, or all together shelved and economic woes continued, albeit at a slower pace. Defence was no exception to financial re-examination and reductions touched every arm of the military. According to the Treasury's humanitarian priorities, "despite the reduction that had already been made, defence expenditure was still too high and expenditure on the social services too low". The Polaris submarines were not launched into smooth waters.⁶⁷

Transferring the civil defence programmes to a care and maintenance status had been proposed soon after as a direct result of the decision to devalue. The case was made once again that too much was being spent on civil defence for the level of protection it delivered. Roy Jenkins, now Chancellor of the Exchequer, prepared a report that provided two suggestions for civil defence: the as-is continuation of civil defence at £20 million per annum, or the mothballing of the program, placing it into a state of stasis or "care and maintenance", to be revived at a later date, if needed, at an interim cost of £7 per annum.⁶⁸

The Cabinet's choice was swift and as expected, they had reached a similar conclusion as past governments who decided the deterrent trumped all other forms of civil defence. As Chancellor Jenkins argued, Great Britain could not "afford to pay £20 million or more every year as an insurance premium against nuclear attack".⁶⁹ The cost was too high, the perceived value

⁶⁶ TNA: CAB 134/3120, "Ministerial Committee on Nuclear Policy," December 1, 1967.

⁶⁷ TNA: CAB 134/3120, "Ministerial Committee on Nuclear Policy Meeting Minutes," December 5, 1967.

⁶⁸ TNA: CAB 134/2892, "Home Defence Expenditure," January 3, 1968.

⁶⁹ TNA: CAB 129/135/19, "Public Expenditure- Post-Devaluation Measures," January 11, 1968.

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was too low, and the deterrent demanded too much funding during an economic crisis. British civil defence was about to be shelved for the first time following the War.

It was, as Prime Minister Wilson referred, a major review in all aspects. The government was essentially stuck, trapped by demand exceeding supply and changes in economics. Prime Minister Wilson agreed with the cuts that were suggested to maintain the nation and on January 16 1968, Wilson announced an all-encompassing shift of government, and with it, care and maintenance:

But what this means for the immediate future is to ensure that we cut down our demands and our ambitions at home and abroad within the limits of what we can currently earn. At home, it means cutting back on excessive demands, both as individuals and as a community, and abroad it means reassessing our role in the world and realistically limiting our commitments and outgoings to our true capacities.

... Now I turn to Home Department Services, including Home Defence. We have decided to reduce Home Defence—Civil Defence—to a care and maintenance basis, with a saving of about £14 million in 1968–69, and £20 million in 1969–70 and in subsequent years. This will involve the disbandment of the Civil Defence Corps, the Auxiliary Fire Service and the Territorial and Army Volunteer Reserve Category III. The Government propose to restrain the growth of expenditure on other Home Department Services by £6 million in 1968–69 and £12 million in 1969–70.⁷⁰

The deed was done and with little objection from either party, it was viewed as bitter medicine the nation was forced to take. As historian Matthew Grant states: “and that was that. A sterling crisis too far, and the whole basis of Cold War civil defence was swept away...”⁷¹

The Labour Party took the political hit of installing the new cuts and the Conservatives were happy to benefit from the savings. At first it was a useful tool, the policy allowed the

⁷⁰ Wilson, Harold. Prime Minister. House of Commons, January 16 1968, v. 756, c. 1577-1589.

⁷¹ Grant, *After the Bomb*, 188.

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budget to be redirected elsewhere, and both parties could claim they did not have any resources to end care and maintenance. The heavy cuts pressured the Home Office to make do with civil defence at less than half the previous level of funding. The path was laid directly to Protect and Survive, dictated by the financial hardships and nuclear consensus of the 1960s. Soon after it was introduced, successive governments attempted to improve civil defence while maintaining the policy as the reality of the cuts settled in. The changes had to be undertaken as the alternative would be the abandonment of the nuclear programme or social services, both deemed too important to cut. Rather than progress and innovation, the decision to suspend civil defence was seen as "a washing of hands."⁷²

The hiatus of civil defence was defended by the government as a logical measure in a time of increasing global stability. Home defence, it was thought, could be activated at times of political tension, springing into action when needed. It was the government's stated policy that once the international position changed, civil defence preparations could be ratcheted up from the level at which they were suspended in 1968 (although Roy Jenkins had informed the Cabinet that this was likely impossible). Care and maintenance remained a useful explanation given the economic difficulties of decline.

There were adjustments to follow - the 1971 Home Defence Review, the stay put policy, Protect and Survive - yet the end of care and maintenance could not be announced until the Thatcher government pumped funding back into civil defence in the 1980s. The UKWMO survived the cutbacks following the announcement as it was seen as vital to the entire effort, a rare success of the government. Many members of government attempted to maintain and even improve the UKWMO during the time of care and maintenance.⁷³

⁷² "British Defence Cuts: Withdrawal into Europe," *The Economist*, January 20, 1968, 72.

⁷³ Grant, *After the Bomb*, 189.

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The introduction of care and maintenance provided the final justification to disband the Civil Defence Corps and recuperate its £20 million per annum cost. The CDC had been perceived as an expensive and nostalgic holdover from the War, constantly tapered down until its deletion. Civil defence was reorganized with the passing of a bill that disbanded the Corps stating: "These regulations revoke the Civil Defence Corps Regulations 1949, as amended, which provide for the organisation by local authorities of divisions of the Civil Defence Corps."⁷⁴ Nuclear defence planning had absorbed the government's efforts since the entrenchment of the nuclear deterrent, and aside from the high costs associated, the dissolution of the CDC was a determination that their success in the previous War would be useless against "the worst case of nuclear aftermath which has absorbed [Britain's] effort since 1968" and the introduction of care and maintenance.⁷⁵ The conclusion of the Corps was a financial decision rather than a home defence decision, one of many that would follow. The government admitted soon after:

"until 1968, planning allotted a significant role to volunteer forces trained in peacetime to counter the effects of conventional war. These forces were disbanded in 1968 as an economy measure at a time when the likelihood of conventional warfare was not considered high".⁷⁶

In the coming years, Conservative MP David Renton attempted to recreate the Corps. Renton cried that care and maintenance was an injustice to the long history of civil defence volunteerism in Great Britain and would push for reinstatement throughout the 1970s. In the 1980s, recollections of the CDC continued to echo in the halls of the Home Office. The CDC was a tangible memory of the nation's resolve and comradery during the Blitz, with wardens and

⁷⁴ TNA: HO 322/776, "Draft Civil Defence Corps (Revocation) Regulations 1968," April 1, 1968.

⁷⁵ TNA: HO 322/926, "Letter to Mr. Law from Mr. Pemberton (F6 Division)," November 18, 1979.

⁷⁶ TNA: HO 322/918, "HDO(WB)(78)18 - Official Committee on Home Defence War Book Sub-Committee," December 14, 1978.

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volunteers providing instructions and assistance during the bombings, not booklets and film reels. Even decades afterwards, the dissolution of the CDC did not diminish their image in the public's eye. In a multitude of documents, civil servants of the late Cold War often spoke defensively, as though the disbanding of the CDC was a crime inflicted upon the populace. In a draft heavily edited and marked up, a Home Office staffer argued that "the contrast often drawn between the pre-1968 existence of the Civil Defence Corps ... and the present-day absence of similar national organizations tends to obscure the very real contributions" made by other voluntary organizations such as the Red Cross and St. John's Ambulance. On the same document, another staffer espoused the role of the Women's Royal Voluntary Service, the UKWMO, the Royal Observer Corps and Territorial Army in British home defence.⁷⁷

Though it had been a long time coming, more alterations to civil defence would arrive with the completion of the 1968 Working Party Report on Communal Fallout Shelters (WPR68), which had taken almost two years to produce. Based on several meetings with Local Authority Associations, the 1964 shelter survey, the 1965 Home Defence Review and the 1967 Science Advisor's Branch study, the recommendations of WPR68 dovetailed nicely with the civil defence reductions of care and maintenance. The Report determined that communal shelters should be reserved only for families with low PF housing and priority classes in special need. The committee concluded that most householders, with the advice of *Civil Defence Handbook No. 10*, could achieve a PF of 40+. However, working with an older 1961 study, the Report found that 10-15% of the British population lived in thin industrial homes such as caravans, bungalows and low-cost prefabricated housing that could not be raised to a suitable PF (much higher numbers than originally believed).

⁷⁷ TNA: HO 322/940, "Draft HDO(80)7 Paper," June 1, 1980.

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These dwellings were estimated to have provided PF 10 or less and would be liabilities in a period of fallout. The WPR68 concluded that Local Authority Associations had a duty to survey their districts to determine how many of their residents lived in homes with a sub 10 PF and to supply adequate public shelter for them. However, this responsibility would become fiercely politicized in the 1980s. WPR68 continued to shed responsibilities for the protection of low PF individuals to the Local Authority Associations. WPR68 also maintained the references to public dispersal schemes referenced in earlier reports. Though actual protocols were left open to determination at a later date, priority classes of some ten million mothers and children were to be removed from cities to "reception areas" 35 to 50 miles away. Another clear holdover from the Blitz that was folded into modern civil defence.

Further into the Report, the Working Party found that it would be unwise evacuate cities with approaching fallout. Therefore, it was the responsibility of every Local Authority Association to prepare adequate public shelter for their residents in insufficient housing as well as taking into account "a large influx of people from elsewhere" in transit. It was also noted that it was the responsibility of all dutiful Local Authority Associations to provide adequate shelter for workers in their area, or those caught in their areas while going to or from work. Thus, in brief, it was the responsibility of all Local Authorities in good standing to prepare shelter for all their residents in weak housing, priority classes, unknown evacuees from any direction, workers both in their area and passing through, as well as people caught in the open.⁷⁸

With low PF residents and local transients accounted for, the next tasks in the continued penny-pinching of home defence would be the suggestion that emergency public education should be prepared by the government for householders during a crisis. This reference in WPR68

⁷⁸ TNA: HO 322/958, "Report of the Working Party on Communal Fallout Shelters." April 1 1968.

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could very well have been the inception of Protect and Survive as a tool of cost-effective civil defence pedagogy. The Report reads as heavily influenced by the decision to place civil defence on a care and maintenance basis as it frequently postpones actual defence plans for an undetermined future date.⁷⁹ The ambivalence of WPR60 was commented upon eight years later when a 1974 F6 Division (Home Office Division responsible for civil defence) shelter document referred to the report, stating that it demonstrated the "very real practical problem of operating a communal fallout shelter which involves movement of the public to" undetermined specialty structures.⁸⁰

Care and maintenance left a lasting legacy on the trajectory of British civil defence. Director of the F6 Division Duncan Buttery recalled that "in spite of assurances to the contrary, the effect of changes made in 1968 has been to create an impression among the general public and in official circles that all contingent preparations for the emergencies of war had been abandoned".⁸¹ Even decades afterwards, the period covering the implementation of care and maintenance to the publication of Protect and Survive was described as a dark era for British civil defence in many Home Office documents. Later governments would freely admit that "between 1968 and 1980, successive governments invested no new effort or resources and provided only for the care and maintenance of such facilities as were already in place."⁸² Just as the deterrent had been agreed upon in Commons, the savings of a skeletal civil defence

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ TNA: HO 322/849, "Mr. Barry Note to Mr. Buttery," April 5, 1974.

⁸¹ TNA: HO 322/817, "Home Office Circular NO. ES 1/1972 - Home Defence 1972-76," March 22, 1972.

⁸² TNA: HO 322/1024, "Civil Defence: Public Presentation," January 2, 1986.

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expenditure was a welcomed excuse in the decade of decline, calling for a new system of civil defence that transferred further responsibilities from the government to its citizenry.

Care and maintenance was never officially ended, although efforts were made to restore the image of civil defence in the public eye. Protect and Survive was argued as the programme that "effectively brought civil defence from 'care and maintenance' to a more active programme with a higher public profile [with] greater openness and improved public advice".⁸³ Before the creation of Protect and Survive however, another key point in its evolution would appear. Soon after care and maintenance and the benefits of its savings, "it was agreed to maintain real expenditure at the reduced rate adopted in 1968".⁸⁴ The document that bridged the benefits of care and maintenance into what would become Protect and Survive was the 1971 Home Defence Review.

⁸³ TNA: HO 322/1032, "Outline Papers on CD Policy for Submission to OD(HD)," September 12, 1983.

⁸⁴ TNA: HO 322/926, "Briefing for New Ministers - Home Defence Policy Draft," May 1, 1979.

Chapter 2

The Nuclear Consensus: The 1971 Home Defence Review

Whenever an opportunity arrived, for either party, to upgrade or abandon nuclear weapons, the decision was made to maintain the nuclear deterrent. This is the nuclear consensus and it has existed in Britain from the 1950s to today, save for the ten years of Thatcherite Britain. Before Labour stepped away from the nuclear consensus, they helped maintain it in 1962 when they created the policy of care and maintenance. Even when Labour promised to address the quagmire of unilateralism in their campaign manifestos of the 1960s, once in power, the unquestioningly proliferated the deterrent. The care and maintenance policy held British civil defence in a dormant state, allowing the funding typically spent on civil defence to be diverted towards upgrading the deterrent. The deterioration of civil defence standards throughout the 1970s, due to care and maintenance, led directly to the Labour Party creating a cost-effect civil defence education program, Protect and Survive.

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, the two main political parties of the United Kingdom demonstrated the cohesiveness of what can be called a nuclear consensus. Bipartisan maintenance of the post-War welfare state, has received significant academic attention, yet the nuclear consensus remains underserved.¹ The nuclear consensus lasted from the late 1940s until the mid 1970s as witnessed through the perpetuation of British nuclear state by both the Labour

¹ Key works in the field include: Maguire, “‘Never a Credible Weapon’”; Jonathan Hogg, “‘The Family That Feared Tomorrow’: British Nuclear Culture and Individual Experience in the Late 1950s,” *The British Journal for the History of Science* 45, no. Special Issue 04 (December 2012): 535–549; Kristan Stoddart and John Baylis, “The British Nuclear Experience: The Role of Beliefs, Culture, and Status (Part Two),” *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 23, no. 3 (September 1, 2012): 493–516; Gill, *Britain and the Bomb: Nuclear Diplomacy, 1964 - 1970*; Hogg, *British Nuclear Culture: Official and Unofficial Narratives in the Long 20th Century*.

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and Conservative parties. The often-unconsidered part of the nuclear consensus is the public sphere as multiple studies demonstrated that the majority of Britons valued the deterrent.² Occasionally, threats to the nuclear cohesion materialized, though they were fleeting, and the consensus remained surprisingly durable until the late 1970s. The initial inklings of deviation from the nuclear consensus arrived during the 1960s and simmered throughout the tumultuous, Labour dominated, 1970s. The consensus ultimately collapsed with the open divergence on nuclear policy and civil defence between the Conservative and Labour parties in the 1979 General Election.

These were the conditions required to release Protect and Survive, a unique political climate in which civil defence was a major battleground. When Labour took on unilateral disarmament as a party platform the discord was accelerated. The Conservatives advocated that a robust civil defence system would demonstrate to the Soviet Union the fortitude and resources needed to endure a nuclear attack long enough to retaliate, thereby enhancing the threat of the nuclear deterrent. Conversely, Labour became anti-civil defence, arguing plans and schemes were propaganda to proliferate the nuclear state. During Thatcherite Britain, Labour openly derided efforts to enhance the nation's civil defence and also opposed the Conservative mandate of finding a replacement to the aging Polaris nuclear missile system. The status of the consensus, and its downfall, runs through Party documents and policies, and uniquely, through each party's approach to civil defence in the 1980s.

² Kristan Stoddart, *Losing an Empire and Finding a Role: Britain, the USA, NATO and Nuclear Weapons, 1964-70* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2012); "Survey on Public Attitudes Towards Defence," *NOW!*, November 15, 1979; TNA: INF6/2490, "Civil Defence Information and Publicity Programme"; Leila Thearle and Helen Weinreich-Haste, "Ways of Dealing with the Nuclear Threat: Coping and Defence Among British Adolescents," *International Journal of Mental Health* 15, no. 1/3 (1986): 126-42.

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Protect and Survive was created in the mid-1970s, a time when the nuclear consensus still held firm, it was after all a Labour initiative. Labour had yet to come out against the deterrent and so the public remained mostly uninterested in civil defence specifics. Vague references to evacuation and shelters sufficed and both parties were content to keep Protect and Survive classified. When Labour broke away from supporting the deterrent, they focused on the futility of civil defence in nuclear war as a means of frightening the public to embrace unilateralism, hopefully removing Britain as a target. As seen with the Labour efforts to disparage civil defence and the resulting Tory policy of openness, Protect and Survive would have never been published if not for the dissolution of the nuclear consensus.

Labour's first significant dalliance with anti-consensus took place during the October 1960 Labour Party Conference. Earlier that year, a growing influence in the Party began to push for unilateral disarmament.³ Party leader Hugh Gaitskell defended the consensus on the basis that a disarmed Britain would be dependent on the United States risking nuclear retaliation on their own cities to defend Europe.⁴ This conflict over deterrence would become the first element of "serious divisions among the official Opposition" that threatened to consume the Party.⁵

At the October Conference, the Labour Conference members, opposed by the Parliamentary Labour Party (PLP), voted in favour of a resolution for the renunciation of nuclear weapons and the endorsement of unilateral disarmament.⁶ This result came after a ferocious round of debates spanning several hours and multiple perspectives. The 1960 Conference was considered a defeat for party leader Hugh Gaitskell, who fought to maintain the consensus

³ From Our Labour Correspondent, "Motions For Labour Conference Demand Disarmament," *The London Times*, July 25, 1960.

⁴ "Labour Differences On Defence," *The London Times*, March 2, 1960.

⁵ Simon Wingfield Digby and George Pargiter, "Defence Debate," *The London Times*, March 2, 1960.

⁶ Labour Correspondent, "Mr. Gaitskell Outvoted by Own Executive," *The London Times*, October 2, 1960.

alongside the PLP. Gaitskell was an electric orator and the resolution passed despite his memorable vow to “fight, fight, and fight again to save the party” from far-left elements inhibiting popular support.⁷

Gaitskell and the PLP maintained their positions and accused the powerful trade unions and the far-left Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) element within the Party, such as future leader Michael Foot, as being “fellow travelers”.⁸ Pundits argued that the Labour Party would be irrevocably divided and that the narrow success of the resolution represented the Party’s retreat from real world affairs.⁹ The following month, however, when Gaitskell was elected to Party leadership against Harold Wilson, he preserved the nuclear consensus in his campaign and refused to alienate the broad public. It should be argued that the resolution posed little threat to the consensus as the PLP remained firmly resolved to maintain nuclear deterrence and seek popular support.¹⁰ The consensus remained intact and the following year the 1961 Labour Conference voted to return to a multilateral disarmament agreement and reverted the resolution.¹¹

As with Gaitskell’s efforts, the successful Labour governments of Wilson and Callaghan were essential contributors to the preservation of consensus despite the widening gyre of opposition forming between the fringe and rank and file of the Party against the actions of the Party leaders. The vocal minority within the Labour Party stemmed from waves of anti-

⁷ Richard Jobson, *Nostalgia and the Post-War Labour Party: Prisoners of the Past* (Oxford University Press, 2018), 13–14.

⁸ Hugh Wilford, *The CIA, the British Left and the Cold War: Calling the Tune?* (Routledge, 2013).

⁹ Special Correspondents, “Mr. Gaitskell Defeated on Nuclear Arms Issue in Five-Hour Labour Debate,” *The London Times*, October 5, 1960.

¹⁰ Chris Hill, “Media and Democracy in Labour History: Re-Assessing the Defence Debate of 1960,” in *Class, Culture and Community: New Perspectives in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century British Labour History*, ed. Anne Baldwin, Chris Ellis, and Stephen Etheridge (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012), 143.

¹¹ Len Scott, “Labour and the Bomb: The First 80 Years,” *International Affairs* 82, no. 4 (July 2006): 688.

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Americanism that contrasted with the PLP's Atlanticist attempts to maintain the cooperation of US/UK nuclear systems and prevent British political and military isolation in Europe. The Labour Party of the 1980s would see this current of anti-Americanism rise to the surface in their open castigation of American forces and nuclear weapons on British soil.

Going forward into the 1960s, the Labour Party under Wilson was increasingly cagey with their stance on disarmament. Wilson was adept in his balancing act that publicly championed disarmament while privately maintaining the deterrent, and the consensus, at every opportunity. In 1962, the Conservative government of Harold Macmillan took great strides to maintain Britain's nuclear deterrent with the ratification of the Nassau Agreement. Under the terms of the agreement, the United States would provide the United Kingdom with submarine-based ballistic missiles as part of the Polaris system.¹² Purchasing the Polaris system was far cheaper than Britain developing its own nuclear launch system to replace the obsolescent Skybolt systems, based on aircraft delivery.¹³

The Conservative government of Douglas-Home continued to pursue the Polaris system and laid forth their plan to construct five Polaris submarines in 1964. Secretary of State for Defence, Peter Thorneycroft, delivered the announcement to Parliament which was corroborated with the Defence White Paper of 1964. Denis Healey, who later assumed Thorneycroft's position with the Labour victory that October, commented as Shadow Secretary that the Polaris submarines were a luxury the nation could ill afford, especially under a false pretense of maintaining an entirely independent nuclear deterrent. Slight cracks were forming in the nuclear

¹² The United Kingdom would still develop their own nuclear submarines and warheads for the Polaris missiles.

¹³ Gill, *Britain and the Bomb: Nuclear Diplomacy, 1964 - 1970*, 52.

consensus that would eventually cause it to shatter, allowing for the publication of *Protect and Survive*.¹⁴

Healey continued his offensive and accused the Conservatives of breaching the consensus and attempting to win an election “on a programme of atomic jingoism”.¹⁵ Thorneycroft, seeing how the Party was critiqued for preparing to construct the five Polaris submarines, attempted to corner Healey and challenged him to speak plainly whether the Labour Party, if they came to power, would “cancel the Polaris as an independent deterrent?”. Healey played his part well and circled around the ambiguity of an “independent deterrent”, adding that the Labour Party could not “make up [their] minds” until discussing the integration of the Polaris system with the United States.¹⁶

The 1964 Labour Manifesto, written by Harold Wilson personally, continued to tap-dance around the question of disarmament, instead denouncing the Conservative’s promise of nuclear independence via the Polaris system. As Wilson wrote in the Manifesto: “It will not be independent, and it will not be British, and it will not deter”. Wilson went on to criticize the Conservatives for Nassau, arguing that the agreement must be renegotiated along the lines of an “inter-dependence” with the West.¹⁷ Within the nuclear consensus, both Labour and Conservatives found a useful tool to batter their rivals with when in opposition, and to fend them off while in power. As per tradition, when the Labour Party came to power in October, Wilson was happy to maintain the consensus and simply reduced the Polaris order from five submarines to four, arguing that it was too late to halt production.¹⁸ Here several historians of British Cold

¹⁴ From Our Parliamentary Correspondent, “Britain Will Stick To Polaris Plan,” *The London Times*, February 27, 1964.

¹⁵ Mr. Healey, D. *HoC Deb*, 26 February 1964, vol. 690, c. 484.

¹⁶ Messrs. P. Thorneycroft and D. Healey. *HoC Deb*, 26 February 1964, vol. 690, c. 481.

¹⁷ “The New Britain - 1964 Labour Party Election Manifesto,” 1964.

¹⁸ TNA: CAB 130/213, “Minutes of Cabinet Meeting at Chequers on Defence Policy,” November 21, 1964.

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War defence have doubted the veracity of Wilson's claims that production of the submarines could not be easily finished without the Polaris systems.¹⁹

At the 1971 Labour Party Conference, a vote was again held on a resolution for unilateral disarmament and withdrawal from NATO. This was a serious resolution to put forward. Britain was crucial to the defence of Europe and withdrawal would have caused all manners of denunciation from the United States. In this iteration, the resolution was overwhelmingly defeated to a boisterous round of applause. Shadow Foreign Secretary Denis Healey argued that unilateral disarmament would defeat any incentives for multilateral agreements and described the idea as akin to a betrayal of their "European socialist comrades". Thus, the parties were becoming more politically opposed, while simultaneously growing closer in agreement on the nuclear consensus.²⁰

Care and maintenance did not sit well within the British government. It was a necessary excuse for the very real financial restraints facing the nation at the start of a decade of decline. Though rarely considered, the 1971 Home Defence Review is a significant document in the history of British defence policy. Its creation and delivery demonstrated the continued government consensus that the nuclear programme had to be maintained, even as the high cost of effectual civil defence became evident. The noted concerns and conclusions by the document's authors, constantly reconciling clandestineness with openness, provide a bridge from care and maintenance to stay-put, the two most significant contributors to the creation of Protect and Survive.

¹⁹ Hennessy, *Cabinets and the Bomb*, 219; Gill, *Britain and the Bomb: Nuclear Diplomacy, 1964 - 1970*.

²⁰ Parliamentary Staff, "Mr Healey Resists a Demand for Unilateral Disarming," *The Times*, October 8, 1971.

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In early July 1970, a small meeting was attended in the civil defence offices of the Home Department. In addition to some senior officials, James Waddell, chair of the Civil Defence Department, and Home Office Minister of State Reginald Sharples²¹ enjoyed an informal discussion on the state of civil defence in Britain. Sharples noted that there were particular efforts made to review the cuts to civil defence made by Wilson in 1968 and he wanted to know what options they had to restore the system. Based off their discussion, on July 15th, Sharples wrote to Philip Allen, the Secretary of State, to suggest a Home Department review to clarify the programme's future priorities. This letter was forwarded to Waddell, Ed Wright in Police Services, and Duncan Buttery in F6 Division. The brief memo would be the inception of stay-put policy and in turn pave the road towards Protect and Survive.²²

Sharples prepared a memorandum on "Home Defence Policy" for Secretary Allen. Unlike the Strath report, Sharples spoke on the benefits that came from most civil defence arrangements being hidden from the general public, which he thought would become distressed if informed of the current state of home defence. The fact that the general public were completely ignorant of the majority of plans the Ministers created was viewed as a benefit. The political aspects of government/civilian dialogues are paramount when considering how Britain arrived at Protect and Survive, and why its circulation in 1980 was so revolutionary. The Home Office remained anxious that the 1968 introduction of care and maintenance was generally unwelcomed, but further cutbacks could be politically disastrous. One specific field that was "very politically sensitive" was the re-creation of a uniformed volunteer service. Sharples pushed for measures that would allow the Conservative party to announce an end of Care and Maintenance, but he was entirely opposed to a recreation of the Civil Defence Corps (CDC).

²¹ Three years before his assassination as Governor of Bermuda.

²² TNA: HO 322/798, "Note from Reginald Sharples to S of S," July 15, 1970.

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Writing over his own text, Sharples wrote that the official view within the Party was that a renewed CDC would “be a (~~lamentable~~) total waste of public money [sic]”. Sharples described a need to see what was working within home defence and what was not. Sharples also tempered expectations for increased funding, suggesting a limit of an extra £5 million to the current £10 million budget.²³

Even within the Conservative party, there were divergent opinions on civil defence. Earlier that year, the Conservative Political Centre published a booklet by MP David Renton called *Coping with Emergencies in Peace and War* which argued for a return to a uniformed Civil Defence Corps-like group of volunteers with a cost approximating £4 million per annum. Within the Conservative Party, Renton’s booklet was met with concern, particularly out of fear that support for a CDC renewal might find its way into the home defence proposals and discourage Ministers from increasing expenditure. Care and maintenance may have been disliked by Ministers, but the savings were welcomed, creating a natural path to less government-created organizations for civil defence.

Along with the draft memorandum, Sharples created a summary of recommendations for the Official Committee on Home Defence. Sharples noted extreme doubts about the validity of present policies to adapt to a possible attack. Sharples acknowledged the restrictions of care and maintenance, yet with some readjustments and a slight increase, Sharples believed new possibilities for survival would accrue. Sharples concluded by stating a review should be commissioned, not to be finished within the year, and that under no circumstances should any increased funding go towards a new Civil Defence Corps. Sharples instead suggested that the nation should harness the “long established national voluntary organisations” of Britain.²⁴

²³ TNA: HO 322/798, “Draft Report on Home Defence Policy by Reginald Sharples for S of S,” July 15, 1970.

²⁴ Ibid.

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Continuing the flurry of activity in July, Wright of Police Services within F6 Division, wrote to Waddell to say F6 Division could produce the exact type of draft Sharples intended to send to Secretary of State Peter Allen. Within the attached notes, Wright provided Waddell with two general goals for a review of home defence: to allow the Government to announce in October that all of civil defence is being revised to do away with care and maintenance, and to publicly state that there is no “intension of investing in a Renton-like uniformed volunteer force”. Both Wright and the Home Office worried that the public might come to demand an expensive CDC-like organization. Wright argued that David Renton, and others hoping to revive the CDC, would be disappointed by a review with recommendations that would strongly disapprove of a new CDC. Furthermore, Wright argued that the public may be disappointed with the slim increases to the budget which would most likely to go towards “covert” improvements to communications and control systems.²⁵

Several weeks later, Wright and Waddell had a phone conversation and discussed the status of a review. Waddell expressed concern that Burke Trend, Chairman of the Official Committee on Home Defence, would not sympathize with proposals for increased expenditure. Wright assured Waddell that he had spoken to an associate of Chairman Trend and he believed Trend was on board to expunge care and maintenance.²⁶ Waddell later prepared a draft proposal to the Official Committee that Trend could deliver, and though Trend had several notes and edits, all references to an end of care and maintenance remained. Like Wright, Waddell, and

²⁵ TNA: HO 322/798, “Report on Home Defence Policy and Expenditure by ED Wright for Mr. Waddell,” July 27, 1970.

²⁶ TNA: HO 322/798, “Note from ED Wright to Mr. Waddell on Home Defence Review,” August 21, 1970.

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Sharples, Trend seemed to favour a readjustment of resources as the likely outcome of a review as opposed to significant funding increases.²⁷

Two months later in October 1970, Trend informed Waddell that the Official Committee on Home Defence may pass the responsibility for the review off to the Machinery of the Government in War Committee (MG). Trend stressed the importance of including a clear message that the Home Office was not looking for substantial increases in expenditure to “pre-care and maintenance levels” and even minor funding increases could provide significant benefit. Waddell carried this information to Secretary Sharples, assuring Sharples that his proposal for the review would be practical and that Trend would agree to head the committee.²⁸

Sharples was pleased to see wheels moving in the Home Office towards an effective review but warned Waddell to avoid any specific tabulations of possible expenditures and focus instead on a “broad examination” of Home Defence. Sharples also expressed his thoughts on evacuation and food stockpiling policies, referring to them as luxuries that could no longer be supported. Waddell reassured Sharples that only general policy concepts would be discussed, and his belief that a review should be completed with many ministries included. Waddell believed this would be the most successful approach and cautioned that suggesting any specifics at this time would have ministers on the defensive, rejecting proposals out of hand as they appear.²⁹

As word spread of an upcoming review of home defence, Jim Prior, Minister of Agriculture, Food, and Fisheries (MAFF) got wind of the efforts and sent word to Sharples. Prior warned Sharples in no uncertain terms that the national food stockpiles were in a dreadful state.

²⁷ TNA: HO 322/798, “Draft Paper on Home Defence Policy and Expenditure for Sir Burke Trend from Mr. Waddell,” September 7, 1970.

²⁸ TNA: HO 322/798, “Suggested Amendments to the Home Office Draft Paper by Sir Burke Trend to Mr. Waddell,” October 6, 1970.

²⁹ TNA: HO 322/798, “Letter on Home Defence for Sir Philip Allen from Mr. Waddell,” October 6, 1970.

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According to Prior, the stockpiles had been in decline since the announcement of care and maintenance. From this news, Sharples assumed MAFF would agree to scrap stockpiles completely as they were apparently unserviceable.³⁰ The opposite proved true, however, and a month later, Prior contacted Sharples again, asking to significantly expand the national stockpiles. Prior expressed frustration that the stockpiles were being neglected every year since care and maintenance in 1968 when £7 millions of foodstuffs were sold off and not replaced. Prior categorized the stockpiles as “inadequate to prevent widespread starvation” following a nuclear attack. While they both agreed on the dismal state of the stockpiles, they differed appreciably on solutions. Sharples had expressed in earlier letters the possibility of doing away with the stockpiles entirely whereas Prior believed that investing future expenditure on other programs when the stockpiles were rapidly depleting would be a tremendous error.³¹

When Sharples later spoke with Secretary Allen, he indicated his outlook for the review, particularly with the efficacy of current arrangements. Sharples wanted the review to determine if the over £2 million being spent on food stockpiles would actually contribute to national recovery after an attack. Sharples also envisioned a thorough examination of “the policy of evacuation” and the role of regional governments and Local Authorities.³² This was the time when the foundation of Protect and Survive was poured as officials slowly inched closer and closer to cost-effective individualized plans for civil defence. Concluding their conversation, Sharples stated that they should also examine the “sacred cows” of Home Defence, namely “stockpiles, fuel supplies, and evacuation policy”.³³

³⁰ TNA: HO 322/798, “Letter to Reginald Maudling from Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food,” October 20, 1970.

³¹ TNA: HO 322/798, “Letter from Minister Jim Prior to Reginald Maudling,” November 11, 1970.

³² TNA: HO 322/798, “Letter for Reginald Maudling from Richard Sharples Regarding Letter from MAFF,” October 28, 1970.

³³ TNA: HO 322/798, “Letter for Sir Philip Allan from Richard Sharples,” October 30, 1970.

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Secretary Allen replied to Sharples, agreeing that the Home Office should spearhead the review, and that the review would include several other Ministries. The Home Office was to be the driving force, argued Allen, but the review would be done under the auspice of the Official Committee on Home Defence and the Cabinet Office. Allen forewarned that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be introducing further cuts to government expenditure that week and plans should not be focused on any large funding increases. Allen suggested a range of examples (less expenditure, equal expenditure, and increased expenditure) to illustrate the options.³⁴

The reality of vague evacuation policies that could be called upon when needed was a recurring theme in the efforts to repeal care and maintenance, create the stay-put policy, and eventually develop Protect and Survive. Up until the Home Defence Review of 1971, Ministers spoke of evacuation in elusive statements, assuming it would be there if needed, but also knowing the policy would be fraught with obstacles.

By November, the efforts to formally conclude care and maintenance were well underway across several Home Office departments. Maudling reminded the Committee that the idea of “care and maintenance” belonged to the “previous administration” and needed to be addressed. In 1968, civil defence spending had risen to £24 million per annum before being reduced to about £9 million. Maudling noted that dissolution of the CDC alone saved over £6 million per year. The Home Secretary argued that the majority of the £9 million was spent on the upkeep of buildings, expired stockpiles, obsolete equipment, and organizations with minimum knowledge and skills. Clearly, Maudling was not of the opinion that the state of civil defence in Britain during 1970 could provide the necessary state of readiness for survival and the viability of the system was in doubt.

³⁴ TNA: HO 322/798, “Secretary P Allen Letter to Mr. Sharples,” October 30, 1970.

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Maudling acknowledged that home defence was not a high priority in peacetime but argued that dynamic improvements could be achieved with a small increase in funding. Maudling was convinced that the review should reconsider fundamentals “such as evacuation policy” that were totally inadequate. Ultimately, Maudling believed a small increase to £15 million per year would legitimize British civil defence provided they avoided spending funds on the kind of CDC David Renton attempted to revive.³⁵

Around the Home Office, memos indicated that there seemed to be momentum behind the proposal. Scottish Secretary of State, Gordon Campbell, expressed clear enthusiasm, indicating that a small increase in home defence funding “might be of a more than disproportionate benefit to the county and our NATO responsibilities”.³⁶ The military was excited at the prospect of funding to end care and maintenance as well. Secretary of State for Defence Baron Peter Carrington wrote to Maudling and expressed his approval and desire to “achieve substantial improvements in our preparedness”.³⁷ Ministers were anxious to cast off the yoke of care and maintenance or, at the least, make home defence more efficient.

When the proposal arrived at the Treasury, however, Maurice Macmillan was quick to inform the Home Secretary that increased funding for home defence did “not have a high priority” and went on to warn that significant reductions in public expenditure were expected. Macmillan concluded by emphasising the proposal’s suggestion for three funding models, particularly what could be done with the same level of funding, and what could be done with

³⁵ TNA: HO 322/798, “HD(70)2 Note by the Chairman of Ministerial Committee on Home Defence on Home Defence Policy and Expenditure,” November 5, 1970.

³⁶ TNA: HO 322/798, “Scottish Secretary of State Gordon Campell to Home Secretary Reginald Maudling on the Review of Home Defence,” November 11, 1970.

³⁷ TNA: HO 322/798, “Secretary of State for Defence Baron Peter Carrington to Home Secretary Reginald Maudling,” November 12, 1970.

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even less.³⁸ On November 13 1970, Prime Minister Edward Heath appointed members of the Committee, to be chaired by Burke Trend, with the mandate “to co-ordinate home defence preparation and to report as necessary to the Defence and Overseas Policy Committee”.

Typically, the military had little involvement in civil defence planning.³⁹

The Official Committee on Home Defence set out to examine the effectiveness of existing home defence measures and to prepare proposals for decreased, neutral, and increased expenditure for 1971 to 1975. On December 20, this task was formally given to the Machinery of Government in War Sub-Committee (MG) who aimed for completion by mid-June the following year.⁴⁰ Soon after, the MG released an early appraisal of home defence which indicated that “existing Home Defence policies, which originated in the ‘care and maintenance’ decisions of the previous administration in 1968” were largely inadequate and did not serve the public trust. Though still unofficial, the interim report suggested an increase to £15m per year expenditure.⁴¹

Three years after the implementation of care and maintenance, the Home Office made its first earnest attempts to address the failure of the decision. In 1971, the home defence budget was approximately £10 million with problems already surfacing. The review determined that most of the budget was going towards the upkeep of stockpiles and equipment that were barely viable in 1971 and would become a liability by 1975. Given a three to four-week warning period before an attack, the review found it would be impossible for Britain, as it stood in 1971, to adequately prepare to mitigate a nuclear attack. Members of the Official Committee argued that care and maintenance, Labour’s home defence policy that was “accidentally” reached in January 1968,

³⁸ TNA: HO 322/798, “Letter from Maurice Macmillan to Reginald Maudling,” November 12, 1970.

³⁹ TNA: HO 322/798, “HD(70)3 Composition and Terms of Reference,” November 13, 1970.

⁴⁰ TNA: HO 322/798, “Reply to Doc 24 by ED Wright for PS for Mr. Sharples, Miss Soret,” April 21, 1971.

⁴¹ TNA: HO 322/799, “Machinery of Government in War Sub-Committee Interim Report of the Home Defence Review,” February 18, 1971.

was a hollow policy that corroded the standing of civil defence. Specifically, the care and maintenance policy introduced by Prime Minister Wilson was seen as doing “virtually nothing ... to mitigate the effects of nuclear war on the public”. The Committee’s report listed the previous administration’s closure of the Civil Defence Corps in 1968 as a necessary savings of £10 million a year and acknowledged that there existed an option to re-create the organization on a smaller scale at a cost of £5 million per annum. However, just as Sharples and Wright discussed a year earlier, the report concluded that a new volunteer organization would not be cost-effective, and that the funds could be better spent elsewhere.⁴²

To correct the error of care and maintenance, the review provided three options: home defence expenditure could be lowered to £7 million for a £2 million savings per annum, expenditure could be maintained or slightly increased, or the budget for home defence could be raised to £15 million. Reduction to £7 million per annum was unreservedly described as a scorched Earth policy that would set back the cause of home defence decades. The principle savings would come at the expense of the entire UKWMO which was costing £2.2 million a year to maintain. This option was roundly criticized by the Committee who argued that such a measure would embarrass the government both at home and abroad, as well as jeopardizing their duties and status in NATO.

As an alternative, the report frequently suggested that being able to declare that care and maintenance was over could be a significant political victory. A modest raise to £12 million was seen as a stop-gap, the bare minimum required to drag the obsolete home defence program forward in its current state, though it would be “impossible to announce the end of care and maintenance”. An increase to £15 million however, would have granted the government the

⁴² TNA: HO 322/799, “Report by the Chairman of the Official Committee on Home Defence,” May 26, 1971.

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ability to announce that care and maintenance was over and corrected. A £5 million per annum increase would have provided improvements to all aspects of home defence, permitting better research and better education for the public to prevent fallout casualties and placing the nation in a position to quickly recover. Previously, research funding had been sorely lacking with SAB working on a shoestring budget.⁴³

The reference to better public education provides potent foreshadowing for the political thinking that would evolve into stay-put policy and eventually Protect and Survive.

In annex E, under “Public Advice”, the review provides some of the earliest hints towards what would become Protect and Survive. The importance of Home Defence Review 1971 to the development of Protect and Survive is apparent as it concluded “no intensive public advice on nuclear war will be issued in normal peacetime”, which was Protect and Survive’s original intention. Stay-put policy emerged as the review suggested that the dispersal of the traditional priority classes of “8 million old people, mothers and children ... will cease”, ending the last pretenses for public evacuation. The review further stated that a book that could be rapidly distributed in a crisis would be prepared by “the end of 1974” and an accompanying TV film for “the end of 1975”, precisely in line with the development of Protect and Survive. Political reaction to the review was varied, but a direct arc from care and maintenance to stay-put and protect and survive can be traced.⁴⁴

From the announcement of care and maintenance into the decade of decline, the British economy continued to deteriorate. Still reeling from the devaluation of the pound, Britain entered an era of trade union disputes, the 1973 Oil Crisis forced the Three-Day Week, and unemployment rose along with inflation. Cuts seemed inarguable as the Conservative

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

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government committed to maintaining tax rates and to lowering unemployment. Though the desire to boast about ending care and maintenance was tempting, Home Office ministers worked with significant restrictions which ultimately funneled them into the acceptance of the frugal stay-put policy. Information on the Home Defence Review had been trickling out to other departments before the review was officially released. The interim report prepared in April had reached the Treasury who began to stop to any proposed budget increases without savings elsewhere. Anthony Barber, Chancellor of the Exchequer, prepared a report on public expenditure in the years up to 1976.

Relieving unemployment, additional steel investments, capital for Rolls-Royce, and entering the EEC were the biggest expenditure increases which allowed little to no room for other increases. Chancellor Barber addressed the goals of the upcoming budget, to provide funds for the committed expenditures while maintaining the tax rate and subduing the national cost inflation quagmire. Barber called it “imperative” that public spending, outside the previous commitments, must remain static. Ministers hoping for increased finances were told they should seek these funds by finding savings within their own programs. Ministers asking for increased budgets had to report by July 15 to the Cabinet explaining the extent to which they could accommodate their own increases within their budgets. The Report listed civil defence as requesting a rise of £6 million per year until 1976 that would not be forthcoming.⁴⁵

It was likely the Treasury was working from a copy of the interim report by the MG which initially put forward a civil defence budget increase of £6 million per annum. Wright had attempted to address this issue immediately, stating the interim report was “simply a working-level document” which was not intended to provide a basis for Ministers. Wright added that there

⁴⁵ TNA: HO 322/798, “Memorandum by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on Public Expenditure to 1975-76,” June 21, 1971.

was much work to be done, including options below current expenditures as the Chancellor of the Exchequer requested.⁴⁶

By July, the Machinery of Government in War Sub-Committee had completed a draft of their Home Defence Review. The MG prepared three proposals, one at the same level of expenditure, one increased to £15 million and one at a lower rate than current. Contained within the draft are early references to stay-put policy, which was described as a fiscal necessity. Stay-put was also suggested as a policy that could correct care and maintenance. The Committee were hesitant to even discuss a lowered budget, affording only one paragraph in the sixteen-page document.

Wright encouraged Secretary Allen to accept the draft even though it was produced at an exceptional rate, and therefore might not be as polished as they would have hoped. The Chancellor stressed to the Home Office that cuts may have been required, spread throughout multiple departments. To provide a funding saving option, most of the cuts would have been from MAFF, with a drop in expensive, perishable food stockpiles. Wright noted the “remarkable unanimity between departments” to improve home defence and saw no issue with inter-departmental cooperation. The early draft listed major concerns for the Home Office, the first of which was the introduction of “the stay-put policy” to finally do away with care and maintenance. Having families remain within their homes, as suggested in the draft, was described as a drastic overhaul of current policy and approach to public information. After pointing out that evacuation plans would now be discontinued, Wright also acknowledged the poorly hidden secret that “credible plans have never existed for the collection and reception of this mass movement”.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ TNA: HO 322/798, “Reply to Doc 24 by ED Wright for PS for Mr. Sharples, Miss Soret,” April 21, 1971.

⁴⁷ TNA: HO 322/798, “Brief to Sir Philip Allen on HDO(71)5,” July 6, 1971.

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Wright was correct to note that for all paper references to evacuation schemes, no document ever existed that would provide instructions on how the government might effectively move millions of citizens in a crisis. In closing, Wright informed Allen that the review was biased towards the option to increase spending to £15 million, and correctly so. The option to increase funding was said to have the support of officials, Ministries and the Cabinet office, with the Treasury, as was custom, being the only hesitant party. As a result of the care and maintenance policy, Wright described home defence as a shamble, with most Ministries having no confidence that home defence, as it was, formed a credible policy. To Wright and the Home Office, it was imperative that the Government pull home defence out of its nose-dive and become serious about the continuation of British civilization after a nuclear attack. In order to do so, Wright closed with the sentiment: “the announcement of the end of ‘care and maintenance’ and the injection of additional finance is an essential pre-requisite to the restoration of confidence”.⁴⁸

Secretary Allen later wrote to Chairman Trend and noted his approval of the draft review and offered his thoughts. Allen noticed that the majority of the increase to £15 million would go to MAFF and Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), and he believed the raises would please the HO and MOD. Allen was more concerned about Annex E of the draft that described the role of volunteers through the 1970s. Annex E encouraged volunteerism at the local level, making use of enthusiastic people and avoiding anything approaching a large, uniformed, and expensive program such as the Civil Defence Corps. Allen described Annex E as “smooth words” but added that it would not satisfy MP Renton in the slightest. Allen attached an element of national vitality to the report and expressed his belief that a raise to £15 million and the end of care and

⁴⁸ Ibid.

maintenance would allow Britain to hold their heads high within NATO.⁴⁹

Within NATO, Britain could still boast about the UKWMO and ROC. As mostly volunteer based early detection organizations, UKWMO and ROC were recognized world leaders. Volunteers were well trained, dedicated, and had hundreds of monitoring posts around the United Kingdom. In other matters of civil defence however, Britain was the runt of NATO.⁵⁰ In percentage of GDP, the UK was spending fractions of the investments made by the Soviet Union and the United States. Following the care and maintenance decision, Britain's civil defence percentages were amongst the lowest in NATO. As the crux of any conflict with the USSR, NATO could barely function without a well defended UK as a base of operations. Ian Gilmour, Shadow Defence Secretary, declared that Labour's defence cuts had done "enormous damage" to their NATO commitments.⁵¹

At the time of the draft review, the civil defence budget was just under £10 million. Priorities clearly lied with the three biggest segments: Regional/Local government planning, the UKWMO, and food and equipment stockpiles. Public advice was a meager 0.2% of the budget. If the budget for civil defence could be expanded by £5 million, the Home Office had a clear preference to divert funding to stockpile increases. Public advice was noted as being cost effective now that stay-put policy was established, and a new public education programme would be ready for 1974. The investment in stockpiles was thought to significantly increase "the prospects of recovery for survivors".⁵²

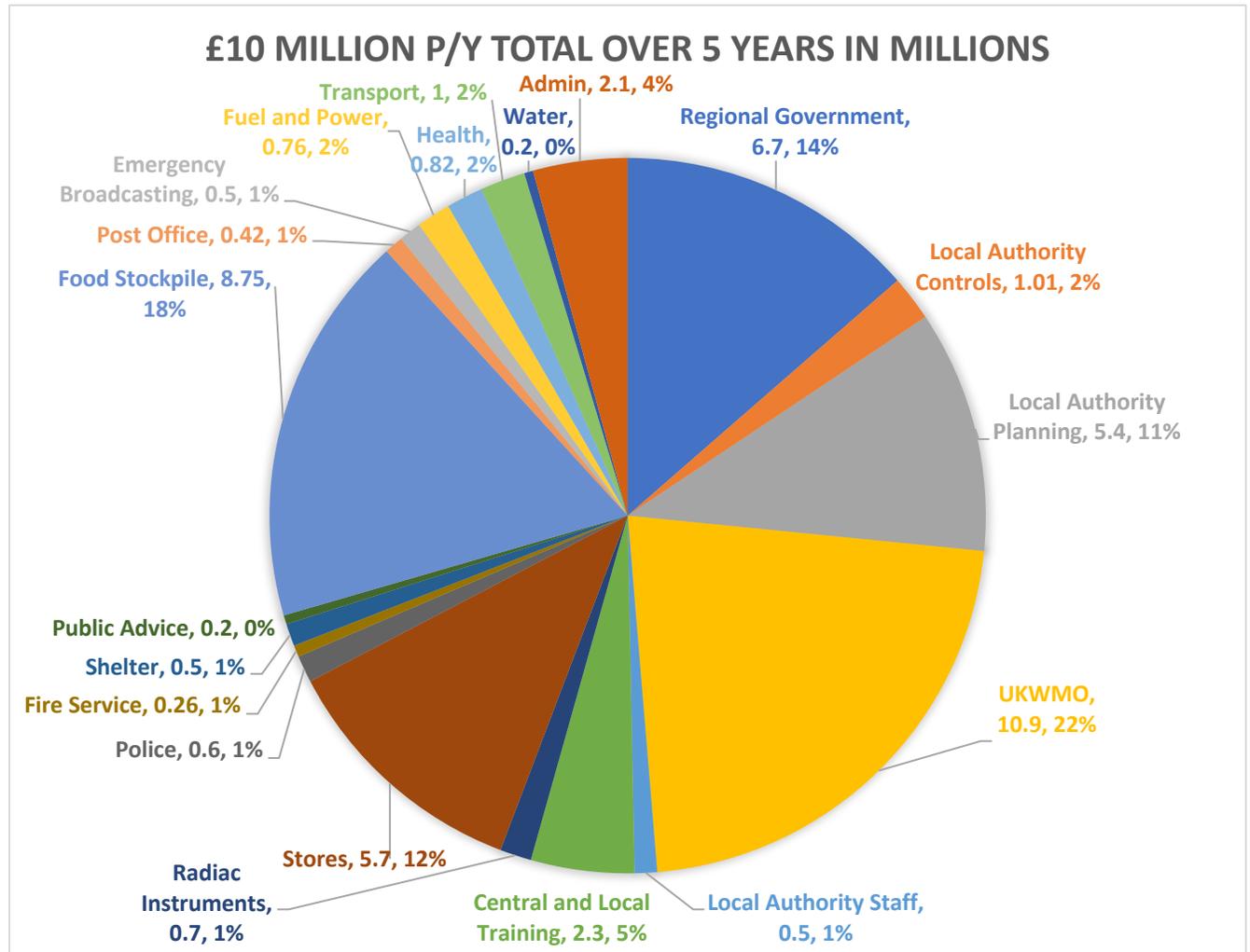
⁴⁹ TNA: HO 322/798, "Copy of Letter from Sir Philip Allen to Sir Burke Trend of 9th July 1971," July 9, 1971.

⁵⁰ Unattributed, "NATO Leaders Urge Civil Defence Revival," *The Times*, July 25, 1977.

⁵¹ THCR 2/6/1/80, "Statement of the Defence Estimates 1977 by Conservative Research Department," March 17, 1977.

⁵² Both tables compiled by Joseph Buscemi with data from - TNA: HO 322/798, "HDO(71)5 - Home Defence Review 1971 Draft," July 5, 1971.

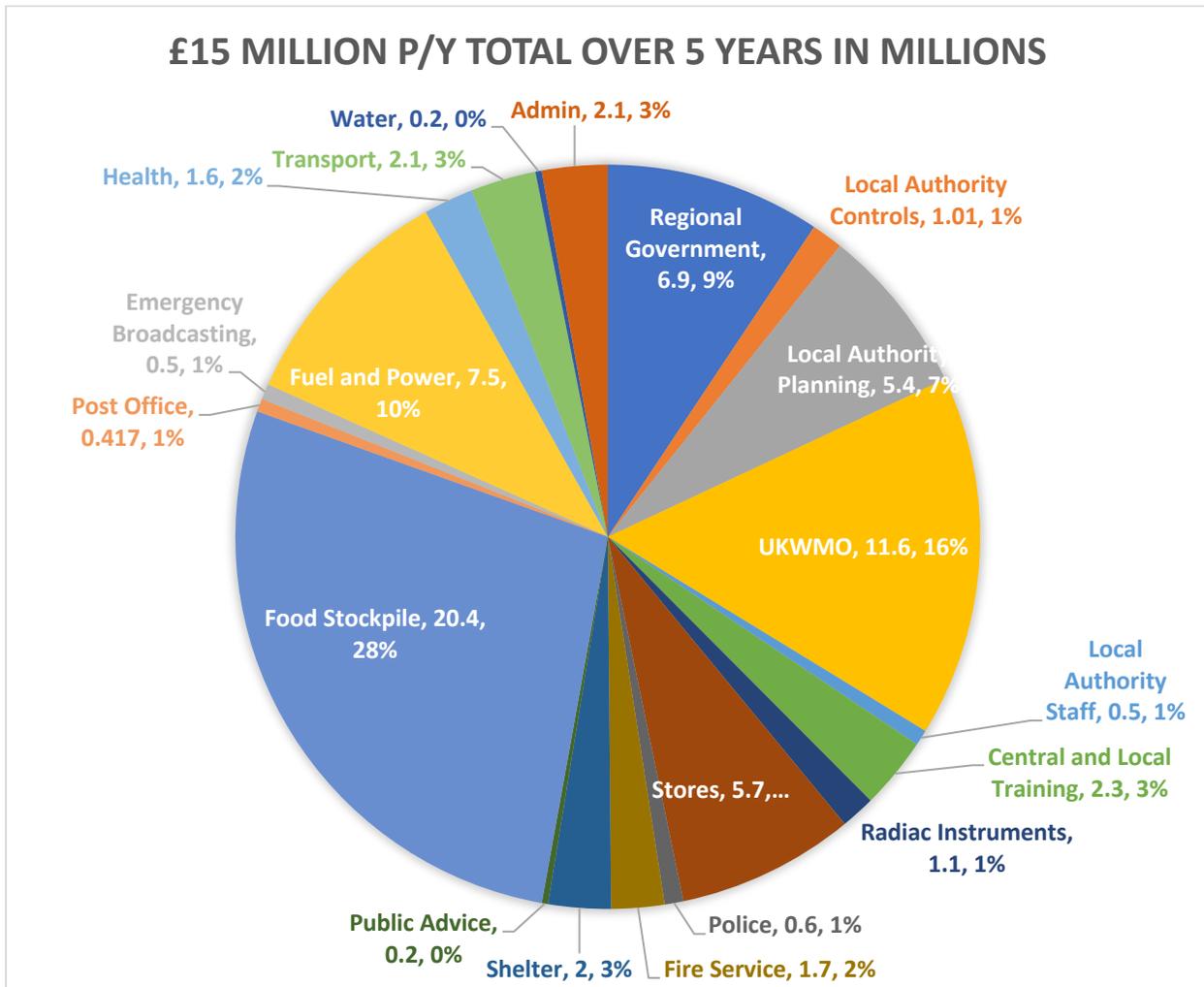
Table 1: Distribution of civil defence budget in 1977



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⁵³ The 1971 distribution of civil defence expenditure as compared to a proposed £15 million budget in TNA: HO 322/798. Note the significant increases to the food and fuel stockpiles.

Table 2: Redistribution of budget if increased by £5 million



The draft review continued to receive near unanimous acceptance from several Home Office departments.⁵⁴ One reply, however, forewarned the future of British civil defence.

⁵⁴ TNA: HO 322/798, "Letter to Sir Philip Allen from Burke Trend in Reply to July 9 Letter of Home Defence Review," July 14, 1971.

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William Armstrong of the Civil Service Department wrote to Chairman Trend and expressed his approval of the MG's report but noted the system depended entirely on an assumption of human behaviour. Worse still, it was an assumption on human behaviour in a cataclysmic crisis. A decade before Protect and Survive was bombarded by criticism, Armstrong captured the essence of the policy's flaw: the entire principle depended on the public actually staying put in their homes or work shelters before, during and after a nuclear apocalypse.

Armstrong called the stay-put theory a precarious supposition made to hold up the framework of cost-effective civil defence without providing any foundation. However, Armstrong acknowledged that "this may be a necessary assumption given the cost limits we were set" and supported the removal of any significant evacuation plans. Armstrong provides a fascinating moment of clarity within decades of politics and reports by considering what families would experience in their efforts to survive an attack. Armstrong concluded with an insightful comment on the problems Protect and Survive would encounter in the future: "I note also that we intend to issue public advice designed to persuade people to stay in their homes. But I think we must not lose sight of what seems to me the very real possibility that large numbers of people would ignore the Government's advice".⁵⁵

On July 14 1971, copies of a finalized Home Defence Review were prepared, and Chairman Trend attached a cover report. Trend believed that the decision of the previous administration to take home defence to a care and maintenance status created significant doubts about the viability of national survival efforts. Since 1968, funding had been provided only to maintain a collection of systems that needed to be activated and brought up to speed in a matter of days during a crisis. Many of these systems were still incomplete and others were not even

⁵⁵ TNA: HO 322/798, "William Armstrong of Civil Service Department to Sir Burke Trend on HDO(71)5," July 9, 1971.

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maintained by 1968 levels. Care and maintenance failed to command the respect of anyone involved and needed immediate redressing. Trend only provided a brief note on the option to spend less than the current £10 million, stating its selection “would completely destroy the credibility of our arrangements at home and abroad”.⁵⁶

The option to maintain current levels, however, was described as having some merit. Improvements would have been achieved by discontinuing expensive and unnecessary practices such as Second World War shelter demolitions and storing obsolete and deteriorating vehicles and equipment. These saving could amount to £900,000 which could have been directed to more important policies, though Ministers could not expect any significant improvement in the nation’s preparedness. The only seemingly viable option to Trend was an increase to £15 million if ministers wished to see “genuine progress” and cared to “considerably enhance the credibility of our home defence arrangements”.⁵⁷

Trend provided two options, the first being an increase in funding somewhere between £12 and £15 million. This amount was believed to help the cause of home defence though it would not have been enough to announce an end to care and maintenance. The second option was a yearly budget in excess of £15 million a year. Trend argued that the review found areas which needed considerably more than £15 million per year to be improved to a useful state. The above £15 million plan would have completely undone care and maintenance by providing a comprehensive civil defence program that could reach a state of readiness in a matter of days, rather than weeks. Trend did not provide specifics on how readiness would be achieved, though he suggested inclusive national shelter programs with sufficient protection from fallout for

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ TNA: HO 322/798, “HD(71)1 Cover Note by the Chairman of the Official Committee on HD(71)5 (Attached),” July 14, 1971.

homes. This level of readiness would have likely equaled or surpassed the pre-care and maintenance budget of £24 million per annum. Trend determined that the government should encourage voluntary organizations, though he discouraged a recreation of the CDC on the grounds that the needs of civil defence had changed significantly from pre-1968 planning. Trend concluded the cover letter with a suggestion that population dispersal plans should be abandoned in favour of stay-put plans. The Home Office latched onto the stay-put policy as it provided possible savings to announce an end to care and maintenance, and after being mentioned in the 1971 Review, stay-put became the backbone of British civil defence.⁵⁸

The Official Committee delegated the task of examining civil defence options to the Machinery of Government in War Sub-Committee (MG). The report by the MG was a yardstick that mapped out the course of British civil defence plans up to what would become Protect and Survive and beyond. As with the Sandys White Paper, the 1955 Review, and the review of 1968, Home Defence Review 1971 was a document that redirected the course of British politics. The MG prepared an extremely thorough report, distilled down to sixteen recommendations, multiple budgets and program options, and an evaluation of Britain's home defence viability following 1968. The report began with the four aims of civil defence:

- a. To secure the United Kingdom against any internal threat;
- b. To mitigate so far as is practicable the effects of any direct attack on the United Kingdom, including the use of conventional nuclear, biological or chemical weapons
- c. To provide alternative machinery of government, both central and regional, which would stand a reasonable chance of surviving nuclear attack in order to direct national recovery;
- d. To enhance the basis for national recovery, post attack⁵⁹

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ TNA: HO 322/798, "Report by the Machinery of Government in War Sub-Committee - Home Defence Review 1971," July 14, 1971.

The review commented that there was no theoretical limit to the amount that could be spent by the government to achieve the four aims of civil defence. Instead, the MG stated that they would proceed within the current context of a £15 million ceiling, which was dictated as a “matter of political judgement” and unlikely to be surpassed. The committee’s judgement was motivated by a contemporary re-assessment of probable risk to the United Kingdom. Part of the pretexts for care and maintenance was the assumption that any military threat to the United Kingdom would build over a matter of weeks or months, providing sufficient time for civil defence preparations. With both the Treasury and the MOD directing funding to other military requirements, the MG carried over the “previous administration’s policy of care and maintenance” to conclude that the current threat level to the United Kingdom was insufficient for any plans above £15 million, though not less than current spending.⁶⁰

The committee formed their risk-assessment conclusions from a recent Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC) report that predicted a sufficient number of weeks of accumulative warning before any attack on the nation.⁶¹ A separate JIC report examining the likelihood of Soviet aggression and tactics found the probability for the use of any biological or chemical weapons against the public to be minimal.⁶² The JIC report re-appears several times during the creation of *Protect and Survive*, explaining the lack of mention of biological and/or chemical protection in the booklet or videos.⁶³ The absence of information on biological and/or chemical attacks was a frequent criticism on *Protect and Survive* into the late 1980s despite the lack of military intelligence to suggest significant risk.⁶⁴

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ TNA: CAB 189/22, “JIC(A)(71)16,” 1971.

⁶² TNA: CAB 189/16, “JIC(A)(70)33,” 1970.

⁶³ TNA: HO 322/776, “Protect and Survive Companion Manual.”

⁶⁴ TNA: INF6/2490, “Civil Defence Information and Publicity Programme,” January 15, 1986.

Chapter 2 - The Nuclear Consensus: The 1971 Home Defence Review

In section five of the review, the MG corroborated Home Secretary Maudling's assumptions from HD(70)2 that the state of British civil defence in 1971 was not viable. This current budget, the MG argued, was devoted mostly to maintaining the low-readiness of civil defence programs dictated by the "arbitrary cuts" made by the Labour party in 1968. At times, the MG noted, even basic maintenance was not being performed, resulting in a notable erosion of stockpiles, equipment, readiness, and organization. The review also uncovered a general "lack of confidence" amongst the staff and volunteers who administered the nation's civil defence programs and "serious deficiencies" in emergency communication networks, further weakening national preparations. Committee members surmised that under current care and maintenance policies, the government could no longer state it was meeting the four aims of civil defence. According to the MG, without adjustment to civil defence funding allocations, "virtually nothing could be done to mitigate the effects of nuclear war on the public or to enhance the basis for national recovery". Thus, care and maintenance could be seen as nothing greater than a failed policy which required immediate correction.⁶⁵

If the current budget of £10 million could not be raised, the committee believed that "the highest priority" of the Home Office should be the attempted improvement of the readiness of the machinery of government in war and the UKWMO. The UKWMO was viewed as one of the few successes of home defence planning and maintained its funding levels through care and maintenance, Protect and Survive, and beyond. To maintain government and UKWMO readiness at the current level of funding, the MG suggested an immediate cessation to any civil defence expenses that did not contribute to national priorities, namely the stoppage of Second World War bunker demolition and the storage of obsolete vehicles and equipment at a savings of £890,000

⁶⁵ TNA: HO 322/798, "Report by the Machinery of Government in War Sub-Committee - Home Defence Review 1971," July 14, 1971.

per year. The committee attempted to re-prioritize the 1971 rate of funding, noting the difficulties of adjusting but not increasing current funding. The possibilities oscillated on either preliminary survival or national recovery. Any gains to survival chances would have to come at the expense of recovery programs and vice versa. Though the MG concluded it had reached the most beneficial budget, it noted that current levels did not permit the assurances of both survival and recovery simultaneously.⁶⁶

If the 1976 civil defence budget was maintained at 1971 levels, £10 million, funding would be redirected away from pricey equipment stockpiles towards public shelters and education investment (Table 3). If funding was increased to £15 million (Table 4), distribution remains similar to the current budget, with virtually all the new funding given to food and fuel

Table 3: 1971 Home Defence Expenditure in £ Millions

⁶⁶ Ibid.

stockpiles, indicating a clear preference for post-attack recovery and public survival.⁶⁷

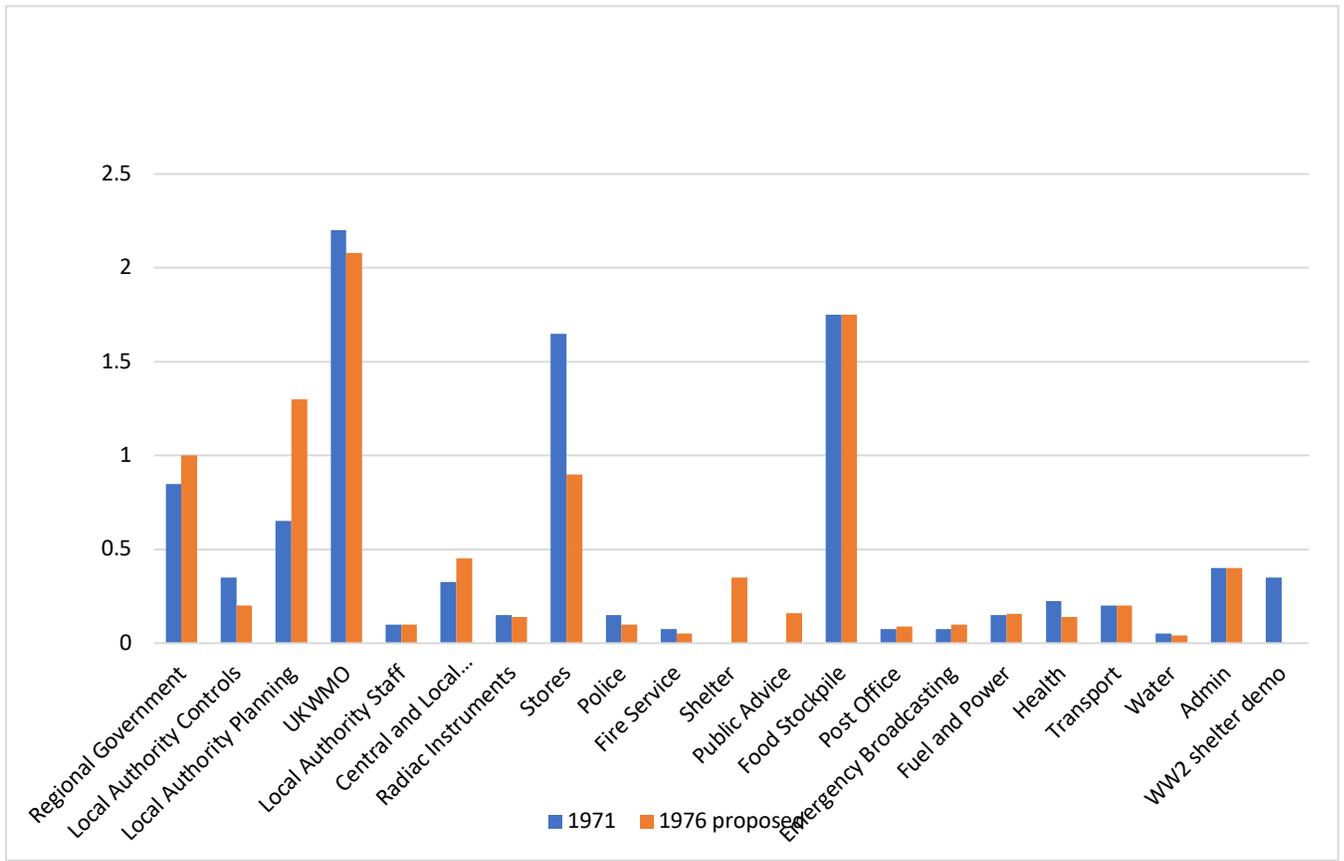
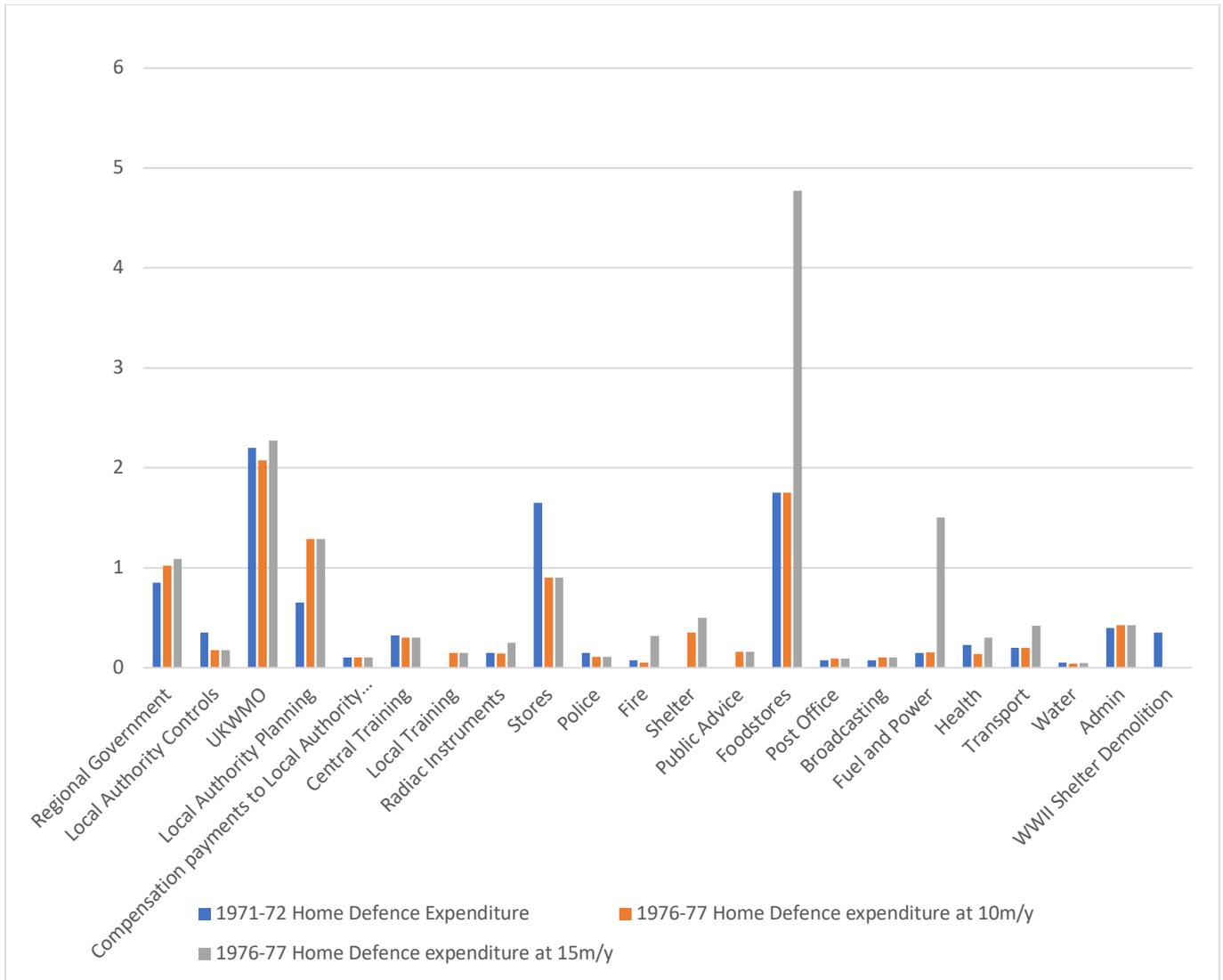


Table 4: Proposed 1976 Home Defence Expenditures in £ Millions

⁶⁷ Tables 3 and 4 compiled by Joseph Buscemi based on data from - TNA: HO 322/798, "Report by the Machinery of Government in War Sub-Committee - Home Defence Review 1971," July 14, 1971.



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The Home Defence Review also briefly explored the option of lowering home defence funding to £7 million per year. Once again, this option was barely given credence as it required the termination of the previously endorsed UKWMO to save £2.2 million, the liquidation of national food stockpiles for £1.7 million, and the dismissal of local authority organizations for

⁶⁸ Above: The current distribution of civil defence funding compared to the same expenditure in 1976. Note the reduction in stores and increase in organization, shelters and public advice
 Below: The same values with the addition of expenditure at £15 million. Note the disproportionate spending on food and fuel stores.

£600,000. The MG were significantly more enthusiastic about an additional £5 million per year being spent on civil defence. It was argued that an increase to £15 per annum could “significantly improve the state of readiness” of the United Kingdom. Public advice investment was described as a method to increase fallout protection without the use of national shelters or any mass-evacuation contingencies. This program of public advice (that would be kept secret until a time of crisis) would obviously promote the creation of Protect and Survive several years later. The MG Committee was prescient in forecasting the arrival of Protect and Survive:

“By then end of 1974, it would be possible to print at short notice a new booklet of advice for rapid distribution free of charge to each household in a crisis. By the end of 1975, a TV film based on the booklet would be ready”.⁶⁹

Once again, British civil defence was shaped by financial restrictions rather than universal protection ideals and unfolded in a very predictable fashion. Public advice programs were to be distributed “via mass-media in a crisis”. The “stay-put” policy would be enforced, and no planning would be provided for evacuating priority classes. The existing policy of not providing national fallout protection would continue, though allotments would be made to local authorities to go towards the conduction of surveys to find suitable buildings that could provide shelter in a crisis. This was thought to be sufficient until 1977-82 when more expenditure would encourage further development of the program. Though public advice was to be implemented in both equal and increased budgets, stockpiles, of both food and fuel were far and away the most noticeable increases of a new budget and would have commanded the most funding. The MG argued that without these stocks there would be mass starvation, failing law and order, and low prospects of recovery.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

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The MG provided a firm conclusion on the current state and future of civil defence spending in the United Kingdom. Firstly, the review confirmed three points made in HD(70)2, namely that present civil defence arrangements:

- i. Are at a low level of preparedness
- ii. Are deteriorating
- iii. Do not command the confidence of those responsible⁷¹

Next, the review found that a budget of £7 million per annum or lower would equate to the abandonment of any credible attempt to provide the four aims of civil defence and jeopardize the standing of the nation at home, within NATO and abroad. An increase above the current £10 million but below £15 million could show benefits, though it would be at a slow pace.

Furthermore, £10-12 million was required to simply maintain current declining programs, which would prevent the government from announcing an end to care and maintenance. An increase to £15 million would allow the Government to announce the end of care and maintenance. The £15 million option was the recommendation of the Committee who described it as the only option to “make genuine progress” in the defence of the nation. Finally, the MG concluded its review with the following predictive statement: “a stay-put policy should form the basis for plans to protect the public in any future home defence programme”.⁷²

Home Office Minister of State, Richard Sharples, wrote to Home Secretary Reginald Maudling to endorse the Committee’s suggestions, specifically for the increased use of volunteers and the cost-effective “stay-put policy” that would become the progenitor of Protect and Survive. Minister Sharples also thought the £15 million budget to be “excellent value” and described £12 million as the minimum acceptable funding level. Even a small increase to £12

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

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million, according to Sharples, would have finally enabled the Conservatives to “announce the end of the existing and wasteful policy of care and maintenance”.⁷³

Copies of the 1971 Home Defence Review circulated around the Home Office, with staff enthusiastically supporting the recommendations of an increased budget. Prevailing thought at the time was that sending copies to other departments, such as MAFF, and Industry, who were responsible for stockpiles, would be quite beneficial.⁷⁴ Chairman Trend asked Wright to prepare a report on the review that could be sent to Secretary Allen. Wright prepared a draft and hoped to emphasize the negligent approach to civil defence that was taken under the previous administration. To accomplish his goal, Wright included “interesting quotations!” from the Labour party which asserted they would not lower civil defence financing.⁷⁵

Trend accepted the majority of Wright’s draft, highlighting the need to deliver a statement to Parliament before the recess and to expect Renton to voice disapproval on the absence of a revived CDC. Trend did make several changes to Wright’s document, where Wright had said it was “impossible” to plan for the collection of evacuees, Trend wrote that “evacuation was to be on a voluntary basis and ... no adequate plans exist”. Trend altered: “the previous policy assumed that families would be split up and all other people would continue their normal tasks in the latter stages of a crisis” to read: “the previous policy assumed that families would be split up and those not evacuated would remain in the cities at normal tasks up to the moment of attack”. Trend also adjusted: “unlike the majority of countries in NATO, the UK has neglected plans to provide minimal protection for the civilian population” to: “Unlike the majority of

⁷³ TNA: HO 322/798, “Note on Home Defence Review 1971 from Richard Sharples to S. of S.,” July 15, 1971.

⁷⁴ TNA: HO 322/798, “Draft Brief for S of S on HD(71)1,” July 1971.

⁷⁵ TNA: HO 322/798, “Note of Attached Draft Brief for Sir Philip Allen by ED Wright,” July 16, 1971.

countries in NATO, the UK has no plans to provide minimal[sic] protection for the civilian population”, civil defence was still of debatable value on a dense island such as Britain.⁷⁶

Later that month the Official Cabinet Committee on Home Defence prepared a document to voice their agreement with the MG’s review and emphasized three conclusions that should form the basis of civil defence for the next five years. The recommendations were unsurprising and little new information was provided. The first goal was to “announce the end of care and maintenance” policies of the previous administration. The second was to stress the importance which the committee attached to voluntary societies supporting Local Authorities in the handling of emergencies in peace and war. The final goal was to declare the Committee’s intention of improving the British state of preparedness by raising the level of investment from under £10 million to £15 million a year. Secretary Allen added his approval of the review’s findings and noted that the Conservative party had been silent on civil defence after coming to power and he was now expecting to make a statement to Parliament asking for a raise in home defence expenditure.⁷⁷ The day before the decision Buttery and others around the Home Office were cautiously optimistic the Ministerial committee would approve the raise to £15 million.⁷⁸ Speaking at a Home Defence Cabinet meeting on July 20 1971, Maudling stated that the “care and maintenance” policy of the previous administration needed to be done away with for good and agreed with the MG’s recommendation of increasing the civil defence budget to £15 million per annum.

Care and maintenance lived in a nebulous area in between readiness and neglect. The public, as well as the Government, viewed it as a half-hearted measure that did no good other

⁷⁶ TNA: HO 322/798, “Draft of HD(71)1 for S of S by Burke Trend,” July 1971.

⁷⁷ TNA: HO 322/798, “Home Defence Expenditure Memorandum by the Secretary of State for the Home Department,” July 19, 1971.

⁷⁸ TNA: HO 322/798, “Buttery Memo on Home Defence Expenditure for Finance Division.,” July 19, 1971.

than providing a paper token on the lowest possible budget to maintain deterrence. The meeting was spirited, attendees were aware the system was not working, needed additional funding, and could not be scrapped entirely without losing political approval. A £10 million per annum budget was seen as the absolute minimum by Home Office Ministers pleading their case. Even at the budget ceiling, the Home Office was unsure if it would significantly improve the efficacy of home defence. The Home Office believed that with £15 million there still would be no system to “contend seriously with the catastrophic effects of a nuclear attack; and the Government could not publicly pretend that it could”. This tactic worked against the Home Office as the Ministerial Committee surmised that if even the budget ceiling was insufficient, there was no point to increasing funding and “could not find room for an additional 6m per annum”. The argument put forward by the Ministerial Committee was: “The country [was] in no mood to approve of an increase over our present level of expenditure on home defence and the proper course might be to discontinue all activities which could not be justified on grounds of their usefulness in peacetime”.⁷⁹

Home Office ministers countered by stating “the last Administration’s policy of ‘care and maintenance’ had been strenuously criticized” by those in the room who concluded “it would be hard to explain to the population as a whole and to the Government’s supporters that no precautions would be taken”. This was a similar critique to that of Protect and Survive that was described as taking no steps to actually protect the Nation. The Home Office Ministers went on to endorse the cost-effective stay-put policy which emphasised individual preparation for attack. In conclusion however, the Ministerial Committee surmised that the funds were not available to increase “the present level of expenditure on home defence” despite the well-argued evidence of

⁷⁹ TNA: HO 322/798, “HD(71) 1st Meeting 20 July Minutes,” July 20, 1971.

its fallibility. The Ministers also noted that “there were major political and practical objections to making significant reductions”. The budget would stay put and future work would be done to use the funds to better assist volunteer organizations. The Ministers could not decide if it would be necessary to let the conclusions of the Committee become public knowledge “beyond indicating that we were seeking ways to reshape our programme in accordance with a realistic appreciation of the requirements”. The secrecy of the consensus remained.⁸⁰

Maudling developed a draft statement which argued a comprehensive review had been completed and “the ‘care and maintenance’ arrangements [had] been critically examined ... and decisions [had] been made about the future level of home defence expenditure in the civil field”.⁸¹ The Home Secretary ultimately concluded it was “not politically feasible to announce increased expenditure for civil defence against nuclear attack [but] would welcome any changes to improve the existing arrangements within the existing ceiling of expenditure”. Sir Burke Trend added that “existing arrangements for civil defence commanded no confidence. For an additional £5 million it should be possible to create a system which made some sort of sense”. Sir Philip Allen agreed and said “it would be misleading to claim that a credible system could be created” at current expenditure.⁸²

On August 5th, the final day of Parliament before recess, Maudling spoke on the decision to maintain the level of expenditure and attempted to remove any perception that the decision was a failure. Maudling expressed they had reached a set of conclusions that home defence could be improved by adjusting spending within the current expenditure. There was little detail on the adjustments, although Maudling referred to strengthening civil defence organizational

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ TNA: HO 322/798, “Draft Announcement on Home Defence Policy 1971,” July 27, 1971.

⁸² TNA: HO 322/798, “Note of Meeting Between S.of S. Sir Burke Trend and Sir Philip Allen,” July 27, 1971.

command.⁸³ Maudling then sent a private letter to Renton the same day, sympathizing with Renton's probable disappointment and acknowledging Renton's efforts to re-start the CDC. Maudling expressed that word from senior Ministers was that the Government were in an alarming financial bind in 1971 and there was no surplus funding to be gained by civil defence when all hands were working towards revitalizing the British economy. The letter went on to encourage Renton that though the budget was remaining the same, the Government could count on current volunteer programs to step-up national defence. Maudling concluded by attempting to persuade Renton that his goals were misdirected and informed him that "local authority associations in England and Wales have already given me to understand that they see no need to create a civil defence force".⁸⁴

As the month continued, Buttery expressed frustration but also provided significant efforts to continue forward and to not allow the Home Office to become stagnant due to Ministerial decisions. On the morning of August 16, Secretary Allen met with Buttery and informed him that Chairman Trend had agreed with him that the Home Office should decide how best to redirect civil defence spending within the current expenditure. Secretary Allen asked Buttery to organize an F6 meeting with Wright to determine where funds could be saved in civil defence and what could then be improved. Allen also requested the Home Office should collectively decide how much effort should go towards the new stay-put policy versus abstract evacuation plans.⁸⁵

The meeting went forward, and Wright soon had a report developed for Secretary Allen. Gathering the Home Departments failed to reveal anything revelatory as most defended what

⁸³ Secretary of State for the Home Department Reginald Maudling, *HoC Deb*, Aug 5 1971, Vol. 137, Col 369-370.

⁸⁴ TNA: HO 322/798, "Letter to David Renton from Reginald Maudling Regarding Statement on Home Defence," August 5, 1971.

⁸⁵ TNA: HO 322/798, "Letter on Home Defence from Mr. Buttery to Mr. Wright," August 16, 1971.

funding they had and how vital it was to the home defence effort. MAFF, DOE, and DTI all claimed that only negligible amounts of finances could be scoured from their stockpiles. The stay-put policy was seen as a valid excuse to say care and maintenance was done away with, while spending the same amount on civil defence. The departments put forward earlier plans to scrap the demolition of World War Two bunkers and stockpiles of obsolete equipment as modest savings. Wright expressed his thanks that “Ministers were sensible enough not to make any public reference to ‘stay-put’ or ‘evacuation’”, allowing the Home Office room to work on the new direction of civil defence behind a veil of classification.⁸⁶

On August 24, Wright met with Secretary Allen again to discuss the opinions of the Home Departments and to flesh out the stay-put policy the Ministers put forward. Wright was extremely tentative about the “appropriateness” of the stay-put policy and how Local Authorities would react to idea. Wright seemed to think of their efforts at redirecting funding from theoretical evacuation plans to non-existent stay-put plans as a kind of shell game. There were no efforts going towards an evacuation policy, thus it was unclear what funds could be gained from abandoning it. Wright informed Allen that it would be “imprudent in the extreme” to mention stay-put with Local Authorities when there were no savings or substance in its proposal.⁸⁷ This seemed prudent as Local Authorities, especially the metropolitans, had a history of opposition to civil defence schemes that offered anything other than total evacuation.⁸⁸

The following month Buttery prepared a report for the leaders of the Home Departments to express his ideas on the Minister’s decision. Buttery began his report with his usual candor by pointing out that there were little to no savings to be found within the departments. Buttery was

⁸⁶ TNA: HO 322/798, “Home Defence Meeting Summary for Mr. Waddell from Mr. Wright,” August 19, 1971.

⁸⁷ TNA: HO 322/798, “Letter to Mr. Buttery from Mr. Wright on Home Defence,” August 25, 1971.

⁸⁸ Hazel Atashroo, “Weaponising the Peace: The Greater London Council, Cultural Policy and GLC Peace Year 1983,” *Contemporary British History*, September 2018.

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more concerned with the development of the new stay-put policy he had been handed. Somehow, funding was to be directed towards fallout shelter surveys and a public advice campaign that could not be divulged to the public. Buttery cautioned ministers not to “spread the butter too widely and consequently too thinly” and things would be best if they could prepare a “package deal” for Local Authorities so there would be no room for quibbling.⁸⁹

Later than month Buttery discussed the “package deal” with the County Councils Association, emphasizing that the Home Office was still devoted to correcting the course of British civil defence which had “been seriously neglected since 1968”. Notably absent from the deal however was “the Government’s ideas of public protection and shelter”. The reason for this, argued Buttery, was that the state of the economy prevented the Home Office from funding such efforts. In the meantime, the package deal would contain helpful resources and Buttery would contact them again after he had examined how funding for public shelters could be found. Buttery safely avoided disclosing the new stay-put policy as part of the package deal.⁹⁰

Meanwhile, in Commons, Labour MP William Price took the opportunity to ask Secretary Sharples: “Is it not clear that civil defence is a con-trick inflicted on people who would have no hope of survival in a nuclear conflict? Why does not the Minister give to those who, with good intentions, engage in civil defence a real role in emergency and accident work?”⁹¹ Secretary Sharples referred Price to an upcoming Circular to Local Authorities which would explain the Government’s intentions. The following month Buttery distributed a follow-up report which stated that one of the greatest expenses was the MAFF stockpile, which could not be scrapped without seriously weakening “the deterrent posture of the Alliance (NATO) as a

⁸⁹ TNA: HO 322/817, “Memorandum from Mr. Buttery for Home Departments,” September 3, 1971.

⁹⁰ TNA: HO 322/817, “Letter to Mr. Hetherington from Mr. Buttery,” September 22, 1971.

⁹¹ Member of Parliament William Price, House of Commons Debate, Jan 27 1972, v. 829, col 1595.

whole”. Only meager savings could be found in scrapping the Fire Services and DTI stockpiles of vehicles.⁹²

Wright wrote to Buttery to express his lack of surprise that the follow-up report found little scope for re-allocation of funds, especially as MAFF steadfastly refused to reduce its food stockpile. Wright saw little prospect other than an endorsement of the “status quo”.⁹³ Later that month Wright updated Waddell on the effects of Home Defence Review 1971. Referencing the Ministerial Committee, Wright stated that “their” Review had been implemented and that “their new policy” (referring to stay-put) was in effect and no further changes, even minor, were “possible before 1975/76 within their £10m limit”. The Home Office had been locked in with no option but to proceed towards what would become Protect and Survive. Wright expressed his lack of surprise that £160,000 would be the maximum funding the public emergency education programme would receive. With that amount there would “be no money to put flesh on the ‘stay-put’ policy which Ministers approved, but fortunately did not announce”. Stay-put seemed to be an inevitable conclusion while both parties worked within the nuclear consensus.⁹⁴

On March 22 the anticipated Home Office Circular No. ES 1/1972 was finally distributed to Local Authorities. Naturally, Buttery left out any mention of the active stay-put policy though he attempted to craft an end to care and maintenance. Buttery assured that “the preparedness of local government to meet a war emergency [was] substantially improved” by the new, stronger communication in local planning for peace and war. The important point was that the damage done by care and maintenance was going to be corrected. Care and maintenance would now give way to a responsible system of government cooperation and efficacy. While defence funding was

⁹² TNA: HO 322/817, “Draft Home Defence Review Report of Follow-up Action Memorandum by the Home Department,” February 9, 1972.

⁹³ TNA: HO 322/817, “Home Office Folder Notes,” March 1972.

⁹⁴ TNA: HO 322/817, “Extended Folder Notes,” March 8, 1972.

shuffled to and fro, the nuclear consensus insured that the nuclear deterrent would continue to be well-funded.⁹⁵ The Opposition were immediately critical of the Circular and on the legitimacy of civil defence. Secretary Sharples attempted to defend the Circular arguing that civil defence still provided tangible protection to millions. Labour MP Roy Jenkins argued that there was no protection from nuclear weapons and that the public would reject the measures. Sharples replied, unknowingly advancing the thesis of Protect and Survive, “no, Sir, I would not accept that ... outside the immediate point of impact it is possible for people to take precautions which will enable a number of lives to be saved”.⁹⁶ On June 6th 1972 Chairman Trend prepared a cover letter for the MG’s Home Defence Review. Trend surmised that with the limitations placed on them, the MG could not “make any genuine progress in the field of civil defence or to announce the end of the care and maintenance policy adopted by the previous Administration”.⁹⁷

Trend’s conclusion quickly perturbed those within the Home Office that felt they had made a valiant effort to finally dispel care and maintenance. Secretary Allen wrote to Trend to and acknowledged that there was no grand announcement that care and maintenance was over, however, Allen believed that national preparedness had been improved at current expenditure. To the staff and departments who collectively made up civil defence in Britain, they had scored a victory by evolving civil defence beyond care and maintenance without increased funding. Allen stated that an official “announcement of the end of care and maintenance is now a non-issue and that it would be best not to revive it – and best not to put any such idea in the Ministers’ heads”.⁹⁸

⁹⁵ TNA: HO 322/817, “Home Office Circular No. ES 1/1972,” March 22, 1972.

⁹⁶ Messrs. Jenkins, Sharples and Paget, House of Commons Debate, March 23 1972, v. 833, col. 1668-1669.

⁹⁷ TNA: HO 322/817, “Note by the Chairman of the Official Committee on Home Defence Review 1971 Follow-up Report,” June 6, 1972.

⁹⁸ TNA: HO 322/817, “Memo to Burke Trend from P. Allen,” June 9, 1972.

Eventually, Trend's cover letter reached Prime Minister Heath's desk, whereupon Heath wrote to Home Secretary Maudling to express his thoughts on the matter. Heath believed the Home Departments had made-do within their limits, though the current measures were incongruent with the kind of emergency for which they were designed. Considering Heath's efforts to ameliorate the growing financial issues of 1970s Britain, he asked that the Cabinet should re-consider civil defence stockpiles as beneficial for civil emergencies and labour stoppages. If the civil defence stockpiles could serve a dual purpose, considered Heath, extra funding may be justified in "peace or in the shadow of approaching war". Heath no doubt had an eye towards the significant labour crises Britain had been faced with in the early 1970s.⁹⁹

The Treasury expressed trepidation that the Prime Minister's memorandum might have been the work of Chairman Trend whispering in Heath's ear, trying to achieve his goals of increasing civil defence expenditure through other means. The Treasury again remonstrated that it had been squarely decided by Ministers, and the Home Secretary, that funding for civil defence would not be increased above "the care and maintenance basis which was adopted at the time of the devaluation measures of January 1968". The concern shown inside the Treasury eventually made its way to John Wass, representing the Treasury on the Ministerial Committee, to ensure that Trend's efforts to squeeze more juice out of a £10 million stone would not be successful.¹⁰⁰

Trend updated his cover letter accordingly, removing references to care and maintenance being repealed. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Heath was in the throes of some of the worst economic crises that Britain had ever faced, with a massive trade union dispute looming on the financial horizon. In these circumstances, Trend noted that Heath had commissioned a Cabinet

⁹⁹ TNA: Treasury T331/850, "Letter to Home Secretary from Prime Minister Edward Heath," June 23, 1972.

¹⁰⁰ TNA: Treasury T331/850, "Letter on Civil Defence/Civil Emergencies by Mr. Widdup for Mr. Wass (Treasury)," June 27, 1972.

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review to examine if civil defence preparations might be used “against the consequences of industrial action by stockpiling” important resources. The state of civil defence in Britain would seemingly always dovetail with the state of finances. Trend’s cover letter started a long-standing debate within the Home Office about the suitability of civil defence stockpiles serving dual purpose for civil emergencies.¹⁰¹ A decade later, as Margaret Thatcher faced her own trade union conflicts, it was decided that “civil defence planning in the United Kingdom does not bear on the effects of industrial disputes. There is no evidence that the public as a whole would wish it to do so”.¹⁰²

The much-criticized care and maintenance policy simply faded into non-being. There was no great announcement to impress the public. It was agreed in the 1971 Home Defence Review, and again in the 1972 follow up report, that there would be no increase in civil defence spending, though the expectation would remain that improvements to civil defence preparedness should continue. The acceptance of this decision resulted in the development of the stay-put policy which was endorsed by successive governments. The path towards Protect and Survive became effectively clearer following the 1971 Review as stay-put would surpass care and maintenance in its effect on civil defence thinking throughout Britain’s decade of decline.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ TNA: HO 322/817, “HD(72)1 Home Defence Review Note by the Chairman of the Official Committee,” June 26, 1972.

¹⁰² TNA: HO 322/1025, “Planning for Home Defence and Civil Emergencies in the United Kingdom,” July 22, 1982.

¹⁰³ TNA: HO 322/776, “Mr. Buttery Wrote to Treasury,” January 30, 1975.

Chapter 3

“Civil Defence Does Not Exist”: The End of the UK Nuclear Consensus

The Labour Party maintained the influx of US investment in the British deterrent and continued to publicly support multilateral, rather than unilateral, disarmament. Labour sustained the nuclear stalemate and cooled tensions of 1970s détente. As Britain’s social welfare programmes began to struggle and decline into the 1970s, Labour continued the consensus and repeatedly pursued the Conservative’s highly classified extension of the aging Polaris programme, codenamed Chevaline.¹ Despite these mutual interests, Britain’s nuclear consensus began to buckle throughout the 1970s. The Conservatives vied for an independent British deterrent but frequently grew reliant on US missile systems. Meanwhile, Labour would toy with the notion of unilateralism and even neutrality, yet they continued to make landmark decisions in the preservation of the UK nuclear arsenal. All the while however, the consensus remained bent, but unbroken.²

In 1974 the Conservative party asserted that the Labour Party’s policies were now “utterly different” from their own. Their 1974 Manifesto categorized the Labour Party as a lost party, infiltrated by the “extreme Left-wing” and unfit to govern. In reality, the parties were growing increasingly similar in several policy areas, particularly in the maintenance of the

¹ The project to modernize Polaris was given the codename of Antelope as it was being developed in the United States. When the US abandoned the plans in favour of an entirely new system, Britain viewed it as a reasonable method to extend the Polaris systems. The codename of Chevaline is said to have derived from Defence Secretary Lord Carrington and his assistant private secretary, Kevin Tebbit. Attempting to find a name for this enhanced antelope system, Tebbit called the London Zoo and enquired if there was any animal that was a kind of super antelope. The zoo replied that a South African creature called a chevaline approximated that description and the name stuck. (Hennessy, *Cabinets and the Bomb*, 272.)

² John Simpson, “Present at the Creation: Nuclear Weapon Policies and Nuclear Disarmament Policies of the United Kingdom,” in *Nuclear Disarmament in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Wade L. Huntley, Mitsuru Kurosawa, and Kazumi Mizumoto (Lulu Books Co., 2005), 110–11.

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nuclear consensus. Labour backed away from threats of neutrality and began to support a strong, NATO-integrated, nuclear deterrent while the Conservatives pledged to strengthen NATO by maintaining “the effectiveness of the British nuclear deterrent”.³ The verisimilitude of the nuclear consensus continued to endure.

Wilson’s return to power in 1974 was wrought with economic difficulties. When the Labour Party announced significant budget cuts were required, the Conservative party seized the opportunity to decry Labour as jeopardizing national defence.⁴ The legitimacy of the Conservative attack was accelerated by Labour’s suggestion to lower military funding by £1 billion.⁵ The Conservatives, led by Margaret Thatcher, grabbed the occasion and soundly criticized the one billion pound figure for several years. In their statement on the defence plan, the Conservatives accused Labour of harbouring a secret agenda for unilateral disarmament and fraternization with CND that the Party was reticent to admit. With decades of acceptance, even this suggestion of departure from the nuclear consensus was a drastic change of political tradition.⁶

In truth, Wilson showed little intention of seriously considering unilateral disarmament, though Labour’s muddled history with the consensus afforded the scheme an air of believability.⁷ The criticisms eventually included a civil defence element as military intelligence indicated that the Soviet Union was spending upwards of 1 billion dollars on civil defence alone.⁸ The mirrored sums of 1 billion proved an effective talking point, allowing the Conservatives to position

³ THCR 1/11/2, “Firm Action for a Fair Britain: The Conservative Manifesto 1974,” 1974, 31.

⁴ Geoffrey Pattie, *Towards A New Defence Policy* (Conservative Political Centre, 1976).

⁵ Conservative Central Office, “Labour’s Programme for Britain,” *Politics Today* 15 (August 2, 1976).

⁶ THCR 2/6/1/80, “Statement of the Defence Estimates 1976 by Conservative Research Department,” March 25, 1976.

⁷ Michael Chichester, “British Defence Policy: Will Britannia Rise Again?,” *Navy International*, January 1977.

⁸ THCR 5/1/2/79, “Foreign Affairs Research Institute: The Strategic Significance of Soviet Civil Defence Preparedness,” November 1976.

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themselves as the party that would invest in civil defence and maintain military spending, eventually evidenced by their policy of civil defence openness and the publication of *Protect and Survive*. However, during this time period, there was still little awareness of *Protect and Survive* and the Labour government’s other civil defence arrangements. In stark contrast to the Soviet expenditure on civil defence, The Labour Party maintained a civil defence budget of £24 million, though they were also responsible, specifically Harold Wilson, for the 1968 devolution of civil defence to care and maintenance basis.⁹ These were figures that the Conservatives were all too keen to point out. Twenty-four million was seen as a paltry amount, as would any amount when compared to the rumoured Soviet figures, and immediately drew public ire.¹⁰

The following year, the Conservatives continued their confrontation with Labour’s position, labelling them as soft on defence and damaging Britain’s reputation within NATO. As the Polaris systems were approaching replacement, the Conservatives continued their practice of criticizing Labour’s withdrawal from the bipartisan nuclear consensus, even if no withdrawal had taken place. In their flogging of the 1977 Labour Party Defence White Paper, the Conservatives accused Labour of “nuclear double-talk” and “blatant hypocrisy”, arguing that although Labour reaffirmed their commitment to the consensus in the opening pages, the rest of paper deliberately obfuscated what would be done with the Polaris system that quickly approached obsolescence.¹¹ As MP Winston S. Churchill wrote in a paper for Margaret Thatcher, it was to be the goal of the Conservative Party to maintain the nation’s nuclear “capability to the year 2000 and beyond”.¹² While the report on the White Paper also included mention of the Labour Party taking

⁹ TNA: HO 322/793, “Implications of Reduced Expenditure on Civil Defence as a Result of ‘Care and Maintenance’ Policy,” January 1, 1969.

¹⁰ THCR 1/19/9, “Britain and NATO - What Is the Truth by Conservative Central Office,” February 8, 1977.

¹¹ THCR 2/6/1/80, “Statement of the Defence Estimates 1977 by Conservative Research Department,” March 17, 1977.

¹² THCR 2/6/1/82, “Report by Winston S. Churchill on Britain’s Nuclear Deterrent,” June 22, 1977.

“justifiable pride” in Britain’s contribution to NATO’s strategic nuclear capability with its Polaris system, it nevertheless returned to the accusations that Labour had no plan for a nuclear deterrent after Polaris.¹³

The anti-consensus strategy would not have proved as effective as it did if it did not play upon popular support for the nuclear deterrent.¹⁴ By 1979, the year of Conservative victory in the General Election, a survey asked participants if Britain should maintain their nuclear weapons or depend on allies. 85% of self-identified Conservatives believed Britain should maintain their nuclear deterrent. Perhaps unsurprisingly, given the Conservative victory, 82% of self-identified Labour supporters also preferred maintaining the deterrent. Clearly a consensus had formed amongst the public as well as the political parties. The affirmation of the nuclear deterrent compounded the radicalness of Labour’s support for unilateralism in the 1980s.¹⁵

The 1979 Conservative manifesto aimed to increase overall defence spending, upgrade Polaris and the maintain Britain’s posture of deterrence.¹⁶ Conversely, Labour’s manifesto aimed to reduce defence spending to bring Britain more in line with NATO allies and took a clear stance against the deterrent. The manifesto stated that Labour had renounced the funding of any successor to Polaris since 1974. Overall, the Labour party had lowered defence spending during their tenure, necessitating the development of Protect and Survive, and these issues had

¹³ THCR 2/6/1/83, “Statement of the Defence Estimates 1978 by Conservative Research Department,” March 8, 1978.

¹⁴ *NOW! Magazine*. “Survey on Public Attitudes Towards Defence,” November 15, 1979.

¹⁵ THCR 2/6/2/133 part 1, “The Marplan Survey - The Public View of Britain’s Defences,” August 1979, The Churchill Archives at Cambridge.

¹⁶ “1979 Conservative Party Manifesto,” 1979, <http://www.conservativemanifesto.com/1979/1979-conservative-manifesto.shtml>.

just begun rising to the surface of popular attention. Labour was now on course to openly facilitate disarmament while the Conservatives continued to pursue nuclear deterrence.¹⁷

With the Conservative victory came a renewed interest in nuclear debate which some had labeled “the peace movement in 1979”, though the peace movement could be better described as the continued erosion of nuclear consensus.¹⁸ Despite predicted cutbacks to a litany of social statutes, Whitehall hoped the new Conservative government might support civil defence as one of the few programmes to receive an increase in budget.¹⁹ Soon after taking office, Thatcher made it a priority to explore Trident, the successor to Polaris, and to bolster civil defence as reinforcement of the deterrent.²⁰

Unlike the oscillations of the 1960s and 1970s, Labour’s open commitment to nuclear disarmament in the 1980s was the first genuine hazard to the nuclear consensus of the previous three decades. While there had been conference resolutions and ambiguities in the past, the party leaders had always adhered to the consensus. The 1980s, however, became the first instance where Labour’s Parliamentary leaders “were personally committed to unilateralism”.²¹ When longtime Labour member Michael Foot replaced James Callaghan as leader of the party following the 1979 election, unilateralism became an ethical cornerstone of the Labour Party. Foot was a CND man through-and-through, one of their original members, and had no qualms about ending the consensus. Foot had pursued unilateralism throughout the 1960s and 1970, though the party majorities did not share his beliefs. Foot lost leadership contests against

¹⁷ “1979 Labour Party Manifesto,” 1979, <http://www.labour-party.org.uk/manifestos/1979/1979-labour-manifesto.shtml>.

¹⁸ MSS 181/3/1/10, “The Civil Defence Debate: Lessons from the Past by PhD Candidate Fred Barker, Manchester University,” 1985, Modern Records Centre at the University of Warwick.

¹⁹ TNA: HO 322/926, “Note for Mr. Heaton from RJ Andrew - Briefing for New Ministers,” May 4, 1979.

²⁰ THCR 2/6/2/46, “Ian Gow to Prime Minister,” December 14, 1979.

²¹ Scott, “Labour and the Bomb: The First 80 years,” 2006. 691.

Gaitskell, Wilson and Callaghan, all of whom harboured fewer revolutionary positions on disarmament.²²

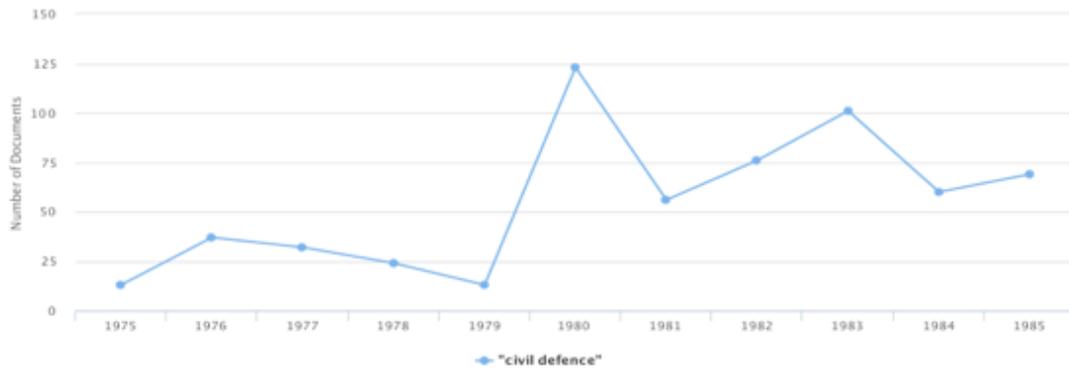
Beyond the bluster of party politics, when the dust had settled, both sides, and the electorate, remained committed to NATO, deterrence and nuclear weapons. That is, until the elections of 1983. *Protect and Survive* was published at the crest of a wave of debate that would collapse the decades long bipartisan consensus on nuclear policy. The significance of this political deviation is difficult to downplay as the “post-war consensus” on nuclear deterrence endured not only within the two political parties, but also found “general support ... among the electorate”.²³ With the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and Foot’s rise to leadership in 1979, along with the debates on civil defence, cruise missiles and the Reagan/Thatcher kinship in 1980, Britain’s status as a nuclear power had never been more tenuous. No longer would the Labour party have a gifted Gaitskell or persuasive Wilson to pull the Labour Party’s bridles towards consensus as Foot and unilateralism were given free reign.

The nuclear deterrent became a popular topic following the 1979 election as the option of disarmament became relevant. Interest in nuclear debates, and by extension civil defence, had been at a nadir at the end of the 1970s. Articles mentioning civil defence in *The Times* went from a dozen in 1979 to 125 the following year, a tenfold increase. This coincided with the resurgence of the CND whose dwindling membership soared to an all-time high. Table 5 depicts the steep increase in mentions of “civil defence” in *The Times*.

²² Andrew Scott Crines, *Michael Foot and the Labour Leadership* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011), 87.

²³ Peter M. Jones, “British Defence Policy: The Breakdown of Inter-Party Consensus,” *Review of International Studies* 13, no. 02 (April 1987): 111.

Table 5: Mentions of “Civil Defence” in *The Times* 1975-1985



24

When Labour stepped away from the consensus, the two parties developed radically different opinions on civil defence. The Conservatives maintained that the deterrent was the best defence, and robust civil defence served to strengthen the deterrent. Labour argued that unilateral disarmament would remove the UK as a target for Soviet attack, thus forgoing the need for civil defence. When the Conservatives came to power, they immediately recognized the popular support for the deterrent. As *Protect and Survive* was being released, the Home Office and Cabinet’s chief concerns focused on the amount of public information they could provide to satisfy public curiosity on civil defence while preventing over-reactions and anxiety.²⁵

While the Labour party flirted with unilateralism to varying degrees when out of office, every Labour administration that came to power “nevertheless ensured that the UK remained a

²⁴ Chart compiled by Joseph Buscemi online via *The Times Digital Archive*, 2019.

²⁵ TNA: HO 322/939, “Note for the Record - Civil Defence: Conservative Home Affairs Sub Committee,” May 27, 1980.

nuclear-armed state”.²⁶ Labour’s electoral successes coincided with their acknowledgement of popular support for the deterrent and the nuclear consensus. The breakdown of consensus drastically disrupted British politics, though public opinions remained fairly static. Writing in May 1980 (the month of publication for *Protect and Survive*) the Home Office prepared a brief that Home Secretary William Whitelaw could discuss at an upcoming Cabinet meeting with the Defence and Overseas Policy Subcommittee (OD).

The brief was titled “A Strategy for Civil Defence” and highlighted the “political case for doing more about civil defence”. The end of consensus formed a fissure in nuclear politics that the Conservatives could exploit through careful proliferation of civil defence, and subsequently, the deterrent. The brief calculated that Labour was spending approximately £8 billion a year on defence and only £20 million on civil defence. An argument was made that the financial disparity weakened the deterrent and the Conservatives would do well to publicize their efforts to invest in civil defence. International tensions were rising with the Soviet/Afghan War and the Iranian Hostage Crisis and with these crises came a newfound public interest in civil defence, family protection and the end of nuclear consensus.²⁷

The climate within the Home Office seemed optimistic, as though Labour had dropped the nuclear ball and the Conservatives were ready, and able, to pick it up and run with it throughout the 1980s. As consensus crumbled, the Conservatives provided more funding and resources to the F6 Division than they had ever enjoyed. In his influential speech to the Commons on August 7th 1980, Home Secretary William Whitelaw indicated there were a number of improvements the Conservatives were bringing to civil defence. One such cost-effective improvement was the attempt to harness Britain’s reputation for volunteerism. To this

²⁶ Scott, “Labour and the Bomb,” 685.

²⁷ TNA: HO 322/939, “A Strategy for Civil Defence - Memorandum by Officials,” May 1980.

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effect, the post of Coordinator of Civil Defence Volunteers was created within the Home Office. However, the difficulties the Home Office encountered while attempting to fill the position were indicative of the rapid influences, both inside and outside the government, brought about by the end of the nuclear consensus.

While searching for the ideal candidate, the F6 Division readily noticed that they were entering uncharted waters as previously, “successive governments” were content to maintain the nuclear status quo.²⁸ A businessman named Peter Prior became the leading choice for the new Coordinator post. Prior was not a government man, but “a captain of industry”, a distinguished veteran, the chairman of cidermakers HP Bulmer and author of the book *Leadership is not a Bowler Hat*.²⁹ To the surprise of the Home Office, Chairman Prior, as a man outside the world of Whitehall, demonstrated how far-reaching the effects of consensus had reached into the public. Prior declined the role as coordinator of volunteers as he believed “there was no political or social consensus” on civil defence in the UK.³⁰ While considering the position, Prior became aware “how politically contentious civil defence had become” and that it had recently acquire an “unfavourable image”. Prior’s success in business had provided him with a predictive view of the unprecedented level of debate around nuclear policy that would befall the United Kingdom.³¹

Several historians have described Thatcherism as an explosive end to Britain’s social welfare consensus as well as their nuclear consensus.³² To date, the amount of research done on the fate of the welfare consensus in the 1980s easily eclipses work considering an end to the

²⁸ TNA: HO 322/942, “Note by Mr. Morris about Presentation of Draft for Local Authorities,” July 25, 1980.

²⁹ Ross Davies, “Business Diary Profile: The Captaincy of Peter Prior,” *The Times*, September 22, 1980.

³⁰ TNA: HO 322/934, “Note of Meeting Held on Monday, 6th October 1980,” October 6, 1980.

³¹ TNA: HO 322/934, “Appointments in Confidence: Co-Ordinator of Civil Defence Volunteers,” October 3, 1980.

³² Shirley Robin Letwin, *The Anatomy of Thatcherism* (Routledge, 2018).

nuclear consensus.³³ Certainly, there were several broad cuts to government spending coming out of the difficult decade of decline. It was a unique facet of the end of nuclear consensus that civil defence became one of the rare programmes that received increased funding from the Conservatives during the 1980s.

Severe labour disruptions, unemployment and rampant inflation were all carried over from the 1970s. Breaking the considerable power of British trade unions and cutting off the funding to government programmes to correct the economy (nullifying the post-War consensus) is considered one of the key tenants of Thatcherism.³⁴ One of Thatcher’s first challenges in office was to break the steel industry strike of January 1980. The strike was considered an insurrection threatening the ability of the Conservative government to restore economic viability for the first time in decades.³⁵ Further economic obstacles were envisioned and the Thatcher government was encouraged to “selectively” cut expenses.³⁶ Thatcher grew concerned that she may have had to resort to lowering the military budget, despite her pro-defence policy. However, spending on civil defence after the end of consensus more than doubled as the Conservatives sought “better balance” of military spending and military usefulness, and in a way, managed to further legitimize the value of civil defence.³⁷

The “political marriage” Prime Minister Thatcher and President Regan shared is well documented, yet it also obscures Thatcher’s first presidential relationship with President Carter.³⁸

³³ Kavanagh, *Consensus Politics from Attlee to Thatcher*; Donald J. Savoie, *Thatcher, Reagan, Mulroney: In Search of a New Bureaucracy*, Pitt Series in Policy and Institutional Studies (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1994); Peter Clarke, “The Rise and Fall of Thatcherism,” *Historical Research* 72, no. 179 (1999): 301–22; Bale, Tim, *The Conservative Party: From Thatcher to Cameron* (Cambridge: Polity, 2010); Letwin, *The Anatomy of Thatcherism*.

³⁴ Clarke, “The Rise and Fall of Thatcherism”.

³⁵ THCR 1/13/17, “The Steel Blockade - Decisive for British Democracy,” January 11, 1980.

³⁶ THCR 1/13/17, “Memorandum - The Crunch,” October 30, 1980.

³⁷ Nott, J. *HoC Deb*, 25 June 1981, vol. 7, c. 385.

³⁸ Nicholas Wapshott, *Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher: A Political Marriage* (Penguin, 2007).

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As Regan is credited with a hawkish defence policy, Carter’s policies had differing goals for military spending. President Carter had taken a “personal interest” in civil defence matters, both in the US and for NATO members. The interest certainly extended to Great Britain which was perceived as slacking in terms of civil defence per-capita spending.³⁹ The American influence suggests that Thatcher’s favourable civil defence budgets were encouraged by more than the nuclear consensus alone. Conservative Cabinets hoped that their investments in civil defence would demonstrate their determination to maintain the deterrence and possibly encourage the US to provide the successor to Polaris at the lowest cost.⁴⁰ However, the associations of civil defence with pro-American sentiment would be exacerbated by the political divide brought on by the end of consensus. Soon, a large component of the alleged “anti-Americanism” that became associated with unilateralism and the Labour party was derived from the pro-civil defence position.⁴¹

The Labour Party openly opposed the Conservative spending on civil defence and had taken a stance to “terminate the present wasteful expenditure on so-called ‘home defence’”.⁴² Following the release of *Protect and Survive*, there was a sustained movement amongst Labour controlled Local Authorities to impede any efforts to comply with civil defence measures. In Labour’s London Manifesto of 1981, the Greater London Council publicized their anti-civil defence/anti-deterrent stance as the two parties continued to separate from consensus. The manifesto openly encouraged Local Authorities to cease all civil defence related efforts.⁴³

³⁹ TNA: HO 322/937, “Home Defence Review: NATO Implications,” March 18, 1980.

⁴⁰ TNA: HO 322/937, “Note for the Record: Future United Kingdom Defence Policy,” March 17, 1980.

⁴¹ Baroness Young. *HoL Deb*, 16 February 1983.

⁴² TNA: HO 322/944, “Copy of Note from Mr. Andrew to Mr. Halliday Re: Civil Defence,” February 26, 1981.

⁴³ Greater London Regional Council of the Labour Party, “A Socialist Policy for the GLC - Discussion Papers on Labour’s GLC Election Policy,” 1981, 82.

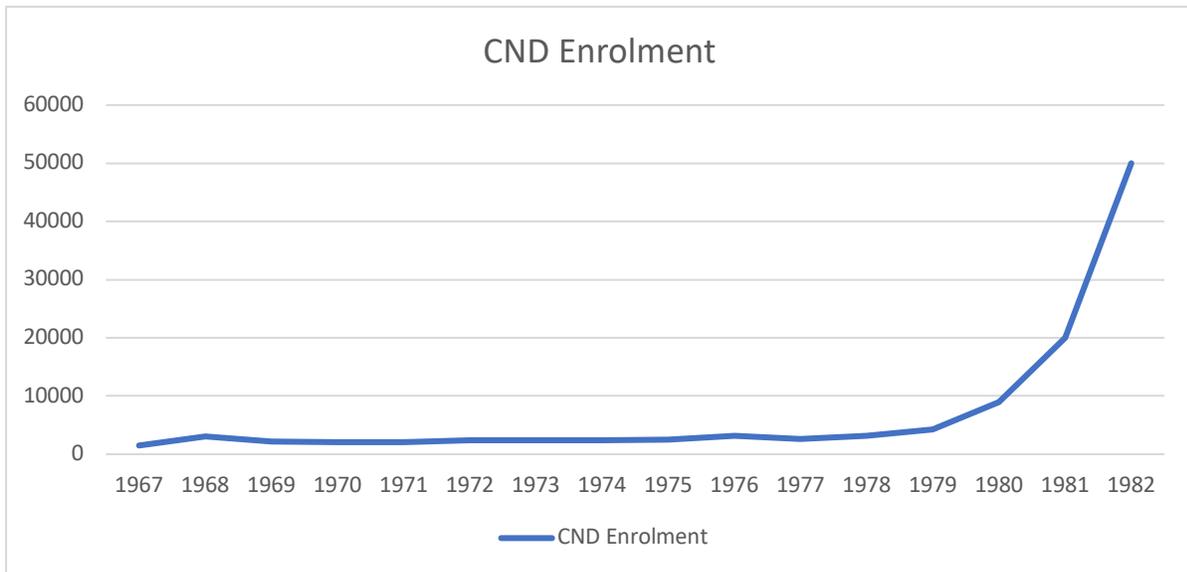
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As the Left and Labour stepped away from consensus, a fierce discord developed around the politics of nuclear defence and American influence in Britain. John Biffen, Lord President of the Council, argued that Labour’s new political course would deliver more harm than benefit as the public and the Conservatives were in mutual agreement on the maintenance of NATO and the nuclear deterrent. Biffen believed the status of the public consensus on Britain’s contribution to NATO’s nuclear deterrent “was now in danger” when in some ways it had already dissolved by 1982. There were rifts forming in public perceptions of Trident, the Polaris replacement, Cruise missiles and Reagan’s policies as anti-Americanism gained a foothold in British politics. The Prime Minister was in agreement with those present at the meeting that the mandate of the post-consensus Conservative Party should be the preservation of public support against the media of the increasingly unilateralist Labour Party and CND. This was to be achieved, according to Biffen, not by swaying the hardened Left, but by courting the vast median population and university students who were being manipulated by “anxiety about American intentions”. By connecting civil defence with national defence the Conservatives could temper the “strong anti-American and pacifist undercurrent” in CND and Labour.⁴⁴

As Protect and Survive became an object of contention, Labour’s relationship with CND, traditionally kept at arm’s length, became explicit when Foot came to leadership. Leaving the consensus hastened their association as civil defence and connected politics would become a deciding factor of the 1983 General Election. Table 6 demonstrates that as the rift in the consensus grew, so did CND enrolment numbers, in direct proportion. The release of Protect and Survive coincided with an enrolment boom from 4000 to 10000.

⁴⁴ THCR 2/6/2/104, “Note of Liaison Committee Meeting Held in No 10 Downing Street on Wednesday, 24 November 1982,” November 24, 1982.

Table 6: CND Enrolment from 1967 - 1982



The numbers would continue to sky-rocket the following years to previously unseen levels. With a reinvigorated CND, debates and actions against the nuclear deterrent became quite insistent.⁴⁵

In meetings, the Conservative Party planned to exploit the end of nuclear consensus for political gains, characterizing Labour as extremists against the common-sense of maintaining the deterrent. The Falklands War of 1982 was considered an effective public and political distraction on the nuclear debate, allowing the government to prepare further supporting arguments. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) produced an effective leaflet extolling the logic of

⁴⁵ Chart compiled by Joseph Buscemi through data contained in: John Mattausch, *A Commitment to Campaign: A Sociological Study of CND* (Manchester University Press, 1989).

“nuclear deterrence and multilateral disarmament” which found a surprising palatability within university campuses. MOD had prepared a partisan film, *The Peace Game*, and organized further publicity against CND leaders. Several government divisions all looked towards the 1983 General Election as an outstanding opportunity. Peter Blaker, Minister of State for the Armed Forces, observed that the relative bipartisan consensus they enjoyed for decades was now “a matter of controversy to an extent we have not witnessed before”. Throughout 1982, the Conservative party exerted considerable effort to court the approval of the electorate with concerted efforts to dispel the recent rising of popularity of unilateralism.⁴⁶

Labour had also been doing their fair share of political maneuvering. The Labour Party considered the rise in CND and the protests towards civil defence and nuclear weapons their own opportunity to exploit. Labour’s efforts were constructed to depict the Conservative Party, and the nuclear deterrent, as fallacious and without regard for public well-being. Following the Home Defence Review of 1980, Labour prepared an advice note to expressly encourage non-compliance by Local Authorities to any civil defence obligations. The advice note argued that “civil defence [in] nuclear war does not exist” and that all the resources going towards civil defence were better spent on the social welfare programmes that the Conservatives were currently slashing (ending the other consensus).⁴⁷

“Home Defence”, as the advice note described, was a con designed for “a small government and military elite” and encouraged Local Authorities to declare their areas “nuclear free zones”. Civil defence was considered Conservative propaganda designed to promote the deterrent by casting a nuclear war as survivable. Disarmament and avoidance of war were the only genuine civil defence measures to the Labour Party. Unilateral disarmament could only be

⁴⁶ THCR 2/6/2/104, “Note of Liaison Committee Meeting, Wednesday 20 October 1982,” October 20, 1982.

⁴⁷ TNA: HO 322/1019, “Advice Note - The Labour Party National Executive Committee,” June 1981.

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achieved when Local Authorities and the public learned to solemnly “oppose all nuclear weapons [in] Britain or any other country”.⁴⁸

By 1983 the consensus between Conservatives and Labour was completely fractured, with both parties mobilizing forces to cast the other in disrepute. Local Authority councils had been weaponized by the Labour party to great effect since 1981. The Home Secretary considered the issue of “recalcitrant” Local Authorities abandoning their civil defence responsibilities and publicly advocating nuclear free zones as an increasing menace. The safest manner of facilitating obedience in the Local Authorities was believed to be achieved by claiming popular support. This tactic, however, was two-sided and the Home Secretary believed the vigor in which the Home Office promoted civil defence was precipitously close to instilling panic and countering the efforts of arguing deterrence as the greatest prevention.⁴⁹

Prime Minister Thatcher noted that discretion was key as the canyon expanded between the two parties approaching the 1983 election. Thatcher considered the difficulty in attempting to win a debate on the outcome of a nuclear war and therefore believed that the Party was to make every effort to connect their efforts to reinforce civil defence as an effective contribution to deterrence and only relevant in the most extreme worst-case scenario.⁵⁰

The divide continued as Michael Foot and Labour’s commitment to unilateralism brought the topic of disarmament to prominence in the General Election of 1983. The election was a

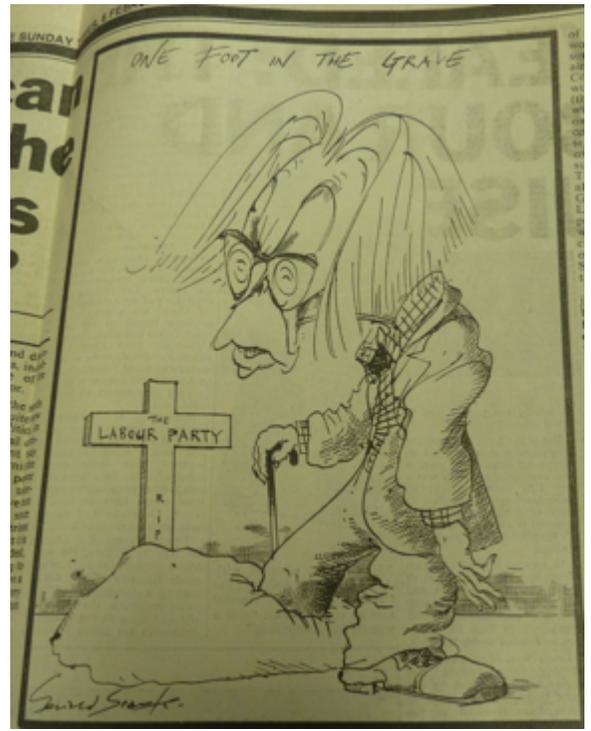
⁴⁸ See Chapter 10 for the union of Labour and Local Authorities against Tory civil defence.

⁴⁹ TNA: HO 322/978, “Note of A Meeting Held on 18 November 1981 - Civil Defence,” November 18, 1981.

⁵⁰ TNA: HO 322/1021, “Defence Secretary’s Meeting on 8 February The Nuclear Debate and Civil Defence,” February 7, 1983.

disaster for Labour as the Conservatives won a comfortable majority government. The Labour Party’s abandonment of the consensus and Foot’s leadership were categorized at the time as detrimental to Labour’s broad appeal (Figure 1). Concerns were no longer preoccupied with surviving nuclear war, but how Labour could survive as a party. Labour MP Gerald Kaufman famously referred to Labour’s 1983 Manifesto as “the longest suicide note in history”.⁵¹ After the failure of the 1983 General Election, Foot was replaced as party leader by Neil Kinnock. Kinnock and Foot were like-minded fellows when it came to CND and Kinnock was also a

Figure 1 Michael Foot in *The Times*
Gerald Scarfe, “One Foot in the Grave,” *The Times*,
February 6, 1983.



“committed unilateralist”. For likely similar reasons, Kinnock fared no better than Foot and failed to win the 1987 and 1992 General Elections.⁵²

Labour’s self-imposed exile from the nuclear consensus coincided with their worst election performance since 1918 and led to twenty years of Conservative success.⁵³ Labour would not be trounced so heavily again until the historic 2019 General Election. Naturally, election results are multi-faceted and cannot be attributed to single causes, though it is informative to note that Labour did not return to power until Tony Blair returned to the consensus in 1997. Ultimately, the history of the nuclear consensus can be befuddling to the observer. The Conservatives maintained the independent nuclear deterrent, despite relying

⁵¹ Robin Oakley, “Tangled Labour Tax and Benefits Policy Fuels Doubt,” *The Times*, June 9, 1987.

⁵² AMES 2/1/104 File 2, “Letter from Neil Kinnock to Ian Bater,” February 16, 1983.

⁵³ Graham Stewart, *Bang! : A History of Britain in the 1980s* (London: Atlantic Books, 2013).

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progressively on US technology while the unilateralist undercurrents of the Labour party failed to deter their panache for “secretly” maintaining the deterrent whenever in power. Thus, a lot can be said of Britain’s nuclear consensus and the influence it can yield. It was well maintained from its formation in the 1950s until its disconnection in the 1980s. However, when considering the time in which *Protect and Survive* became infamous, there is little doubt that the end of nuclear consensus helped to make its publication possible.⁵⁴

⁵⁴ Simpson, “Present at the Creation: Nuclear Weapon Policies and Nuclear Disarmament Policies of the United Kingdom,” 2005. 111.

Chapter 4 "Public Information in a Crisis": The Origins Of Protect And Survive

Writing in 1976, Conservative MP Geoffrey Pattie wrote a booklet entitled *Towards a New Defence Policy*. The booklet calls for several reforms of Britain's defence policies, a principle one being investment in deterrence and civil defence and the cessation of cuts to the defence budget. Pattie foreshadowed many of the policies that the Thatcher government would employ throughout the 1980s including the leapfrogging of defence above "spectacles or teeth, or schools, or roads, or pensions, or housing" as defence is about survival.¹ Pattie collectively described Great Britain and the role civil defence would play in the continuation of the nation, "if we can assure our survival then we can go on to tackle the social programmes that can be afforded".² Pattie argued the need for change in the complicated history of defence spending, and placed the Conservative opposition in the role of protecting the nation from itself. However, an intriguing question is produced from Pattie's thesis: would spending more on defence at the small expense of cuts to welfare state benefits such as dentistry truly constitute a *new* policy?

A need was created when the government slashed civil defence spending while maintaining a rigid nuclear culture that diverted all money and efforts towards the maintenance of the deterrent. The result was a need for low-cost high-value civil defence plan to support the appearance of the deterrent. Duncan Buttery, Director of F6 in the early 1970s took the initiative to begin work on an efficient program of emergency civil defence education. Taking inspiration

¹ Pattie, *Towards A New Defence Policy*.

² Pattie, 7.

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from previous civil defence education programs and instilling his own pragmatism, Buttery created Protect and Survive to serve a unique role in British civil defence.

While Protect and Survive certainly seemed new to Britons when the material leaked out in 1980, it cannot truly be said to have been a new direction in British defence policy. The development of Protect and Survive was the result of several factors, old and new, that necessitated a cost-effective programme of public protection. Protect and Survive was not so much a new defence policy, rather it was the grand reveal of the direction and political consensus of the last thirty years within the Home Office, with some new ideas tacked on.

Protect and Survive itself was already in a Home Office vault by the time of Pattie's booklet. Through oscillating governments, Protect and Survive was slowly crafted over a decade as the culmination of Britain's nuclear consensus and its first priority: deterrence. Sinking into the origins of Protect and Survive, delving into the multitude of papers left behind, a pattern of chipping away at civil defence spending frequently appears, as both parties thought savings could be found within the preparations. Britain's long-standing commitment to the nuclear deterrent, obligations to NATO, and their defence priorities all contribute to Protect and Survive's creation. Britain, as a charter member of NATO, had an established history of influence within the Council, as well as dedication to NATO policies such as stay-put and the deterrent. Building off an established platform of peace through deterrence, British defence policy became dictated through significant demands and constraints. The nations of NATO were determined to prevent Soviet expansion and adopted a system of deterrence through fear of retaliation. Even conventional military expansions could collapse a chain of dominoes leading to nuclear Armageddon. However, nuclear weapons also made Britain a greater target for attack, if the Soviets decided to pre-emptively strike Britain's nuclear bases. This circular philosophy,

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with complicated debates, was accepted by Britain throughout the Cold War. Therefore, the government of the day was said to have a humanitarian duty to protect the lives of Britons should deterrence fail.

In the 1970s, commitment to NATO and the policy of nuclear deterrence dictated the creation of a 'stay-put' policy in Britain. Britain's status in NATO was so accepted, when the Labour Party toyed with neutrality, politicians reacted as if they had gone mad. As it was accepted that Britain was a likely nuclear target, the survival of its citizens had to be addressed, and the result was the policy of stay-put. Stay-put was the foundation of Protect and Survive and the very bedrock of the programme's anti-nuclear suitcase shelters. Evacuation was found to be too complicated, with the added danger of lack of safe space in such a densely populated island. National shelter systems proved also too expensive, and so the resulting logic was to encourage the population to remain in their homes. The home was argued to be the safest place to fortify once the government initiated a public emergency education campaign. These were the didactic do-it-yourself survival preparations of Protect and Survive.

Beginning with the defence spending cuts of the 1960s, Britain developed a pragmatic make-do system of negotiating with the realities of limited finances and expensive deterrence. National nuclear pedagogy was substantially cheaper than national nuclear bunkers. Protect and Survive is fairly unique in that it evolved from both an increased dependence on volunteerism and the encouragement of individualistic civil defence, both of little cost to the government. Commitment to stay-put, a marginal budget (compared to nuclear proliferation), multitudes of civil servants, and Members of Parliament all added bricks to the bunker of bureaucracy and necessity that created Protect and Survive.

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Truly remarkable people, with truly remarkable stubbornness, managed to cooperate to create Protect and Survive. In particular, JFD (Duncan) Buttery, chair of the F6 Division, is one such person. Buttery was shrewd and outspoken, the ideal character to play the part of motivator in the often-surreal story of Protect and Survive, the programme that advised the Britons to hunker under their suitcases as the bombs dropped. Defending the nation meant deterrence. Defending deterrence meant stay-put. Defending 'stay-put' meant the development of do-it-yourself civil defence. And defending do-it-yourself civil defence meant Protect and Survive.

Britain was a charter member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in 1949. The nation's government was swift in its determination to check Soviet expansion, particularly with the formation of the Warsaw Pact in 1955. Bolstered by American money and influence, Britain found a foothold within the organization that allowed it to cling to an accustomed level of relevancy in global matters. International importance came at the expense of being in the exclusive nuclear club, even if the nation was a distant third to the United States and the Soviet Union. NATO operated on the principle of deterrence, that the consequences of Soviet aggression would be so devastating that the Warsaw Pact could never attempt aggression or risk annihilation. Many Britons argued that deterrence had kept the peace for fifteen years and should be fiercely protected³. Fortunately, the system seemed to be working as the alternative was nuclear war. Those in Britain who argued for disarmament argued that the success of deterrence was the height of specious reasoning, the Soviet Union was unlikely to attack unless provoked.⁴ Specious or not, Britain seemingly did not want to consider the alternative as successive

³ THCR 1/4/2 Part 1, "Prepared Answer for Questions about The War Game Censorship," October 1981.

⁴ TNA: CAB 134/3120, "Ministerial Committee on Nuclear Policy," December 1, 1967.

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governments continued to maintain the policy of deterrence. Though the Labour Parties of the 1960s and 1980s flirted with disarmament, dedication to peace via deterrence remained unwavering since its inception.

NATO's commitment to deterrence was similarly straightforward. In the Home Defence Review meeting of 1971, Edward Heath's government debated whether civil defence funds could also be used for civil emergencies and work stoppages that besieged his tenure. The Cabinet however argued that to deploy civil defence so generally would undermine the posture of civil defence to their "NATO allies".⁵ Discussing Duncan Buttery's report on the Home Defence review, Bill Watkins of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office wrote to Brig. William T Macfarlane in the Cabinet Office to emphasize that maintenance of the deterrent was crucial to their standing in NATO and trumped most financial implications.⁶ Speaking in 1976, Shadow Secretary of State for Defence, Lord Gilmour, argued that the Conservative Party was dedicated to meeting the demands of NATO's civil defence standards, and that the defence of Britain, and thereby freedom, was "far, far more important than anything else".⁷

With a watchful eye on the swaying Iron Curtain, NATO informed its member nations to strive for a fundamental measure of civil defence to facilitate the required retaliation of the deterrent policy. As such, within Britain, not providing more emergency nuclear education was "an area in which [they were] subject to continual criticism in NATO".⁸ The deterrence policy was an established component of the every British government from 1952, and served as an educational foundation with the development of the Home Defence College, established to instruct ministers and officials in proficient techniques to protect the nation and improve civil

⁵ TNA: HO 322/798, "HD(71) 1st Meeting 20 July Minutes," July 20, 1971.

⁶ TNA: HO 322/817, "Copy of Letter Dated 3.1.72 for FCO to Cabinet Office," January 3, 1972.

⁷ THCR 2/1/3/3, "Sir Ian Gilmour on Conservative Defence Policy," June 18, 1976.

⁸ TNA: HO 322/798, "Note of Meeting Between S.of S. Sir Burke Trend and Sir Philip Allen," July 27, 1971.

defence. Home Defence College pedagogy operated with the maxim "credible civil defence plans prepared in peacetime are an essential part of the total defence posture".⁹

The ability to endure and retaliate (even if a final act) was firmly established in Britain's nuclear culture, though the financial limitations provided little funding in the way of civil defence. A readiness for combat, or a determined civil defence scheme, was required by all NATO nations in good standing. The frugality of Protect and Survive would be the perfect solution. If the programme could be adapted to also resist conventional bombing, so much the greater, as NATO dictated that all member nations had to "demonstrate the ability to sustain themselves in a conventional war which could extend beyond a few weeks".¹⁰ Pattie's booklet advocated much the same, and concluded that rugged civil defence and the invulnerability of submarine based Polaris missiles were "prudent national security for Britain to stay" in the business of deterrence.¹¹

Civil defence, as a British contingency, needed to "be credible in the eyes of the Soviet Union and, in order to be credible [a nuclear salvo] must be survivable".¹² Referring to statements made by Lord Chancellor Quintin Hogg, it was noted that Britain's nuclear deterrent was "hardly credible" without an effective system of civil defence.¹³ In 1979, the Home Office stressed to Home Secretary William Whitelaw, that NATO had begun seriously "pressing nations to raise the level of civil preparedness".¹⁴ Through military meetings and frequent nudging NATO did exert some pressure on Great Britain to improve their civil defence measures

⁹ TNA: HO 322/841, "DoE Replies to Mr. Buttery's Letter of 4 July," July 18, 1975.

¹⁰ TNA: HO 322/860, "HDO(WB)(77)19," November 2, 1977.

¹¹ THCR 1/4/2 Part 2, "Report on British Strategic Nuclear Deterrent for PM by MP Geoffrey Pattie," January 4, 1982.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ TNA: HO 322/939, "Letter of 22 May from Trade Secretary to Home Secretary," May 22, 1980.

¹⁴ TNA: HO 322/918, "Note to Home Secretary about Home Defence," June 19, 1979.

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in some capacity, likely inspiring the decision to flaunt Protect and Survive. The policies to maintain deterrence necessitated all manner of government divisions to contribute to the post-attack survival of the nation, as the Home Office concluded: "the maintenance of our strength to retaliate would be an expensive bluff if we did not also make determined preparations to survive attack."¹⁵

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) perpetuated the NATO recommendations, tying the importance of post-attack survival to the legitimacy of deterrent posture. Maintaining nuclear weapons alone was not sufficient if the Government agreed with the philosophy that nothing could be done to help survive a nuclear attack. The MOD constantly reminded the Home Office of their civil defence obligations, arguing that defence of the nation depended upon "the awareness of the enemy of our readiness to wage war, and that includes our preparations to survive a nuclear assault".¹⁶ Protect and Survive was kept secret until its infamous newspaper leak in the early 1980s, however, the MOD wanted public eyes on the programme from the start. Fortunately, Thatcher's Conservatives agreed that making the public aware of their civil obligations would make deterrent even more credible. The MOD welcomed the disclosure of civil defence policies and argued "from a purely military point of view, awareness by the civil population of the possible threat to it and the existence of some degree of preparations for protection and survival are an integral part of the policy of deterrence".¹⁷

Thus, it became established within the government that the deterrent was compulsory, and to be effective, the deterrent required a robust civil defence system, regardless of Britain's financial state, it simply had to be done. To be believable, the deterrent had to demonstrate to the

¹⁵ TNA: HO 322/958, "Short History of the Food Stockpile," January 16, 1981.

¹⁶ TNA: HO 322/918, "Home Defence Planning Assumptions by MOD Defence Secretariat Bob Coles for Noel Law Esq," August 3, 1979.

¹⁷ TNA: HO 322/928, "MOD/UKCICC Statement at Home Office Home Defence Study," November 23, 1979.

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Soviets that Britain had "faced the prospect of nuclear war by taking meaningful steps to safeguard the survival of the nation and at least some of its people".¹⁸ Stay-put became an official NATO policy after it was approved in October 1977 but was unofficially maintained for decades as a pragmatic choice for all member states. Stay-put was originally designed to "prevent cross-border movement of the populations and uncoordinated movement within borders" and this rationale inspired the Home Office's three tenants against dispersal schemes:

“1. That there are no areas within reasonable travelling distance that could accommodate millions of additional people over a long period and would offer better protection together with the necessary facilities and supplies.

2. That it cannot be assumed that there would be sufficient warning time to carry out[sic] mass evacuation.

3. That the defence effort would require the support of the civil population carrying on their normal activities”.¹⁹

In a summary of the 1971 Home Defence Review, Secretary of State, Alec Douglas-Home was quite clear regarding the connection between NATO, deterrence, and the stay-put policy. The Home Office later informed the Secretary that a civil defence pedagogy had to be instilled in the nation, regardless of finances, "if for no other reason than the impossibility of participating in NATO without them". The Home Office explained that if stay-put was to become public knowledge, then a system of anti-fallout education was essential to maintain public support. The lack of which was the reason Britain was "subject to continual criticism in NATO".²⁰

¹⁸ TNA: HO 322/940, "Draft Review of Civil Home Defence Preparedness by Home Office," June 19, 1980.

¹⁹ TNA: HO 322/958, "Note by Home Office 'Shelter and Evacuation - History and Progress to Date,'" March 26, 1981.

²⁰ TNA: HO 322/798, "Note of Meeting Between S.of S. Sir Burke Trend and Sir Philip Allen," July 27, 1971.

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It is worth noting that debate on the disclosure of these policies remained active as Home Office staffer ED Wright wrote beside the statement on discussing stay-put that "no public comment on this is ... necessary or desirable". Regardless, following the establishment of the stay-put doctrine, the next logical step after the commitments made to deterrence was to improve Britain's civil survival in some meaningful way. With national bunker systems unattainably expensive, the planners of Home Office sought to make do with what was already available, namely their own houses.²¹

Protect and Survive's roots reach as far back as a 1966 internal circular titled *Civil Defence Fallout Shelter*, in which the Home Office stated, "people living in substantially built accommodation would best obtain shelter against fallout by staying in their own homes and following official advice about protective measures".²² Furthermore, it was thought that if a war erupted that required British soldiers to fight away from home, their morale would be improved if they knew some civil defence measures were in place for their families. By the time of care and maintenance, the haphazard system of stockpiles and a handful of bunkers, it was becoming "increasingly difficult to present the current arrangements as having any credibility" in Britain.²³

This period of government, 1968, was in close proximity to the dissolution of the Civil Defence Corps and an oncoming lacuna in British civil defence. It becomes difficult to overstate the importance of the stay-put policy to the creation of Protect and Survive as it was undoubtedly a direct progenitor. So many contingencies changed course with care and maintenance as Britain took large strides away from communal civil defence towards drastic budget cutbacks. Soon after

²¹ Ibid.

²² TNA: HO 322/849, "Home Office Circular 'Civil Defence: Fall-Out Shelter Policy'" March 7, 1966.

²³ TNA: HO 322/958, "Report of the Working Party on Communal Fallout Shelters," April 1 1968.

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care and maintenance, the government created "the only practical principles" for shelter planning: protection against fallout rather than blast, and that those living in "substantially-built accommodations" would be best off in their own homes following some form of "official advice" and emergency education.²⁴

Care and maintenance carried over into the 1971 Home Defence Review which should be considered the starting point of Protect and Survive. The official fallout emergency pedagogy contained in the Review would develop into Protect and Survive's content. In the content of the Review, it was argued that protection against the blast of nuclear explosion would be a massive undertaking, difficult enough for a well-protected few, virtually impossible for an entire nation. The alternative was a cost-effective instructional system of home insulation and filtration from fallout. In the aftermath of a strike, the danger to survivors would arrive via fallout, carried for miles, looming over a bombarded nation.

Protection from conventional bombing is considerably easier than from nuclear attack. However, Britain had difficulty seeing Protect and Survive as the successor of the communal shelters in the Second World War. The spirit of community and volunteerism, government and citizen cooperation, was difficult was a difficult ideal to abandon. Though it would not be "civil defence as it was known in the last war," a combination of early warning from the UKWMO, emergency public didactic instructions, and some form of the preservation of the machinery of government, was thought to be frugal, pragmatic, and likely the nation's best chance for post-attack recovery.²⁵

The Home Office was quite aware of the difficulties in making the shift in emergency pedagogy palatable to the British public familiar with stories of the Blitz and its legacy of

²⁴ TNA: HO 322/798, "Note of Meeting Between S.of S. Sir Burke Trend and Sir Philip Allen," July 27, 1981.

²⁵ Ibid.

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successful anti-bombing measures. Protect and Survive, with its clear intention of moving away from the optimistic communal content of 1960's *Advice for the Homeowner* into individualized shelter policies, was hoped to be a solution. Home Office officials saw the challenge ahead and they were relieved that the politicians "were sensible enough not to make any public reference to 'stay-put'" until they had time to craft something an alternative pedagogy of some substance.²⁶ Stay-put would be the policy going forward and the Home Office were left with the task of convincing Britain it was viable.

Local Authorities would also need convincing of the "appropriateness of HMG's decision to adopt a 'stay-put' policy". Metropolitan districts however had a history of criticizing post-War civil defence, and when stay-put policy became official the Home Office understood that it would be "impudent in the extreme to even mention 'stay-put' to Local Authority Associations".²⁷ The Home Office, with Buttery as chairman of the 1971 Home Defence Review, was entirely accepting of "stay-put" as official policy and a necessary financial decision. In his report, *The Present State of Civil Defence*, Buttery attributed the insufficiencies of civil defence to "the previous administration" and the care and maintenance policy which lowered civil defence spending from £27,000,000 to £9,000,000. Buttery also asserted that the "care and maintenance" policy of 1968 had utterly failed to maintain even a semblance of civil defence. "All necessary public advice," Buttery contended, "should be prepared, up-dated and stored in suitable places for use by all mass-media in a period of increasing tension" and the responsibility for coordination of this emergency education should rest with the Home Office. Buttery was

²⁶ TNA: HO 322/798, "Mr. Wright to Mr. Waddell 19.8.71," August 19, 1971.

²⁷ TNA: HO 322/798, "Mr. Waddell to Mr. Buttery Containing Results of Meeting with Sir Phillip Allen on Aug 24," August 25, 1971.

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already referring to his own role as director of the nuclear crisis information project that would become Protect and Survive.²⁸

Some staff within the Home Office were concerned that the Government was abandoning public defence and that the "first priority", should any funds become available for civil defence, should be put towards public fallout protection and shelter readiness, to "make the stay-put policy more credible". Buttery and conceded that "in Western democratic society, great importance is attached to the life of the individual and to measures for his care in sickness". The humanitarian duty of civil defence was thought a political necessity and Buttery pushed Protect and Survive to the forefront.²⁹

Firstly, Buttery concluded that any attempt of public dispersal was a disaster in waiting as the result would likely be more people trapped outdoors during attack. Buttery argued that most Britons failed to appreciate that a nuclear attack could destroy up to 80% of the national capacity for industry "and yet only kill 20% of your population".³⁰ Stay-put and an emergency education campaign were intended to provide as much capacity for the continuation of British civilization as possible. A stay-put pedagogy would therefore provide for "the nation's capability to survive a nuclear attack and re-construct a viable society with a reduced population in the post-attack phase". This was a very matter-of-fact turn of phrase which would become Buttery's signature throughout the development of Protect and Survive. Buttery saw to it that the rest of the Home Office was also convinced that "a stay-put policy should form the basis for plans to protect the public in any future home defence programme".³¹

²⁸ TNA: HO 322/799, "The Present State of Civil Defence," February 18, 1971.

²⁹ TNA: HO 322/799, "Machinery of Government in War Sub-Committee Interim Report of the Home Defence Review," February 18 1971.

³⁰ TNA: HO 322/799, "The Present State of Civil Defence," February 18, 1971.

³¹ TNA: HO 322/798, "Home Defence Review (71)1 14/7/71," July 14, 1971.

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A Cabinet Committee chaired by Secretary of State for the Home Department, Reginald Maudling, concluded there was little that could be done to combat the "catastrophic effects of nuclear-attack" even with a sizeable budget, but also that "it would be hard to explain to the population as a whole ... that no precautions would be taken". While it was agreed to take-up stay-put and abandon evacuation, Maudling decided that "people with medical training should be allowed to disperse" to provide a greater chance of survival.³² This sentiment, that evacuation was safe for some but not for all, would undercut the stay-put policy within the public's mind for decades. Seemingly to counter this, stay-put became forcefully pushed with Home Office memos frequently commenting on the necessity of stay-put as nowhere in the nation would be "certainly safe".³³ Within the earliest drafts of Protect and Survive, the necessity of stay-put was defended with firm statements that "no place in the UK is safer than another" and that "you are better off in your own home. STAY THERE."³⁴

Other departments agreed with the Home Office, though they remained nervous about convincing the public of the wisdom of this policy. The Department of the Environment (DoE) wondered if the public would ever accept that no preparations were made to disperse "special classes" such as young children, as it was done during the War. RWJ Mitchell of the DoE wondered if the Government would truly announce that a "plan to save the lives of 4 million young people" was too expensive? Mitchell suggested the mass-information material would be best if it specifically targeted "those who disregard advice to stay put", the kind that would be most likely to self-evacuate cities. To do this, the Home Office must "ram home more forcibly the wisdom of staying-put" as the safest option and to aggressively disparage self-evacuation for

³² TNA: HO 322/798, "HD(71) 1st Meeting 20 July Minutes," July 20, 1971.

³³ TNA: HO 322/776, "Defence Against Nuclear Attack Memo from WJ Rawles to RC Yeates," November 13, 1975.

³⁴ TNA: INF6/2531, "Protect and Survive Script 4," March 17, 1976.

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"those who were foolish enough to disregard the best advice that could be given". Mitchell ultimately concluded that "the real difficulty [with] the abandonment of evacuation [was] political".³⁵

RC Yeates of F6 Division, commenting on the "pre-attack mass information campaign" that would become Protect and Survive, claimed that the Home Office was very dissatisfied with the didactic language used in the emergency advice. The matter-of-fact descriptions of fallout and its effects were "just about the worst way of introducing the stay-put policy" according to Yeates, to the point that it would make many opt to be vaporized in the blast than endure fallout. Still, Yeates believed in the necessity of public education and stay-put as "every place in the country was as dangerous as any other".³⁶ For emphasis, Yeates underlined the sentence "So stay-put in your fallout room until you are told it is safe" in an early Protect and Survive script.³⁷ Yeates saw stay-put as the greatest difficulty to acceptance of Protect and Survive, so much so that he encouraged prominence of the notion that "only fools run away".³⁸

There was little opposition to stay-put for those in the know of Britain's financial predicament, though it was not entirely accepted that the population would "stay put in the event of a crisis". It was noted, by William Armstrong of the Civil Service Department, that Protect and Survive pedagogy was inevitable, "given the cost limits", and evacuation could endanger more lives than it saved.³⁹ From the start, Buttery demanded that "no intensive public advice on nuclear war" should be published in peacetime", secrecy was to be maintained as an emergency pedagogy loses substance if overly scrutinized. The Home Office pressed-on and grew closer to

³⁵ TNA: HO 322/799, "Department of the Environment Report to JFD Buttery," May 3, 1971.

³⁶ TNA: HO 322/776, "Pre-Presentation Notes for JFD Buttery from RC Yeates," September 19, 1975.

³⁷ TNA: HO 377/776, "Draft Script with Comments by RC Yeates," September 9, 1975.

³⁸ TNA: HO 322/776, "Appendix A.3: What War Could Mean To You," October 1973.

³⁹ TNA: HO 322/798, "Civil Service Department Comment on Home Defence Review," July 9, 1971.

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Protect and Survive by concluding that "planning for the dispersal of 10 million old people, mothers and children (the priority classes) would cease" and a new didactic system of rapid dissemination of nuclear protection would be available before 1975. Afterwards, a complimentary video package would be prepared, ready for broadcast on national television to ensure maximum retainment and influence. Thus, in 1971, the idea for Protect and Survive would be created. Enter JFD Buttery, Esq..⁴⁰

If one man could claim authorship of Protect and Survive, it would be JFD "Duncan" Buttery. Buttery lacked the bureaucratic smoothness his name would suggest, as he would not hesitate to share his opinions and was consistently, unceasingly, forthright. As well as official missives, memos and reports, Buttery's unique comments can be seen scrawled in margins and scraps of paper throughout the archived papers of the F6 Division, leaving behind a trail of slights and gripes. Head of F6 by the mid 1970s, Buttery worked his way up the Division until he ultimately found himself responsible for what would become Protect and Survive. Buttery's history is lost in the early 1980s, before Protect and Survive was made public, with a single mention as working in the prisons division of F6 before disappearing entirely. Though he did not participate in its publication, Buttery's candour and idiosyncrasies remained an indelible component of Protect and Survive.

Famously (at least amongst British civil defence historians) Buttery noted in his distinctive scrawl next to a criticism of Protect and Survive's advice: "If one says, we can't tell the public this or that because such a thing doesn't exist or is totally impractical that is a fair comment. If one is saying that you can't advise the public to do this or that, because not everyone will be able to comply – that is sentimental egalitarian twaddle!"⁴¹ Buttery did not

⁴⁰ TNA: HO 322/798, "Home Defence Review (71)1 14/7/71," July 14, 1971.

⁴¹ TNA: HO 322/776, "Folder Notes, JFD Buttery," December 1973.

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suffer bureaucracy well, seeking to always dismiss the fussy nature of politicians and civil servant nitpicking. Growing weary of debating minutiae with the DoE, Buttery simply replied; "I hope you will not press me on this relatively trivial point. In all honesty I cannot let these obsolete and inappropriate civil defence procedures lie around unchallenged".⁴² Buttery also had his own manner of adages that are dotted throughout the documents of the Home Office, once asserting that "I regard the sort of advice in [previous Civil Defence circulars] as introducing an unacceptable degree of 'teaching Grandmother to suck eggs' on a topic in which Whitehall has no experience whatsoever". Other times, Buttery was seemingly unable to resist sardonically referring to "your 'experts'" when debating with other Home Office Divisions.⁴³

Buttery's constantly etched his personality into all manners of Home Office documents, and in one letter from housing advisor Stephen Rhodes of the Association of District Councils, he wrote:

Rhodes: "How can police and local government officials ... identify person[sic] with inadequate accommodation arrangements?"

JFD: "Because they ask for help!"

Rhodes: "Wartime Homelessness Officer is suggested as a title unless it would be too confusing with the WHO's possible appearance on the scene."

JFD: "A housing advisor with a sense of humour!?"⁴⁴

When it came down to business, Buttery was pleased to take credit for Protect and Survive, acknowledging much of the stewarding past government departments he carried out. Writing to the Treasury in 1975, Buttery explained "in November 1972 I initiated discussions with other Whitehall Departments ... in the content of public advice in crisis and war on the content of a mass-information campaign" adding "then I approached COI for their ideas as to

⁴² TNA: HO 322/841, "JFD Buttery's Reply to DoE," March 16, 1976.

⁴³ TNA: HO 322/841, "Mr. Buttery Replying to CK Spinks Esq of the Department of the Environment," July 29, 1975.

⁴⁴ TNA: HO 322/841, "Reply from ADC to Mr. Buttery's Letter of 18-8-75," October 30, 1975.

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how this campaign might be assembled" and he began from that point.⁴⁵ Even in meetings he could not attend, staff knew that Buttery's approval would eventually be essential. At times, RC Yeates would stress that he had a meeting with Buttery to lend his voice credence.⁴⁶ Other times Yeates would invoke Buttery's will stating "Mr. Buttery explained that he wished the campaign to be mainly on television, backed by sound radio and extensive press coverage. He accepted that it might be useful to prepare a booklet for reference purposes, but this could be considered at a later stage".⁴⁷

When a sample questionnaire was developed to test public comprehension, Buttery scrawled that all the questions were "just like an exam paper!" Buttery would inspect every detail of draft copies of Protect and Survive, not letting anything become finalized without his say-so. In one draft, he would not allow work on a script to continue until "wait for rescue" was changed to "wait for Medical Services" as rescue would be unlikely. Otherwise, Buttery would often scribble "I don't think so" on scripts he felt lacking.⁴⁸ Alternatively, he could state "no production in immigrant languages" and it would be so, though it was unclear why this point was emphasized as the HMSO only printed in English.⁴⁹ When meeting notes summed up Buttery as stating that distances of heat and blast were under discussion and should therefore be omitted, he corrected the comment by slashing it out and adding "not quite the point I made!!!"⁵⁰ Perhaps the most Buttery-esque comment was his note on the first reveal of the Protect and Survive logo: "not very impressive".⁵¹

⁴⁵ TNA: HO 322/776, "Mr. Buttery Wrote to Treasury," January 30, 1975.

⁴⁶ TNA: INF6/2531, "Memo on Protect and Survive Videotapes from Robert Yeates to Gerry Evans Esq.," May 25, 1976.

⁴⁷ TNA: HO 322/776, "Note from Mr. Yeates to Mr. Moores (PRB) about Meeting Held on May 30," May 30, 1974.

⁴⁸ TNA: HO 322/776, "COI Meeting Notes for November 27 1975," November 28, 1975.

⁴⁹ TNA: HO 322/776, "Protect and Survive Companion Manual," 1976.

⁵⁰ TNA: HO 322/776, "Note on Home Office Meeting to Present Campaign Proposals," October 7, 1975.

⁵¹ TNA: HO 322/776, "Protect and Survive Companion Manual," 1976.

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Buttery was the final judge of all things Protect and Survive before it was finalized. Eventually, after Buttery "agreed with the style proposed for the television scripts [and] approved the use of the logo, the modular design of programme material and the animation techniques outlined," a few copies of Protect and Survive could be printed in late 1975.⁵²

Of course, even a persona as dynamic as JFD Buttery was not enough to create all the material of Protect and Survive, and inspiration came from across the country and around the globe. In a unique turn of events, Britain and one of its dominions swapped inspiration for civil defence pedagogy across decades as well as the Atlantic. Though both were dictated by the stay-put policy, Protect and Survive was directly modeled on the Canadian film and booklet *11 Steps to Survival*.

The two programmes had key differences, though they were remarkably similar in many ways. The similarities were not coincidences, as Buttery asked to see, and was inspired by, *11 Steps to Survival*. Canada, at first, was inspired by Britain's World War II era Civil Defence Corps and communal shelters and volunteer groups were prepared. After the War, via another Conservative effort, Canada's national civil defence division, the Emergency Measures Organization (EMO) (roughly equivalent to the F6 Division) was founded in 1957 by Prime Minister Diefenbaker.⁵³ Canada too was quick to abandon the concept of national shelters, constructing the infamous Diefenbunker⁵⁴ for high-ranking personnel, while the nation would be

⁵² TNA: HO 322/776, "Notes on Outline Script," Circa 1975.

⁵³ Ken Cuthbertson, "Everything Old Is Nuke Again," *The Globe and Mail*, April 13, 2018.

⁵⁴ Information is lacking as to whether the Diefenbunker inspired the Maggiebunker.

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shown how to improve their chances via booklet and animated film. The changes made to better suit the realities of British life were readily apparent.⁵⁵

The two nations had entirely divergent civil defence cultures, all due to the element of space. The vast majority of Canada was uninhabited, with seemingly boundless wilderness for the roughly 18 million Canadians living in 1961. Canada, like the US and USSR, had the blessing of space, something sorely lacking in densely populated island Britain. While most Canadians lived within a few kilometers of the United States, Canada sheltered no nuclear weapons to target, unlike Britain. As such, the Canadian mindset was entirely different than the average Briton's. Canadian civil defence concepts were equipped with a pressure relief valve, if Cold War tensions got too hot, Canadians could always just run away. This was not an option a British islander enjoyed. Whereas Britons became critical of the nation's civil defence schemes, most Canadians simply did not care. It was not a significant part of the Canadian psyche.

The differences were easily seen in the overall approaches to civil defence the two nations followed. Canada was forthcoming in dialogues with its citizens, while Britain held their civil defence cards closer to their chest. For the brief period when civil defence was a popular topic in Canada, the early 1960s, the Canadian Government was "sensitive to the criticism" of the people who believed they lived in likely target areas. Not only did Canada openly discuss the reality of likely target areas, they were quick to respond to the populous. In *11 Steps to Survival*, Canadians were given a choice: As it was impossible to predict where the bombs might fall, the reader was left to decide how formidable a shelter they needed to create. Those in rural Canada could opt for Protect and Survive style fallout shelters. Those in urban areas might prefer more substantial shielding and were directed to other books.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Andrew Paul Burtch, *Give Me Shelter: The Failure of Canada's Cold War Civil Defence* (UBC Press, 2012), 185.

⁵⁶ Burtch, *Give Me Shelter*, 200.

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Here was a crucial difference in the two nations' emergency education, the unashamed disclosure that some citizens lived in "potential target areas". Consider this approach to the MOD's unceasing vigilance that nuclear bases be associated with safety, not danger, and the Home Office's decades long refusal to share classified target sites with the GLC. Once again Canadians were given a choice that Britons lacked, two different didactic booklets for two different options. *11 Steps to Survival* was published for those that wished to fortify themselves in their homes. When this option did not suit the entire nation, the EMO immediately issued a second booklet with a title that would have been positively scandalous to the Home Office: *Survival in Likely Target Areas*.⁵⁷

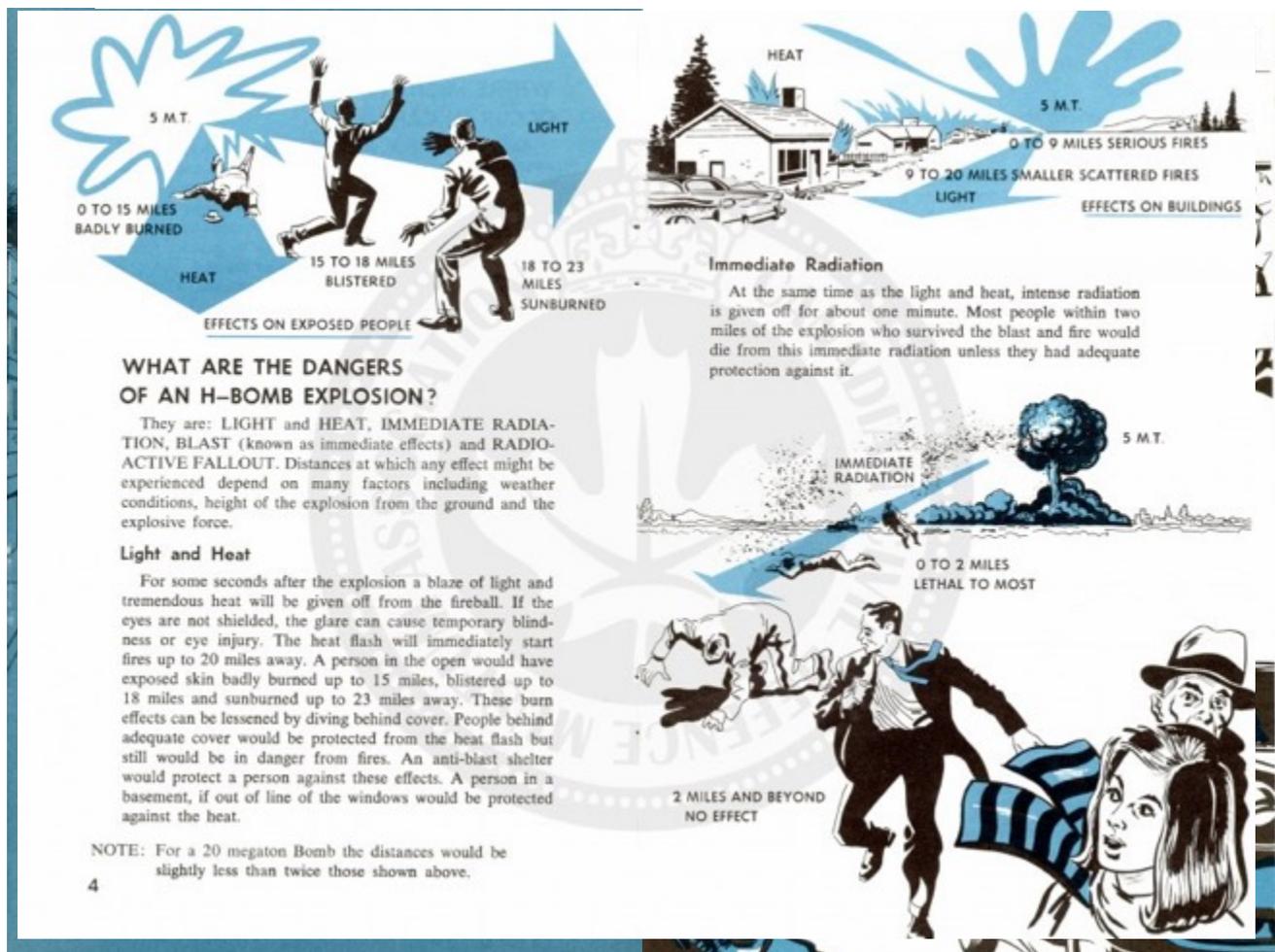
For the Canadian that felt safe in their homes, *11 Steps* was available. For the Canadian who chose to self-evacuate from a high-risk area, *Survival in Target Areas* in was printed. Whereas the Home Office constantly fretted over self-dispersal foiling their best laid stay-put schemes, the Canadian Government had no such concerns. As the Home Office noted: "[public shelters did] not appear to be effective in relation to the cost; [an evacuation scheme] hardly seems practicable in ... this country. But proposals do include the free issue of a leaflet explaining that official advice" to stay-put during a nuclear crisis.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Canada Emergency Measures Organization, *11 Steps to Survival* (Ottawa: Emergency Measures Organization, 1961).

⁵⁸ TNA: HO 322/918, "Note to Private Office, about Home Defence," June 19, 1979.

Survival meanwhile, was bizarrely graphic, with several renderings of people caught in explosions or otherwise fleeing for their lives (Figures 2 & 3). *Survival* made clear in its forward that it was intended to provide both the advantages and disadvantages of self-dispersal, after that, it was up to each Canadian to make their own decision. Also differing from Protect and Survive, both Canadian booklets departed from the neo-liberalism of isolation and highlighted

Figures 2 and 3 A Tale of Two Booklets: The striking differences between *Survival* and Protect and Survive. Target areas, guided evacuation, and sheer panic. Canada Emergency Measures Organization, *Survival in Likely Target Areas* (Ottawa: Emergency Measures Organization, 1962).



every Canadian's "civic obligation" to restore the nation if they survived. The survivor's duty to rebuild Canada after an attack stretched beyond their basement shelters.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ Burtch, *Give Me Shelter*, 181.

11 Steps was more inspiration to British civil defence efforts, as evident in their similarities, rather than the differences found in *Survival*. Like Britain, Canada had adopted the NATO suggested “stay-put” policy, though Canada soon accepted self-dispersal as an option. Comparable to Protect and Survive, the booklet and film of *11 Steps* were straightforward in their approach, beginning with an explanation of nuclear blasts, then home refuges, and finally a checklist. The checklist nature of the booklet is emphasized several times during the creation of Protect and Survive. At a meeting to discuss a draft of the Protect and Survive booklet, Mr. Buttery stressed the importance of checklists frequently, writing that the booklet “is not [sic] central to the operation. It does not need to be comprehensive: its purpose should be to serve rather as a checklist and back-up to the television material”. Buttery goes on to handwrite in the margins of documents that the “booklet must be a checklist – take out first aid – stretch to 32 pages”.⁶⁰

Also, Protect and Survive and *11 Steps* were both laid out in a “matter-of-fact tone” that spoke plainly to the reader. Both booklets were clear that they were not made to guarantee survival, rather they were intended to “increase [the reader’s] chances of survival” As Prime Minister Diefenbaker stated himself in the opening pages of *11 Steps*, many Canadians could be lost in a nuclear attack, however, with preparation, “many hundreds of thousands” could survive. Furthermore, homeowner and families were the target readers for both books as seen in Protect and Survive’s iconic logo (Figure 4) and the assumption behind *11 steps* that “suburban family units were to be the nuclei of Canada’s survival”.⁶¹

⁶⁰ TNA: HO 322/776, “Note of Points to Be Made at Meeting with COI on October 7 1975,” October 6, 1975.

⁶¹ Burtch, *Give Me Shelter*, 179.



Figure 4 Commonwealth/Commonshelter: A similar white-on-blue colour theme for both animated films. (left) National Film Board of Canada, *11 Steps to Survival*, 1970. (right) Central Office of Information, *Protect and Survive*, 1973.

While discussing already successful civil defence media during a Home Office meeting in October 1973, it was noted that “reference may be made to Canadian Government film and booklet *11 steps to Survival* [but do not] slavishly copy the trans-Atlantic approach”.⁶² Slavishly copy they did not, though they certainly took liberal inspiration. A few months later, in January 1974, Buttery learned that the Home Defence College held a copy of *11 Steps to Survival*, and seeing how it was “the only example [he had] been able to trace of really effective publicity material,” the Home Office was in desperate need of a loan.⁶³ On March 4, 1974, the F6 Division met with the Central Office of Information (COI) and RC Yeates who reaffirmed that the new emergency education booklet should be “a comprehensive booklet ... similar to the Canadian publication *11 steps to Survival*”.⁶⁴ Later during the meeting, Yeates added that the emergency

⁶² TNA: HO 322/776, “Copy of Revised Brief,” October 1973.

⁶³ TNA: HO 322/776, “Memo on Advice to the Householder on Protection Against Nuclear Attack from RC Yeates (F6) to Mr. Moores (PRB),” January 24, 1974.

⁶⁴ TNA: HO 322/776, “Note of Meeting Held 4.3.74 to Discuss Best Means of Advising the Public on Protection Against Nuclear Attack,” May 4, 1974.

pedagogy used by F6 had to "be of a high standard: *11 Steps to Survival* should be taken as a model". Clearly, the EMO had a secret admirer across the pond.⁶⁵

By November, during a meeting with the COI, Buttery again mentioned "the Canadian Government's booklet *11 Steps to Survival*" as a very helpful reference of what he had in mind for Protect and Survive.⁶⁶ The inspiration continued and from 1975 onwards it was Home Office rule that "the principal source of protection from fallout will be the individual's own home ... almost irrespective of its protective qualities".⁶⁷

Again, diverging from British experience, Canada adapted to NATO's stay-put policy early on and shaped their civil defence material accordingly, though they soon incorporated plans for mass dispersal of the population. In Britain, evacuation was thought to "run counter to the NATO policy that civil populations should stay put".⁶⁸ The evacuation question becomes muddled however, when it is considered that *11 Steps* originally stated "your chances of survival are best if you *STAY PUT* [sic] in your community ... don't assume other area are going to be free of the danger"⁶⁹. JA Pemberton of the F6 Division wrote to NF Law at the Home Office to affirm that the UK would follow *11 Steps* not *Survival* and "in a war crisis people should 'stay-put' and follow government advice to improve the fallout protection available in their homes".⁷⁰

⁶⁵ TNA: HO 322/776, "Mr. Yeates' Note on Meeting Held 4.3.74 on Advising the Public on Protection Against Nuclear Attack," March 5, 1974.

⁶⁶ TNA: HO 322/776, "Amended Minutes of Meeting with COI on 5 November," November 20, 1974.

⁶⁷ TNA: HO 322/776, "Wrote to COI about Canadian + American Films by RC Yeates," December 12, 1974.

⁶⁸ TNA: HO 322/918, "Note to Private Office, about Home Defence," June 19, 1979.

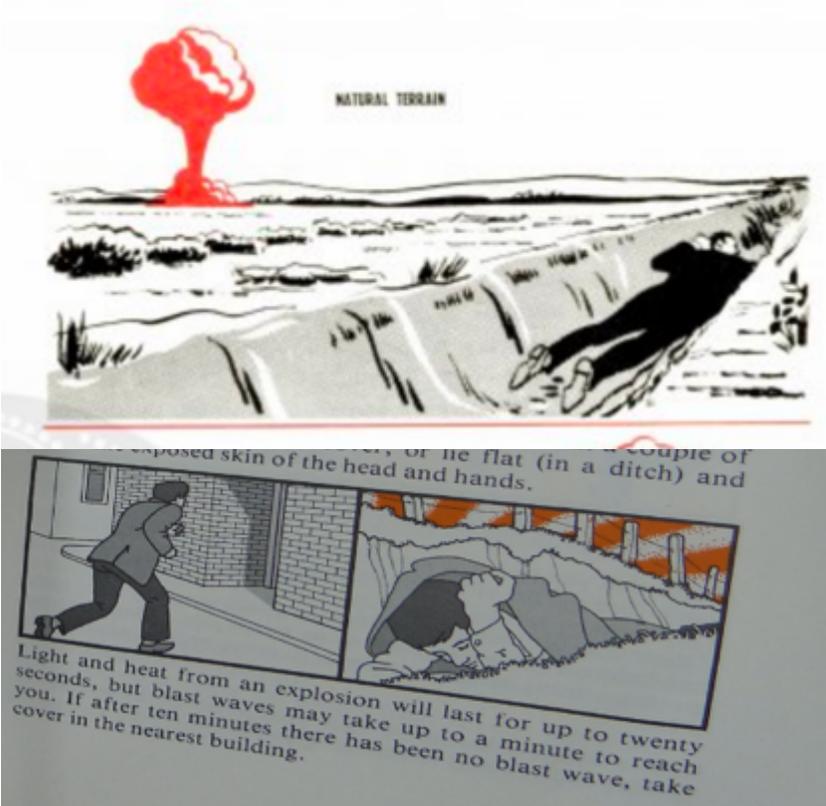
⁶⁹ Canada Emergency Measures Organization, *11 Steps to Survival*.

⁷⁰ TNA: HO 322/928, "JA Pemberton Notes on Home Office Home Defence Study for NF Law," November 18, 1979.

Buttery was so enamoured with *11 Steps* that early drafts of Protect and Survive contained his handwritten comments that their booklet should be more like the Canadian one.⁷¹

The references continued for months, when the first draft of Protect and Survive was

Figure 5 Too Close for Comfort?: The similar advice and colour schemes for taking cover in a ditch. *11 Steps to Survival* (above) and *Protect and Survive* (below)



deemed too lengthy, Buttery complained that it was too verbose and “something on the lines of *11 Steps to Survival* ... would be an improvement” (Figure 5).⁷²

⁷¹ TNA: HO 322/776, “Protect and Survive Companion Manual,” 1976.

⁷² TNA: HO 322/776, “Note of Points to Be Made at Meeting with COI on October 7 1975,” October 7, 1975.



Figure 6 Transatlantic Inspiration: The inner refuge illustrations of *11 Steps to Survival* (left) and the familiar images of *Protect and Survive* (right)

While *11 Steps* shares many similarities with *Protect and Survive*, it is important to realize that while the books were analogous (Figure 6), the national approaches to civil defence were fundamentally different. Though early Canadian civil defence was based upon stay-put doctrine, they soon took advantage of their surroundings and provided options for self-dispersal. However, *Protect and Survive* never provides an alternative to stay-put, as the radio script began: “the risk is as great in the countryside as in the towns SO STAY WHERE YOU ARE

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[sic]".⁷³ Protect and Survive was built from the ground up as a projection of the stay-put strategy, as the Home Office's to "hammer home" the message that self-evacuation would be no safer than home shelters.⁷⁴ Thus, it was vital that the British public remained ignorant of the choices other countries had available. "I must emphasize" warned Buttery, "the importance of not disclosing the Government decision on the 'stay-put' policy".⁷⁵

When it came time for the Home Office to finally write Protect and Survive, the influences of NATO, deterrence, *11 Steps*, British finances and the stay-put policy became evident. A didactic information campaign for the public was planned early on, soon after care and maintenance was initiated. At first, the Home Office was hesitant to step away from the comfort of public indifference that Britain had enjoyed in the past. The Home Office was forced to work in narrow, mandatory margins, to craft a document that firmly turned the page of the old systems of civil defence. Buttery, in his usual manner, welcomed the challenge as he informed other Departments around the Home Office:

"but please, I beg of you ... let [F6] concentrate on the policy guidance, stop looking over our shoulders at the civil defence arrangements of the 50's and 60's and accept that no good will come of central government trying to tell present-day Local Authorities how to do things".⁷⁶

As early as the 1960s, mentions of a mass-information nuclear emergency advice campaign began to appear in the files of the Home Office. Some within the Home Office knew

⁷³ TNA: INF6/2502, "Protect and Survive Television Script Episode 4 'STAY AT HOME,'" November 5, 1975.

⁷⁴ TNA: HO 322/940, "Draft Review of Civil Home Defence Preparedness by Home Office." June 19, 1980.

⁷⁵ TNA: HO 322/817, "Mr. Buttery to Other Departments Within HO (3.9.71)," September 3, 1971.

⁷⁶ TNA: HO 322/841, "Mr. Buttery Replying to CK Spinks Esq of the Department of the Environment," July 29, 1975.

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something would have to be done, although most did not want to accept responsibility for explaining to the public that when it came to nuclear war “no precautions would be taken”.⁷⁷ Then again, Duncan Buttery was not most people. While ideas were bandied about the Home Office, it was F6 Director Duncan Buttery who took the initiative and set out to create “a stockpile of publicity material to advise and inform the public” of affordable fallout protection.⁷⁸

There was no singular start date for the creation of Protect and Survive. The Home Office was ultimately the initiator, or more specifically Duncan Buttery, and by 1975 F6 staff acknowledged that they had been tasked to “produce [a programme]” of civil defence education for which they had almost completed.⁷⁹ Initially more concept than document, stay-put policy was affirmed and Buttery connected several ideas that stalled for years, some from overseas, going through a variety of names and concepts to settle on Protect and Survive. As evident throughout its creation, Protect and Survive was built upon a humanitarian need that *something* had to be done and the Home Office took up the duty to prepare what best they could.

The authors and contributors to the programme were aware they were working in a “make-do” situation, rife with limitations. Official policies would come down from the Ministers, whether they were stringent budgets or stay-put, and the Home Office worked diligently within these parameters. The Home Office also worked with Buttery’s mandate that the material would not be shown to the public until a time of crisis. After it was done, the programme’s own authors lacked faith that Protect and Survive would be successfully taken up by the public. In an internal circular written after Protect and Survive had been finalized, the Home Office remained steadfast that they had produced the best pragmatic advice possible with

⁷⁷ TNA: HO 322/798, “HD(71) 1st Meeting 20 July Minutes,” July 20, 1971.

⁷⁸ TNA: HO 322/776, “Mr. Buttery Wrote to Treasury,” January 30, 1975.

⁷⁹ TNA: INF6/2531, “Nuclear Defence Memo from Bruce Parsons to J. Hall,” October 22, 1975.

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such limited resources. However, they felt the need to explain that Protect and Survive did not claim to be a policy which would allay public unease about the effects of nuclear warfare, or ... the adequacy of the arrangements to ensure an individual's survival".⁸⁰ Protect and Survive was not perfect, but it was as good as it could get, even if the public would not be thrilled with the programme's measures.

Back in 1973, the material had a suitably generic title for a bureaucratic document, it was referred to as *Public Information in A Crisis 1975-1984*. The nine-year expiry date indicates a foresight that revisions would, and should, be made in the future. Perhaps indulging in a moment of wishful thinking, the Home Office thought Protect and Survive was sufficient for the time being and would be improved later when resources were less scarce. At four pages in length, consisting of eleven general points, the document was minimal, but it was undoubtedly the practicality of Protect and Survive. *Public Information* at this stage lacked the step-by-step checklist details of Protect and Survive and existed as a collection of thoughts on emergency education, condensed into a single document. The document was introduced as something a future government might need to release to the public, during a time of international tension. Its authors were quick to distance themselves from the pre-stay-put era of civil defence, calling the 1960s advice "old", "reminiscent of World War II" and "both obsolete in its content and ineffective in its presentation".⁸¹

The 1960s emergency education programme, *Advice to the Homeowner*, with its depictions of garden hose firefighting and local wardens coming around to lend aid were seen as

⁸⁰ TNA: HO 322/849, "Home Office Circular No. ES/1975 'Fall-out Protection in War,'" October 28, 1975.

⁸¹ TNA: HO 322/776, "Public Information in a Crisis 1975-1984," October 1973.

nostalgic at best. The goal now was to obtain "new publicity material" on a miniscule budget, then move ahead with production of film, video, audio, print and poster media for distribution.⁸²

The frequent Home Office emphasis on preventing the public from accessing the material was significant, as though all British civil defence would collapse like a house of cards if exposed to the public eye. In as little as five years, The "public Information" programme was specifically not intended to be released to "the general public in non-crisis peacetime".⁸³ Intended to be issued in a staggered release, with more material being provided the worse the situation became, the programme kept the public on a need-to-know basis. It was noted within Buttery's explanatory notes that should the global situation improve that "Government would no doubt halt the indoctrination campaign" though if it worsened again it must all be repeated "ad nauseam".⁸⁴ Fluent understanding was demanded, and the programme was created with a "low level of literacy" and "animated [such as] strip cartoons" for ease of retention.⁸⁵

TV/Radio was always the first intention of the Home Office as the booklet was seen as supplemental. By 1975, JFD Buttery had put out a circular on "Fall-out Protection in War" to discuss the programme with local councils, and immediately pointed out that the programme worked within "practical limitations".⁸⁶ "Fallout Protection in War" provided the next step towards Protect and Survive, describing some specific civil defence details and steps, building upon what was suggested in previous documents. The circular evidenced a clear progression of the stay-put policy, stating early on that "the principle source of protection ... would be inside the home".⁸⁷ The verification of a shift of responsibility to the public rather than the government

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ TNA: HO 322/849, "Home Office Circular No. ES/1975 'Fall-out Protection in War.'"

⁸⁷ Ibid.

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for the onus of survival becomes evident. "The responsibility" of the Government would be the production of information materials, in simple terms, that would advise the public on "immediate measures which they should then take to increase the protective quality" of their homes.⁸⁸ Even in its earliest stages of creation, Protect and Survive was delicately crafted to improve civilian survival after an attack, not to guarantee survival or mass shelter. In this the material is fairly honest, never over-promising or under-delivering what could be done in such extreme crisis.

The shift of responsibility to the community level was the foundation of the programme and Protect and Survive's media campaign. It would be the duty of "all Local Authorities ... to arrange for supplementary advice and help, using local voluntary effort wherever possible".⁸⁹ The Home Office had slipped the yoke of creating and maintaining the CDC and emphasized the cost-saving measures of volunteerism gathered at the community level. The Government would only assume obligation for providing "advice" for improving one's chances of survival. Quickly, it became evident that alternative methods of survival would be required for those in feeble structures that could not provide sufficient protection. Here again, the programme of Protect and Survive called for the budget-sensitive duty of volunteerism, calling for citizens to prepare "local sharing arrangements".⁹⁰ The Government would only provide a "mass-information campaign" so that those with suitably protective dwellings could adopt a "good neighbour attitude" to others in their area.⁹¹

The preliminary Protect and Survive documents are blatant in their adherence to stay-put doctrine. The recommendations quite literally tell individuals that they should stay-put and not move "more than one mile" by foot or "five miles" by car in urban areas. If they do move

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Ibid.

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temporarily the expectation is that they will return to their homes "when radiological conditions allowed".⁹² Other tasks to be delegated to Local Authorities included surveys for suitable emergency shelters for persons caught in transit at the time of the attack. The shelters were to comply with a variety of stipulations, but there was a clear delegation of this task to the Local Authorities. Local Authorities would not be entirely without help however: "To assist Local Authorities ... the Home Office [would] shortly publish and issue to them, a manual containing pictures and details"⁹³. *Fall-out Protection in War* concluded with "further considerations" which clearly state the efforts of the Home Office to make-do. Again, the language is deliberate but clear and not deceptive. Words were chosen carefully to neither promise nor assure, only to state facts.

Fall-out Protection in War reaffirmed the necessity of the stay-put policy, removing the Government from decisions by stating this was the only possible strategy. The Home Office repeatedly argued that nothing better could be done with such an island as Britain. The United Kingdom was too densely populated, contained too many possible targets, with geography too diverse, and no plan for mass evacuation could be realistically considered. The decision was said to be out of the hands of the Home Office given the nature of the island, coupled with the "astronomical cost" to develop a policy of public shelter against nuclear attack.⁹⁴

With nuclear weapons, the successes of previous governments with conventional bombing were disqualified, and rightfully so. Again, the anticipated shock was not attempted deception, but harsh reality that the "relatively small conventional bombs" of the War were relatively easy to withstand compared to thermonuclear weapons. The future goal of Protect and

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

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Survive was explicit in its objective of correcting the assumptions of those "with memories of World War II".⁹⁵ The notion of returning to the Underground for protection as in the Blitz was deliberately dispelled by the Home Office. The former security offered by the Underground or coal mines, dependable during the Blitz, would be "dangerous places" during a nuclear attack.⁹⁶ These places, when faced with the higher magnitude of destruction with nuclear attacks, would have been prone to flooding, collapsed exits, and no fallout air filtration. Emphasis was stressed on the responsibility of the individual and the policy of make-do was remarkably evident throughout the document. Even with the danger of old sub terranean shelters in the modern era, "any cover [was] better than none and, in the public mass-information campaign in crisis, particular emphasis would be laid on the paramount importance of the individual taking whatever cover was at hand".⁹⁷

In a 1975 memo titled "pre-attack mass-info campaign," Buttery discussed with COI "the preparation of material [that future Governments could utilize to] educate the public at various stages of a deteriorating international situation".⁹⁸ The material would be updated from old sources and was prepared for "public mass-information during a deteriorating international situation".⁹⁹ Again the audio/video media of Protect and Survive was identified as the priority and was to be used as a "back-up to the TV and radio campaign, rather than vice-versa".¹⁰⁰

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ TNA: HO 322/828, "Draft Letter of Discussion Paper for Local Authorities by Mr. Buttery," November 19, 1974.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ TNA: HO 322/776, "Mr. Yeates' Note on Meeting Held 4.3.74 on Advising the Public on Protection Against Nuclear Attack," March 5, 1974.

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Later on, Yeates summarized that the Home Office concluded that the best pedagogy for "promulgating advice to the public on protection against nuclear attack" was through a combination of a booklet that would be adaptable to television.¹⁰¹ The advancement of Protect and Survive was subdued, as a meeting was called on November 5 1974, attended by Buttery, and other personnel from Home Office and COI to discuss "a new publicity campaign" which could be released at a time of international hostilities. Explicit references were made to "Public Information in Crisis 1975-1984" as material on which the new programme would be based. Attendees were quick to note that "existing materials, prepared in the 1960s" should now be considered "obsolete" and a new campaign, uniquely focused on TV and radio should be the successor.¹⁰²

The booklet would be provided last after radio and television campaigns and would be designed to provide "hard facts on what preparations to make".¹⁰³ The Home Office acknowledged the matter-of-fact nature of the new material and once again reference was made to the new material not being available to the public in peacetime.¹⁰⁴ The following day RC Yeates prepared his own notes on the meeting and stated: "during the five months since our last meeting ... COI had made no progress at all, and they had no proposals to put to us".¹⁰⁵ Therefore, Buttery and Home Office "started from scratch once again" with Buttery again underscoring the importance of the printed material being a back-up to the film and radio material and that the programme "should be classified 'restricted'".¹⁰⁶

¹⁰¹ TNA: HO 322/776, "Note from Mr. Yeates to Mr. Moores (PRB) about Meeting Held on May 30," May 30, 1974.

¹⁰² TNA: HO 322/776, "Amended Minutes of Meeting with COI on 5 November," November 20, 1974.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ TNA: HO 322/776, "Note of Meeting with COI on 5 November," November 6, 1974.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

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On February 18 1976, William Stewart TV Productions Ltd were awarded a contract for £37,638 for "Nuclear Defence (sixteen programs)."¹⁰⁷ This contract was presumably for the booklet as the film was noted as done in several documents and "ready for distribution" by November 27 1975.¹⁰⁸ Afterwards, Buttery composed a three-point update for the Secretary of State. The main items of Protect and Survive were reinforced again by Buttery in his expected candour.

First, the 1960s material was said to be old, out of date and difficult to follow while new programme was designed to show what the public might do to "enhance their survival chances" during war. Second, the main focus was intentionally on the film and radio material with the booklet being a "checklist" and "backup" to the audiovisual material. And third, few copies were being developed for the purpose of testing with the public. This might have aroused public comment and press critique of the Government's planning. Material was prepared for the Press Office to handle these queries and the program was strictly prohibited from over the counter sale, as opposed to the earlier material of the 1960s.¹⁰⁹

Buttery sent the promised information to the Press Office the same day. His notice contained thirteen points of replies to presumed lines of inquiry by the press. Buttery emphasized that any investigation should be told that Home Office was "merely updating obsolete material".¹¹⁰ Early on in the 1979 Conservative Government "the question of civil defence had been raised ... by the Prime Minister" and the Home Secretary was quick to inform her that a

¹⁰⁷ TNA: INF6/2294, "COI Work Contract for 'Nuclear Defence' to William Stewart TV Prod. Ltd.," February 18, 1976.

¹⁰⁸ TNA: INF6/2294, "Memo from Commercials Unit Office to Film Library," November 27, 1975.

¹⁰⁹ TNA: HO 322/776, "Preparation of Public Advice by COI by JFD Buttery," November 10, 1975.

¹¹⁰ TNA: HO 322/776, "Preparation by COI of Public Advice on Civil Defence Measures from JFD Buttery," November 10, 1975.

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paper would be prepared outlining the "existing plans and state of civil defence", including Protect and Survive.¹¹¹

Planning had been completed by 1978 and matters were mostly finalized before the storm of the public dispersal. Discussing changes, the Home Office outlined updated past assumptions. Under "evacuation and shelter for the public" it was written that "present plans" were to tell the nation to stay-put in their own homes. Section 9, titled "advice to the public", stated that existing arrangements could mount an intensive television radio and press campaign in 48 hours but noted at this stage "distribution of a booklet would take three weeks [but was] less essential".¹¹²

Sure enough, the press did get wind of some of the new programme. In February 1975 *The Times* wrote an article titled *Talks to Form Fallout Shelter Policy*.¹¹³ The author, Stewart Tandler, believed the new effort was about preparing a national survey of potential shelters and noted that the materiel from the 1960s was out of date. "Tandler's diggings" were dismissed by Buttery who remarked that if Tandler was the extent of their leak, they could "be well pleased with [their] efforts to maintain a low key response".¹¹⁴ Unfortunately, Buttery had moved on from F6 by the time the unthinkable occurred and Protect and Survive was published, robbing the world of his no doubt unique reaction. In a 1979 review, Ministers decided that more information about civil defence and the likely effects of a future war should be made available to the general public which led to the publication of 'Protect and Survive'.¹¹⁵

¹¹¹ TNA: HO 322/918, "Minutes of War Book Sub-Committee Meeting on 1/6/79," June 1, 1979.

¹¹² TNA: HO 322/918, "HDO(WB)(78)(18)," December 14, 1978.

¹¹³ Stewart Tandler, "Talk to Form Fall-Out Shelter Policy," *The Times*, February 5, 1975.

¹¹⁴ TNA: HO 322/849, "Letter from Mr. Buttery to Press Office," February 5, 1975.

¹¹⁵ TNA: HO 322/958, "Minutes of Home Defence Planning Sub-Committee Working Group on Shelter and Evacuation 14 April 1981," April 14, 1981.

Chapter 5

“Paper Bags and Satirical Advice”: The Content and Purpose of Protect and Survive

The prevailing judgement on Protect and Survive was that it was, at best, useless and at worst, an elaborate ruse on the public. E.P. Thompson often wrote on the topic of Protect and Survive in such scathing tones, labelling the booklet as an effort “to tranquilise the public mind”¹. An examination of the documents of the programme’s creation may provide an alternate view upon the intent of the authors of Protect and Survive. Evidence from the creation of Protect and Survive demonstrates an earnest attempt to ameliorate a catastrophic event within an extremely tight budget. The honest sentiments of F6 Division, the Home Office Division responsible for civil defence, typically indicated a desire to at least *do something* that could help the public, regardless of budget. Many of the protests against Protect and Survive were of a principally political persuasion rather than critiques of the programme’s efficacy. Even Thompson’s other text, *Protest and Survive*, was focused on his objections to the programme being used to bolster deterrence posture, very little was said of the nuclear emergency education.

With the resources they possessed, F6 Division made an informed choice to strive for national recovery over initial bombardment survival. Following the story of Protect and Survive’s creation, a path is formed from the requirement of civil defence to work within the confines of the “secret state” system that was agreed upon in the 1950s.² The secret state system was intended to provide reassurances for the continuation of the machinery of government in

¹ E.P. Thompson, *The Defence of Britain* (London, UK: Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, 1983).

² Hennessy, *The Secret State*.

Chapter 5 – “Paper Bags and Satirical Advice”: The Content and Purpose of Protect and Survive war. Protect and Survive was developed to be a part of this system, while also working under the stay-put doctrine which advocated the home as the safest place to be during a nuclear crisis. Specifically, the development of the War Book method (a chronological order of actions for crisis management) utilized Protect and Survive as the principle form of government communication with the public.

As F6 staff began to recognize the flaws in the civil defence preparations of the past, they began a well-documented tradition of improving what they could, within the overall confines of budget and politics. Protect and Survive, with its reinforcement of deterrence posture, served the bipartisan consensus on nuclear weapons well. In the 1970s, when attack scenarios were changed, F6 provided a tremendous effort to adapt to the new threats and to maintain the efficacy of Protect and Survive. From this demand to adapt to changing assumptions, the Home Office hosted a major multi-day symposium that characterized their efforts to safeguard the validity of Protect and Survive.

It would be nearly impossible to answer with certainty if Protect and Survive would have succeeded, yet the government attempted to find an answer, and their perseverance shows an element of ethical obligation. Though there was a possibility Protect and Survive may not have helped tremendously, government research suggests that it would, indeed, have been better than nothing. With their efforts considered, it stands to reason that the programme was simply the best that F6 and the Home Office could produce.

Protect and Survive was explained as part of a system designed to assist “survivors of a nuclear attack to survive its aftermath and start national recovery”. The programme was a well-intention attempt at emergency education for the public, with minimal time to prepare. The low-cost, low-difficulty shelter plans, and minimal preparations demonstrate the role Protect and

Survive was created to fill. The popular image of the 1980s, that Protect and Survive was a ridiculously poor attempt at advice for surviving a nuclear blast is false. All evidence demonstrates that Protect and Survive was intended to help a specific group of people, on the fringes of a blast, fortify their homes and increase their chances of survival after attack.³

Protect and Survive was not developed to work in isolation. Protect and Survive was created to increase post-attack survival rates after the national government had fragmented into a system of regions. The programme was a key component of a region-based system designed to maintain “the machinery of government in war”. Understanding the creation of Protect and Survive requires an understanding of the political organs which encouraged its conception. Writing in 1975, the Home Office stated that all civil defence stemmed from the Civil Defence Act (CDA) of 1948. From this act, a multitude of statutes followed which established the Act as the de facto basis for British civil defence. Within Whitehall it became “common knowledge” that the responsibilities of the British Government to protect Britons were set out with the Act and all home defence would be built upon this foundation.⁴ Civil defence was defined in the Act as non-combat measures to counter a hostile power prepared before, during or after an attack. Central and local governments of the United Kingdom accepted this responsibility, and in doing so, began to ensure the continuation of the machinery of government in war.⁵

The CDA details regulations relating to the protection and survival of the public following a disaster. One section of the Act indicates the preparations Local Authorities were to make to care for those who would be made homeless from a war.⁶ After the Blitz, the British

³ TNA: HO 322/918, “Reply Note to N. Law by JA Pemberton - Home Defence Policy,” April 20, 1979.

⁴ TNA: HO 322/806, “Home Defence College Report on the War Book Approach to Local Government Emergency Planning,” February 1975.

⁵ TNA: HO 322/1025, “The Current State of Home Defence Planning in the United Kingdom,” July 23, 1982.

⁶ TNA: Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF) 250/35, “Civil Defence Act 1948,” 1948.

Chapter 5 – “Paper Bags and Satirical Advice”: The Content and Purpose of Protect and Survive

Government believed they had a humanitarian duty to prepare for the defence of civilians in case of war. This responsibility quickly evolved from basic shelter into the need to maintain the rule of law after a catastrophic attack, believing it to be safest path to recovery. To facilitate recovery, a regional system was established whereby the Government would partition itself into a dozen regions, some with further sub-regions, to preserve law and order when severed from central government. This splitting of the nation, with the aim of eventual restoration, was famously described by Peter Hennessey as the “secret state”. The secret in secret state referred to the planned splintering, which was kept strictly confidential. In doing so, the attempts of the British government to maintain the apparatus of authority during catastrophe were perceived by some journalists and unknowing Britons as clandestine and possibly sinister. Ministers believed the system required secrecy to succeed, unsurprisingly fostering a public perception that a secret government, a collection of fiefdoms poised to assume power, was operating beneath the visage of British democracy.⁷

The origins of the secret state’s region system lie with the CDA’s provision of “rest centres” which included “sick bays”, “information centres” and the preparation for billeting millions of citizens made homeless following an attack, all sentiments carried over from the War. The Act incorporated flexibility as the preparations were “liable to revision in scale ... in light of future changes in the assessment of the possible scale of attack”.⁸ As the Government further researched the effects of a nuclear attack, it became evident that communication systems were exceedingly fragile and central government authority could become impossible. As a means of delegating the responsibilities of central government, and preventing the seat of government from being overwhelmed, the goals of the CDA evolved into the regional HQ system: the secret

⁷ Hennessey, *The Secret State*.

⁸ Civil Defence Act, 1948.

Chapter 5 – “Paper Bags and Satirical Advice”: The Content and Purpose of Protect and Survive state. The rest centres became regional HQs, typically public buildings with solid foundations such as schools, that were mandated to provide for not less than 8 per cent of the surrounding populations. At all times, British civil defence operated under the fiscal ethos of practicality and pragmatism which encouraged the straightforward frankness of the authors of Protect and Survive.⁹

The Ministry of Food (later Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, MAFF) held the responsibility of feeding the displaced citizens at these rest centres, though the stockpiles were continually eroded by budget cuts until their eventual eradication. Originally, it was assumed there would be a great number of trained volunteers to carry out pre-strike evacuations from likely target areas. The Civil Defence Corps (CDC) was to be closely involved with the administration of the centres and evacuations, including transportation to hospitals. In 1966, military intelligence indicated the chances of a Soviet attack were slim and civil defence funding was lowered by 75%. These plans, and the CDC itself, ceased with care and maintenance and the dissolution of the CDC in 1968.¹⁰

Speaking at a nationwide military exercise conference in 1982, Robert J. Andrew, Deputy Under-Secretary of State for the Home Office, recounted his role in the creation of the regional system:

“I first became involved in plans for the machinery of government in nuclear war in the early 1950s ... It had been recognized that the level of destruction in a nuclear war was going to be of a different order of magnitude from anything previously experienced. [Commanding from the capital would be impossible] So an alternative seat of government was planned at an underground site some 100 to the West... [there was little chance of quickly] restoring a centralized system of government, even if the alternative

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ TNA: HO 322/932, “Interim Report of the Working Party on Home Defence by the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives,” April 1980.

site survived. It was against this background that the concept of regional government was developed in the 1960s.”¹¹

Andrew believed it was the humanitarian duty of Government to plan for the aftermath of a disaster as the surviving population would lack the resources and means of legislating democratically. During the 1960s, the focus of civil defence shifted from bombardment survival to preliminary survival and aid to facilitate recovery. The Home Office were also concerned with casualty prevention measures as this was believed to be the main component of national survival. The concepts extended to the belief that if citizens were unable to establish suitable protection, all other recovery measures would be for naught.¹²

By the 1970s, Home Office circulars expressed “great dissatisfaction” with home defence resources within Government. Civil defence efforts were saddled with a need to cut costs and yet provide maximum recovery. The F6 Division were keenly aware of their restrictions, often commenting: “we must keep the overall costs ... within the limits approved”.¹³ When the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) wrote to F6 Secretary JFD Buttery, the candid creator of Protect and Survive, they discussed current contingencies and budgets. On the note from the DTI, they prefaced a list of suggested upgrades with the phrase “we strongly recommend that funds should be made available as follows: [list]”. Buttery was so shocked by an assumption that funds could be made available he could only respond with a stunned question mark and exclamation in the margins.¹⁴

¹¹ TNA: HO 322/986, “‘Regional Government and National Survival’ - Keynote Address by Mr. Andrew, Exercise Torchlight VIII, February 1982,” February 5, 1982.

¹² TNA: HO 322/849, “Mr. Barry Note to Mr. Buttery,” April 5, 1974.

¹³ TNA: HO 322/776, “Note from F6 Division to Public Relations Branch on ‘Protect and Survive’ - Research,” October 24, 1975.

¹⁴ TNA: HO 322/817, “Home Defence Review - Follow Up Action,” January 21, 1972.

The information centre procedures, listed in the CDA, could be developed within budgets, eventually converting into the regional HQs that would form the new seats of government post-attack. Regions were further broken down to sub-regional HQs, and then county or borough HQs (Figure 7 & Appendix A). Originally, RHQs and SRHQs would only be brought to action “in the event of an enemy attack”. They would be manned, but inactive during times of crisis, as the Local Authority HQs would work directly with central government. It would be hotly debated decades later as to whether the regional and sub-regional HQs should rather come to bear during periods of tension rather than waiting for annihilation.¹⁵

¹⁵ See Appendix A for further maps and visuals of the region system. TNA: HO 322/806, “The War Book Approach to Local Government Emergency Planning (Draft),” February 17, 1975.

As agreed by the Home Defence College (HDC) nearly thirty years later, CDA 48 expedited the ideas that a central authority could not realistically provide order for the majority of the population following an attack. Contingencies were required, which became the system of twelve regions, each more concerned with the eventual recovery of the nation rather than initial survival during the detonation of nuclear weapons. By the early 1970s, the Home Office stated that the United Kingdom’s ability to preserve the machinery of government in war had to be “substantially improved,” and referenced adherence to the Stay-Put doctrine and the development of a public information system as means of achieving this goal.¹⁶ The region system was further established in Home Office “War Books”, which were lists of procedures developed in the First World War as step-by-step manuals for various government institutions to transition from peacetime to war. In the 1970s, the Home Office began a concerted effort to streamline the “voluminous plans” of the many war books of the 1960s which served as stopgaps for the care and maintenance era. Each division in the Home Office had developed their own war books, and “the result [was] a complete lack of uniformity”.¹⁷

In the 1970s, as in the Second World War, the Defence and Overseas Policy Committee met regularly with the Prime Minister, senior Cabinet Ministers (such as the Home Secretary) and relevant Chiefs of Staff to discuss home defence. The Home Office wanted to recreate this system with a Chief Executive (to be selected from Ministers of the day), advised by specialized staff, in each regional HQs following an attack. The Chief Executive would thereby become “an officer in the chain of internal regional government” acting with full authority, until such time central government could be reestablished. In 1971, the Home Office began to push for a

¹⁶ TNA: HO 322/817, “Home Office Circular NO. ES 1/1972 - Home Defence 1972-76,” March 22, 1972.

¹⁷ TNA: HO 322/806, “The War Book Approach to Local Government Emergency Planning (Draft),” February 16, 1975.

Chapter 5 – “Paper Bags and Satirical Advice”: The Content and Purpose of Protect and Survive reexamination of civil defence planning. Most policies dated back to the War and little work was being done following the decision to place civil defence on a care and maintenance basis. The Home Office took it upon itself to update their War Books, noting that while current plans may yet prove useful, they have lain dormant since 1968. There was an obvious need to scrutinize recent research, attack scenarios and the structures of local and regional governments. The F6 Division would frequently meet to discuss the state of home defence and would later call for new plans that were flexible, adaptable and only requiring minimal central government support.¹⁸

Though it was not realized at the time, the Home Office would essentially create two didactic campaigns for an attack – the War Book for the Government and Protect and Survive for citizens. Contingencies now targeted simplicity, directness and clear instruction for the preservation of the machinery of government in war. Above all, plans needed to be “capable of implementation in time to bring about the desired result;” that is, continual government authority. In a crisis, there would be no time for the Government to debate new legislation, or for the homeowner to build a significant bunker, thus, the pedagogy of civil defence became doing what could be done, by whomever held the instructions, in as brief a period of time as possible.¹⁹

War book instructions were organized in an outline system, with subheadings. Section 1.7.3 would be the third subsection, of the seventh subsection, under section one. The order of completion is not organized according to importance, rather in the foundations that needed to be in place before further measures could be taken. For example, distribution of Protect and Survive was motion 5.13.2.c.ii. Before distribution, mandated tasks included the appointment and transfer of authority to regional commanders, the preparation of emergency courts, bringing the

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ TNA: HO 322/806, “Home Defence College Report on the War Book Approach to Local Government Emergency Planning,” February 16, 1975.

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UKWMO to a war state, and the broadcast of the Wartime Broadcasting Service on the BBC.

Tasks to completed after the distribution included the closure of schools; the removal of “art treasures” from London, Edinburgh and Cardiff; and the implementation of strict immigration controls.²⁰

To cope with these variables, a delegation of authority would have to take place. Home defence plans began to assume a period of deteriorating communications followed by the transition from central to wartime (or regional government), or at the least a “suitable framework of government”. Local Authorities were not provided full access to the restricted documents of the secret state but rather left to “assume the government [would] run the country under a central or decentralized system, come what may”, while the Home Office would coordinate War Books for all ministries simultaneously. This restriction of information would become a growing concern of Local Authorities during the creation of Protect and Survive. One Local Authority association categorized their survival as being administered by “one division in the Home Office (F6), headed by an Assistant Secretary, with a handful of staff and a budget of £22m, much of which is spent on maintaining stockpiles and the UKWMO”.²¹

Even before Protect and Survive was established, the Machinery of Government in War Sub-Committee of the Cabinet, responsible for the smooth transition to regional governments in war, did not accept the premise that the public should be made aware of the region system. Particularly as they still recalled the “apathetic or sometimes hostile reception” to previous

²⁰ TNA: HO 322/921, “Government War Book Measure 5.1,” May 22, 1978.

²¹ TNA: HO 322/932, “Interim Report of the Working Party on Home Defence by the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives,” April 4, 1980.

attempts at providing public information.²² Thus, for decades, the “plans for the continuity of government” remained secret to the majority of the public until 1980.²³

The role of Local Authorities became more involved as time passed. By 1979 the Home Office organized 17 hardened bunkers to serve as Sub-Regional HQs. At the time, only 14 were operational with 5 others requiring extensive upgrades which were to be completed by 1984.²⁴ The SRHQs locations were classified as top secret, even to Local Authority executives, and some that were not decommissioned in the 1990s still remain secret. The secrecy surrounding the SHRQs continually frustrated district councils who were unsure of their duties and viewed the region system as “untried and untested in practice”. In the 1960s, the planning efforts of County Executives varied substantially. While some were eager, others fobbed off their duties to volunteers with little to no oversight “and there developed a degree of remoteness from local government”. Through the late 1970s, the Home Office attempted to transfer the “full powers of internal government” to Local Authorities with SRHQs taking on a supervisory role. This proved to be quite challenging to Local Authorities who were now given greater responsibilities yet remained deprived of detailed instructions as to their duties.²⁵

Additional complications to the region system arrived with the Local Government Act of 1972. With the Act, regional boundaries were modified, and the Home Office updated their home defence map accordingly.²⁶ Afterwards, as the Home Office elaborated in a circular, the boundary adjustments were used as an opportunity to prune costs of policies that did not

²² TNA: HO 322/799, “Machinery of Government in War Sub-Committee Interim Report of the Home Defence Review,” February 18, 1971.

²³ TNA: HO 322/982, “Civil Preparedness for Home Defence 1981 Progress Report to Ministers,” November 3, 1981.

²⁴ TNA: HO 322/926, “Improvements in Home Defence Preparations,” October 21, 1979.

²⁵ TNA: HO 322/932, “Interim Report of the Working Party on Home Defence by the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives,” April 4, 1980.

²⁶ Parliament of the United Kingdom, “Local Government Act 1972 C.70” (1972), <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1972/70/contents>.

Chapter 5 – “Paper Bags and Satirical Advice”: The Content and Purpose of Protect and Survive contribute to war readiness and further invest in better communications.²⁷ In response to the circular, the already created Ministry of Defence (MOD) regions were altered to match those of the new home defence regions. A military commander, complete with staff, would be present at each SRHQ, and once regional HQs were established, a senior representative of the military region would act as advisor to the Regional Commander.²⁸ However, as explained in a later Home Office circular, the MOD argued that they had neither the manpower nor resources to assist civil government after attack.²⁹ The majority of the Armed Forces would likely be overseas supporting NATO, while those that remained would guard “Key Points” (areas such as armories and missile sites with high strategic importance).³⁰ The enforcement of law and order following an attack was to be left to local police departments. For years however, unilateralists would insist that the military were going to assume command of the nation in a crisis and the true purpose of Protect and Survive was to keep the public indoors and subdued.³¹

In any case, the role of the military in home defence remained murky. The Home Office argued the existence of a long-standing precedent in the UK of utilizing the military to assist the Government in its core duties and maintaining peace during a crisis. Deployment would require “a Royal Prerogative, taken by Ministers who would be, in turn, accountable to the Government” for the actions of the military. By law, the status of servicemen during an emergency would be identical to that of every other citizen, they had a responsibility to “uphold the law” and could be “deputized” by Chief Constables, as they saw fit. To the Home Office, a soldier was “simply a citizen in uniform” and at all times responsible to Local Authority and SHRQ Executives.

²⁷ TNA: HO 322/817, “Home Office Circular NO. ES 1/1972 - Home Defence 1972-76,” March 22, 1972.

²⁸ TNA: HO 322/910, “Minutes of UKCICC Meeting Held in the Ministry of Defence on Tuesday 20 November 1979,” November 20, 1979.

²⁹ TNA: HO 322/802, “Home Office Circular No. ES11/1974 - Armed Forces in War,” September 25, 1974.

³⁰ TNA: HO 322/910, “Home Office Circular No. ES 6/1974 - Protection of Key Points,” June 20, 1974.

³¹ TNA: HO 322/802, “Home Office Circular,” October 17, 1974.

The intentions of the Home Office were to maintain that the structure of command for the military would rest with a military commander, whose primary duty was to support the police commander’s authority. The MOD remained elusive on their commitment to act in support of the police force and typically argued that the military commander would be more concerned with national defence measures than answering police requests to restore the peace. While they agreed that the Armed Forces would be subordinate to Civil Authorities in war, the MOD often took the position that while some Territorial and Army Volunteer Reserves (TAVR) would be available for support, the military commanders would mostly be about their own duties in wartime (and wanting to be left well enough alone when possible).³²

The military attempted to codify their powers in several reports for the Home Office. In these documents the MOD typically argued that when it came to protecting Key Points, the military should be authorized to arrest, seize and detain without warrant any person entering, approaching or in the neighbourhood of a Key Point.³³ F6 Secretary Buttery categorized the proposed powers of the military in a crisis as “horrifying”.³⁴ The F6 Division refused to endorse a recommendation to Ministers making loitering near a Key Point an arrestable offence. “Only in exceptional circumstances, perhaps not even then” would F6 sanction the criminalization of standing near a Key Point.³⁵ The MOD attempted to placate civil concerns by emphasizing that they would only receive these powers with the passing of an Emergency Powers Bill in Parliament, itself a measure of extreme last resort enacted only days, or even hours, before hostilities commenced. Furthermore, unlike Northern Ireland where military police had the

³² TNA: HO 322/802, “Military Aid to Civil Authorities in England and Wales,” June 9, 1980.

³³ TNA: HO 322/835, “Power of the Armed Forces Engaged Upon Home Defence Duties,” October 2, 1973.

³⁴ TNA: HO 322/835, “Mr. Buttery Replied to MOD,” October 4, 1974.

³⁵ TNA: HO 322/835, “JA Pemberton to GG Way Esq. RE: Powers of the Armed Forces,” July 23, 1974.

power of constables, in Great Britain each soldier would need to be sworn in by a police commander to assist with search and arrests outside Key Points.³⁶

The role of the police during war was not without its own legal controversies. Most arguments centred around what enhanced roles the police would have in an emergency, such as firearms, open search and seizure regulations and defence of the public.³⁷ Curiously, one of the biggest proponents of increased police roles were the Scientific Advisory Branch which argued the role of police after an attack was not to restore the status quo but to begin “a new society”. While some procedures remained unsettled, the Home Office endeavored to maintain their intentions and streamline the response to nuclear attack as much as possible.³⁸

During the transition to war period, communication would be invaluable. All radio and antenna were to be removed from power sources and covered in earth if possible. This measure would shield radio circuitry from the effects of post-detonation electromagnetic pulse (EMP). Following an attack, during the period of fallout, “radio [would] become the primary means of communication [for] the passing of information on fallout and other hazards”. When outside movement became possible, an improvised messenger service was to be introduced.³⁹

The BBC, who would have staff in each SRHQ, placed correct communication at such a premium they believed all received communications should be confirmed via “hardened” (against the effects of EMPs) telephone lines.⁴⁰ F6 however believed the idea to be unrealistic in a post-attack environment when the telephone system would be severely damaged or even out of commission entirely. While the risk of false messages could have harmful consequences pre-

³⁶ TNA: HO 322/835, “JA Pemberton to UKCICC,” August 2, 1974.

³⁷ TNA: HO 322/928, “MOD/UKCICC Statement at Home Office Defence Study,” November 20, 1979.

³⁸ TNA: HO 322/828, “JKS Clayton Writes to NF Law,” November 5, 1979.

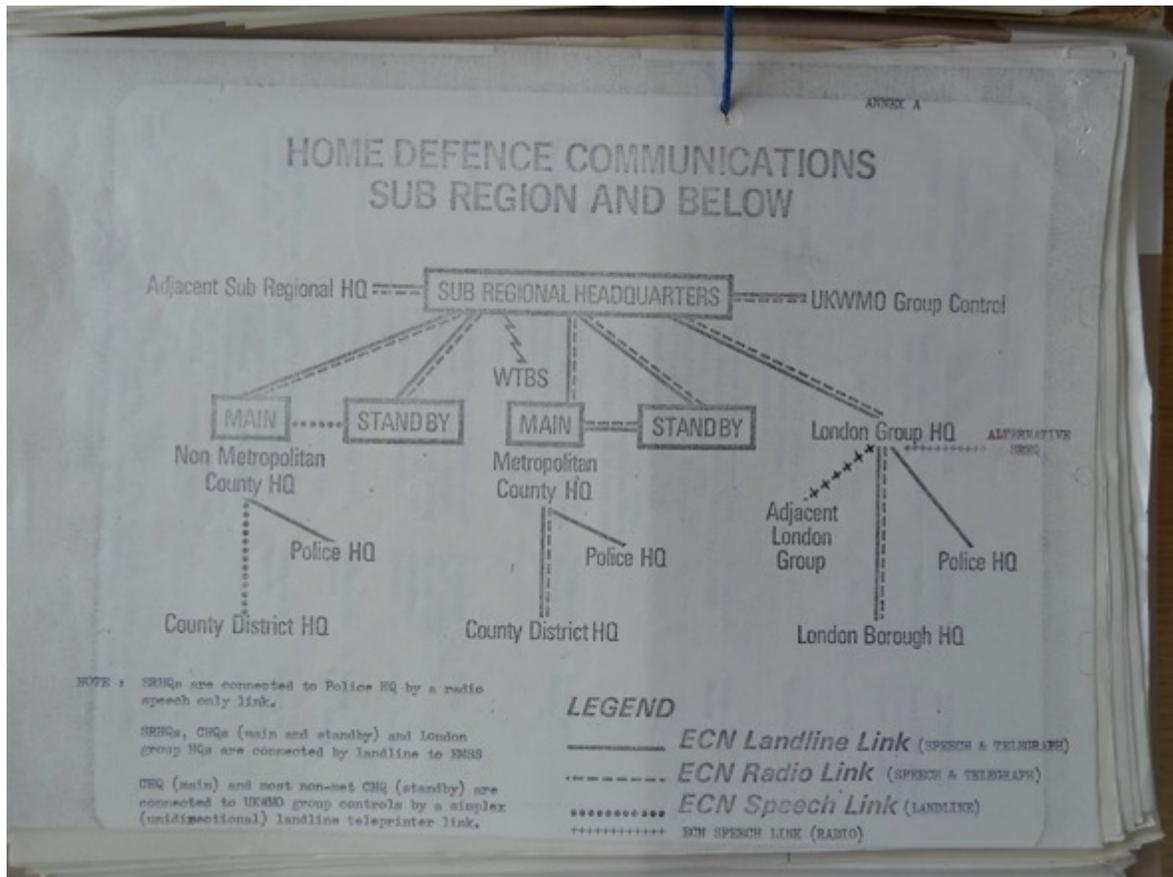
³⁹ TNA: HO 322/911, “Copy of Report Joint Working Party Bedfordshire on HD Communications,” November 9, 1979.

⁴⁰ TNA: HO 322/855, “SV Rayner of the BBC to JA Pemberton, F6 Division.,” January 7, 1976.

Chapter 5 – “Paper Bags and Satirical Advice”: The Content and Purpose of Protect and Survive attack, following the attack “the problem then for everybody left alive will be survival” with no time or resources to devote to redundant message confirmations.⁴¹

Direct line communications from UKWMO Control HQs to their monitoring posts were provided by emergency circuits, activated and maintained by the post office (Figure 8).⁴² The function of the UKWMO was to provide reliable data on incoming attacks and surrounding levels of fallout to Local Authorities, and later SRHQs.

Figure 8 Communication in War: UKWMO SRHQ connections. TNA: HO 322/911, “Review of Home Defence Telecommunications,” March 5, 1979.



⁴¹ TNA: HO 322/855, “RC Yeates of F6 Division, on Behalf of JA Pemberton, Reply to SV Rayner of the BBC,” February 5, 1976.

⁴² TNA: HO 322/911, “Copy of Interim Report of Working Party on Home Defence Communications,” July 21, 1980.

The UKWMO would communicate with SRHQs from as many of the 872 monitoring posts that were viable, broadcasting public warnings of missile strikes and fallout levels as well as updating civil and military authorities accordingly. This was at times categorized as unnecessarily confusing by the Home Office as the UKWMO operated within their own regional boundaries which did not correlate to the government’s regional system.⁴³

In a slightly convoluted system, prior to attack, sub-regional commanders, and their staff, would be dispersed to expansive subterranean hardened bunkers (such as Hack Green in Essex) while regional commanders and staff would be sent to fallout shelters in remote parts of the country. Some weeks later, the regional commanders would emerge from their burrows and establish an RHQ somewhere suitable depending on area viability. Until this time the SRHQ commander would be the highest authority in government, though they would not be active until a nuclear attack occurred. Prior to a nuclear strike, SRHQs would be manned, but central government would leapfrog them to coordinate with Local Authority headquarters. Once active, SRHQs would maintain food and health, attack information through the Wartime Broadcasting Service (WTBS), public order and justice. SRHQ commanders would then replace the dispersed central government and operate through county controllers on a local level (where still functional).⁴⁴

While regional and sub-regional HQs were expected to be controlled by government Ministers, the operation of Local Authority HQs implied district councils would take command, though this was left somewhat ambiguous. Following an attack, it was assumed the populous would be frightened and confused, and “natural leaders” of the community were thought to arise, though it was likely they would not have given previous thought to survival in such dire

⁴³ Appendix A

⁴⁴ TNA: HO 322/911, “Review of Home Defence Communications,” April 11, 1979.

Chapter 5 – “Paper Bags and Satirical Advice”: The Content and Purpose of Protect and Survive situations. A Local Authority’s first duty following an attack was to set up information centres and attempt to communicate with surrounding districts and their SRHQ.⁴⁵ For these reasons, the Home Office repeatedly stated that their aim was to consider these problems before they occurred and provide solutions. Thus, during a time of international tension or conventional war, the Local Authorities would command their districts. SRHQs would be manned at this time, but non-operational, and Local Authorities would receive instruction from the central government. When the nation stabilized, the RHQs would serve until such time that the many regions could rejoin to “establish the new order”.⁴⁶

However, following the creation of Protect and Survive, the duty of collecting and disseminating information following an attack moved from the SRHQ to Local Authority levels. There would now be a County Military HQ established in parallel with a County Wartime HQ in each Local Authority. County and District Controllers would now possess full powers to counter the effects of attack until communications to higher levels, principally the SRHQs, could be established.⁴⁷ Following an attack, it became the function of every Local Authority to also make plans for collecting intelligence, providing public information, billeting, facilitating environmental health, the collection of human remains, the control of food and feeding and the preservation of public works as well as “maintaining any other services essential to life”.⁴⁸

London was unique in that they possessed a high number of boroughs, each with a separate wartime HQs.⁴⁹ These were often earmarked spaces in basements of municipal

⁴⁵ LMA: GLC/RA/COOS/02/024/001, “Home Office Consolidated Circular to Local Authorities on Emergency Planning,” July 30, 1984.

⁴⁶ TNA: HO 322/932, “Interim Report of the Working Party on Home Defence by the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives,” March 22, 1972.

⁴⁷ TNA: HO 322/852, “Home Defence Exercise 1978,” September 12, 1978.

⁴⁸ TNA: HO 322/997, “Civil Defence (Planning) Regulations 1974,” 1974.

⁴⁹ Appendix A

buildings such as the Guildhall in the City of London and Town Hall in Croydon.⁵⁰ While Kelvedon Hatch was established as the SRHQ for Greater London, it is believed that several highly classified bunkers operated beneath London. These bunkers, assumed to be allocated for Ministers and high-ranking government, were never disclosed, even to the Home Office. However, some members of F6 would enjoy discussing their suspicions of possible hidden bunkers such as below the Ministry of the Environment rotunda on Marsham Street, London.⁵¹

British civil defence stagnated in the 1960s. The development of Protect and Survive during the mid 1970s demonstrated obvious efforts by the Home Office to revive home defence. These plans established a desire for the best survival outcomes, with the latest information, within strict budgets. The F6 Division, in particular, would respond to new research directly, and rarely appeared content to simply make-do with established systems of home defence. The secret state was not an immobile monolith, rather it was flexible and frequently updated, along with relevant planning assumptions. F6 was not satisfied to remain idle and once they completed Protect and Survive, they remained keenly aware of their obligations to maintain the highest levels of civilian/government communication in a crisis. Clear example can be found with the Home Office reaction to the alteration of attack scenarios in the late 1970s. The updated scenarios inspired a massive reexamination of civil defence across the Home Office, including Protect and Survive, culminating in a first-of-its-kind, multi-day interdepartmental study.

⁵⁰ TNA: HO 322/956, “F6 Note about Local Authority Wartime HQs,” April 10, 1980.

⁵¹ TNA: HO 322/979, “HDO(P)81 - Cabinet Office Official Committee on Home Defence: Civil Preparedness for Home Defence 1981 Progress Report,” April 8, 1981.

In 1977, the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC), responsible for the collection and analysis of military intelligence in the United Kingdom, issued revised assumptions for possible attacks on the nation from the Soviet Union. To this point, expectations specified a multi-week, possibly months long degradation of international relations that would predicate any attack, providing ample time to fortify the nation’s war readiness at a slow, steady pace. The extended time allowed for a staggered release of information to the public, gradually acclimatizing the nation to potential horrifying consequences. The distribution of public information was to begin with indirect news alerts of growing international tensions, followed by home defence information in newsprint, radio adverts, the printing of substantial copies of Protect and Survive, and ultimately, the video components played non-stop on national television. A 1977 JIC document drastically altered Britain’s nuclear attack theories and relevant protocols, reducing the warning period from several weeks to as little as 48 hours. With the shorter warning period, the JIC also introduced the possibility of a protracted conventional (non-nuclear) war on the nation before any nuclear exchange, leaving civil defence planning with a considerable new challenge.⁵²

Lord Chalfont (President of the Association of Civil Defence and Emergency Planning Officers) believed civil defence plans were overdue for updating as little had changed since 1973. For Chalfont, the revised assumptions provided ample reason to revise home defence contingencies. The JIC and Cabinet agreed and invited several ministries and departments to review their civil defence plans, war preparedness and ideas for the dissemination of information to the public.⁵³

⁵² TNA: HO 322/918, “HDO(WB)(78)18 - Official Committee on Home Defence War Book Sub-Committee,” December 14, 1978.

⁵³ TNA: HO 322/918, “Folder Notes by N. Law, F6 Division,” October 26, 1978.

On the heels of this call for status reports, the Machinery of Government in War Sub-Committee (MG) released a circular that also invited the Home Office to prepare a statement on their preparations for conventional war. The MG were particularly interested in the establishment of SRHQs in a reduced timeframe. Mr. Heaton of the Police Division of the Home Office, noted that all of Protect and Survive would likely require reexamination.⁵⁴ At the same time, the War Book Sub-Committee (WBSC) considered the revised assumptions and again asked the Home Office to prepare diagnostic reports and host some kind of interdepartmental study to consider the state of home defence under the reduced warning periods.⁵⁵

Noel Law, then director of F6, chronicled the Home Office discussions on the new assumptions and their efforts to adapt their plans to the new dangers. F6 staff began a complete review of attack planning as well as their recently developed Protect and Survive programme. Protect and Survive originated in post-attack scenarios from 1968 which assumed nuclear strikes without a preceding conventional war. This scenario would leave little opportunity for government rescue due to fallout, hence Protect and Survive was designed to encourage people to remain within their homes after an attack, not to endure explosive air raids.⁵⁶

To satisfy the Cabinet’s request for a status report on the current state of home defence, the Home Office prepared a paper focused on the questions brought up by the recent JIC report. F6 had always been challenged by a restrictive budget and an impossible task; now the challenge took the form of a vastly reduced warning period to gird the nation for nuclear annihilation. To further complicate the difficult task, a period of conventional war was added, a form of attack for

⁵⁴ TNA: CAB 134/3517, “HDO(P)77(5) - Official Committee on Home Defence: Home Defence Planning Sub-Committee,” May 1977, 77.

⁵⁵ TNA: CAB 134/4144, “HDO(WB)77/20 - Official Committee on Home Defence: War Book Sub-Committee,” May 1977.

⁵⁶ TNA: CAB 134/3121, “Report to the Minister of Technology by the Working Party on Atomic Weapons Establishments,” July 18, 1968.

which Protect and Survive was silent. It likely would have been tempting, particularly as the nation was embroiled in the Winter of Discontent, to shirk any obligations of modernization and claim nothing could be done. After all, this was the period that historians of the United Kingdom label as the peak of “Decline”.⁵⁷ Idleness did not come to pass, and the Home Office, under Callaghan’s troubled government, began a thorough examination of Protect and Survive and the Machinery of War system.

The report was dense with questions, all attempting to determine what needed to be changed to uphold home defence. Here the Home Office viewed the study as a possible answer to the questions of what modifications were required from the adjusted projections, and what steps could be carried out within “current manpower and financial resources”.⁵⁸

The shorter warning required the Home Office to develop higher states of preparedness in peacetime, including the ability to operate during a period of conventional war, without additional funding. The task was further complicated by the difficulty of increasing preparedness, down to the Local Authority level, without the public catching some hint of activity. The endeavor could produce a panic or be “interpreted as inconsistent” with the détente encouraged by the Cabinet. Therefore, it was decided by the Home Office that revisions would be made under the classification of secret. The Ministers, and Home Office leaders, did not include Local Authority representatives in their ranks and the F6 Division rightly predicted the changes were likely to instigate objections. Plans were being formulated for Local Authorities by the Government that could not be realistically discussed outside Whitehall. To bring the matter to Local Authority attention would open the possibility of public outcry that Whitehall would prefer to avoid. In the record cold months of 1978, when all manner of labourers were protesting,

⁵⁷ Jim Tomlinson, *The Politics of Decline: Understanding Post-War Britain* (Harlow, England: Longman, 2001).

⁵⁸ HDO(WB)78/18, December 14, 1978.

there was surely sufficient civic turmoil for the government, and no need to create more.⁵⁹

Rather, the Home Office decided to move forward and gather the Departments of the government for a home defence conference to determine how the secret state could cope with the current revisions.⁶⁰

The multi-day conference took place at the Home Defence College for two reasons: the ease of security on the private grounds of the College, and the ability to reinforce to the media that this was simply a routine conference to discuss hypothetical scenarios. Numerous branches of government were invited, and the study would strive for the “best available appreciation” of the shifting attack landscape.⁶¹

In light of the new attack assumptions, the Cabinet invited the Home Office to review Protect and Survive, the Machinery of Government in war and the regional programme.⁶² In the report, the Home Office communicated the flaws in the current system that were created by shorter warning periods and conventional war. During a transition to war period, Regional, Sub-Regional and Local commanders and their staff, over 2000 in all, would dispatch to their relevant headquarters. The RHQs and SRHQs occupants would then remain “lying doggo” until the point that central government was unable to function (assumed to be following the first nuclear strike). To complicate the issue, RHQs would be manned by Ministers, so it remained nebulous as to who would actually serve the role of central government during transitional periods or during conventional war. There was no clear solution for the need to have SRHQ commanders identified and trained within 48 hours.⁶³

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² TNA: CAB 134/3517, “HDO(P)77(5) - Official Committee on Home Defence: Home Defence Planning Sub-Committee,” May, 1977.

⁶³ TNA: HO 322/918, “HDO(P)(78)14,” December 14, 1978.

Protect and Survive’s audiovisual media could be broadcast immediately, however distribution of the booklet would require at least three weeks. Furthermore, the advice would need significant expansion if it were to protect against non-nuclear bombing. Gearing up to operational readiness during a conventional war was a difficult task, yet possible. Preparing for a nuclear strike within 48 hours was seen by F6 as a virtually superhuman undertaking.

To Noel Law and F6, preliminary examination suggested that the only way to cope with less warning time was to obtain more: more ore funding, more resources, more peacetime preparedness, more conventional protection, more support for morale, and more warning. However, they were entirely aware of the tumultuous Winter of Discontent in which they laboured. Being approved for more would be unlikely given the low threat of attack and the high costs of protection. Instead, the F6 Division attempted to find success through research, insight and careful consideration.

The solutions for F6 were not as simple as they were for the UKWMO, which operated naturally at a state of readiness. However, UKWMO warning sirens would fall on ignorant ears if public education was not raised prior to attack. There was no shortage of obstacles and there was a huge divergence between what F6 had prepared and what they now required. Nervousness and doubt echoed around the halls of F6 Division with several documents demonstrating that staff frequently asked each other if “low warning time” was a problem they could actually solve.⁶⁴

As the Cabinet and Ministers were made aware of the problems facing home defence, it was left to the Departments of the Home Office to wade into the bureaucracy of Whitehall and attempt to return with a solution. Basic assumptions would be corrected frequently as the F6

⁶⁴ TNA: HO 322/918, “Vernon Barry to Noel Law - Home Defence Planning Assumptions,” December 29, 1978.

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Division reexamined national contingencies. Some suppositions of the state of civil defence were taken for granted, such as when Noel Law had to be corrected when told, due to finances, little to no rescue equipment actually remained in store.⁶⁵

F6 were not alone in their discoveries. Many departments eagerly prepared to consider their own contingencies and to provide questions for the upcoming study. Within their offices, the Science Advisory Branch (SAB) were particularly interested in the study. One of SAB's first realizations was that the new possibility of conventional war would imply the use of chemical weapons. SAB voiced their concerns to F6 ardently, pointing out that even the hardened subterranean SRHQ bunkers, let alone the lean-tos in Protect and Survive, afforded absolutely no protection from chemical weapons. As one scientist pointed out, the only way bunker dwellers would know they were under attack from chemical weapons would be the death of occupants.⁶⁶

The HDC also brought their concerns to bear on F6 in the light of revised assumptions. The HDC ran as a paramilitary institution, with Air Marshal Sir Leslie Mavor in command. Air Marshal Mavor received the revised assumptions and accepted them as evidence that home defence must be revamped. NATO, it was argued by the Marshal, could not survive days, let alone weeks, of conventional combat against the numbers of the Soviet Union. NATO would have no recourse but the use of nuclear weapons, making the release of Protect and Survive difficult if not impossible.

As head of the College and senior officer, Mavor was likely familiar with his words bearing great influence. The Air Marshal spoke authoritatively in his communications, and he did not hide his opinion that all the planning of the Home Office was for naught once the chaos of

⁶⁵ TNA: HO 322/918, “PR Wall, Supply & Transport Branch to N. Law - Home Defence Planning Assumptions,” December 19, 1978.

⁶⁶ TNA: HO 322/918, “SAB Memorandum - Home Defence Planning Assumptions,” January 3, 1979.

war began. Mavor questioned if the Home Office was aware of the relationship between warning time and peacetime preparedness in their “never-never land of home defence?”. Mavor resented Ministerial assumptions that the restitution of government would proceed in any kind of coherent manner. To believe it could, argued Mavor, was dangerous and misleading. The Air Marshal concluded one letter to Noel Law by attesting that counties teetering between recovery and oblivion would form the majority of the nation post-attack, and their outcomes would “decide the ultimate fate of the country as a whole”. To help conceptualize his warnings, Mavor invited Law to imagine a public prosecutor in a crumbling bunker clutching a peace pamphlet in one hand and Protect and Survive in the other “with all its obfuscation on the merits of ‘stay-put’!”.⁶⁷

Director Noel Law (Buttery’s successor), had grown protective of F6’s efforts and took umbrage with Mavor. Law’s immediate reaction to Mavor’s advice was to find a coworker who could take the responsibility of replying off his hands. Unfortunately, Law was unsuccessful and several weeks later reluctantly prepared his reply. When discussing the relationship between warning time and civil preparedness levels, Law remarked “it is a fact of life that pure logic and political decisions on peacetime expenditure are not always the closest of bedfellows!” Law answered the missive by defending F6, indicating they had no delusions of a step-by-step return to central government and that the purpose of the study (hosted at Mavor’s College) was to determine what could be achieved by combining government resources.⁶⁸

The F6 director also spoke on the fact that NATO’s ability to resist Soviet troops in a conventional war for some weeks’ time was provided verbatim from the MOD and the Cabinet. Thus, while Law appreciated Mavor’s concern, he trusted the information he received. Law

⁶⁷ TNA: HO 322/918, “Letter from Home Defence College,” January 9, 1979.

⁶⁸ TNA: HO 322/918, “Home Defence Planning - Implications of 1977 Revised Planning Assumptions,” February 20, 1979.

likely believed Mavor was accustomed to leadership roles and, as such, he provided Mavor with some “top secret” intelligence. Intelligence that was tantalizingly described as strictly for “Mavor’s eyes only.” Two years ago, NATO approved the Rapid Reinforcement Concept (RRC), which prepared for a massive influx of troops and equipment during political tension. NATO estimated they could place over three million troops into the field before hostilities began. Law followed this information by informing Mavor that there were other critical roles for the SRHQ’s during a conventional war, unfortunately, given Mavor’s lower clearance level, Law concluded he was unable to say more.⁶⁹

Law had faith that other military men would be less dismissive of the Home Office’s efforts. Law wrote to the MOD informing them of their efforts to study the implications of the JIC’s revisions, particularly in the civilian sector, and enquired if the MOD had any input.⁷⁰ David Heyhoe, Head of Defence Secretariat Division, replied on behalf of the MOD. Heyhoe asked only that F6 consider the advantages of expanded military influence in the civilian sector and the development of initiatives such as a national blackout to perturb Soviet bombers.⁷¹

With JA Pemberton, Director Law debated the blackout, another home defence holdover from the War, that encouraged all lighting off at night, to confuse enemy bombers. The two men agreed that a blackout could boost morale, but it would be ineffective, cumbersome, and expensive. It was likely that modern Soviet aircraft were not reliant on visual navigation and targeting and a blackout would not be apropos to the upcoming study. Ultimately, their conversation ended ominously with concern that the MOD would overwhelm civilian planning if given a larger foothold at the upcoming conference.⁷²

⁶⁹ Ibid

⁷⁰ TNA: HO 322/918, “N. Law to DC Heyhoe Esq, MOD,” June 8, 1979.

⁷¹ TNA: HO 322/918, “Heyhoe to Law Re: Home Defence Planning Assumptions,” June 26, 1979.

⁷² TNA: HO 322/918, “Folder Notes by JA Pemberton,” July 10, 1979.

Robert Coles of the MOD replied on behalf of Heyhoe. He countered that a blackout would be a slight operational advantage by denying the enemy use of any navigational assistance from ground lights and made a case for relevance to the upcoming study. Coles found the opportunity to improve public acceptance of civil/military cooperation “exciting” and added that UKCICC (United Kingdom Commanders in Chief Committee) asked to present at the study.⁷³ In his reply to Coles, Pemberton argued that a marginal military advantage weighed against a massive civil expenditure was unlikely to become policy. However, Pemberton added, if Ministers increased home defence funding they might reconsider the policy, but they were currently doing all in their power to stretch every pound. Pemberton noted that UKCICC were welcomed to give a 10-15 minute “tour d’horizon” of military and civil preparedness, provided F6 approved the script. The UKCICC presentation eventually delivered at the study would end up becoming a point of significant contention.⁷⁴

F6 were familiar with this type of politicking, and typically defended their efforts vociferously, reinforcing their feeling of obligation to active home defence. Before the 1979 election, F6 were asked to prepare a briefing on home defence for the new Home Secretary, whichever party they might be. F6 focused on the political implications of the victorious party and considered their current expenditure limits and the degree of disclosure to the public.⁷⁵ Soon after, Noel Law circulated the Home Office’s earlier assessment of the state of civil defence and how it should be adapted following the JIC revisions, to the Ministers of the WBSC. Mr. Whitmore, Chair of the WBSC, informed those present that the recently elected Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, was very interested in home defence and had inquired about its

⁷³ TNA: HO 322/918, “MOD to F6 Re: Home Defence Planning Assumptions,” August 3, 1979, 6.

⁷⁴ TNA: HO 322/928, “JA Pemberton to R Coles, Esq. - Home Defence Planning Assumptions,” August 31, 1979.

⁷⁵ TNA: HO 322/926, “David Heaton to Noel Law - Briefing for New Ministers,” April 11, 1979.

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status at a recent Cabinet meeting. Home Secretary William Whitelaw followed the Prime Minister and noted he would commission another report from the Home Office. Whitmore also mentioned that other departments in the Home Office were asked to submit reports on their obligations to home defence to the new Secretaries, though there were many absent replies. Law mentioned the upcoming study and how it would assist the Home Office in its goal to continually advance civil defence.⁷⁶

The JIC revisions had inspired top to bottom examinations of home defence and F6 moved at a brisk pace by bureaucratic standards. To maximize efficiency, the F6 repurposed a 1978 report and retitled it “Home Defence Policy”. The first draft was prepared by Pemberton and given to Law for approval. The restructured draft explained that F6 currently worked under the old assumptions of a long period of deteriorating relations followed by 3- or 4-weeks warning of nuclear attack. Pemberton also noted that F6 was operating within the restrictive budgets mandated in 1968 and that more funding was likely required to modernize. Pemberton’s draft pointed out that in 1977-78 only 3.6% of the total defence budget, or 48p/capita, was spent on civil preparedness, amongst the lowest in NATO. Despite these criteria, F6 recalled their efforts to continually update and improve their core planning advice to the populous and the overall preparedness of the nation. Protect and Survive was explained as part of a system designed to assist “survivors of a nuclear attack to survive its aftermath and start national recovery”.⁷⁷

Before submitting the report for Ministers, Law clarified the mission statement of the F6 Division, which they had worked under since the dissolution of the CDC in 1968. The mission of the F6 Division and British home defence policy was to improve preparedness to mobilize all

⁷⁶ TNA: HO 322/918, “Minutes of War Book Sub-Committee Meeting on 1/6/79,” June 1, 1979.

⁷⁷ TNA: HO 322/918, “Reply Note to N. Law by JA Pemberton - Home Defence Policy,” April 20, 1979.

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civil resources, mitigate the effects of a nuclear attack, and provide a strong basis for national recovery via the “establishment of alternative regional machinery of government”. Law’s report criticized the variance of preparedness between districts without regulation or oversight. Law also lamented that F6’s efforts typically received criticism from the media for lacking public shelter and withholding information.

One possible solution, proposed by Law, was to prepare the Protect and Survive program for issue to the public upon request. The note was quite revealing of F6’s intentions to provide the public with the greatest possibilities of survival, even if it would require highly restricted information to be declassified. Law’s suggestion predated any leaks or demands for the release of Protect and Survive by almost a year. F6 had been working under Buttery’s mandate that Protect and Survive should never be available in peacetime, lest the programme loses its impact or incites a panic that war was imminent. Adaptation was evidently possible within F6 after Buttery’s departure, as they were now amenable to greater disclosure if it improved civil defence and served the public trust.⁷⁸

F6 quickly prepared a two-part draft report and forwarded both parts to Mr. Chilcot, Principal Private Secretary to the Home Secretary. The Division then sent only part one (the current state of home defence) to Miss Dews, Lord Belstead’s private secretary. The copy to Belstead also invited the Under-Secretary to visit the HDC and a UKWMO headquarters to appreciate home defence in action. The draft for Belstead explained the previous attack assumptions home defence planning were working under in 1971. From those assumptions, it was evident that fallout would prevent any immediate rescue of civilians. Thus, F6 developed Protect and Survive, and the advice within could save some two-thirds of the population. Protect

⁷⁸ TNA: HO 322/926, “Briefing for New Ministers - Home Defence,” May 1, 1979.

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In the report, Law stated there were no public bunkers, as the advice within Protect and Survive could adapt most single-dwelling homes into reasonable fallout shelters. It was explained that due to political restrictions, the public was ignorant of these preparations and the media had perpetuated the myth that they were being deliberately concealed to serve the government and staff. The brief concluded by noting that current per capita spending on home defence is 55p⁸⁰, the lowest in NATO, and that planning is being reexamined to accommodate new attack warning predictions.⁸¹

Often criticized for lacking the shelter programmes of smaller nations, a dearth of confidence in Britain’s home defence system might have resulted in a disastrous migration to fringe areas considered “safe” in a crisis, the self-dispersal issue. Increased funding, Law argued, would not go towards public shelters, but to the improvement of peacetime readiness which would deter evacuations. Protect and Survive was kept restricted to preserve its impact until needed, and there was “no strong evidence” that the nation was overly concerned by the restricted information and any clamor was simply a media by-product. If not Protect and Survive, Law suggested, a new leaflet could be created to “dispel some of the [widespread] ignorance and apathy”. The F6 Division felt confident that the regional system combined with Protect and Survive provided the greatest possible readiness for nuclear attack. However, F6 could no longer say that held true under the new assumptions.⁸²

⁷⁹ TNA: HO 322/918, “Draft of Home Defence for Lord Belstead,” June 3, 1979.

⁸⁰ It is unclear why Law changed the earlier reported figure of 43p/capita to 55p/capita.

⁸¹ TNA: HO 322/928, “Home Defence Parts I and II,” June 19, 1979.

⁸² TNA: HO 322/929, “Review of Home Defence Planning: United Kingdom Warning & Monitoring Organisation,” November 28, 1979.

Soon after, Noel Law received a response from Lord Belstead, and it was apparent the Under-Secretary did not share Law’s satisfaction with civil defence. Belstead was “seriously concerned” about the present readiness of home defence, or lack thereof. Lord Belstead was incredulous that home defence planning was built upon a false premise that the Soviet Union would not initiate hostilities, or resort to unprovoked nuclear attacks. It was difficult for Lord Belstead to accept that the best preparations for the United Kingdom in a nuclear attack amounted to providing Britons with “satirical advice [to] climb into their paper bags”. Belstead would be a long-time proponent of civil defence measures that harkened back to the halcyon days of the War, when the United Kingdom was on a grander stage and communists were still despised.⁸³

In his note, Belstead dismissed Protect and Survive and the region system as folly without the support of the CDC and robust shelter programme. The non-chalance around home defence was puzzling for Lord Belstead, particularly at a time when NATO was encouraging its member states to further improve their civil preparedness to buttress the value of deterrence. The Under-Secretary was eager to condemn current planning efforts, though he notably refrained from criticizing F6 directly. Law and Pemberton remained positive that Lord Belstead’s opinion of their home defence efforts would improve following his visit to the HDC and UKWMO headquarters and pointed to the upcoming study as an excellent opportunity to make their case for increased funding. A few years later, a conference hosted by the HDC would become a pivotal point in the history of British civil defence.⁸⁴

⁸³ TNA: HO 322/926, “Vivienne Dews, Private Secretary of Lord Belstead,” June 20, 1979.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

The effects of care and maintenance lasted ten years, before the Home Office could secure enough funding to revitalize British civil defence. The successful completion of Protect and Survive encouraged F6 to prove that small investments in civil defence planning were capable of delivering significant results. The solution would come from the Home Defence College. After the 1979 election a classified conference was held at the HDC, with attendees from across Whitehall, to attend and contribute to lectures on the new direction for civil defence. The results of the study lead directly to Home Secretary William Whitelaw’s notable announcement of the publication of Protect and Survive and end of care and maintenance in Commons in August 1980.

When Protect and Survive was completed, the F6 Division believed their efforts enhanced nuclear civil defence, based on the pre-1977 assumptions of attack. A new JIC report however, spurred the Home Office into action, and the F6 Division offices were abuzz with reports, meetings, memos and documents. The upcoming study was held at the Home Defence College on November 20-23 1979 and the Division was working flat out. The study would see the earlier reports on revised assumptions adapted once again, to be presented at the conference to various representatives, with discussions following each paper. The labours of the Home Office, to continually provide the best efforts for home defence, would eventually develop into the principle content of the far-reaching Home Defence Review of 1980.⁸⁵

The format of the study was set out by F6, alternating presentations with discussion periods. Invitees were bumped up to 59 from the original 50 including 18 from the Home Office, 24 Local Authority representatives, and 17 from other departments such as the MOD,

⁸⁵ TNA: HO 322/929, “JA Pemberton, Folder Notes,” November 8, 1979.

Chapter 5 – “Paper Bags and Satirical Advice”: The Content and Purpose of Protect and Survive Environment, Food, Health Services, Cabinet Office, Energy and Transportation as well as Scotland and Wales. Duncan Buttery, at this time with the P7 Division (Prisons) was not invited, marking the last reference to his mysterious departure from F6.⁸⁶ F6 were particularly keen that Ministers approved the attendance of many Local Authority representatives. F6 emphasized that there was a need for both central and local government representatives at the study as it was “beamed” for them. The study presented a series of questions, including: How would shorter warnings and a conventional war effect Local Authorities? Can higher preparedness and morale be achieved without cost? Can the public be made aware of possibilities without the entirety of Protect and Survive being distributed?⁸⁷

F6 believed that a key objective of the study would be the improvement of government/civilian communication as well as the development of the administration's “ability to sustain public morale in the face of possible adverse public reaction”.⁸⁸ The papers were to be circulated ahead of the study with departments given an opportunity to add their voices. HDC Director Mavor was quick to reply, entrenching his position that the region system would not work and no effective communication between central and local government would be possible after the outbreak of hostilities. The Air Marshal argued that he had yet to be corrected in regard to his opinion that the appropriate time to transfer authority was the period when hostilities were imminent, not active. Mavor remained perplexed as to the point of dispatching staff to SHRQs to simply sit about waiting for mushroom clouds.⁸⁹

⁸⁶ TNA: HO 322/929, “HDO(79)16 - Official Committee on Home Defence - Review of Home Defence Planning - Distribution List,” December 20, 1979.

⁸⁷ TNA: HO 322/928, “Working Group on Home Defence Study,” July 24, 1979.

⁸⁸ TNA: HO 322/926, “Note from HDC on Study Objectives,” July 10, 1979.

⁸⁹ TNA: HO 322/928, “Air Marshal Mavor to NF Law - Home Defence in the 1980s,” October 11, 1979.

To appease Air Marshal Mavor, Noel Law forwarded him a copy of the report “Home Defence in the 80s” that was prepared for new Ministers. The report explained the scenario the Home Office had been working with: The hypothetical chain of events began with international relations deteriorating to the point the government orders the staffing of SRHQs, to ensure their survival. Two days later “overt home defence measures” would be ordered and Protect and Survive distribution would begin. An exodus from cities and mounting industrial unrest and unruly demonstrations would be likely and the Police would be prepared to maintain order while protecting critical installations. The threat of nuclear annihilation would hang in the air above the nation as conventional bombing would begin with the relevant actors in position.⁹⁰

Surprisingly, “Home Defence in the 80s” failed to placate the Marshal. Mavor contended that the Home Office were acting as though the Soviets were “going to telegraph us a statement of intent”. As to the sections of the report relating to Protect and Survive, Mavor considered it to be “without value” for a study designed to solve the problem of shorter warning times and conventional bombing. The letter concluded that five minutes could be saved if instead of Mavor welcoming guests, someone could simply open the conference by saying “what a very nice chap [Mavor is] and how good it is of [him] to have you all at the college”?⁹¹

At the opening of the study, David Heaton welcomed the attendees and thanked “the Principal and his staff” for hosting a Home Office function. Noel Law then stepped up to present the opening paper “Aims and Backgrounds”. Law referred to the papers that had been circulated earlier and reminded the attendees that the aim of the conference was to reconsider the planning implications for a shorter warning period before nuclear attack as well as the possibility of a period of conventional war. For reference, Law provided a 10-day scenario of how hostilities

⁹⁰ TNA: HO 322/928, “Home Defence in the ’80s - Draft,” October 16, 1979.

⁹¹ TNA: HO 322/928, “Air Marshal Mavor to NF Law - Home Defence in the 80s Notes,” October 16, 1979.

might begin, based on current military intelligence. This would be the standard hypothetical scenario used for discussion purposes during the study: ⁹²

At the first signs of international tension, the UKWMO, police and Local Authorities would move immediately and “unobtrusively to war readiness”. Four days later, Protect and Survive would begin broadcasting with the booklet entering production. Police would maintain transport routes, prevent hoarding and redirecting self-evacuees. The Armed Forces would then be deployed to Europe for reinforcement and TAVR reserves would be activated. Two days after this, visible transition to war protocols for police, medical staff, fire and rescue and Local Authorities would come into effect. SRHQs would be manned and critical personnel would be evacuated to fringe areas of the country while Ministers remained at their desks in London. Local Authorities would likely encounter substantial public distress, industrial unrest and a mounting exodus requiring police intervention “to maintain public order”. Emergency powers would be granted by the Crown when war seemed inevitable and the military would commandeer key points and guard against sabotage. A total of 10 days after preparations began, Soviet forces would enter West Germany, air bombardment of the United Kingdom would begin, and thus a Third World War would commence.⁹³

NATO would resist Soviet advancements for three weeks, while relentless bombing substantially lowered the United Kingdom’s ability to serve as NATO base. Britain would suffer 30,000 casualties, and an additional 100,000 Britons would become homeless, while central government and local authorities struggled to cope with enemy bombardment and declining morale. The War may continue at this point, escalate to nuclear weapons, or a cease fire could be called. During this three-week period, the threat of nuclear attack loomed above the nation, and it

⁹² TNA: HO 322/928, “Home Defence Study: Opening, 20 November,” November 20, 1979.

⁹³ TNA: HO 322/928, “Home Defence Study, Aims and Background,” November 20, 1979.

is for the study to determine what measures and procedures must be drawn. Discussions should also recall that nuclear weapons could be launched with as little as 48 hours warning, or the conventional war may progress further than three weeks.⁹⁴

After a break, attendees gathered to discuss the paper “A Shorter Warning Period”. The F6 report stated the revised warning times clashed with available plans, which were dictated by financial restrictions. Currently, there was no dialogue with the public in regard to future wars and the steps taken to counter them. Without distribution of information, such as Protect and Survive, the public could not take any measures of self-preservation. How then could preparedness be higher without losing the impact of Protect and Survive? “Fundamental assumptions” had been changed and required answers. NATO previously adhered to a ‘trip wire’ strategy, only requiring enough military presence to detect Soviet aggression and launch a nuclear retaliation. In recent years, however, the Soviets had increased their ability to wage conventional war dramatically. NATO had replaced the trip wire system with a staggered escalation, which the paper summarized as “don’t hit him harder than he hits you – or he might hit you harder still”. Thus, Ministers aimed to hold Soviet expansion on the ground level for as long as possible. Considerations for fire, rescue, medical treatment and law enforcement were unnecessary when the government predicted a period of tension directly into a nuclear war. The new question must be how the government and its citizens can maintain “business as usual” during a conventional war with the threat of annihilation hanging above their heads.⁹⁵

The following discussion was lively and fruitful. Attendees suggested central government should foster an open dialogue with the public on home defence measures, and some additional funding should be granted to do so. Time must be taken to have Local Authorities at a higher rate

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ TNA: HO 322/928, “Home Defence Study, A Shorter Warning Period,” November 20, 1979.

Chapter 5 – “Paper Bags and Satirical Advice”: The Content and Purpose of Protect and Survive of readiness and provide some form of shelter to citizens during conventional and nuclear attack. Local HQs would provide the best coordination of services, although Local Authority executives currently have no powers beyond persuasion. Legislation should be developed to delineate their powers. Regional Emergency Committees (with junior Ministers, separate from RHQs) could work from Local HQs and ameliorate communication with central government during conventional war.⁹⁶

The following day began with the presentation of F6’s paper “Lifesaving Services in Conventional War”. Established plans predicted a nuclear attack would begin hostilities and thus police, fire and rescue services were to be stashed away in the countryside until such time that ambient radiation became tolerable. A period of conventional war caused difficult new problems in planning. Fire control and rescue would be crucial to maintaining morale, public services and industry. The public would never tolerate the British government allowing its cities to burn and its citizens to suffer while rescue looked on from the fringes of counties. There must therefore be some measure of rescue services during air bombardment, but what of the danger of critical staff being vaporized in atomic fire? Police were also caught in this conundrum. At present there were 126,000 officers, 20,000 special constables, and 3400 cadets that would be available to maintain order, clear paths for military concerns, occupy Local and SRHQs, repel sabotage and guard key points. Police, fire and medical staff were all scheduled to be dispersed to areas with an “eye to survival from nuclear attack” when bombing began, determined by the regional commander. It was asked if some police and fire crews should be held in reserve and, if so, what percentage? Furthermore, should public volunteers be used in their place?⁹⁷

⁹⁶ TNA: HO 322/928, “Home Defence Study Paper 1 - Shorter Warning Period - Summary of Main Conclusions,” November 20, 1979.

⁹⁷ TNA: HO 322/928, “Home Defence Study, Lifesaving Services in Conventional War,” November 21, 1979.

The resulting debate concluded modern police, fire and medical staff should be able to deal with conventional war bombing which might not approach the intensity of the Second World War. Volunteers should be trained (at no cost) to operate some of the heavy machinery of fire and rescue, to be prepared in an emergency. The use of reservists when possible and recalling professionals when a possibility of nuclear attack materialized were also considered sound ideas. Finally, it was said more needed to be done to encourage self-help, such as that found in Protect and Survive. These preparations, it was agreed, should also be made public and more visible to counter any home defence confusion. Protect and Survive was now an integral component, of not only civil defence, but the entire defence policy of the United Kingdom.⁹⁸

After breaking for lunch, F6 presented “Local Authority Support Services in Conventional War”. Conventional bombing would cause 500-1000 citizens per week to become homeless in each county, with highly targeted areas producing significantly more. These citizens would require replacement housing, and seeing as the nation had not been irradiated, the newly homeless would likely expect “accommodations less spartan” than after a nuclear strike. In case of nuclear attack, it was assumed that survivors would be content to simply have a roof over their heads that was not radioactive. Powers of requisition would have to be passed quickly by Local Authorities to begin billeting survivors. Local Authorities were also intended to earmark buildings that could serve as rudimentary shelters for 2% of their population (for individuals caught between work and home during bombing). The question of evacuating citizens from likely targeted areas was problematic, and likely to be made by the central government on a case-by-case basis. Other questions that developed was the use of public works to clear debris while

⁹⁸ TNA: HO 322/928, “Home Defence Study Paper 2 - Life-Saving Services in Conventional War - Summary of Main Conclusions,” November 20, 1979.

also fortifying Local Authority centres. The paper concluded by asking guests to consider what resources needed to be prepared to cope with the homeless during a conventional war.⁹⁹

The following discussion concluded that current planning did not account for evacuation or sheltering people away from home. It was agreed that more needed to be done by Local Authorities to earmark buildings suitable for billeting and shelter, though they had been encouraged to survey their municipal buildings as far back as the 1948 Civil Defence Act. Local broadcasting capabilities also should be established to provide more accurate information.¹⁰⁰

The final day of the study arrived November 23rd 1979. On that morning, Lt. Colonel James Dunsmore of UKCICC took the podium to deliver their brief presentation. Listeners were likely unaware of the tempest the paper churned up within the F6 Division. Dunsmore began by validating UKCICC’s presence at a Home Defence study by stating there was a long tradition of the military assisting civil authority in times of crisis. However, the Lt. Colonel argued that the Armed Forces would be required elsewhere and unlikely to answer most civil requests for assistance. Therefore, it was asked, how could the MOD operate most efficiently during a period of conventional war. Dunsmore was troubled by the “rapidly increasing divergence between” the protection the military could offer, and the level of protection civilians expected. If military personnel and staff could expect some form of protection from SRHQs and military bases, was it not reasonable that the public should expect some equal measure of protection? How could the Home Office expect reservists and military staff to leave their families virtually unprotected and then report to HQs?¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ TNA: HO 322/928, “Home Defence Study, Local Authority Support Services in Conventional War,” November 21, 1979.

¹⁰⁰ TNA: HO 322/928, “Home Defence Study Paper 3 - Local Authority Support Services in Conventional War - Summary of Main Conclusions,” November 20, 1979.

¹⁰¹ TNA: HO 322/928, “MOD/UKCICC(H) Statement at Home Office Home Defence Study,” November 23, 1979.

Unfortunately, the CDC no longer existed, and the population would likely expect the military to fill this role, which they certainly could not. Dunsmore acknowledged that “stay-put is government policy” but insisted an enormous exodus from urban areas would surely threaten the movement of troops and supplies.¹⁰² Dunsmore pointed out that all defence establishments and military bases had completed shelters to withstand conventional attack and nuclear fallout. Civil policy was in direct contrast and a danger existed of an apparent “protected elite” afforded protections the populous lacked.¹⁰³

Surely, Dunsmore continued, the Home Office must have been aware that many important individuals would not report for duty if it meant leaving their families to fend for themselves with only Protect and Survive. It was MOD policy that nuclear/biological/chemical (NBC) clothing would be available for all troops on home defence duty, which once again projected an image of a privileged class. The argument was made that Police, Fire, the UKWMO and medical staff should have similar equipment (though no clothing can provide protection from ambient radiation, its use would be in the filtering of fallout from the air).¹⁰⁴ The Lt. Colonel then laid out the threat of sabotage, either from subversive traitors or, of much greater danger, elite Soviet Spetznaz Special Forces acting as diversionary brigades. For unknown reasons, Dunsmore then felt obligated to warn the conference that it was common knowledge “that the Russians look upon [chemical weapons] as quite legitimate weapons of war”.

Dunsmore concluded by taking the Home Office to task for the lack of communication between the public, the military and the Government. There was, he argued, little dialogue

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ This would indeed come to pass with the development of the “bunker for knobs/bureaucrats” sentiment after the release of Protect and Survive. Discussed in Chapter 8.

¹⁰⁴ TNA: HO 322/960, “13 Oct 1980 Meeting of the Home Office Working Group on Shelters (WGS),” October 13, 1980, 16.

Chapter 5 – “Paper Bags and Satirical Advice”: The Content and Purpose of Protect and Survive between the Government and citizens about the nuclear threat and their plans to counter it, fostering a sense of apathy and resentment. This lack of public confidence eroded morale which degraded the deterrent. Fortunately, improved communication could be achieved if security classifications were removed to foster open dialogue between the Government and the nation. The reactions of the members of F6 were not recorded, though they were likely not pleased that Dunsmore discussed virtually every topic they asked him to avoid.¹⁰⁵

Dunsmore’s provocative speech was not a surprise to Law. On November 14th, a few days before the study was set to begin, Colonel CW Denton wrote to Frank Woodland of F6 and attached a copy of Lt. Col. James Dunsmore’s presentation for approval as F6 requested in August. The Colonel opined that he could not imagine any objection to its contents as the paper was personally approved by General Sir John Archer (Chairman of UKCICC). Unfortunately, there were indeed ample causes for F6’s objections.¹⁰⁶

Woodland was quick to dispatch his unabashed disapproval of UKCICC’s draft and hoped some measures of revision could be performed. The problem originated months earlier with a letter from Robert Coles, Defence Secretariat at the MOD. Coles wrote to Noel Law on August 3rd and passed on the message that UKCICC “would like to be associated with the home defence study”. Coles forwarded UKCICC’s list of home defence concerns and their offer of a Joint Services presentation by each branch of the Armed Forces.¹⁰⁷

Among UKCICC’s concerns were assumptions of military availability, the lack of a Civil Defence organization, the damage to the posture of deterrence with ineffectual protection prepared for citizens, and the risk of chemical attack and Soviet diversionary brigades. The

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ TNA: HO 322/928, “Col. CW Denton to Frank Woodland, Esq.,” November 14, 1979.

¹⁰⁷ TNA: HO 322/918, “Home Defence Planning Assumptions by MOD Defence Secretariat Bob Coles for Noel Law Esq.,” August 3, 1979.

UKCICC document argued that current preparations were insufficient to allow the civilian element to leave their families to perform their duties. It would therefore be unacceptable to provide shelter and respirators to some critical workers and not their families; and if they were provided, then provisions must also be made for the remainder of the population. UKCICC concluded by harshly criticizing ‘stay-put’ policies, insisting it was “not accepted as credible in either military of civil circles [sic]”.¹⁰⁸

Pemberton replied by coldly stating that F6 did not accept UKCICC’s conclusions on civil defence planning and would not care to debate these topics at the study. Discussion was at a premium at the conference, with the aim focused on revised attack assumptions, not the fundamentals of Britain’s civil defence policies. F6 could not conceptualize how significant time could be allotted for each branch of the Armed Forces to discuss topics non-germane to the study. UKCICC could be granted a single 10-15 presentation on the military’s contribution to home defence as a lead-in to a discussion of the main objectives of the study; the implications for Local Authority planning with shorter warning periods and the possibility of coping with conventional war.

Pemberton asserted that the foundations of nuclear civil defence were under constant review in the F6 Division, the HDC and SAB and their collective research was sufficient for the time being. The implications of the threat of chemical weapons had already been discussed with SAB and the MOD, and steps were being taken to provide for civilians in target areas and their dependents. Pemberton added that chemical weapons were not pertinent to the study. The threat of Soviet Spetznaz (special) forces acting as a diversionary brigade is not a problem Local Authorities can, or could, combat and thus required no discussion. Furthermore, there were

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

Chapter 5 – “Paper Bags and Satirical Advice”: The Content and Purpose of Protect and Survive security implications to even discussing Spetznaz at the study, lest the public catch wind. Pemberton concluded with a reminder that F6 would require a preview of their script as soon as possible to ensure its suitability.¹⁰⁹

When F6 finally received UKCICC’s draft a few days before the conference began, their objections were legion. In his reply the next day, Mr. Woodland protested that if F6 had seen this draft earlier they could have assisted UKCICC in the preparation of a paper that correctly addressed the concerns espoused in the August letter. Woodland voiced his palpable disappointment that the draft focused on several topics UKCICC were specifically told not to discuss. F6 and Woodland were particularly discouraged to see the discussions on chemical weapons, Spetznaz and civilian information restriction in a draft “which by inference is immutable”.

As the conference closed, Alan Howard of F6 had a frank discussion with Colonel JDS Henderson of UKCICC. Howard expressed the Home Office’s grievances and Henderson offered sympathies on UKCICC’s behalf. Colonel Henderson followed up their tete-a-tete with his own letter, and though he did not apologize, he wished to state for the record that the draft was approved by the Chairman of UKCICC personally before “James Dunsmore was allowed to utter!”¹¹⁰

Two months later, F6 had assembled and refined a report on the findings of the study that would be presented to Ministers as current analysis of home defence. F6 was typically accustomed to working under a strict budget. However, when other departments were brought into the fold, the solution to many problems was to simply ask for more money. F6 worked around these suggestions and once again put forth their best in the name of home defence.

¹⁰⁹ TNA: HO 322/918, “JA Pemberton to R Coles, Esq. - Home Defence Planning Assumptions,” August 31, 1979.

¹¹⁰ TNA: HO 322/928, “Col. JDS Henderson to JA Howard, Esq.,” January 29, 1980.

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The regional government plan, it was agreed, should remain. F6 realized that the present plans to identify staff, provide training and situate them in SRHQs would simply not work with a 48-hour warning period. Further difficulties would arise without predetermined SRHQ volunteers as many commanders might refuse to leave their families. The Home Office could find no alternatives other than increased public awareness and the selection and training of staff in peacetime. Local Authorities were advised to establish links within their communities and allow volunteers to come forward. A codeword was to be broadcast over the media, indicating that commanders and staff were now required to man their posts. These changes were calculated at £350,000 in total until the year 1985.¹¹¹

When evaluating SRHQs that were completed, F6 found five which required significant renovations and three had yet to begin construction. Current planning estimated their completion by 1985/86, which was unacceptable. The level of preparedness needed to be accelerated to have all SRHQs battle ready by 1982/83 at a cost of £1,450,000. No alternatives were presented to adequately bridge the communication gap between central and local government other than the activation of SRHQs during a conventional war. There would be no extra cost to implement this change.¹¹²

The government required £3,300,000 immediately to replace obsolescent stockpiles of radiation detectors. Additionally, the radio equipment that made up the Emergency Communications Network (ECN) required modernization, including the entire UKWMO network at a cost of £9,000,000 over 10 years. The Wartime Broadcasting Service (WTBS), part of the ECN, could only broadcast nationally following a nuclear attack, not regionally nor

¹¹¹ TNA: HO 322/929, “Home Office Note in Response to HDO(79)12 and 16,” January 22, 1980.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

locally. Modernization would require hardening their communication circuits at £4,500,000 over 5 years and an annual maintenance cost of £140,000.¹¹³

F6 reused the wording of their UKWMO report from November 28 that said there was “widespread ignorance and apathy among the public” when it came to the question of civil defence. The idea of spending £100,000 a year on an emergency education campaign was thought to be cost-efficient and the Protect and Survive material was already prepared and well suited to the task. Any alternative plans were judged to face a litany of problems. Organized evacuation, the constant thorn in F6’s side, would have entailed the movement of over 20 million Britons, to unknown country areas, with no preparation to house them and a likely equal possibility of fallout. Not only would this scheme be nearly impossible during a short warning period, the evacuation would have to be total¹¹⁴, thus depriving large sections of industry their labour force. The report concluded that a working party would be established, reporting to the Official Committee on Home Defence. The working party would investigate options for public shelters and evacuations, though open communication with the public regarding the November study should be avoided lest the public discover that alternatives to stay-put were financially prohibitive.¹¹⁵

The Home Office believed the November conference was a tremendous success, with many solutions established. Whitehall divisions and departments were now asked by Cabinet to make new reports on home defence for a committee meeting in the coming months. The revisions and discussions created by study would lead to a reorganization of civil defence and a transformation of thought regarding government secrecy, Protect and Survive, and

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Not following the Birkenhead Drill of women and children first.

¹¹⁵ TNA: HO 322/929, “Home Office Note in Response to HDO(79)12 and 16,” January 22, 1980.

civilian/government dialogues. The report of F6 would go through further permutations to become the influential Home Defence Review of 1980.

The Creation of Protect and Survive

The content of Protect and Survive remained mostly static once it was finalized around 1975. There was the booklet with checklist, containing images and instructions on how to prepare your home for a nuclear attack, and how to increase your chances of survival afterwards. The literature was aimed at a low level, with simple, clear illustrations. The advice itself was uncomplicated and unassuming, the goal being to provide instructions that most families could follow. It was rapid emergency education to be delivered on a national scale. The principal objective was to construct a refuge or lean-to in the centre of the home and to prepare supplies and fortifications to endure the resulting fallout. The booklet was intended to be a companion piece for a series of episodes, or modules, of audiovisual material to be repeated continually in periods of crisis. The episodes were a mixture of straightforward animation and physical models with a narrator. Like the booklet, the videos were basic instructions about how to prepare for a nuclear attack that might follow, and how to protect oneself and family from nuclear fallout for approximately two weeks. The assumption was that two weeks would provide enough time, even in the most irradiated areas, for ambient radiation levels to fall to the point that it was safe to leave one's refuge. The programme was complimented by a radio script of the same information to be broadcast continually by BBC radio (with news interstitials) and large informative adverts of information to print in newspapers.

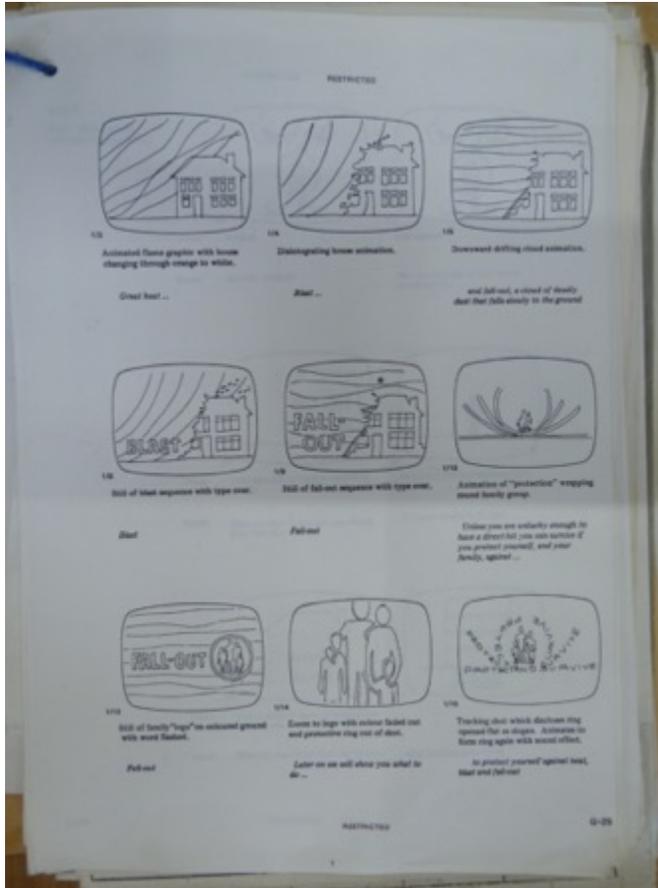


Figure 9 Scenes of Warning: A story board page that would become part of the video module on fallout.

When beginning to create a new public information campaign in the early 1970s, F6 prepared lengthy scripts of information, with the intention of determining which data was most valuable afterwards. With the scripts complete, sketches of layouts and video scenes were developed, and the tone of the project was

conceptualized. F6 sent copies of the scripts and storyboards to the Public Research Branch and Central Office of Information. The two departments would communicate back and forth with F6, updating information and memorandums, to eventually develop a few sample modules that could be previewed by Ministers for approval (Figure 9).¹¹⁶

The public was first introduced to Protect and Survive through a snippet of the radio script played on a BBC radio newsmagazine.¹¹⁷ Later on, clips of the modules were shown on television newsmagazine such as *Panorama* and print material could be previewed by some journalists. The newsprint samples were made available before the booklet (Figure 10).

¹¹⁶ TNA: HO 322/776, “HVH Marks to JFD Buttery - Advice to the Public on Protection Against a Nuclear Attack,” December 6, 1973.

¹¹⁷ TNA: HO 322/909, “Transcript of BBC Radio Program ‘Can UK Survive War?,’” January 1980.

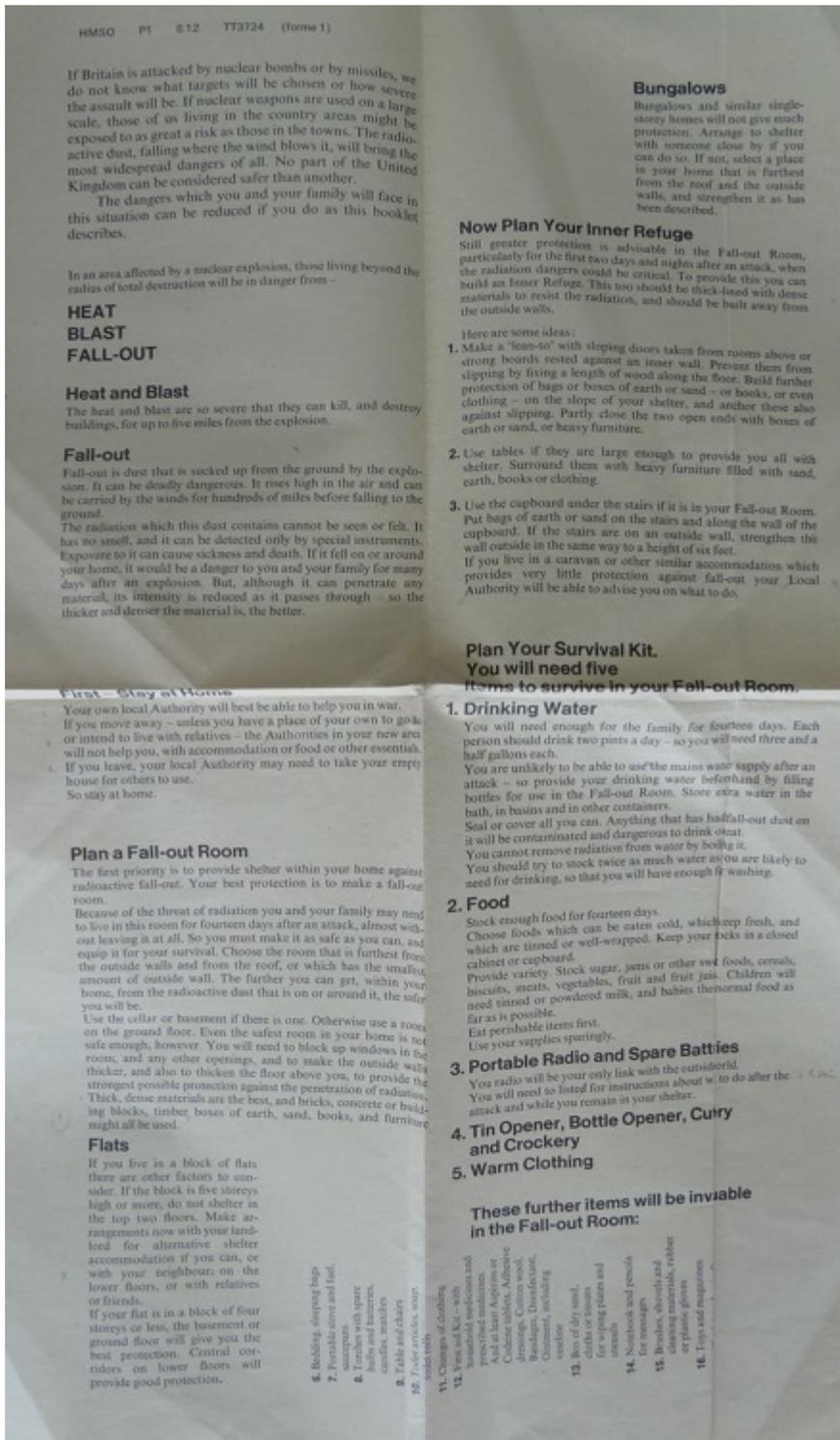


Figure 10 A Nuclear Pedagogy: The information of Protect and Survive laid out to be printed in newspapers.

The idea to update civil defence advice for the public developed out of the 1971 Home Defence Review. Assistant Secretary of F6 Division, JF Duncan Buttery, began to consider the prospect of modernizing the survival education around this time. The sample scripts were completed by 1974, then attuned for video. The approval to develop the

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videos arrived late in 1975 and work began under the original title of *Nuclear Defence: Protect and Survive*.¹¹⁸

With a sample script agreed upon by F6 and COI, the COI Film Division set to work to develop six prototype episodes. Bruce Parsons, head of Film Division, calculated twenty-two “spots” to be filmed, though seven samples were to be created for testing. The F6 Division initially imagined the episodes to be called “short films”, though this was changed to “spots” and later “episodes/modules”. The module basis was important if the programme was to be continually updated in the future with new data as efficacy was a premier goal of F6. Each module was copied onto a separate VHS cassette with two master copies containing the entirety. VHS was chosen for its versatility over film reels, which further associated the earlier civil defence reels with obsolescence.¹¹⁹

F6 agreed that after Film Division completed the first six episodes they should be tested with audiences for comprehension before filming the remaining spots. The comprehension testing was critical to Buttery and F6 Division, as they did not intend to rush out a complacent, ineffectual public emergency pedagogy. The stated goal was the production of the best possible guidance for the public. F6 directly informed Film Division to be chiefly concerned with “clarity and comprehension”, and the programme was intended to communicate effectively and inspire the nation to take action.¹²⁰ Protect and Survive was designed from the ground up for maximum intelligibility, regardless of background or education. One of the most critical goals of the Home Office was to impart to Britons that they could not depend on government rescue; images of the Blitz had to be avoided. Secondarily to that message, F6 would have to achieve the goal of

¹¹⁸ TNA: INF6/2294, “Memo from Commercials Unit Office to Film Library.”

¹¹⁹ TNA: INF6/2531, “COI Memo ‘Nuclear Defence’ from Bruce Parsons to Miss Vivienne Moynihan,” October 21, 1975.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

imparting the seriousness of self-help without inspiring hopelessness or apathy. Even in the earliest scripts, the phrase “you will have to protect yourself without any help” was underlined for emphasis.¹²¹

The comprehension testing went well and F6 then proceeded to make the samples available to Ministers and other department heads to garner their support.¹²² Pending their security clearance, COI granted a contract to the experienced William Stewart Television Productions Limited to produce the samples for a total cost of £37,638, excluding VAT.¹²³ Buttery praised the memorably eerie and unsettling electronic synthesizer notes over the logo, which was created by Roger Limb.¹²⁴ Other than the logo SFX there was to be no music, this was believed to inspire a serious tone.¹²⁵ The goal was to be memorable and it certainly was, though the fear it inspired may not have been the lasting memory they hoped to create.¹²⁶ For the role of narrator, producers wanted someone capable of a received pronunciation accent, a reassuring BBC voice like the kind used “during the War” who possessed an air of authority, yet also reassurance. The voice was found with Patrick Allen, an experienced voice-over artist whose memorable timbre played over the images of shockwaves and fallout. Both Limb and Allen were familiar artists that COI had hired for previous projects.¹²⁷ The animation was created by Richard Taylor Cartoons Ltd and the model home was created by artist Richard Dean.¹²⁸ The first six test episodes were filmed at Trillion studios on November 19, 1975.¹²⁹ After the test

¹²¹ TNA: INF6/2294, “Protect and Survive Script 13 - Fire Precautions,” November 19, 1975.

¹²² TNA: CDA 72 405/1/3, “The Que File Report on Protect and Survive,” October 1975.

¹²³ TNA: INF6/2294, “COI Work Contract for ‘Nuclear Defence’ to William Stewart TV Prod. Ltd,” February 18, 1976.

¹²⁴ TNA: INF6/2294, “Music Cue Sheet - William Stewart TV Prod. Ltd. - Nuclear Defence: Protect and Survive,” June 16, 1976.

¹²⁵ TNA: INF6/2531, “WSTV Budget Form,” October 1975.

¹²⁶ Interview material available in the Hack Green Nuclear Bunker.

¹²⁷ TNA: HO 322/776, “Protect and Survive Companion Manual,” 1975.

¹²⁸ TNA: INF6/2531, “COI Memo ‘Nuclear Defence’ from Bruce Parsons to Miss Vivienne Moynihan,” October 21, 1975.

¹²⁹ TNA: INF6/2531, “Trillion Video Ltd. Invoice - Protect and Survive,” December 2, 1975.

episodes, the Treasury approved a budget ceiling of £96 000 for the remaining episodes and radio tapes.¹³⁰

Original booklet layouts were much more verbose than the final printing, including instructions on outdoor shelters and detailed first aid, which were removed for clarity and simplification of shelter messaging (though these would be the first additions to the attempted revision of the programme). The principle demand for first aid would likely have been for radiation sickness, for which nothing could be done, and thus it was decided that avoiding any recommendations altogether was best.¹³¹ The draft oscillated between too detailed and too simplified, such as when shelter padding was changed from “heavy stuff” to “materials”.¹³² Again, emphasis was put on YOUR: “your conditions,” “your booklet,” “your family”. Buttery changed “plan an inner shelter” to “plan YOUR inner refuge”. In 1980, before the programme’s release, the run time was expanded from 22 episodes totaling 50’30” to 56’20” including two new modules on food consumption.¹³³

The video and booklet were classified restricted, and authorized for “COI internal screenings only” unless Home Office permission was obtained and the copies were stored in the Home Office Film Library vaults.¹³⁴ Oddly, Buttery stated that the Home Office was prepared to deal with leaks and so the programme should be derestricted, yet not available for viewing.¹³⁵ Further comprehension testing was carried out at various locations around the nation, with random Britons, and also with certain Local Authority Executives. The Scottish Home and Health Department (SHHD) wanted to make sure the narrator’s accent was “suitable for

¹³⁰ TNA: HO 322/776, “‘Protect and Survive’ - Expenditure,” November 6, 1975.

¹³¹ TNA: HO 322/776, “Note on Home Office Meeting to Present Campaign Proposals,” October 7, 1975.

¹³² TNA: HO 322/776, “Amended TV Scripts,” November 4, 1975.

¹³³ TNA: INF6/2294, “Run Sheet - Protect and Survive,” 1975.

¹³⁴ TNA: HO 322/776, “Memo from Commercials Unit Films Division to Home Office,” May 24, 1976.

¹³⁵ TNA: HO 322/776, “Meeting Notes: Guidance on Protection Against Nuclear Attack,” October 7, 1975.

Scotland” to which Buttery retorted in his usual fashion, stating “if the Scots don’t like it they can make their own in any language, accent or dialect comprehensible”. Buttery’s jokes aside, the programme went through multiple rounds of comprehension testing, the Home Office did not rest on their laurels after initial production. Within the documents of its creation, the intentions of Buttery and the other authors of Protect and Survive to improve government/citizen dialogue become evident.¹³⁶

In 1981, after the release and commotion over Protect and Survive, the Home Defence Planning Sub-Committee of the Cabinet released a classified circular regarding the history and intentions of the programme. It described Protect and Survive as a genuine effort to make-do with an impossible task on a strict budget. The Home Office described Protect and Survive as its attempt to develop a collection of advice and protective measures ensuring some protection in homes involving the “hasty construction” of fallout rooms in a nuclear crisis. Protect and Survive would prevent evacuations and supported the region system that in turn would propagate deterrence. The Home Office did not indulge in embellishment or self-congratulations on a perfect system, rather they frequently commented on the ineffectiveness of the programme with high-rises, initial blast damage, and conventional bombing.

Additionally, unlike other nuclear preparations, Protect and Survive could match the revised JIC scenarios with as little as 48 hours warning. Protect and Survive would begin with television episodes, radio and newsprint adverts with the booklet being issued thereafter.

¹³⁶ TNA: HO 322/776, “Note about the Need to Show Material to Other Govt Depts and Dr. Summerskill,” December 9, 1975.

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Although Buttery originally conceptualized the video media to run last with the booklet first, as a companion. The Home Office reversed this decision to meet the shorter warning period requirement as the booklet could not be printed and delivered in a matter of days. Eventually, as acknowledged in the Sub-Committee’s note, Protect and Survive was now on sale to meet the “demand by the public for information”, without any modification from the initially restricted material. Protect and Survive was presented as the Home Office’s effort to satisfy the stay-put policy mandated by NATO.

As Buttery forewarned, releasing Protect and Survive in peacetime made it an easy target for critics to take out of context, though the earnest intentions of the authors are not a mystery. The files and reports of the Home Office often state their intentions to develop an effective didactic advice programme. The multitude of notations gathered from the documents pertaining to the creation of Protect and Survive demonstrate the intents of its authors as genuine.¹³⁷

The goals of F6 to develop a suitable public information campaign become clear in their instructions to Film Division. The Home Office stated their purpose was to provide lifesaving information to the public to satisfy the scenario: “given a deteriorating international situation and the inevitability of nuclear war, the Government of the day would wish to release to the general public of the UK information on protection and survival”.¹³⁸ Furthermore, the F6 Division made clear their honest intent and would frequently re-record entire segments to improve one small detail such as the bathroom script (at a cost of £400) to change “well away from the fallout room” to “just outside your”. F6 were not simply throwing pieces together and becoming

¹³⁷ TNA: HO 322/958, “Shelter and Evacuation - History and Progress to Date,” March 26, 1981.

¹³⁸ TNA: INF6/2531, “Nuclear Defence Memo from Bruce Parsons to J. Hall,” October 22, 1975.

satisfied, they often spent their funding to redo entire chapters to ensure the media was as successful as they could make it.¹³⁹

The majority of Protect and Survive originated with Buttery, and his fundamental goal was always to “allay public concern” and provide assurances that the government would do all in its power to avoid war. For this reason, Buttery designed Protect and Survive as a flexible system with episodes 1 -4 intended to be played during a low-level crisis providing reassurance. The remaining episodes were to contain a sense of urgency to be played against a deteriorating crisis, meeting the 48-hour criteria. COI inquired if the Home Office should not include linking material to include information omitted in the packages, though Buttery remained adamant in their efforts to have the programme be self-contained. Having a panicked person in a crisis alternating between multiple mediums and notes was not acceptable. The only omissions came from F6’s inability to forecast for unpredictable events, such as *The Timescale* to nuclear attack. As Buttery said in 1976, “we should be prepared to stand by the material which has already been prepared”.¹⁴⁰

Before recording, the COI prepared a detailed guide that laid out the information and intentions of F6. The guide contained verbatim scripts and storyboards to be used, along with general summaries of the intentions of the Home Office. When sent to the F6 Division, Buttery commented with his usual brevity making his intentions quite clear. When attempting to summarize the scenario in which Protect and Survive would be used, Buttery crossed out the

¹³⁹ TNA: INF6/2531, “Revised Scripts for Protect and Survive from COI to William Stewart TV Productions Ltd.,” March 17, 1976; TNA: INF6/2531, “Revised Script 16 - Life Under Fallout Conditions,” March 17, 1976; TNA: INF6/2531, “Revised Script 19 - Sanitation Care,” March 17, 1976.

¹⁴⁰ TNA: INF6/2531, “Memo on Protect and Survive Videotapes from Robert Yeates to Gerry Evans Esq,” May 25, 1976

phrase “inevitability of nuclear war” to the less alarming “possible outbreak of hostilities”, which also provided benefit in a non-nuclear attack.¹⁴¹

The initial script was dispatched to as many departments as possible to collect diverse feedback F6 may not have considered. The Home Office and Buttery were especially keen to prepare a programme that would be future-proof, one that would succeed on radio, television or newer forms of communication. Duncan Buttery seemed extremely irritated with the initial feedback from other departments, which may have inspired his trademarked contemptuousness. The aggravation with the perceived nitpicking in the received comments seems to spread to entire staff of F6. Replies from the Division often had an unspoken subtext, challenging the providers of feedback to do better rather than criticizing. F6 was often defensive, on some occasions to the point of being indignant. Collectively, F6 protected Protect and Survive not by claiming perfection, but with an implication that it was the best they (or anyone) could do given their parameters.

An excellent source of reference exists with the stinging retorts Buttery left in the margins of the feedback he received from a sample Protect and Survive script. When the SHHD suggested that F6 should explain why only men over 30 should make outdoor repairs (they were believed to be more expendable), Buttery countered with a strikethrough and “I don’t accept”. When comments were made regarding the possible lack of special materials to build refuges, Buttery countered “what practical alternatives has anyone to suggest?” and “but we advise what to do if no special materials are available!”.

When the reference was made that a ditch or trench would be the best place to lie down if caught in the open during an attack, Buttery provide the sardonic retort: “If they were in

¹⁴¹ TNA: HO 322/776, “Protect and Survive Companion Manual,” 1975.

existence for the majority, it might be!”). On the topic of determining if floors were being overloaded: “For the moron, how would one word such advice?” and “when the ceiling cracks, you have overloaded the floor !?!”. When it was suggested that “Paracetamol” should be added to the mention of Aspirin or Codeine tablets, Buttery’s reply is a sarcastic note that paracetamol is “a word commonly used and understood by the masses!!”. Finally, when SAB inquired about the low availability of commodities people were advised to collect: “the question has got nothing to do with the mass information programme. We are not stockpiling their items – so presumably they will run out. So what!!”.¹⁴²

Buttery’s comments foreshadow the ultimate fate of Protect and Survive to be consistently misunderstood. It was never intended to be the perfect programme, it was the best that could be done with little to no preparations. For Buttery, and F6, the purpose of Protect and Survive was to help as many people as possible who had not taken precautions, and were inexperienced builders, increases their chances of fallout survival. That was all. The goals of instilling hope were stressed in the programme’s intentions to present stark information, but provide reasonable actions to overcome apathy, helplessness and avoid inaction. “Above all”, wrote Buttery, the goal of Home Office was to “prevent panic and mass migration” from urban to rural counties, thus exposing the public to fallout and overwhelming the resources of their destinations. In this sense, Protect and Survive can be argued as “better-than-nothing,” though that colloquialism contains a callousness that belies the efforts of F6. Buttery preferred to describe their efforts as identical to an old civil defence philosophy of “going to war with what we can”.¹⁴³

¹⁴² TNA: HO 322/776, “Notes on ‘Advice to the Public on Protection Against Nuclear Attack,’” December 20, 1973.

¹⁴³ TNA: HO 322/776, “Folder Notes, JFD Buttery,” December 1973.

The programme’s central theme was agreed as “protection”, hence the name and symbolism of the infamous logo, though Buttery, in his usual manner, considered the logo “not very impressive”. Buttery’s barbs may read as dismissive, though it demonstrated the constant desire to improve the programme’s effectiveness. Protect and Survive was designed to be as straightforward as possible and to reach as many people as possible by reducing the information to a “lowest common denominator – even at the expense of some scientific inaccuracies”.¹⁴⁴ Protect and Survive was explicitly designed as a measure of last resort with specific instructions to avoid previews being shown to the public or being softened for less disquieting viewing in peacetime. Buttery expressed his continued persistence that the information should be both practical and reassuring “in the style of *11 Steps to Survival*” (the Canadian civil defence film which inspired Buttery). When others suggested Protect and Survive should be more “comprehensive” Buttery wrote “NO! [more of] a checklist” instead. The reasons for not keeping Protect and Survive on hand for distribution are documented when Buttery simply wrote “we don’t want to” print 25 million copies at a cost of £550,000 with £12,000 per annum storage fees. Budgets were always a factor to F6.¹⁴⁵

While Buttery famously described idealized universal advice programmes as “egalitarian twaddle”, his files actually depict a sincere egalitarianism that trumped needless divisions. When COI suggested instructions for provisions should be tested with women, while other topics, such as shelter construction, should be tested on men, Buttery objected that the instructions should be for the benefit of all. The didactic had to be comprehensible to the largest base possible, not rarified to fit specific demographics. Buttery was adamant that the booklet should not become

¹⁴⁴ Which Mr. Buttery corrected to “scientific simplification”. TNA: HO 322/776, “Protect and Survive Companion Manual,” 1975.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

Chapter 5 – “Paper Bags and Satirical Advice”: The Content and Purpose of Protect and Survive the focus of the programme. To Buttery, the videos were easiest to digest, and the booklet was to serve as companion so terrified viewers were not forced to take their own notes. There are many comments and repeated mentions of “too heavy reliance on the booklet” written by Buttery throughout the COI preview guide.¹⁴⁶

In 1975, Buttery wrote to JD Skinner in the Treasury Department and recalled the history of Protect and Survive to date. A 1971 Cabinet paper called for a stockpile of “publicity material to advise and inform the public” with an eye to continual improvements within the home defence budget. In November 1972, Buttery “initiated discussions” with Whitehall as he had a “direct interest” in the concept of effective public advice in a crisis.¹⁴⁷ Buttery understood the limitations of British finances in the tumultuous 1970s and was quite content to work within the constraints without complaint, aside from the occasional cutting comment. The decade of Decline still categorized the relationship between the government and the public as paternal. At this time the BBC could still be depended upon to remain silent on matters deemed imperative to the state.¹⁴⁸

Likewise, Duncan Buttery firmly believed in restricting access to Protect and Survive. The restriction was his method of preserving the programme’s “visceral impact” and worried familiarity would dilute its usefulness.¹⁴⁹ As an example, Buttery pointed to the *Advice to Householder* material from the 1960s which “lacked the impact necessary”.¹⁵⁰ The benefits of

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ TNA: HO 322/776, (HDO(MG)(71)8) “Pre-Attack Mass-Information Campaign Letter from Mr. Buttery to JD Skinner Esq, Treasury Chambers,” January 23, 1975.

¹⁴⁸ Tony Shaw, “The BBC, the State and Cold War Culture: The Case of Television’s *The War Game* (1965),” *English Historical Review* cxxi, no. 494 (December 2006): 1351–84; James Chapman, “The BBC and the Censorship of *The War Game* (1965),” *Journal of Contemporary History* 41, no. 1 (January 1, 2006): 75–94.

¹⁴⁹ TNA: HO 322/776, “Folder Notes, JFD Buttery,” December 1973.

¹⁵⁰ TNA: HO 322/776, “Notice to Home Office ‘Advice to the Public on Protection Against Nuclear Attack,’” November 10, 1972.

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secrecy were fully appreciated by Buttery as seen in his perpetual reluctance for any Protect and Survive material to be made public during peacetime. In the programme’s petition for approval, Buttery stressed the importance of restricted access as “an integral part of the Government’s crisis management arrangements”. The modular nature of Protect and Survive was also described by Buttery as allowing the Government of the day to disseminate information to the public as they considered “appropriate”. Lastly, Buttery maintained that while regulations would allow, F6 should return to Protect and Survive yearly to maintain the quality of information.¹⁵¹

Staying within budget restrictions was probably never as vital as it was at the time Protect and Survive was being developed. Unfortunately, the 1974/75 Britain was in the midst of rampant inflation, rationed electricity, near constant labour disputes and the workweek was reduced to three days.¹⁵² When petitioning the Treasury for approval, Buttery was sure to emphasize that he would keep the costs within the home defence budget ceiling.¹⁵³

On March 4 1974, a meeting was held in the Home Office with Rob Yeates (F6), John Probert (COI) and staff from the Public Relations Branch (PRB). The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the project of “promulgating advice to the public on protection”. Buttery had “not been informed” and COI and PRB spent a considerable amount of time attempting to convince Yeates that the booklet should be the focal point of the programme, something of which Buttery strongly disapproved. COI objected by arguing the number of people without a television was much higher than the number of illiterates. Yeates concluded by stating he would pass on this information to Buttery and to ensure he was invited to future meetings.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵¹ TNA: HO 322/776, “Pre-Attack Mass-Information Campaign Letter from Mr. Buttery to JD Skinner Esq, Treasury Chambers,” January 23, 1975.

¹⁵² TNA: HO 322/776, “Orders Prohibiting and Restricting Electricity Consumption,” January 19, 1974.

¹⁵³ TNA: HO 322/776, “Pre-Attack Mass-Information Campaign Letter from Mr. Buttery to JD Skinner Esq, Treasury Chambers,” 1975.

¹⁵⁴ TNA: HO 322/776, “Mr. Yeates’ Notes on Meeting Held 4 March 1974 at Home Office.,” March 5, 1974.

When the meeting was reported to Buttery, Yeates stated that his lack of invitation was an “oversight” by the COI and PRB representatives. Yeates exclaimed that he had a bad feeling that COI were “easing themselves deeper into their well-worn rut” where the development and printing of the book became their focus and the TV materials were “side-issues”.¹⁵⁵ Two months passed and COI, Yeates contended, would simply get deeper into their rut if Buttery did not intervene to stop them. Buttery agreed he needed to keep a close watch on COI and to ensure Protect and Survive went for maximum impact as they could not assume the public would be looking for information, it had to be “brought forcibly to their attention”. Information was to be absorbed in seconds, not minutes.¹⁵⁶

Permanent Under-Secretary of State Philip Allen was familiar with the state of civil defence, contending that 1970 civil defence plans were not viable and the entire system needed reexamination.¹⁵⁷ Buttery agreed for the need of a new system, but immediately moved away from civil defence ideas from the Second World War. With nuclear weapons, blast shelters were not feasible, and the main danger arrived from fallout. Buttery would later stress that if bunkers could not be provided to everyone, then home was the safest place, the idea of public fallout shelters would prove impossible. There were serious questions as to who would operate such shelters and who would decide if a person’s home was less secure than the bunker and grant them entrance.¹⁵⁸

It was commonly noted by the F6 Division that they had been working under a restrictive budget as far back as the Home Defence Review of 1968 that put civil defence on a “care and

¹⁵⁵ TNA: HO 322/776, “Note from Rob Yeates to JFD Buttery Regarding Meeting with COI,” April 29, 1974.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid. TNA: HO 322/776, “Note of Meeting Held on Monday 4 March 1974 in Room 101 Whitehall,” March 4, 1974.

¹⁵⁷ TNA: HO 322/798, “Secretary P Allen Letter to Mr. Sharples,” October 30, 1970.

¹⁵⁸ TNA: HO 322/849, “Mr. Buttery Wrote as Within to Local Authorities,” November 19, 1974.

maintenance” basis.¹⁵⁹ This was to the extent that even as F6 hoped for an increased budget under the new Conservative administration, they still wore their accomplishments with strict financials as a badge of honour.¹⁶⁰ When F6 Division screened Protect and Survive for a large gathering of Home Office staff, their principle objective was still identified as the need to develop an improved low-cost strategy which should ensure that a substantial proportion of the UK population would survive a nuclear strike, irrespective of the overall level of the attack or the precise attack strategy. When the realities of a post-strike Britain were considered, however, F6 may have been overly optimistic when declaring that Protect and Survive “should ensure that significant” casualties did not occur outside blast areas.¹⁶¹

Thankfully, Protect and Survive was never tested, so its potential utility during a nuclear catastrophe remains unknown. Since its release, some have argued that it actively decreased chances of survival, while others maintain, while not ideal, it could prove invaluable. Others still debate whether the programme was intended to be successful for the individual, or for the nation as a whole by encouraging stay-put and preventing unbridled dispersal. The evidence to date removes most notions of malice or clandestine population manipulation, instead depicting strained civil servants making earnest efforts with few resources. However, when the Home Office’s detailed predictions of what shape a nuclear attack could form, it is possible to cobble together a fascinating, and frightening, glimpse into a Britain that never was. This vision into the

¹⁵⁹ TNA: HO 322/918, “Reply Note to N. Law by JA Pemberton - Home Defence Policy,” April 20, 1979.

¹⁶⁰ TNA: HO 322/926, “Note for Mr. Heaton from RJ Andrew - Briefing for New Ministers,” May 4, 1979.

¹⁶¹ TNA: HO 322/958, “Home Defence Planning Sub-Committee Working Group on Shelter and Evacuation,” March 26, 1981.

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nuclear abyss reaffirms the government’s belief that the unadulterated reality depicted in Protect and Survive was truly better than nothing.

Notable examples of a fear of loss of control permeated British attack scenarios. Government expectations frequently described the collapse of law and order as well as unchecked government powers as worst case scenarios after an attack. The loss of control was often described ominously as though British civilization would be suspended while emergency powers were enacted. The Home Office devised many scenarios of attack through their research, as well as research from the MOD, JIC, DHSS, SAB and the HDC. A common element in every scenario however was the interruption of the machinery of government equating to an interruption of British society itself. The Home Office pondered the imponderable, attempting to predict the dangers that Protect and Survive would have to overcome before, during, and after an attack. Protect and Survive was intended to work as part of a system, but if the Home Office did their part, would the system of contingencies fall into place?

As noted in its public reception, the simplicity and starkness of Protect and Survive was often met with disbelief, sometimes in the prospect of survival it afforded, and sometimes for the advice in the programme itself. The perceived depressing frankness of Protect and Survive was not created by Home Office failure to provide more animated advice. Rather the harsh honesty was an attempt to address unthinkable horrors and how they could be ameliorated. It is very likely that sugar-coating the medicine of Protect and Survive could have done more harm than good. Protect and Survive often received criticism as being unrealistic, yet when its purpose is truly considered, it becomes easier to sympathize how brutally pragmatic the staff of F6 Division

had to be. Much of the advice was composed of unpleasant truths that could not be avoided, such as the instructions of how to bury deceased occupants of “your” fallout refuge.¹⁶²

Other components of Protect and Survive may have seemed innocuous, which belied the struggles of F6 to provide necessary advice, without inspiring dread, depression or hopelessness. One piece of Protect and Survive advised that “OUTSIDE TASKS SHOULD BE PERFORMED BY OLDER PEOPLE OVER 30 WHEREVER POSSIBLE [sic]”.¹⁶³ The information appears fairly straightforward; the likely reason might be that over 30s would have greater experience with emergency responsibilities and repairs. In actuality, the message substantiates the bitter truths that come with nuclear catastrophe. William Howitt of the SHHD wrote to Duncan Buttery to discuss the reality of the advice. Howitt was aware that the intent behind the injunction was readily apparent to those who authored the programme, but would it be appreciated by the public who would have it “fed to them?”. The rewrite suggested by Howitt stated: “when risks of exposure to radiation have to be taken ... it should be the older people who should take these risks. They have a smaller stake in the future – less time to help in the regeneration of our national life”.¹⁶⁴

Problems such as these were the circumstances that the Home Office was obligated to anticipate. Howitt sympathized that the reality may have been too morose, and Buttery opted to maintain the original phrasing. In retrospect, most within Whitehall appreciated that harsh realities had to be delivered to the public. Before it even had a title, the HDC agreed that Protect and Survive would be more effective, more fitting, and more likely to succeed in its home

¹⁶² TNA: HO 322/776, “Annotated Script - Protect and Survive,” November 1975.

¹⁶³ TNA: HO 322/776, “Appendix C.13 - Life Under Fall-out Conditions in Advice to the Public on Protection Against Nuclear Attack,” October 1973.

¹⁶⁴ TNA: HO 322/776, “Note from Scottish Home and Health Department to Mr. Buttery, F6 Division,” November 29, 1973.

defence objectives than the old, chipper film reels.¹⁶⁵ Clearly, there were some struggles to be expected when critiquing F6, however, their efforts suggest their determination to create a successful programme was genuine. The question of “would Protect and Survive have worked?” is often considered, though it might also be asked “did it work?”. If the goal was to enhance the national deterrence policy to prevent nuclear war (and F6 believed that was indeed their goal) then it could be argued as a success.

Naturally, the answer is not so uncomplicated. It was difficult to communicate the messages within Protect and Survive during peacetime, but in a nuclear crisis, the program was expected to increase “public understanding, morale and support”. Morale is a vital component of home defence that should not be dismissed. Low morale could jeopardize the entire nation while solid civil defence plans were believed by F6 and the MOD to increase public morale, and thus bolster nuclear deterrence. Protect and Survive was ridiculed extensively, yet, in actual crisis, having basic advice rather than no advice would appear beneficial.

¹⁶⁵ TNA: HO 322/776, “Letter to F6 Division from Home Defence College,” November 28, 1973.

Chapter 6 "This is Not a Secret Pamphlet": The First Looks of Protect and Survive

The concept of Cold War secrecy often invokes images of cunning spycraft and international intrigue. In Great Britain, it was often more a matter of the prying efforts of the British press. While parts of *Protect and Survive* did get out to the press, it never came across as a matter of concern for the newly elected Conservative government in 1979. The Conservatives and the Home Office had been toying with the notion of publishing *Protect and Survive* before the successive leaks. To many within Government, publishing the book was considered part of the rejuvenation of British civil defence. Unfortunately, there was no great caper by a daring reporter. Most pages of *Protect and Survive* started leaking into the public after the Home Office had already begun releasing bits and pieces to the media to promote their civil defence efforts. The results of these small leaks were soaring public interest in civil defence as the nuclear consensus fell away.

While the historiography of *Protect and Survive* frequently asserts that a series of leaks to the British media forced the hand of the Home Office to publish the programme, this study proves this was not the case. The first reveals of *Protect and Survive*, in *the Times*, on BBC radio, and on BBC television were all select excerpts chosen by the Home Office and provided to the media after extensive meetings within Whitehall. The broadcast of *Protect and Survive* on programmes such as *Panorama* were carefully considered and entirely unsurprising.

After coming to power in 1979, civil defence was primed for a rejuvenation from the Conservative Party. Working towards a campaign of openness with civil defence matters to counter Labour's accusations of secrecy, the Home Office relaxed restrictions around *Protect and*

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Survive. Some elements of the programme were leaked to newspapers, while other pieces were given to journalists in an attempt to control a positive image of Protect and Survive. As the public became aware of the lack of neighbour-based cooperation as opposed to the neo-liberal individualism of Protect and Survive, demand for more access to Protect and Survive grew and the Home Office made the decision to publish the booklet.

The decision to publish of Protect and Survive was an integral part of the recommendations in the Home Defence Review of 1980, the results of which were notably delivered to the public via a Parliamentary speech by Home Secretary William Whitelaw on August 7 1980. The Review had concluded that public knowledge, as part of a robust civil defence system, enhanced the resilience of the national deterrent. Small leaks and authorized samples of Protect and Survive continued throughout the Winter of 1980, the pinnacle of public interest in civil defence as seen through the multitude of articles in the media and in government. As Protect and Survive became familiar to the public, the government decided that placing the booklet on sale would end the perception that they were withholding vital survival information. Since Margaret Thatcher's rise to the top of the Conservative party in the mid 1970s, the Tories pushed for a campaign of civil defence "openness", believing the demonstrated strength of civil defence planning would deterrent.¹

After publishing the booklet, the demands for information did not dissipate, greatly effecting the outcome of the Home Defence Review of 1980. The Review would set the tone for British defence for the remainder of the Cold War. Recommendations of the Review included calls for greater public information, doubling the civil defence budget, harnessing volunteer efforts and renovating government bunkers throughout the 1980s. These changes occurred

¹ Peter Hennessy, "Whitehall Brief: Readiness and Openness Mark County Plan for Survival in Nuclear War," *The Times*, March 4, 1980.

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alongside the decision to base Cruise missiles in the nation as well as upgrading the Polaris nuclear missile system to the Trident system.²

All these significant decisions in British military history flowed from the decision to sell Protect and Survive to the public. From the first mention of the booklet in January 1980, to its release that May, there were dozens of articles, parliamentary debates, and public discussions on Protect and Survive. Predominant theories held that the government's hand was forced into selling Protect and Survive following invasive journalistic and public pressures. However, following the departure of F6 Director and chief Protect and Survive author Duncan Buttery in the late 1970s, discussions began to be held at the Home Office regarding the sale of Protect and Survive. When the booklet was eventually published, the release was so unassuming that many in the Home Office were not even aware it had been issued. It was not until the noteworthy Home Defence Review of August 1980 that the critiques of Protect and Survive became truly intense.

Protect and Survive was originally created with secrecy in mind. Throughout the creation of the programme, Home Office staff emphasized that the booklet and videos must remain classified, hidden from the public, the press, and even MPs without prior approval.³ During a test screening, Buttery assured the Home Office that F6 was prepared to deal with leaks.⁴ There was even some disquiet in the Home Office when the United States Embassy requested a copy of Protect and Survive. F6 eventually agreed on the condition that only the top staff attend the viewing, and that all the media was returned to the Home Office afterwards. Unfortunately, after all the security measures, the video could not be viewed by the Embassy staff. Suspicions

² TNA: HO 322/937, "Home Defence Review 1980 - The Current State of Civil Preparedness Report by the Home Defence Planning Sub-Committee," March 19, 1980.

³ TNA: HO 322/776, "Amended Minutes of Meeting with COI on 5 November," November 20, 1974.

⁴ TNA: HO 322/776, "COI and HO Meeting on Guidance on Protection Against Nuclear Attack," October 7, 1975.

abounded that it was a purposeful sabotage by the Home Office to prevent Protect and Survive being released. However, it was eventually realized that the Embassy VCRs were in NTSC video format while the cassettes were in British standard PAL format.⁵

Though the BBC was said to have their own copies of Protect and Survive for the Wartime Broadcasting Service, the principal source of early information was obtained by *The London Times*. The investigative skills of reporters at *The Times* were quite effective and whether by choice, or from lack of material, they maintained a reserved demeanor during their reveals of information. In 1979, two *Times* reporters established themselves as the premier journalists reporting on civil defence in Britain: Peter Hennessy and Peter Evans. Before the two Peters, Stuart Tandler often wrote on civil defence for *The Times*. As early as 1974, Tandler picked up on Buttery's first attempts to dust-off neglected civil defence plans.

Often with a flair for drama, Tandler opened one article warning that "direct control of who might be allowed to live or die in the aftermath of nuclear attack is being debated" by the Home Office. Moments of sensationalism such as this, positioning the government as cloak and dagger manipulators of public fate, helped contribute to the frenzy of civil defence interest in the Winter of 1980. Along with Tandler, it became common place for civil defence journalists to pull in readers by crafting imaginative "what-if" scenarios. The stories fostered a sense of survivalism, creating thinking puzzles for readers to cast themselves in a post-nuclear dreamscape.

All manner of attempts to capture the reader's imagination were used in articles such as these, with one notable example being Tandler's revelation that the government was stockpiling contraceptives in secret warehouses to curb birth rates after a nuclear attack (as the trauma would

⁵ TNA: INF6/2531, "Michael G. Macdonald, US Embassy, to RC Yeates, Central Office of Information," December 6, 1976.

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bring people "closer together").⁶ What little information escaped the Home Office was often extrapolated and embellished, at times intelligently and at times melodramatically. Sir Clive Rose, Cabinet member and chair of the Civil Contingencies Unit, commented that Peter Hennessy had a knack for "intelligent speculation", often piecing together classified narratives from publicly available information.⁷ Likewise, when Buttery was still deliberating on the wording of Protect and Survive, Tendler was already informing the public of a new government policy designed around letting people fend for themselves using objects within the home.⁸

Within the Home Office, there was little mystery as to how information found its way to the media. A few weeks before Tendler's nuclear birth rates article, Buttery had written to SAB (Scientific Advisory Branch) and Director Mavor of the HDC (Home Defence College). Buttery theorized Local Authority Executives were growing disgruntled over the secrecy surrounding civil defence and were becoming less inclined to keep what information they did pose away from the media. Secretary Buttery was also apprehensive that the Home Office would receive a barrage of complaints from the Executives as they had not received details of the Government's long promised shelter policies. Buttery had prepared a report which was to be delivered to a council of Executives. There were no plans to provide detailed information, but Buttery had prepared broad stroke talking points on civil defence that were hoped to pacify. For Buttery, information available to Local Authorities was equal to be available by the public, and with the track record of civil defence leaks from metropolitan Local Authorities, it is hard to disagree.

Buttery's report acknowledged that Local Authorities were under informed and reassured them that several documents now existed, most being Home Office circulars, that would be

⁶ Stewart Tendler, "Debate on 'right to live' after Nuclear War," *The Times*, May 6, 1974.

⁷ TNA: HO 322/778, "Sir Clive Rose Comments on Doc 1 to Mr. Andrew," October 26, 1978.

⁸ Tendler, "Talk to Form Fall-Out Shelter Policy," February 5, 1975.

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forwarded to Executives. Further details were said to be classified, though they involved a public campaign of civil defence media to be distributed during an international crisis. Buttery explained that public shelters were unfeasible and "the best fallout protection [was] based on staying in one's own home"; the basic tenants of "stay-put". The home was to be the government's official recommendation for shelter, regardless of its PF value. The report concluded with Buttery's trademark pragmatism, conceding that the home shelter plans were not ideal but that they were "realistic" based on the limitations of the "political and financial times".⁹

SAB and the HDC replied to the report with warnings regarding the public palatability of "stay-put" and cautioned against discussion with the Local Authority Executives.¹⁰ Buttery was still content to send the report to the Association of Metropolitan Authorities (AMA) with little change other than emphasizing that little could be done within financial considerations.¹¹

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the Association considered the information insufficient and requested a meeting with F6 Division and the formation of a Working Party to elaborate on civil defence planning.¹² Buttery was quite content to host the meeting but became quite sarcastic with the Working Party request, doubting they would find any results when the Home Office plans were already based off the most "exhaustive examination of the voluminous reports ... which have been written in the last twenty years".¹³

Discourse between the government and the Councils was to be further strained when the AMA insisted that only protection from blast and heat, not fallout, would carry any

⁹ TNA: HO 322/849, "Mr. Buttery to Mr. Clayton Re: Guidance to Local and Other Public Authorities and Attached Documents," April 24, 1974.

¹⁰ TNA: HO 322/849, "SAB to F6 Re: Guidance to Local and Other Public Authorities on Shelter Policy," July 9, 1974.

¹¹ TNA: HO 322/849, "Draft Letter of Discussion Paper for LAs," November 19, 1974.

¹² TNA: HO 322/849, "JFD Buttery to AC Hetherington Re: Shelter Policy," December 16, 1974.

¹³ TNA: HO 322/849, "JFD Buttery to AC Hetherington Re: Shelter Policy and Communications in War," January 16, 1975.

"psychological credibility" with the public.¹⁴ However, the Home Office had been working under the assumption that protection from nuclear blast was relatively impossible and planned for fallout protection. The meeting was held on January 31st, and was fairly uneventful, consisting of the Home Office repeating the salient points of their reports and the Councils squirreling for greater details. Thus, when Tendler's article was released five days later, Buttery remained unsurprised that the details of the meeting had found their way to the public.¹⁵ If the article was the extent of leaked information, Buttery was content that they maintained a "a low key response".¹⁶ Ultimately, this was not the first time Buttery suspected the Association of telling tales out of school and it was thought unlikely to be the last.¹⁷

Public discussion of civil defence in the media continued, though it remained subdued. In June 1977, Tendler reported that RF O'Brien, a Council Executive from Nottinghamshire, would be one of the Local Authority Executives "running Britain" after a nuclear attack. O'Brien was quoted during his address to the Association of Civil Defence and Emergency Planning Officers conference. Tendler also conveyed O'Brien's frustration that both parties were working with threadbare contingencies made after the switch to care and maintenance in 1968. The resources were available, according to O'Brien, but not the will, as evidenced by the government spending £400 million on finding jobs and nothing on national shelters.¹⁸

In July it was reported that NATO was beginning to encourage members to revive their civil defence forces with an eye towards recovery from civil emergencies.¹⁹ The following year, *The Times* reported on a civil defence booklet published by two Tory MP's titled *Britain's Home*

¹⁴ TNA: HO 322/849, "AC Hetherington to JFD Buttery Re: Shelter Policy," January 28, 1975.

¹⁵ TNA: HO 322/849, "Note of a Meeting with Local Authority Associations on 31 January 1975," January 31, 1975.

¹⁶ TNA: HO 322/849, "JFD Buttery to Mr. Tilbury, Press Office Re: Civil Defence Publicity," February 5, 1975.

¹⁷ TNA: HO 322/817, "Letter to Mr. Hetherington from Mr. Buttery," September 22, 1971.

¹⁸ Stewart Tendler, "Revision of Civil Defence Plans Is Sought," *The Times*, June 2, 1977.

¹⁹ Unattributed, "NATO Leaders Urge Civil Defence Revival," *The Times*, July 25, 1977.

Defence Gamble. The booklet was written by Robin Hodgson and Robert Banks, the latter of which was to become a vocal advocate for increased civil defence measures in Parliament for years to come. In their booklet, British civil defence was said to be "an ill coordinated shambles surrounded by a fog of secrecy, largely Ministerially imposed". Care and maintenance was also discussed as Hodgson and Banks argued that "successive governments have gambled" that effective civil defence measures could be raised in a matter of weeks following an advanced warning of attack. The article further reported on the findings of the MPs that 20 million Britons could be expected to survive a nuclear attack, though that figure could rise to 36 million with "proper" civil defence measures.²⁰

Peter Hennessy's work began with his interest in government plans for dealing with civil emergencies and labour strikes during the 1978 Winter of Discontent before finding a natural lead-in to civil defence. On October 11th 1978, Hennessy wrote to Donald Grant of the Public Relations Branch (PRB) requesting an interview with Home Secretary Merlyn Rees regarding contingency plans for civil emergencies in relation to the ongoing labour crises in Britain. Hennessy was also curious to discuss what uses civil defence equipment could have during a civil emergency.²¹ Grant forwarded the request to Mr. Morris of F6 and noted that No. 10 had already denied Hennessy's request to interview Sir Clive Rose. Rose was informed that Hennessy's publicity of civil emergencies "could only cause embarrassment" and he was instructed to repeatedly put off Hennessy's interview requests under the guise of being busy. Grant recommended instead of an interview with a Home Office official that Hennessy should be provided with whatever relevant public material could be gathered.²² F6 Director Noel Law later

²⁰ Unattributed, "Civil Defence Is 'shambles' Two Tory MPs Complain," *The Times*, August 21, 1978.

²¹ TNA: HO 322/778, "Mr. Peter Hennessy Writes to HO for Information on Contingency Planning for Civil Emergencies," October 11, 1978.

²² TNA: HO 322/778, "Mr. Grant (PRB) Writes to Mr. Morris (F6) About Hennessy Request," October 16, 1978.

provided Grant with a list of available material and circulars that could be provided to Mr. Hennessy.²³

Following these efforts, Hennessy turned to the MOD for information. The MOD agreed to provide an "unattributable" briefing with Hennessy on the proviso that he wrote with sympathy about MOD involvement in civil contingencies. Cabinet Secretary Robert Armstrong informed the MOD that he was still apprehensive about Hennessy's intentions and that they should be on guard for any signs of "mischief-making".²⁴ Above all else, warned Armstrong, the MOD was forbidden to provide Hennessy with any information regarding the machinery of government in crises contingencies. The MOD replied that a briefing with the Ministry was likely to prevent Hennessy from operating "clandestinely" as "he is inherently vain" and prone to giving away information about his contacts. The MOD, more than the Home Office, were very concerned about their public reputation, and feared being seen as a future tool of the Government to use against labour disruptions.²⁵

Hennessy met with Brian Cousins of the MOD and Cousins reported that he successfully gave Hennessy the runaround, avoiding any discussions of the machinery of government. Hennessy was said to be mostly interested in contingency planning for an upcoming eight-part special on industrial emergencies. Hennessy's probing articles on emergency planning would inadvertently kick off the frenzy of civil defence interest in the Winter of 1980. Hennessy's eight-part study provided the public with privileged information that began with a thorough rundown of "one of the most secret parts of the Cabinet Office machine, the Civil Contingencies

²³ TNA: HO 322/778, "Mr. Law Writes to Mr. Grant About Doc 1," October 25, 1978.

²⁴ TNA: HO 322/778, "Robert Armstrong Writes to Sir Frank Cooper," October 30, 1978.

²⁵ TNA: HO 322/778, "Frank Cooper to Sir Robert Armstrong Re: Civil Contingency Planning," November 2, 1979.

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Unit".²⁶ Hennessy went on to report on the limits of emergency powers and the machinery of government that would continue during labour stoppages.²⁷ Hennessy also wrote on the suggestion for a new Civil Defence Corps and the involvement of the military in civil emergencies, complete with a map of "military districts" that overlapped with Regional Government Headquarters (though that remained unknown at the time).²⁸

Hennessy's journalistic aptitude proved quite effective and he made a habit of piecing together puzzles with missing pieces. The day before the first article was published, Prime Minister Thatcher passed down notice that anyone who was approached by Mr. Hennessy in regard to the classified information of the machinery of government during a crisis was forbidden to provide comment. The Conservatives took the classification of machinery of government plans quite seriously and they were meticulously cautious. Ironically, Hennessy would later go on to publish *The Secret State* which became the preeminent study of Britain's machinery of government in war.²⁹

The interest in civil defence continued to develop both outside and within government. In December 1979, Baroness Emmet of Amberley challenged Lord Belstead, Parliamentary Undersecretary of State for the Home Office, to answer what steps were being taken to update civil defence in light of the increasing political movement towards nuclear warfare. Lord Belstead replied that the Home Office were taking measures, including a large civil defence conference at the HDC the previous month. The results of the study were said to be included in an upcoming Home Defence Review. Lord Gladwyn pressed further, asking if Belstead would

²⁶ Peter Hennessy, "Whitehall Brief: Secret Unit Whose Judgments Are Vital During a Winter of Discontent," *The Times*, November 13, 1979.

²⁷ Peter Hennessy, "Two Key Factors Limit Full Use of Emergency Powers," *The Times*, November 20, 1979.

²⁸ Peter Hennessy, "New Civil Defence Corps Suggested," *The Times*, November 23, 1979.

²⁹ TNA: HO 322/778, "Cabinet Memorandum on Civil Contingency Planning," November 12, 1979.

not agree that protection against nuclear war was impossible and could not be survived. Lord Belstead disagreed with Gladwyn, arguing that most houses offered a fair amount of natural fallout protection which could be further enhanced with DIY plans. This government, as did the previous, were said to have plans ready to be distributed to the public when necessary. It seems likely that the plans to which Lord Belstead referred were Protect and Survive.

Lord Peart then accused Lord Belstead of taking the defence of the general population too casually. Labour was continuing to step away from the status quo of civil defence and continued to attack the deterrent. Lord Belstead continued his efforts to defend civil defence, reminding the Lords that, unlike the previous government, the Conservatives put on the HDC conference not six months into office. Belstead went on to comment that one of the findings of the conference was the benefit of the government being more transparent with the public in regard to these plans. Lord Inglewood then contested that the current government, as had the previous, continued to keep the public ignorant of plans made for their safety. Even most Lords, according to Inglewood, had no idea what these government plans entailed. Again, Lord Belstead advocated greater openness between the government and the people, pointing out that there was not a day in the year when a course is not provided at the HDC for the military and Local Authorities. The amount of information provided, it was argued, came down to a matter of timing for effectiveness.³⁰

The following day *The Times* reported on the civil defence debate in the House of Lords. The article introduced the public to the HDC conference and the Home Defence Review that promised to be greatly informative. The discussion of the Review would ignite a tremendous increase in the demand for civil defence instructions from the Home Office in the following

³⁰ Lords Belstead, Gladwyn, Peart, Inglewood and Baroness Emmet of Amberley. *HoL Deb*, 6 Dec 1979. Vol. 403, Col. 861 – 865.

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month. While the article reiterated Lord Belstead's efforts to reassure the House of Lords that plans were in place, *The Times* noted that a bout of derisive laughter burst out following Belstead's comment that home fallout protection could be increased with simple DIY measures. Ridicule of Protect and Survive was to become one of the most frequent tools used by Labour supporters to discredit the notion of nuclear civil defence.³¹

The next significant milestone in the public/government discourse of Protect and Survive was the March broadcast of a BBC Radio 4 special, *Can the UK Survive War?* The programme was a longtime in the making, with minimal sensationalism present in the final product. The producers of the programme, Blair Thomson and Defence and Foreign Affairs Correspondent Christopher Lee, set out to reveal the foggy world of British civil defence. The process began at the start of 1979 and would not finish until March the following year. It was a fortunate coincidence that the programme would premier when the public curiosity for Protect and Survive had never been greater.³²

Lee began his research by contacting the MOD rather than the Home Office. Writing to JK Ledlie of the MOD, Lee introduced his programme idea, then titled *Can Britain Defend Herself?* Lee hoped to identify the threat to the nation and the defences prepared, without melodrama or negative bias. Lee and Thomson were careful to mention their honest intentions to the MOD frequently, which reassured Ledlie. Of particular interest to Ledlie in Lee's outline, he had underlined the section titled *Where's My Shelter?* which explored civil defence, control of the civilian populace, medical treatment, evacuation and the political complications of preparing for a war that may never arrive.³³

³¹ Unattributed, "Making Population Aware of Civil Defence Plans," *The Times*, December 7, 1979.

³² TNA: HO 322/909, "Transcript of BBC Radio Program 'Can UK Survive War?'," 1980.

³³ TNA: HO 322/909, "C. Lee (BBC) to J. Ledlie (MOD)," January 17, 1979.

Lee and Thomson requested a meeting with the MOD in April, and when passing the meeting request up the food chain, Ledlie described the programme as a major show, "up to two hours!", that looked to be a "serious semi-educational piece – not a sensational thriller". The MOD tended to be even more secretive than the Home Office and the higher-ups still required reassurance of the BBC's intentions. It was crucial to the MOD that the meeting started "off on the right foot" with people "of the right kind".³⁴ The MOD were protective of their public image and were quick to cooperate, believing, as they did with Hennessy, involvement was the best approach to ensure that the programme was as accurate and positive as possible. It was also the idea of the MOD to include the Home Office in the meeting. The MOD were aware civil defence matters were "the primary concern of the Home Office".³⁵

A few weeks after taking up the position, Secretary of State for Defence, Francis Pym, approved the meeting and offered to be interviewed.³⁶ Ledlie had produced a draft of the MOD's presentation for Lee and Thomson and passed it around the Ministry for approval. The main suggestion from the MOD was to emphasize that the Home Office administered civil defence, not the MOD, thereby ensuring that any criticisms were directed elsewhere. The MOD repeatedly mentioned that, following an attack, the military was to work entirely in support of the civil power, and there was no basis for rumours of military rule.³⁷

The repeated mention of the lack of MOD involvement was likely an attempt to prevent any connections between the military and civil emergencies, as seen in Hennessy's earlier articles. The Home Office were also aware of the ramifications of the meeting and F6 Division Secretary Noel Law directed the Home Office representative, Mr. Woodland, to "conceal any

³⁴ TNA: HO 322/909, "J. Ledlie to AUS Re: BBC Radio Programme 'Can Britain Defend Herself?,'" April 10, 1979.

³⁵ TNA: HO 322/909, "G. Trist to AUS(D Staff) Inc. Draft Outline for Programme," May 21, 1979.

³⁶ TNA: HO 322/909, "D. Omand to DGPR," May 23, 1979.

³⁷ TNA: HO 322/909, "Paper on 'Military Assistance to the Civil Power,'" June 1979.

difference of views between the military and ourselves".³⁸ The Home Office was also concerned about the MOD's ideas on law and order post-attack and set up an "unattributable" briefing for Lee and Thomson at Whitehall, away from the MOD, in an informal setting.³⁹

Before the meeting, Lee requested a visit to the Home Defence College where he might collect some recordings of classes and training.⁴⁰ After he was assured that the BBC program was a serious attempt to present facts and strike a balance, Director Mavor was happy to oblige and suggested the week before the HDC conference as a suitable time.⁴¹ Thomson arrived for the "unattributable" Home Office meeting with Raymond Morris of F6 and John Cotterill of the Public Relations Branch (PRB). A PRB representative was requested as public perception was at the forefront of the Home Office's concerns. Morris noted that Thomson "bragged" that the MOD allowed him to ride in a Polaris submarine and visit an Air Force base. Morris believed this was Thomson's attempt to spur the Home Office to compete with the MOD.

Thomson shared that the 90-minute programme would air March 16 at 6:15pm with a studio discussion to follow. Several people relevant to civil defence had agreed to the studio discussion and Morris suggested Lord Belstead might be amenable to representing the Home Office. Thomson noted what he considered to be a fair amount of irony when going about his research. In many European countries, according to Thomson, a robust national shelter system was in place, yet the citizens were mostly ignorant of these plans and showed little concern. In Britain, there was little done as far as national shelters (due to unique difficulties with cost, likely targets and population density) and this appeared to be a large public concern.⁴²

³⁸ TNA: HO 322/909, "Note, Mr. Law to Mr. Woodland," June 13, 1979.

³⁹ TNA: HO 322/909, "Note, Mr. Woodland to Mr. Law," June 15, 1979.

⁴⁰ TNA: HO 322/909, "Folder Notes on Mr. Lee's Visit to HDC," September 4, 1979.

⁴¹ TNA: HO 322/909, "F6 Note on BBC Radio Programme on the Defence of Britain," November 12, 1979.

⁴² TNA: HO 322/909, "Note of Informal Meeting Held at Home Office on 7 December 1979 Re: BBC Radio Programme on the Defence of Britain," December 7, 1979.

Thomson also sympathized with the difficult situation facing the Home Office. The Home Office had the arduous task of publicizing civil defence information without creating a panic. Thomson was also aware of an "illicit copy" of Protect and Survive that the BBC was rumoured to have procured, though he assured F6 that he had not referenced it, nor would he. As a show of good faith Thomson stated he would only reference what the Home Office provided. Discussions about Protect and Survive were becoming public and Thomson believed his programme to be the perfect debut opportunity for the campaign materials. Raymond Morris informed Thomson that he was unsure about providing direct access to Protect and Survive, but he would give the matter sincere consideration.⁴³

"A great kafuffle" was caused when Thomson approached the BBC seeking to access their pre-recorded emergency broadcast recordings as Lee and Thomson argued it was illogical to reference the recordings in the programme without playing a clip. Thomson had thought his inquiry to be quite innocuous though thirty minutes after his request, the MOD contacted the BBC and stated Thomson had "rocked a particular security boat". The anecdote did not amuse the Home Office as staff began to disagree if programme was a sound idea. Secretary Law believed that allowing an audio copy of Protect and Survive to the BBC would set a poor precedent and the clips were likely to be overused by subsequent programmes hoping to capture public attention. Conversely, Morris believed there was an advantage to providing a trusted producer with a short clip and asked that Law consider the matter as a good opportunity for publicity.⁴⁴

The noticeable disparities between the MOD and the Home Office approach to classified information suggested divergent intentions. The MOD kept a wall of secrecy at all times while the Home Office continued to provide informative breadcrumbs to Council Executives and the

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

media. At some point it was likely the Home Office was aware that what little information they gave to Local Authorities or journalists invariably ended up in the media, yet they continued the practice. Slowly but surely, the Home Office maintained the public interest in the clandestine world of Protect and Survive and Cold War civil defence.

Following the meeting, Morris and Cotterill concluded Thomson was not after a sensationalist story and should receive their support. The Home Office would provide Thomson with some "ear grabbing sounds" to start the programme, and any interviews were told to frequently emphasize that nuclear war was highly unlikely, it was crucial that the programme not appear to suggest a war was imminent. Cotterill suggested the conclusion of the programme should underscore the preparations that were in place for the public. Director Law also wished to stress that the Home Office interviewees should use the phrase "survival of the nation" as often as possible.⁴⁵

Law seemed more inclined to provide access to Protect and Survive when he was assured that the programme would discuss the revisions to the campaign following the new Soviet attack assumptions (that lowered warning time from days to hours) positively. After some deliberations, Law stated that he would allow the programme to describe the content of Protect and Survive, provided Lee refrained from referring to the campaign as merely "a booklet", it was a didactic campaign, and accentuated that the likelihood of the public ever needing the information was exceedingly remote.⁴⁶

The decision to provide access to Protect and Survive was by no means unanimous within the Home Office, and many were still leery of the BBC's intentions. For the previous five years, the Home Office adhered to Buttery's law that Protect and Survive was to be restricted to the

⁴⁵ TNA: HO 322/909, "Note from Mr. Durant to Mr. Morris Re: BBC Radio 4 Programme," December 12, 1979.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

public to maintain its motivational impact. F6 staffer, M Durrant, believed that the government and public discourse was at a point where audio clips from Protect and Survive could be shared without the public falling into a panic. However, others warned that the soundbites would generate follow-up inquiries once Protect and Survive entered the public sphere. Some within the Home Office preferred to joke that the clip would be played on Radio 4, so there was little need to worry that people would be listening.⁴⁷

Law was more protective of the prerecorded BBC attack warnings than Protect and Survive and denied Lee use of the recordings (again to maintain impact). Law instead suggested something "ear-bending" from the Protect and Survive media, perhaps a clip that included the air siren messages and their meanings.⁴⁸ Morris then informed the PRB that Thomson was to have supervised access to Protect and Survive during their Home Defence College visit and had permission to record a short clip for their programme.⁴⁹

The next month, Protect and Survive officially entered the public sphere as *The Times* would run an unprecedented four-part exposé on civil defence in Britain. January 16 would be the general public's introduction to Protect and Survive, as the article provided the first look at the booklet's iconic cover. Evan's headline, "SS20 Russian Missiles Expose Britain's Weakness to Attack", was also an effective attention grabber. The first official interaction between the public and Protect and Survive was already linked to weakness.⁵⁰ The contents of Peter Evan's article stated that the "much-criticized" civil defence plans of the United Kingdom were to be given increased governmental attention thanks to innovative new Soviet missiles. The SS20

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ TNA: HO 322/909, "Folder Notes by Mr. Law, F6," December 11, 1979.

⁴⁹ TNA: HO 322/909, "Raymond Morris, F6, to Mr. Cotterell, PRB, Re: BBC Radio Programme on the Defence of Britain," December 18, 1979.

⁵⁰ Peter Evans, "Civil Defence-1: Government to Give Greater Priority to Protect Millions of People," *The Times*, January 16, 1980.

missiles were ominously described as superior to previous missiles and able to strike anywhere in Britain. The Conservative Party was said to be already thinking of upgrading civil defence, as seen in the *Britain's Home Defence Gamble* booklet. The article and the booklet both characterized the 1968 care and maintenance decision as a dangerous wager that the government could minimize investment in civil defence and hope it would never be required. Evans reported on the HDC study of the previous month, and reiterated Lord Belstead's comments in the House of Lords. The article concluded with a worrying message from a county planner about the extent of the devastation that would follow a nuclear detonation over County Hall, London.⁵¹

The Times' exposé would continue the following day with Evans providing a glimpse inside a Southeast Regional Headquarters. Evans described the bunker as a fortress that could not be found by the general public. The only outside evidence of the bunker's existence was a blue plastic dome and a white dustbin. The entrance tunnel was long and foreboding while the cramped spaces inside generated claustrophobia. Other areas were described, such as the living quarters, the meeting room, the BBC office and UKWMO's 873 monitoring posts across the nation, said to be "Britain's best prepared civil defence asset". Evans referenced *Protect and Survive* without providing a name, calling it a "COI film" to be shown during international tension. Stay-put policy was also highlighted as Evans quoted *Protect and Survive*: "no place in the UK is safer than anywhere else". Evans characterized the survival instructions as quite DIY in style and based around instructions to seek shelter, lie down, or find a downstairs room away from outside walls in event of an attack.⁵²

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Peter Evans, "Civil Defence-2: Blue Plastic Domes and White Dustbins Mark Underground Regional HQs," *The Times*, January 17, 1980.

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The next article in the series focused on the superiority of Russia's civil defence systems and national shelter policies. The supremacy of foreign civil defence was a common tool for civil defence critics to portray Protect and Survive as woefully insufficient. John F Wallace, former director of Emergency Planning in Canada, stated that General AT Altunin was in charge of Soviet civil defence, and he had prepared extensive evacuation plans to go along with national shelters. Evans concluded that Britain was not prepared to survive a nuclear war when compared to the accomplished shelter programmes of other European countries. The final point argued that proper civil defence could save millions of Britons, but "Britain lags badly behind most of the rest of Western Europe".⁵³

Evans' series concluded January 19th with an article suggesting that the public were put in peril by their indolent government and he fanned the flames of inept civil defence. The article was subtitled "Stay Where You Are" and discussed the stay-put policy that successive governments had been following since the 1968 switch to care and maintenance. The Home Office was said to have "no firm plans" for evacuation or shelter and were working off antiquated contingency plans from the 1960s. Evans revealed that government media would be aimed at compelling the public to "stay put" during a crisis, although chaotic self-evacuation was to be anticipated even after the police "seal off petrol stations".⁵⁴

The article went on to mention that 48 hours before a likely attack, the Cabinet would flee London to secret bunkers and Local Authorities would control the nation. The frequent proliferation of the "bunkers for bureaucrats" theme was regularly utilized to generate anger towards the government, categorizing survival as forbidden knowledge. The article continued by

⁵³ Peter Evans, "Civil Defence-3: Russia Believes Evacuation Is Still the Best Protection," *The Times*, January 18, 1980.

⁵⁴ Peter Evans, "Civil Defence-4: Branch Line Closures Made 1960s Evacuation Plans Obsolete," *The Times*, January 19, 1980, 4.

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discussing private shelter companies that could be hired, suggesting the neo-liberal perception of Protect and Survive was encouraged by the media. Evans concluded on a menacing note by recalling the large survey by *NOW! Magazine* that found 40% of Britons believed a Third World War would occur before 2000.⁵⁵

Further in the issue, *The Times* carried an article titled "A Lethal Failure of Duty" that surmised the four-day exposé on British civil defence. *The Times* stated that while civil defence was largely neglected, they did not wish to spark alarm, they were simply pointing out that tensions were rising, and an attack was "not inconceivable". With such ominous suggestions in the media, it was little surprise that public interest in civil defence would continue to grow in the coming months. In the four-day blitz Peter Evans validated government efforts while simultaneously deriding them, preventing any clear political statement. National shelters were said to be politically and financially impossible, and yet it was also said that Britain was so far behind the rest of Europe that corrective action had to be taken. The Conservatives and the Home Office followed *The Times'* articles closely, noting that a small investment in civil defence education might go a long way to quell the public.⁵⁶

When Protect and Survive was first introduced to the nation, it came with the reminder that it "remained unavailable". Indicating that it was complete but unobtainable pitted the public against a government that was withholding life-saving information that could save the reader's family. As the public was reminded in the summary, the civil defence information currently in the public realm, which was not easily found, was "quaint and outdated", and for the best chance of survival, the public would have to seek out the forbidden knowledge within Protect and

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Unattributed, "A Lethal Failure Of Duty," *The Times*, January 19, 1980.

Survive. To conclude the four-day series, *The Times* warned that "a major war could happen in the 1980s [and] the present lack of preparation [was] a lethal failure of duty".⁵⁷

Two days later, Peter Evans contributed another article on civil defence, capitalizing on the great interest his four-day exposé had generated. Evans cited a booklet entitled *A Place Called Armageddon*, by the Greater London Young Conservatives. The Young Conservatives criticized current civil defence arrangements, arguing that the morale of troops fighting in Europe would falter if their families were left unprotected due to government negligence. The booklet also criticized the figure of £24 million that was allotted for civil defence, arguing that the government was refusing to spend the bare minimum on public protection. The booklet called for a return of the CDC, pre-attack food rationing, a UKWMO budget increase, and increased public information. The booklet was also aware of *Protect and Survive*, though they argued only 5000 copies were printed "due to cost", accusing the government of being spendthrift to the detriment of the population. Public resentment for the government's civil defence efforts were quickly crystalizing, even before the publication of *Protect and Survive*.⁵⁸

Also, in that edition, the first of a flood of letters to the editor following the civil defence exposé were printed. David Sneath criticized the ignorance of the public in the face of nuclear attack and demanded that civil defence education be increased. Ideally, argued Sneath, *Protect and Survive* should be published and issued to every home immediately to maximize survival. The image of *Protect and Survive* as forbidden knowledge would become infuriating to many and became a difficult fallacy for the government to dispel.⁵⁹

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Peter Evans, "'Armageddon' Call for Civil Defence Corps," *The Times*, January 21, 1980.

⁵⁹ David Sneath, "Civil Defence Precautions," *The Times*, January 21, 1980.

On January 24th, one of many readers wrote in to evoke images of the War Years, with the community coming together to endure the Blitz. This viewpoint was especially prevalent among those who lived through the War, both inside and outside the government. One such citizen argued that an abandoned Second World War shelter near his home should be refurbished to be used during nuclear attack. Mr. Kerpel went on to lament the government's history of inaction, recalling Stewart Tendler's article from 1974 with all its sensational discussion of post-attack anarchy. As Tendler demonstrated, argued Kerpel, 80% of the public would be vaporized in an attack, however, if the government could simply be convinced to invest in shelters, that number would tumble to only 20%.⁶⁰ Kerpel surmised that the government's philosophy of "we can't do enough so we will do nothing smack[ed] of criminal neglect".⁶¹

A Mr. BJ Greenwood wrote in to note the "great comfort" he now had knowing that during a nuclear Armageddon, the government would be safely stored underground, while the population above would vaporize. Conservative MP Robert Banks, the author of *Britain's Home Defence Gamble*, added his thoughts on the dangers of the government "withholding" prepared advice for a crisis and that £11.6 million could be transferred from wasteful "quangos" to the civil defence budget. Lord Clifford of Cludleigh, chair of the Devon Emergency Volunteers, wrote in to congratulate Peter Evans for publicizing civil defence while also calling for more to be done with volunteers, as he had frequently argued in the House of Lords.⁶²

All manner of readers continued to write to *The Times* to express their thoughts, setting civil defence as the hot button topic of January 1980. It was little surprise that the eventual publication of *Protect and Survive* left such an indelible mark on British memories of the Cold

⁶⁰ Tendler, "Debate on 'right to live' after Nuclear War," May 6, 1974.

⁶¹ Tony Kerpel et al., "Civil Defence: A Lethal Failure of Duty?," *The Times*, January 24, 1980.

⁶² Ibid.

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War. Lord Noel-Baker wrote in to take umbrage with Sneath's letter of the 21st. Lord Noel-Baker was upset with the implication that nuclear wars could be "won" or even survived.⁶³ Other letters on civil defence were received from Mrs. Helen Batty, a member of the Women's Royal Voluntary Service, who encouraged a return to a well-trained volunteer corps.⁶⁴ Prof. Michael Howard, Chichele Professor of the History of War at Oxford, also voiced his desire to see an end to secrecy around nuclear civil defence. To Professor Howard, all of Britain's nuclear deterrents would be no more than "an expensive bluff" without a public afforded every degree of knowledge to survive the worst-case scenario and rebuild British society.⁶⁵

The BBC capitalized on the interest with the final episode of a reality show called *Warschool*. The programme followed a group of men training to become military officers. On January 30 the men trained for nuclear war and shared their thoughts on nuclear weapons and the deterrent. The recruits corroborated many of the replies found in *The Times*, specifically the idea that British civil defence plans were antiquated and described their post-attack training as "a great jape, frivolous".⁶⁶

While Radio 4 continued to prepare their programme, producers of the BBC newsmagazine television programme *Panorama* held a meeting with F6 and the PRB to discuss their intentions of an episode based on civil defence. The episode was pitched as a follow-up to their well-received episode on the replacement of Polaris and would explore a theme of: "what if the deterrent fails to deter?" F6 felt confident at the meeting that the BBC did not appear to have a "slant" on the status of civil defence in the UK. When informed of the similarly themed Radio

⁶³ Philip Noel-Baker, "Reviving Civil Defence," *The Times*, January 25, 1980.

⁶⁴ Helen A. Batty, "Reviving Civil Defence," *The Times*, January 31, 1980.

⁶⁵ Michael Howard, "Reviving Civil Defence," *The Times*, January 30, 1980.

⁶⁶ John Reynolds, "EP4: Tomorrow's War, Tomorrow's Generals?," *War School* (BBC One, January 30, 1980).

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4 programme also airing in March, *Panorama* stated that they did not believe their programme posed any conflict with the Radio 4 special.

Panorama requested access to the Protect and Survive videotapes but acknowledged that only the most "unambiguous extract could be shown during peacetime". Before the publication of Protect and Survive, the Home Office mandated that all media inquiries were required to seek approval. David Darlow, producer of *Panorama*, met with F6 officials to make the case that his programme would cast Protect and Survive in a good light. Darlow explained that the public perceived the "secretive attitude of successive UK governments" as a failure when compared to the open attitudes of Scandinavian and Swiss governments. When he was given a copy of the old civil defence booklet *Nuclear Weapons*, Darlow was surprised to find that most of the information he believed to be hidden was already publicly available. At the end of the meeting, Darlow provided seven topics he wished to explore including Protect and Survive, SRHQs, shelters, and expenditures.⁶⁷ Meanwhile, the Radio 4 programme was becoming increasingly focused on Protect and Survive. Civil defence had taken on greater importance in the public and Lee hoped to add his voice. To that end Thomson and Lee also invited Lord Belstead to appear in a live studio debate following their programme.⁶⁸

Civil defence was also gaining relevancy in Parliament during the Winter of 1980. Tory MP Geraint Morgan asked the Home Secretary if he was prepared to release a "publicity campaign to inform the general population of measures they [could] take to attempt to survive a nuclear attack", clearly referencing Protect and Survive. Home Secretary Whitelaw replied that the matter was part of the ongoing Home Defence Review.⁶⁹ In the House of Lords, Lord

⁶⁷ TNA: HO 322/909, "Note of Informal Meeting with BBC TV (Panorama) 3/1/80," January 3, 1980.

⁶⁸ TNA: HO 322/909, "BBC Preliminary Request for Lord Belstead's Participation," January 16, 1980.

⁶⁹ Messrs. Morgan and Whitelaw. *HC Deb*, 18 January 1980, Vol. 976, Col. 874.

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Belstead answered a question from Baroness Emmet of Amberley in regard to the level of cooperation the Home Office was receiving from Local Authorities. Belstead mentioned that the upcoming Review was progressing rapidly and would provide greater clarity and incentives to Local Authorities. Lord Belstead also responded to an enquiry from Lord Clifford of Chudleigh in regard to public information. The reply from Lord Belstead acknowledged that there was a case for more public information, and it was being considered seriously. Belstead added that the Home Office was still operating under the long-standing proviso that "in order to have its greatest impact, information should wait until this country is under threat of attack".⁷⁰

On January 22nd the F6 Division suggested once again that publishing Protect and Survive could appease the public demand for information and provide motivation for the nation to educate themselves.⁷¹ Buttery had mandated restriction, the Tory Cabinet pushed for openness, and the public grew more aggravated every day that they were kept in the dark. The benefits of publishing Protect and Survive were further detailed in a report F6 had created based on the HDC study. F6 noted "widespread ignorance and apathy" among the British public regarding civil defence. However, these comments were created in the middle of the Winter of 1980 and it is difficult to characterize the frenzy of civil defence debate as apathetic. The demand was audible and growing rapidly. Regardless, the F6 noted that releasing Protect and Survive would dispel all the insinuations that the government was harbouring secret knowledge for their own survival. Increasing public awareness was also thought to add greater pressure to obstinate Local Authorities, strengthen the deterrent, and please the Prime Minister.⁷²

⁷⁰ Lords Belstead, Hawke and Baroness Emmet of Amberley, *HL Deb*, 28 January 1980, Vol. 404. Col. 602-607.

⁷¹ TNA: HO 322/929, "FJ Woodland to Mr. Pemberton: Revised Draft," January 22, 1980.

⁷² TNA: HO 322/929, "Home Office Note in Response to HDO(79)12 and 16," January 22, 1980.

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At the end of January, the Home Office received extraordinary media interest in Protect and Survive. Sally Jones of *Westward TV* wanted to see Protect and Survive for a special on home defence in the Southwest. *The Observer* asked to visit an SRHQ, Thames Television had two programmes, *TV Eye* and *Thames Report*, asking to copy Protect and Survive's video and text, and BBC Radio Bristol wanted a copy of the extracts Radio 4 had recorded. That month, the Home Office received twelve requests for media access to Protect and Survive. The nature of the request played a considerable role in determining which outlets would be granted access. As with the requests from *The Times*, Radio 4 and *Panorama*, the Home Office had to be reassured that production would be politically neutral, not critical of civil defence and certainly not a "hit piece". The Home Office was reluctant to give access too broadly, such as providing information to multiple programmes on a single station. As Buttery had noted in years past, Protect and Survive could not be allowed to become overplayed and the Home Office maintained this position.⁷³

February demonstrated no signs of waning interest in Protect and Survive or civil defence. *The Times* and other newspapers continued to print articles and letters on civil defence. Both Houses of Parliament debated the question of restricted information and Protect and Survive continued to generate notice until its publication in May. In Commons, Tory MP Hugh Fraser called for a return of national service to counter the "growing domination of ... the largest military and armaments machine in history", the Soviet Union. Another Tory MP, Dr. Alan Glyn, noted two institutions that the country currently lacked: "a Home Guard and an organized civil defence system". For Dr. Glyn, a proper civil defence system did not sit on plans waiting for a crisis, rather, it would provide advanced education to the public so that they could then

⁷³ TNA: HO 322/909, "Public Relations Branch Minute for Request for Facilities Meeting," February 1, 1980.

defend themselves adequately.⁷⁴ Dr. Glyn called for a return of national service to prepare the populace and compared the state of the nation to the Saxons who lacked the preparedness to resist the Norman invasion. Write-in opinions and articles in the *Guardian*, however, indicated Fraser and Glyn were in a small minority that welcomed a return of National Service.⁷⁵

A few days later the Home Office received notice from *Panorama* that their documentary on civil defence, now titled "If The Bomb Drops" was set to air on March 10th. *Panorama* also requested Lord Belstead for a post-episode live studio discussion. The opinion around the Home Office was that Lord Belstead had already confirmed he would participate in Radio 4's post-episode debate and that Radio 4 were likely to be "less partial".⁷⁶ Raymond Morris of F6 noted that *Panorama* was attempting to steal Radio 4's thunder by choosing to air on the 10th after Radio 4 was set to air on the 16th. When Radio 4 was informed of *Panorama*'s plans, they attempted to move up their premiere to March 2nd. However, they were unable to prepare their programme in time and returned to the original broadcast date.⁷⁷ By this point, F6 had made arrangements to screen a copy of the Radio 4 programme for involuntary security lapses.⁷⁸ The cassette tape arrived at the Home Office on March 10 and was previewed for Ministerial approval.⁷⁹

The Times continued to report on civil defence as there was obvious interest in the civil defence revelations demonstrated the previous month. In February, the public received their greatest look at Protect and Survive to date as *The Times* called for the restricted booklet to be published and included the first photo extract (Figure 11). The article began by stating Home

⁷⁴ Parliamentary Correspondent, "Parliament, Feb 1, 1980," *The Times*, February 2, 1980.

⁷⁵ Glyn, Dr. Alan. *HC Deb*, 1 February 1980, Vol. 977, Col. 1780-1783.

⁷⁶ TNA: HO 322/909, "David Heaton (Police Department) to Miss Dews (Private Secretary)," February 6, 1980.

⁷⁷ TNA: HO 322/909, "Folder Notes by Raymond Morris on Radio Programme Air Date," February 8, 1980.

⁷⁸ TNA: HO 322/909, "Folder Notes by Raymond Morris," February 27, 1980.

⁷⁹ TNA: HO 322/909, "Folder Notes on Preview Cassette," March 10, 1980.

Secretary Whitelaw was now considering the publication of *Protect and Survive*. Once again Peter Evans reported that *Protect and Survive* was a secret that "the government intended to keep under wraps", building on the forbidden knowledge and bunkers for bureaucrats motif. Peter Evans stated that since January's articles he had received over thirty "angry" inquiries about how the public could obtain *Protect and Survive*. The public anger, it was said, was being generated by the perception that the booklet was being hoarded by a protected elite.⁸⁰



Figure 11 A Charged Introduction: The first image of *Protect and Survive* as it appeared in *The Times* February 7 1980.

Other readers complained about being turned away from the Stationery Office when searching for copies. The staff at the Office were informing searchers that the January 16 *Times* article depicting the cover of *Protect and Survive* was "a mistake". Evans went on to provide some detailed notations of the book's instructions for fortifying a lean-to, as pictured in the article. With a few more snippets, the article concluded with the reminder that the booklet would be printed in a time of international tension. The same edition of *The Times* published a letter to the editor from Vice-Admiral Sir Ian McGeoch who was very much in agreement with Professor Howard's earlier letter regarding the importance of civil defence education.⁸¹

⁸⁰ Ian McGeoch, "Reviving Civil Defence," *The Times*, February 7, 1980.

⁸¹ Peter Evans, "Mr Whitelaw Considers Public Demand for Information on how to Prepare Homes for Attack," *The Times*, February 7 1980.

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Greater public awareness of Protect and Survive was becoming apparent, if not by name, then as the hidden survival information the government was concealing. In Commons on February 8th, Conservative MP Keith Stainton asked Home Secretary Whitelaw if the low level of public information on civil defence would be remedied by releasing the prepared survival documents, to which Whitelaw replied that the Home Defence Review would answer this question when released.⁸² The same day *The Times* reported on seventy MPs signing a motion to revive the CDC. Building from the debate on reinstating national service the previous week, several MPs indicated their concerns over the deteriorating international climate, though the CDC was viewed as entirely different than National Service. An organization titled Civil Aid was also mentioned, as they provided their own civil defence leaflets to fill the gap in public knowledge while petitioning Ministers to publish Protect and Survive.⁸³

February 11th was also notable for another civil defence debate in both the Commons and *The Times*. Peter Evans published a new civil defence article, in which the Civil Aid organization was alleging that the Home Office was planning to halt civil defence volunteerism and sell off their stores of fire and rescue equipment. Civil Aid's report recalled the "care and maintenance" decision of 1968 as well as the continued efforts of successive governments to shut down civil defence. Here Civil Aid had provided the unique theory that the nuclear consensus had operated on a bipartisan mission to eradicate British civil defence. While Civil Aid had produced evidence of their research on British civil defence, negative statements such as this helped ensure that they went mostly unconsidered by the general public. Evans also reported that the Home Defence

⁸² Messrs. Stainton and Whitelaw, *HC Deb*, 8 February 1980, Vol. 978, Col. 374.

⁸³ Home Affairs Correspondent, "MPs Call for New Civil Defence Organization," *The Times*, February 8, 1980.

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Review was labouriously working its way through the Home Office for the past several months while the public clamored for its release.⁸⁴

Later that day, Mrs. Renée Short, Labour MP for Wolverhampton North East, provided the first mention of Protect and Survive in Parliament. Short asked Home Secretary Whitelaw if he would make Protect and Survive free and available to the public. Whitelaw replied with a reference to his statements on February 1st and that Short's question would be answered with the upcoming Home Defence Review. Tory MP Jim Pawsey then asked the Home Secretary if he would take steps to publicize information on protection during war and ensure that Local Authorities had plans for the speedy and efficient evacuation of women and children. Whitelaw answered that most houses provided good protection which could be bolstered by simple DIY measures. The Home Secretary avoided commenting on evacuation and agreed that there might be an advantage to deploying information to the public in peacetime. This too, argued Whitelaw, would be answered in the forthcoming Home Defence Review.⁸⁵

On St. Valentine's Day, February 14th 1980, Peter Evans returned to the popular topic of civil defence. Evans once again reported on the Civil Aid pamphlet and argued its similarity to Protect and Survive. By mid-February Protect and Survive had become a mysterious legend as public imagination began to fill-in the gaps of undisclosed information, often becoming sensationalist and prone to exaggeration. Evans, as others in the media, characterized Protect and Survive as top secret, privileged information which the Home Office was "refusing" to publish until an impending "bomb drop". Civil Aid was being rewarded with significant publicity as they positioned their booklet as a make-shift Protect and Survive. The difference, Evans argued, was

⁸⁴ Peter Evans, "Home Office Wanted to Abolish Civil Defence Voluntary Bodies and Sell Equipment, Civil Aid Says," *The Times*, February 11, 1980.

⁸⁵ Messrs. Pawsey and Whitelaw, Mrs. Renée Short, *HC Deb*, 11 February 1980, Vol. 978, Col. 412 – 414.

the greater practicality of the Civil Aid booklet which emphasized neighbour-based cooperation as opposed to the neo-liberal individualism of Protect and Survive.

The Civil Aid text provided survival information that the public assumed formed the basis of Protect and Survive. The information from Civil Aid included jerry-rigged toilets, getting on with minimal hygiene and tips on forage-based dining, such as bread without yeast, uncooked oatmeal and how to prepare frogs. *The Times* remained relatively neutral though they certainly recognized the dramatic narrative provided by the restricted access to Protect and Survive.⁸⁶

February 20th would provide one of the most significant moments in the long history of British civil defence. Late that night, a debate was held in the House of Commons, with a lengthy speech by Home Office Minister of State, Leon Brittan. Tory MP Robert Banks, the vocal proponent of a rigorous civil defence system then followed with a speech of his own. Speaking in the Commons just before midnight, Banks criticized the Labour party for diminishing civil defence to an anaemic state. The "care and maintenance" decision, as well as the disbanding of the Civil Defence Corps, were described as dangerous errors the Conservative Party had to correct. Banks informed the Commons that after Labour's military cutbacks, a precarious military imbalance developed as the Soviet Union eclipsed NATO's conventional and nuclear abilities. Banks then summarized the present Home Office contingencies for a nuclear attack with a surprising amount of detail.⁸⁷

The secret state and the system of Sub-regions were mentioned as well as Protect and Survive. Banks was also fiercely critical of the programme, arguing that it was not a viable option to recommend people in flats to "live under the kitchen table". Protect and Survive, Banks

⁸⁶ Peter Evans, "Frogs on the Emergency Menu," *The London Times*, February 14, 1980.

⁸⁷ Banks, Robert. *HC Deb*, 20 February 1980, Vol. 979, Col. 620 – 623.

argued, should not be lifted from secrecy as people expect a "more realistic approach". Instead Banks called for a renewed national commitment to civil defence with a national shelter policy, volunteer corps, and the public sale of Protect and Survive, revised to provide instructions for permanent shelters. Banks held in his hand a translated copy of a civil defence handbook from the Soviet Union and lauded their national shelter system as one to be emulated. Tory MP Archie Hamilton spoke next and warned: "the likelihood of there being a nuclear war increases each year. We know the Soviet Union dominates the world". Many people and politicians believed civil defence in the Soviet Union and the United States was more legitimate than in Britain, which was often assumed to be impractical. The Soviet Union and the United States, however, had the twin blessings of size and money, both of which were lacking in 1980s Britain.⁸⁸

Minister Brittan then provided his response by complementing Banks on the efforts of his booklet, *Britain's Home Defence Gamble*, to "pierce the fog of Ministerially imposed secrecy" and that he would like to "[disperse] the mist, if not actually [lift] the veil". Brittan then acknowledged the public frenzy over Protect and Survive that Winter and attempted to clarify the matter. The Home Office was said to have received over 200 letters in the last seven weeks by the public regarding civil defence. This rise in distress was described as natural given the recent Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the American diplomats being held hostage in Iran. Brittan reminded the House that the Home Defence Review, that began "before the current wave of concern", was nearing completion and that the Home Secretary would be publicizing the results soon. The House was assured that the Review provided all the answers they sought, particularly as it related to public information.⁸⁹

⁸⁸ Banks, Robert and Hamilton, Archie. *HC Deb*, 20 February 1980, Vol. 979, Col. 620 – 624.

⁸⁹ Brittan, Leon. *HC Deb*, 20 February 1980, Vol. 979, Col. 625 - 630.

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Brittan famously told the House: "this is not a secret pamphlet, and there is no mystery about it" when describing Protect and Survive. "A central feature of the public debate" argued Brittan, was the perception, perpetuated by the media, that the government had some kind of nefarious motive to conceal Protect and Survive. Brittan addressed one of the central complaints of the public, that the booklet was never intended to be distributed and only existed to maintain the deterrent at the expense of national survival. Brittan explained that Protect and Survive had been shown to many civil and Local Authority staff who attended the HDC courses and that many politicians and journalists had also seen the programme. The only reason it had not been distributed by the Home Office, according to Brittan, was due to the fact that it was created to be dispersed when attack was imminent to ensure "the greatest impact".⁹⁰

The purpose of maintaining the highest impact had been at the centre of Protect and Survive from Buttery's initial conception. Brittan was correct in his announcement of the purpose of the restrictions placed around Protect and Survive. There was no ill intent, Buttery's goal was the opposite, to prevent the programme from losing its sense of immediacy if it were published in peacetime. This is of course precisely what happened when the public and the media had unfettered access to Protect and Survive, it was taken out of context, scrutinized on every level, and mocked mercilessly. Brittan likely agreed with the Buttery mandate judging by his earnest defence of the decision. Then, to the surprise of many in the House and public, this central tenant of Protect and Survive was suddenly removed.

Minister Brittan announced that following a slight update, the Home Office have decided to respond to the public unrest by publishing Protect and Survive. The booklet was said to be published not long after Easter recess and that it would be on sale, rather than distributed. Sale,

⁹⁰ Ibid.

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as opposed to distribution, was a fair compromise by the Home Office, one intended to pacify the perceived conspiracy, while not attracting the attention of the entire nation and inciting panic.

As did *The Times*, the BBC maintained neutrality in their Protect and Survive coverage as mandated by their broadcast license, though they produced many documentaries with provocative titles and images.⁹¹ Thames TV, ITV and other channels were usually more sensationalist, depicting a clear public interest that earned multiple re-airings. It was Labour that surprisingly accused the BBC of impartiality. Labour had expected the BBC to openly condemn Protect and Survive and took their neutrality as an endorsement. The BBC was faulted for "biased and serious distortion" when depicting civil defence as helpful. Labour had harboured their judgement from the BBC decision not to broadcast the very *Threads*-like nuclear war docudrama *The War Game* in 1964. Labour's suspicions solidified after the release of Protect and Survive when the BBC capitalized on the interest generated by the programme.

The broadcast of programmes such as *When the Bomb Drops* were said to accustom the nation to the "idea of an acceptable nuclear war". Opinions only grew worse when the BBC declined to meet a CND delegation before a televised civil defence debate, and then refused to broadcast an EP Thompson disarmament lecture. To Labour, the exclusion of CND from participation presented the organization in such a way that a "comprehensive and effective argument of [their] position [was] made very difficult". At the 1981 Labour Conference it was agreed that the dissemination and rationalization of nuclear arms through the media was "as important as the weapons themselves" and CND should apply "all forms of legitimate pressure" on the BBC.⁹²

⁹¹ Tony Shaw, *British Cinema and the Cold War: The State, Propaganda and Consensus* (I.B.Tauris, 2006).

⁹² CND Add 2/1, "CND Annual Conference 1981 - Resolutions," November 13, 1981, London School of Economics Archive.

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The long-time BBC flagship news-documentary programme *Panorama* had a reputation for balanced reporting and discussions. Despite the reputation, Prime Minister Thatcher was said to have little appreciation for the programme. The programme had written to MP Thatcher to appear on the show before the 1979 General Election, thought they were "rather coldly" denied by Bernard Ingham, Thatcher's Chief Press Officer. It was noted that while the Prime Minister believed a BBC interview would eventually be necessary, she reaffirmed that she had "no taste" for *Panorama*.⁹³

One year after, almost to the day, of being denied an interview with Thatcher, *Panorama* met with F6 Division and the PRB to discuss their upcoming civil defence special. The working title for the special was "*What if the Deterrent Doesn't Deter?*", though it would later be changed to "*If the Bomb Drops...*" soon before broadcast as it was arguably more captivating. *Panorama* had been among the first programmes afforded the opportunity of meeting with the Home Office, though they were unaware that BBC Radio 4 had met with the Home Office a week prior for their own civil defence special (see chapter 4). *Panorama* producer David Darlow met on the morning of January 3rd with Raymond Morris of F6 and G Cotterell of the PRB. As with BBC Radio, *Panorama* was afforded a private meeting with the Home Office Ministers as they had hoped not only for access to the Protect and Survive videos, but also permission to broadcast a small video excerpt. This would be a significant decision as, unlike the printed content, the video media of Protect and Survive was never intended to be declassified, even after the Conservative initiative of civil defence openness.

Darlow was eager though never insistent, deftly working his way towards the Protect and Survive request, reassuring Morris and Cotterell that he was happy to work within whatever

⁹³ THCR 2/6/2/133 part 2, "Note of a Meeting with the Prime Minister on 10 January 1979," January 10, 1979.

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boundaries were laid down by the Home Office. Darlow had already been on Home Office radar as he had been frequenting the BBC archives and contacting a number of Local Authority executives while researching Protect and Survive. F6 and the PRB agreed, if anyone should access Protect and Survive, it should be the BBC as "there was no evidence of a pre-determined slant". At the meeting, Morris informed Darlow of the identically themed BBC Radio 4 programme also set to broadcast in March. Darlow confidently dismissed any idea of conflict as the mediums were so dissimilar. Along with Protect and Survive, Darlow asked to film Fylingdale radar base, an "impressive control" board at the Horsham UKWMO headquarters, the HDC, some "very dated ... filler material" of heavy rescue operations and an SRHQ bunker. While other programmes had made similar requests and were denied, all of Darlow's requests were granted.

Darlow had concealed his two biggest requests until the end of the meeting, requesting an interview a high-ranking Minister, preferably Lord Belstead, and footage from Protect and Survive. Being the first and only television programme to broadcast Protect and Survive was sure to attract a great number of viewers and some prestige for *Panorama*. Realizing the sensitive nature of the request, Darlow reassured Morris and Cotterell that he had "no wish to trespass on sensitive areas" and would use "only the most unambiguous extracts".

Next Darlow attempted to sweeten the deal for Morris and Cotterell, pointing out the great benefits that *Panorama* could provide to the Home Office. It was said by Darlow that "successive UK governments [had a] secretive attitude" about civil defence, particularly compared with countries such as Switzerland (a segment on Swiss civil defence preparations did indeed appear in the programme). Darlow added that revealing some of the precautions the Government had taken could gain a significant amount of public trust. When Morris then handed

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him a copy of the HMSO booklet *Nuclear Weapons*, Darlow was stunned. The booklet contained detailed civil defence measures, both basic and advanced, and contained most of the relevant info that was said to be "withheld from the British public".

Afterward, Morris discussed the meeting with F6 Director JA Howard. Morris noted that it was likely the show would be produced regardless of Home Office input, so it was agreed they might as well participate and manage their own image. Howard agreed that the programme sounded forthright and that Darlow seemed able to strike "a fresh note" with the public, perhaps even ameliorating the current civil defence debates. Morris and Howard enjoyed a laugh over Darlow's request to film "a stockpile" of Protect and Survive booklets as there were none. The booklet was set to be published though Howard remained hesitant to broadcast Protect and

Survive video. When it came to the booklet materials, excerpts had already leaked to the media, but the videos were another matter. At this time the Home Office still adhered to former director Buttery's decree that the videos were never to be previewed by the public for fear of lessening their impact. After much debate, Howard cautiously agreed and began to make arrangements.⁹⁴

On 4 March 1980 at 8:10pm, the *Panorama* episode "If the Bomb Drops..." was first broadcast on BBC1. The programme opened with flashy missile launches, blinking buttons, nuclear Armageddon preppers, and exciting music. Notable host and journalist Jeremy Paxman

Figure 12 *If the Bomb Drops...*: Host Jeremy Paxman welcomes viewers on March 4 1980

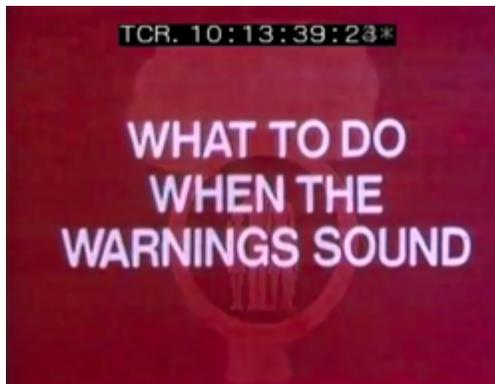


⁹⁴ TNA: HO 322/909, "Note of Informal Meeting with BBC TV (Panorama) 3/1/80."

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then greeted viewers with a simple question: "What preparations do you and me, not the Government, have to survive nuclear attack?" (Figure 12). Paxman reminded viewers that the CDC was disbanded, and the Government believed "there will be no nuclear war, or if there is, no one will survive it". Similarly, to *Threads* four years later, the programme added a content warning and declared that Great Britain would be a "likely target" of any future nuclear war. With preparation however, many Britons could survive, as much as 70%, while Soviet civil defence claimed casualties as low as 5%. The programme then provided clips from the highly influential civil defence content of the 1936 film *Things to Come*. After the bombing of London scene, the episode cut to graphic video of Hiroshima and Nagasaki victims, warning the viewer of the phenomenal deadly capabilities of any nuclear strike.⁹⁵

Figure 13 Introduction: A chilling first look at Protect and Survive



At ten minutes, footage was shown of a lecture at the Home Defence College. The lecturer stated the HO prediction of three to four weeks warning before an attack. Paxman called this a "questionable assumption" and showed the cover for Protect and Survive. Paxman explained that during the warning period "the Government intends to print and distribute" the booklet, though he added, "the HMSO

say they need four weeks just to print the booklet". Surviving a nuclear attack was said to require information and currently "Britain's population is amongst the most ill-informed in Europe". At the thirteen-minute mark, Protect and Survive was first broadcast on television. Paxman's voiceover added that "these films are secret, but we have managed to obtain copies of them".

⁹⁵ Louise Capell, "If the Bomb Drops...", Youtube.com, *Panorama* (BBC Broadcasting House, London, England: BBC One, March 4, 1980), Youtube.com.

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Paxman continued; "they've never been seen before and won't be seen again until nuclear war is imminent. Their advice is intended to be reassuring," stated Paxman, while the unsettling music score of Protect and Survive played (Figure 13).⁹⁶

Paxman then asked "armed with ignorance, what would the people do" in the event of the broadcast of Protect and Survive. This led to a series of man-on-the-street interviews where most interviewees offered apathetic answers such as "I dunno... run for it?" and "You've had it, int' yer!". Returning to the video, a clip extolling the viewer to stay at home was shown, followed by instructions on how to build a fallout shelter when Paxman interjected "here more cracks begin to appear in Britain's civil defence theories".⁹⁷

Panorama recruited a Yorkshire family to build a Protect and Survive shelter which proved quite difficult; securing enough materials was said to be demanding. This would be the first video created depicting the realities of the confining Protect and Survive lean-to. Interestingly, the family provided an answer for the question of pets that was brought up during the creation of Protect and Survive. When asked why they were not mentioned in the booklet, Buttery remarked that his advice would be to kill them, so it was best not to mention them. When Paxman asked the family

Figure 14 In The Doghouse: A family makes room for all members in Protect and Survive fashion



⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

why they brought their dog, the father stated if he did not bring the dog, he would never convince his daughter to enter (Figure 14).⁹⁸

The episode then returned to Protect and Survive footage, playing the segment that reinforced stay-put as the cartoon family was greeted by a series of closed doors while the narrator reminded the viewers that if they were to self-evacuate, the Government may give away their home to another family while authorities in the new borough would not help. This was then juxtaposed with a video of bespectacled physicist and civil defence critic, Bruce Sibley, standing in a herd of cows discussing Protect and Survive. Sibley stated that he would call the programme "Neglect and Die" and that its simplistic advice was "preposterous". Paxman asserted that "the Government wouldn't publish it if it was wrong" to which Sibley replied "I've worked in civil defence for 25 years and I can say the information from the 50s is the same as in Protect and Survive now. Upturned tables, cushions, whitewashed windows ... Damaged houses would let in so much fallout people would be dead in days".⁹⁹

Next Paxman toured a Swiss house, commenting on its formidable and roomy underground bunker which the Swiss government mandated in all new homes since 1960. As the camera panned the man's extensive pantry, it was clear the programme was setting up Protect and Survive as lacking. Darlow's request for a high-ranking Minister was granted as Lord Belstead then explained that the enormous expense to shelter the entire British population precluded the nation from mandating Swiss-style bunkers. Dr. Shirley Summerskill, a long time SAB minister and contributor to Protect and Survive, then remarked that 50p for the booklet was adequate for the negligible level of threat that existed at the time.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

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What followed was a graphic recording of a civil defence exercise, replete with wailing actors in heavy special effects make up to simulate wounds and burns. A very open effort to shock the viewer. While on one hand sensational, the footage was of an actual civil defence training exercise, implying an unbiased attempt at captivating footage. At the half hour mark, video was shown of a long, foreboding hallway into a SHRQ bunker. Paxman stated that it was "a building so secret we cannot show it". The location was not disclosed though it bears a remarkable similarity to the entrance to Kelvedon Hatch (note the identical hook rails along the corridor in Figure 15).¹⁰⁰

Figure 15 Not So Secret State?: The striking similarities between the unknown bunker (right) and Kelvedon Hatch (left) 40 years apart



¹⁰⁰ Photo on left, "Entrance to Kelvedon Hatch" by Joseph Buscemi, July 27 2012.

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Next shown was support for Protect and Survive from Eric Alley, President of the Institute of Civil Defence, followed by the Commissioner's Office in a different regional bunker. This time declared as Hull, both the bunker and Eric Alley would be the subject of a notable CND protest four years later. The footage showed a Commissioner and a full allotment of staff running exercises as Paxman reminded the viewer that they would be working in this bunker knowing that all their families had to depend upon was Protect and Survive. *Panorama* framed the Commissioner as a bit of an odd duck and introduced him as "former accountant Keith Bridge". The viewer was told Bridge would have "total power" after an attack. When the exercise scenario stated that a number of looters were approaching the bunker, Bridge looked to Paxman and flatly stated that he would "deliver the ultimate sanction and instruct they be executed". Later, Bridge produced a peculiar grin when asked if it would be difficult to be sheltered away from his family.¹⁰¹

The programme then played the "casualties" chapter of Protect and Survive, with its infamous instructions to wrap and identify family members in garbage bags. The episode concluded with some footage of a group of civil defence survivalists running drills. It was clear the episode did not intend the viewer to take them seriously as they marched about in full hazmat suits, similar to the ones sold in *Protect and Survive Monthly*. The leader was shown inspecting the suits of the other members, thoroughly ensuring that no skin or air holes were exposed, despite one member's ear comically sticking out. The group launched flares before roaming around a small town in an off-road vehicle. The sound of the driver instructing locals to take cover from the onboard microphone was contrasted with bewildered townsfolk and the jovial

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

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march from *The Great Escape* layered over the footage. Before the credits rolled Paxman reminded the viewer "it's funny now, but after an attack it could be all we have".¹⁰²

The following morning *The Times* reviewed the programme as "intelligent" and "necessarily frightening". Critic Michael Church noted that he had learned that in the event of an attack "a Government film" would run on television telling him to stay home. Meanwhile, Church and his home would be vaporized after a bomb exploded over Westminster. The Swiss, Church noted, were said to have their own shelters while "careworn" Lord Belstead was quoted as "reviewing" the matter of civil defence. Ultimately the episode was said to contain great "importance" for the glimpses of Armageddon it displayed.¹⁰³

The similarly themed BBC Radio 4 programme *Can the UK Survive Nuclear War?* had been notably lenient with Protect and Survive, describing it as useful advice for families on the outskirts of blast sites. While *Panorama* took the occasional jab at Protect and Survive, it was mostly a fair and honest public introduction to the programme. F6 Director Howard, on the other hand, believed *Panorama* was more critical of the programme than he had anticipated. F6 Minister David Heaton had the forethought to inform Lord Belstead that while both *Panorama* and BBC Radio wished to interview him, Radio 4 was "more likely to be objective". Unfortunately, Belstead was forced to drop out of the Radio 4 interview due to Parliamentary business and so settled with *Panorama*.¹⁰⁴ When reviewing the BBC Radio 4 programme, noted unilateral activist Jonathan Dimpleby remarked that Protect and Survive's "chilling inadequacies had already been well exposed by *Panorama*" last week.¹⁰⁵

Following the broadcast, Paxman wrote an article for *The Listener*, discussing the

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Michael Church, "Panorama," *The Times*, March 11, 1980.

¹⁰⁴ TNA: HO 322/909, "BBC Preliminary Request for Lord Belstead's Participation," January 16, 1980.

¹⁰⁵ Jonathan Dimpleby, "Who's Afraid of the Bomb?," *The Listener*, April 10, 1980.

episode. While Protect and Survive was "the cornerstone of civil defence policy", Paxman believed British civil defence "always had a faintly ridiculous air about it". Paxman recalled laughing at "middle-aged physics masters" running exercises with Geiger counters on cold winter nights "as if they could save us from the Bomb". There was a morose complacency in his ignorance of "meaningless" civil defence as a nuclear strike was supposed to be "The End of Civilization as We Know It". The Home Office was touting Protect and Survive, arguing it could save upwards of 30 million Britons. "In a major concession to public disquiet" salvation was said to be at hand as anyone "who cared to invest 50p" would soon be able to buy the booklet. Paxman reminded the reader that the MOD suggested it was possible for a war to kick off in a matter of days while the HMSO required a month for printing alone.¹⁰⁶

Paxman's tone was fairly glib, a sense of fear mixed with dejection. Protect and Survive said to build a lean-to, though when *Panorama* attempted to build their own, they found it required 100 bin bags filled with over a ton of earth, something Paxman sardonically described as "readily available to most of the population". For Paxman, Britain had "missed the boat" when they passed on mandating bunkers in every home during "the building boom of the Sixties". By the 1980s, it would be too expensive, though he was comforted that "the cuckoo clock will survive Armageddon". Evacuation would also be a "non-starter" with the amount of fallout expected to hang over Britain after an attack. Fortunately, the Government had "taken steps to protect itself" in 17 SRHQs, each with a junior minister and "about 200 civil servants".¹⁰⁷

Paxman wondered how the civil servants would get on, knowing the fate of their families would be decided by Protect and Survive. The regional government system was said to be "all

¹⁰⁶ Jeremy Paxman, "If the Bomb Drops..." *The Listener*, March 20, 1980.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

conjecture” anyways as three of the SRHQs had yet to be built and the one for North Wales had yet to even decide on a plot of land. Paxman found the entire idea of regional government to be “wildly optimistic” as government was more likely to come down to the Local Authority level. The article concluded with some parting shots at Keith Bridge, the “softly spoken man, looking every inch the accountant he [was] by training”. Ultimately, Paxman acknowledged it was extremely difficult to spend vast sums of money during the tough times of the 1980s on facilities that, “with any luck, would never be used”. Given a choice between public shelters and new hospitals, it was easy for Paxman to see which way the Tories should go. In the end, Paxman hoped the day never came that the reader would have to use Protect and Survive, however if they did, he asked how they would feel crawling into “cramped home-made shelters, and where would [they] find all those old physics teachers?”¹⁰⁸

The Listener also printed a letters column that touched on many elements of the Protect and Survive debate, displaying a mixed public reception of the episode (Figure 16). Before *Panorama*, Neil Feldman of Nottingham assumed “the general public and so-called officials” were aware of the effects of nuclear weapons, though now he was not quite sure. To Feldman, it was “ludicrous” that the Government experts could talk “in a smug, callous and calculated manner of the annihilation of 30%” of the public when adhering to Protect and Survive. Feldman then wondered why *Panorama* did not discuss the even more catastrophic effects of a nuclear strike on a nuclear power station.

Figure 16 Punchline: A comic at the expense of Protect and Survive in *The Listener*, March 20 1980



¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

Chapter 6 - "This is Not a Secret Pamphlet": The First Looks of Protect and Survive

Arnold Knebel and his wife were "appalled at *Panorama*'s lack of balance". They were perplexed how the programme could imply that the nation could survive if billions were spent on shelters when Lord Noel-Baker stated there was no defence against atomic war. WGA Watson of Ipswich then lamented that *Panorama* was not shown on "all three channels" as it provided insight on what was in store for "ordinary people" while "the little Hitlers" exercised "unlimited power" from their underground hidey-holes. The other fault Watson had with the programme was that it presented nuclear war as a "natural disaster over which [the public] had no control" and could only concoct schemes such as Protect and Survive.

Mr. Williamson of Edinburgh accused *Panorama* of harbouring the same faults as Protect and Survive, namely that the "naïve contents" of the booklet and programme "contributed towards the psychological preparation" of the public to accept nuclear weapons. Others despised the "unnerving calmness" in *Panorama*'s depiction of Protect and Survive. Roger Bolton, editor for *Panorama*, wrote in with his own reply. Bolton claimed that the episode made a deliberate effort not to "frighten or upset viewers" and that the general tone was supposed to indicate that a nuclear attack was "indeed very unlikely". What the show attempted to convey were the differences between survival plans for the public compared to the Government. However, Bolton maintained the neutrality of the programme, stating that it was "not for *Panorama* to say" if such civil defence policies were "correct", as they only intended to inform the public.¹⁰⁹

Since the start of the Home Defence Review, the Home Office had begun to consider the notion of publishing Protect and Survive. The reluctance to publish was attributed to the Home

¹⁰⁹ "LETTERS - The Future of War: Panorama on Nuclear Defence," *The Listener*, March 20, 1980.

Chapter 6 - "This is Not a Secret Pamphlet": The First Looks of Protect and Survive

Office fear that the booklet was too basic in its information and would be ridiculed and then ignored. They would be half correct: Protect and Survive was indeed about to be ridiculed, but it certainly was not going to be ignored.¹¹⁰

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

Chapter 7 “Under the Kitchen Table with Tins of Baked Beans”: The Release of Protect and Survive

On February 22 1980, Peter Hennessy was the first to announce that the Home Office had decided to publish Protect and Survive in the coming months after considerable public prodding. Hennessy reported on the dearth of information on surviving conventional attack, a topic the Home Office had debated extensively for the previous four months. The anticipated Parliamentary speech on the results of the Review was said to be nearly completed, pending “finishing touches” by the Prime Minister and the Cabinet Defence and Overseas Committee. Not only was Protect and Survive now confirmed for release, the Home Office Review promised further information on conventional attack as civil defence was continuing to dominate public discourse. Peter Hennessy also reported that a “secret” Cabinet committee had refused to reform the CDC but were allocating money for volunteer organizations with similar missions. Once again, the Home Defence Review was said to be completed after Easter. The Review, Hennessy concluded, was hotly anticipated inside and outside the government as both were caught up in the whirlwind of civil defence at the start of 1980.¹

With demand from the public to access Protect and Survive growing, combined with the Conservative Party’s emphasis on openness around civil defence, the Home Office worked towards the publication of Protect and Survive. Security around the programme had become so lax the Home Office inadvertently began publishing the booklet without their notice. Despite the leaks that already revealed the contents of the booklet, the reaction to the programme was

¹ Peter Hennessy, “Ministers Reject a New Civil Defence Corps in Favour of Reliance on Voluntary Groups,” *The Times*, February 22, 1980.

Chapter 7 – “Under the Kitchen Table with Tins of Baked Beans”: The Release of Protect and Survive

surprisingly critical, spurred on by Labour and the CND who were anticipating the opportunity to attack the nuclear deterrent via the Conservative plans for civil defence.

In the same issue, *The Times* continued to discuss the notable events in the Commons on the 20th. The second article chose to emphasize the mention of revising Protect and Survive. The article mentioned Minister Brittan’s comments the previous night, announcing the forthcoming speech on the Home Defence Review, as a milestone in progressively increasing public information. The Review promised detailed discussion of nuclear and conventional attack survival as well as the importance of civil defence to the maintenance of the deterrent. This was, naturally, opposed by Labour’s strategy of unilateralism. The decision not to publish Protect and Survive was also discussed. The Minister’s statement, “this is not a secret pamphlet, and there is no mystery about it”, continued to capture public interest. “The time had come”, according to the article, for the public to finally receive the hidden knowledge they had demanded.²

A few days later, Peter Hennessy provided another article on civil defence contingencies. Prime Minister Thatcher was insisting her Ministers follow her example and take part in transition to war exercises. Typically, civil servants would play the role of Ministers. Prime Minister Thatcher now played her part in nuclear launch drills and asked the same of her Ministers as civil defence interest abounded within the halls of government. Thatcher wanted to familiarize herself with the Government War Book which was recently updated during Buttery’s time as director of F6. The Prime Minister’s interest in running through doomsday drills was depicted as quite an odd thing for a Prime Minister to do. Hennessy was particularly interested in the role of Chief Press Secretary however, who would have been tasked with commandeering national media to distribute and withhold relevant information. The concept of a Chief Press

² “Revision of Pamphlet on UK Civil Defence,” *The Times*, February 22, 1980.

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Secretary manipulating information in a crisis was described as an adversarial conflict between the government and the public with Orwellian overtones.³

The following day Peter Evans and Laurence Godfrey released an article with a focus on the casualties of nuclear war. The story was more shocking in tone when compared to Hennessy’s reports. Evans and Godfrey discussed the horror of government officials dealing with mass casualties after an attack due to inadequate shelter policies and evacuation plans. The forbidden information motif returned as the article quoted Home Office Circular ES1/1976. The circular warned that it may offend some and that its contents regarding stay-put should be restricted “to those who have a need to know”, very much implying the public did not have such a need. Evans and Godfrey pushed a narrative that the government had been caught scheming.

The remainder of the article was mostly doom and gloom, discussing the need for ad hoc mass burials without consideration for identification or religious beliefs. It is clear that when compared to his colleague Peter Hennessy, Evans was the sensationalist, not opposed to provocative articles. The 1977 DHSS study titled *Health Service Arrangements for Dealing with Major Accidents* was also quoted, though it was unattributed. The study advised that medical professionals should “not be wasted” by exposing them to fallout in the first two weeks following an attack and those suffering from radiation sickness would be denied treatment. The article framed the government as a significant obstacle to public health and safety.⁴

Hennessy returned to the topic of national shelters in March, with a headline stating that shelters could protect 60% of the public from an attack. Hennessy reported on the civil defence exercises carried out at the HDC and once again mentioned that the 1968 Wilson government

³ Peter Hennessy, “Whitehall Brief: Thatcher Interest in ‘doomsday’ Role,” *The Times*, February 26, 1980.

⁴ Peter Evans and Lawrence Godfrey, “Individual Beliefs May Be Offended, Government Says,” *The Times*, February 27, 1980.

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“cut the heart out of British civil defence”. Hennessy was encouraging of the Conservative efforts to revitalize civil defence and compel otherwise immobile Local Authorities. While Evans typically attempted to shock readers, Hennessy argued that the notion of increased openness regarding civil defence “carried no weight in Whitehall” until Home Secretary Whitelaw’s Home Defence Review. Years of restricted access to Protect and Survive had forced some Local Authorities to create their own civil defence preparations while others, typically Labour supporting districts, made little to no efforts.⁵

Back in the House of Lords, debates on the subject of civil defence steadily continued. During one statement, Lord Clifford of Chudleigh argued forcefully that the Home Office should not delay the publication of Protect and Survive any longer. It was also argued that the booklet should be rewritten with information for farmers and protection from biological and chemical attack. The Home Office excuse that secrecy prevented panic was disputed as the Lord contended that it was better to have the public panickily hording tinned food now than when it would be too late. Lord Belstead reprised his role of defender of the Home Office and reminded the House once again that the upcoming Home Defence Review would clarify the role of civil defence in the maintenance of the deterrent. Belstead reminded the Lords that “there [was] nothing secret” about Protect and Survive and that 2,250 copies of the booklet had been distributed for HDC training and thousands of copies would be sold following the Review.⁶

Lord Noel-Baker remained a staunch critic of Conservative civil defence planning, having expressed his opinions in *The Times* and the House of Lords. On the 5th, Noel-Baker emphasized that nuclear war could not be survived and would equal national oblivion. Lord

⁵ Hennessy, “Whitehall Brief,” March 4, 1980.

⁶ Lords Clifford of Chudleigh, Belstead, Noel-Baker, Henley, Mottistone and Earl Cathcart, *HL Deb*, 5 March 1980, Vol. 406, Col. 260 – 386.

Chapter 7 – “Under the Kitchen Table with Tins of Baked Beans”: The Release of Protect and Survive

Noel-Baker was outraged that the Home Office was about to publish the “picture booklet” called Protect and Survive as a suitable form of protection in nuclear war. He was openly shocked by the “obscene gentility” that was preventing the public from knowing the true facts of war. The public, it was argued, had a right to know the harsh truths that in nuclear war there was no survival.

Noel-Baker promoted the Labour view that no protections, aside from unilateralism, could protect the public from a nuclear bomb. The Labour viewpoint was gaining controversy as it grew in similarity to CND’s 1980s platform. Earl Cathcart countered Noel-Baker’s statements with his belief that there would be some survivors in war and the government had a duty to help these people. Noel-Baker and Cathcart’s views exemplified the conflicting civil defence ideologies between the parties who now operated outside the nuclear consensus. Lord Mottistone reflected on his own harrowing experience of visiting Hiroshima six months after the blast. In his understanding of nuclear attack, the Government was not being wasteful, there would be survivors, and they would absolutely need the information within Protect and Survive. Cathcart and Mottistone continued to argue that civil defence was not a wasted effort.⁷

Lord Henley opined on the difficulty he encountered while attempting to obtain a copy of Protect and Survive. Even as a Lord, Henley was told he could not have a copy as there was already a photocopy in the Library of the House of Commons. Now that the Home Office was publishing the booklet, Lord Henley wondered if that would be the extent of the Government’s actions. Protect and Survive could not simply be placed on shelves, it needed to be “pushed down people’s throats” to ensure its contents were realized. The public needed to know, according to Lord Henley, that the official advice was to hide under the kitchen table with tins of

⁷ *Ibid.*

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baked beans. The booklet, Henley contended sarcastically, had to be placed in libraries and public spaces so that everyone could find out “how to build our bomb proof shelters”.⁸

Lord Belstead informed Lord Henley that, as he stated earlier in the debate, Protect and Survive would be printed at a very reasonable price after the Easter Recess. Anyone interested in having a copy of the booklet would easily be able to obtain as many copies as they wished. Furthermore, Belstead continued, the Home Office had considered shelter designs that exceed the protection levels of Protect and Survive. These designs were at noticeably higher costs but would be published in a separate booklet. In conclusion, Belstead repeated that the Review was nearing completion and would answer any further questions. There was never any talk within the Home Office of distributing Protect and Survive to the entire nation for free, not just for financial reasons, but for the panicked response by the public as their Government mailed the entire country a booklet on emergency shelter education.⁹

The care and maintenance decision had been a longstanding complaint within the Home Office, and in 1980 it was becoming a noticeable public complaint as well. Following the House of Lords debate, *The Times* noted once again that civil defence was left to wither on the vine in 1968, and public information needed to become a priority of the Conservative government. The article emphasized Belstead’s insistence that civil defence was a primary focus of the current government and noted the HDC study and upcoming Home Defence Review as Conservative efforts. Protect and Survive was being prepared for open publication, which was said to represent the modern differences between the Conservative and Labour approaches to civil defence. Labour supporter Lord Noel-Baker was quoted on his oft-shared beliefs that civil defence was

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

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hollow and any attempts, such as the upcoming booklet publication, were “an outrage”.¹⁰

Secretary of Defence Francis Pym believed that Lord Noel-Baker held a minority view and restated the Government’s position that support for the deterrent was the best prevention to war.¹¹

As planned, *Panorama* aired their special investigation on Protect and Survive on March 10th.¹² The programme attracted considerable attention and was categorized by *The Times* as unbiased the day after it aired.¹³ Word of the episode reached as far as Australia as a Sydney television station offered to pay as much as £54.63 for a copy.¹⁴ A programme entitled *Yorkshire TV* asked the Home Office for the specific clip that *Panorama* showed as “it [was] the most controversial”.¹⁵

The Radio 4 programme aired on the 16th and began with explosions while the voiceover spoke about the impossibility of running from or winning a nuclear war. The listener was captured with the sound of an air siren and a narrator stating that this was the sound of nuclear war. The narrator informed the listener that the programme would consider where and when a nuclear war could begin and the Spetznaz were listed as a significant danger, as they had been at the HDC conference. The programme also stated that since the election, the Conservative government had increased military spending more than any other NATO member.

The show moved along to a segment entitled “Where’s your shelter?”. The Government, it was said, would not provide protection from nuclear attack, nor would they help people

¹⁰ Unattributed, “Dangers Facing Britain with No Dad’s Army or Enough Reserves,” *The Times*, March 6, 1980.

¹¹ Parliamentary Correspondent, “Anxiety over Provision of Civil Defence,” *The Times*, March 12, 1980.

¹² Covered further in the following chapter.

¹³ Church, “Panorama.”

¹⁴ TNA: INF6/2531, “Una Curtin to Angel Rea Re: Sale of Two Sony U-Matic Videocassettes Via the Home Office,” September 8, 1980.

¹⁵ TNA: INF6/2531, “COI Memo Re: Sale to Sydney and Yorks TV,” September 1980.

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evacuate, aside from Ministers and civil staff. Radio 4 employed many of the protected elites tropes that were successful for the media . These facts were alarming according to the programme, yet they were said to be entirely true, these were the policies of the Government. The programme then explained the rigors of the secret state, described as “the regions system”. Stay-put was once again explained to be government policy, though most of the public was unofficially expected to “head for the hills”. Unmarked burials, looting and military justice were mentioned as possibilities, likely unsubstantiated attempts to shock the listener. A UKCICC representative was quoted as arguing that public information, civil defence spending, and chemical attack protection were all lacking in Great Britain.

The programme then challenged the listener to suppose that an hour after programme aired, the USSR were to launch 80 nuclear missiles: “how would we know?”. The answer was stated to be the broadcasting of a pre-recorded BBC emergency warning. Radio 4 made sure to underscore that the Government had given them exclusive access to these recordings and that few at BBC Broadcasting House even knew of their existence. Listeners were told that if missiles had launched, they would hear the following recording and they then played an extended audio clip from Protect and Survive. The excerpt coldly stated that “fallout can kill” and that “no place in the UK is safer than any other, stay where you are and build a shelter”.

The programme also provided further examples of the “Wartime Broadcasting System” but never mentioned Protect and Survive by name. This was an odd omission as there was no evidence that the Home Office suggested that the name of the campaign should be restricted. The programme went on to state that “the Government is at long last publishing a handbook on survival” yet continued to withhold the title of handbook. It is unknown if Buttery had been

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listening to the programme, but if he was, he very likely cringed at the description of the unnamed campaign materials as “a handbook”, a description he loathed while with F6.

The programme went on to discuss the type of attack Britain could expect, the amount spent on civil defence, and the relative superiority of other nation’s civil defence systems. These comparisons likely inspired contempt that the Government was not providing Britain with the same securities as other nations. The show concluded by stating that they avoided discussion of who would win any future war and played a soundclip of a Soviet general unemotionally explaining that in any future nuclear war “there [would] be no winner”.¹⁶

The following morning *The Times* reported on the Radio 4 programme as well as the live studio discussion. Lord Belstead was quoted as saying 15 million people could survive a nuclear attack, but as many as 30 million could survive if the advice in Protect and Survive was followed. Responding to a question about the lack of national shelters, Belstead reiterated that no underground shelter, despite what some Local Authorities had stated, would provide effective protection from the blast and heat of a direct nuclear attack. With a comprehensive shelter policy, which Belstead readily admitted was not financially viable, the public would “flee from the towns and cities in large numbers in a crisis”. This exodus was thought to expose a greater number of casualties to fallout and blast. Lord Belstead also optimistically added that the Government was going “to do more than publish Protect and Survive”.¹⁷

Public interest in civil defence continued unabated throughout March following the Radio 4 programme. Tom McKitterick wrote into *The Times* on the 22nd of March and noted what he believed to be sensationalist discussions about nuclear war that were taking place in the British

¹⁶ TNA: HO 322/909, “Transcript of BBC Radio Program ‘Can UK Survive War?,’” January 1980.

¹⁷ Unattributed, “Nuclear Safety Book ‘Could Save 15 Million,’” *The Times*, March 17, 1980.

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media. The Radio 4 programme was dismissively brought up, as well as its suggestion that a Third World War could occur within 18 months. The life-saving potential of the advice within Protect and Survive did little to comfort McKitterick. After his criticism, McKitterick took a philosophical stroll, discussing with the reader his concept of the deterrent and if the reasoning behind spending billions on defence was simply cultural insanity.¹⁸

Four days later, *The Times* returned to the topic of Protect and Survive with an article by Lawrence Freedman, Head of Policy Studies at the Royal Institute of International Affairs. “Recent months,” began Freedman, “had seen a major revival of interest in civil defence, reflected most notably in *The Times*”. The opening sentence was correct in its observation of interest and the article also republished the lean-to photo from Protect and Survive. Freedman went on to point out the nature of the now fractured nuclear consensus, though he did not call it by this name. Instead, Freedman theorized that the decades of inaction, by both parties, had been overtaken by a crescendo of public and political interest, set to peak with the upcoming Home Defence Review. Undoubtedly, the end of the nuclear consensus was felt by the British public in the Winter of 1980, even if it was not entirely realized at the time. The weeks of debate and planning, hinting at clandestine government secrets, were all coming to the surface at an unprecedented level. Demand for civil defence information had reached a highpoint that had never been seen.¹⁹

The Winter of 1980 may have been the pinnacle of interest in Protect and Survive, though the programme would continue to seep into popular culture throughout the decade. Freedman pondered the DIY nature of the advice inside Protect and Survive and questioned its efficacy. In

¹⁸ T. E. M. McKitterick and Allan J. Bowers, “Averting the Perils of Nuclear Warfare,” *The London Times*, March 22, 1980.

¹⁹ Lawrence Freedman, “Does Civil Defence Claim Too Much?,” *The Times*, March 26, 1980.

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contrast to the DIY method, Freedman noted that some MPs were calling for a national shelter policy, public training and evacuation contingencies. These ideas had all been through the mill of discussion within the Home Office, but they were fairly novel debates for the public. Freedman encapsulated the entire Conservative stance on the deterrent: the best nuclear defence was nuclear offence. Billions could be spent burrowing into the ground, and all it would require for the Soviet Union to counter these preparations would be a handful more missiles. As Protect and Survive stated, Britain was simply too “small, centralized and densely populated” to be effectively defended from nuclear attack. Though the idea was not mentioned in the article, Freedman was utilizing the same reasoning that fostered the end of the nuclear consensus. Nuclear weapons had become a question with a choice of two answers: The deterrent and the Conservatives, or disarmament and Labour. It was time for the public to decide which option would provide the greatest security.²⁰

Freedman then discussed the role of civil defence in Great Britain. If the Soviet Union wished to truly annihilate the nation, they possessed enough weaponry to destroy the United Kingdom ten times over. However, if the Soviet Union used limited strategic targeting, civil defence and fallout resistance would save millions. This was the reason, argued Freedman, that so many neutral European countries were investing in civil defence: they feared the plumes of fallout wafting towards them after an attack outside their borders. As Protect and Survive extolled, mass evacuation could ultimately move the public *into* areas of fallout, and these complicated issues were considered within the article.

The release of Protect and Survive, as well as the resulting discussions, became a brilliant example of discourse between a government and its citizenry during the tensions of the Cold

²⁰ Ibid.

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War. As Freedman observed, “a civil defence policy reflects the relationship between the Government and the people”. In the dictatorial Soviet Union, it was said that the government manipulated morale by force through mandated civil defence training and shelter schemes. In the United States, the free public expected to turn to the individualism of personal shelters protected with firearms. In British democracy, “honesty and openness” would be required, and through public discussion, a better answer than the extremes of the Superpowers would be found.²¹

Similarly, to the push to publish *Protect and Survive*, there was a high-level impetus for the new government to deliver the Home Defence Review expeditiously, especially as NATO had begun to stress an increase in national preparedness. JA Pemberton of F6 wrote to Colonel Stevenson of the Cabinet and noted that President Carter had personally emphasized enhanced civil preparedness both within the US and the Alliance. The results of the Home Defence Review were hotly anticipated to demonstrate to the British public, and to NATO members, that Britain was serious about defending the nation while serving as forward base during a conflict.²²

Following the announcement of the publication of *Protect and Survive*, a pivotal meeting with the Defence and Overseas Cabinet Committee (OD) was set by Home Secretary Whitelaw for March 20th. The purpose of the meeting was to demonstrate the progress of the Home Defence Review (HDR) and set parameters for the Home Secretary’s speech to Parliament. A preliminary draft of the HDR was prepared which summarized the history of civil defence and extrapolated all the recommendations gathered from the HDC Conference and other internal research. The HDR defended stay-put, arguing that the alternative of transporting some 20 million Britons during an attack would expose them to fallout without protection. The concept of

²¹ Ibid.

²² TNA: HO 322/937, “Home Defence Review: NATO Implications,” March 18, 1980.

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a national shelter system had been dismissed as financially unreasonable at an estimated cost of £15 billion. The Review noted the “widespread ignorance” of the public, media and certain government officials regarding civil defence preparations. This public ignorance was considered to be a major flaw in the current assessment of civil defence. The ignorance was said to have led to either public apathy or fierce opposition to the credulity of government advice. Publishing *Protect and Survive* and removing the perceived veil of secrecy over the government’s contingencies was an effective and affordable option. The booklet would be released while the videos would remain restricted to protect their “impact” if needed, much in the same manner that Buttery defended the publication of the booklet several years earlier.²³

In his status report to the Cabinet, Home Secretary Whitelaw indicated that following care and maintenance, there were “no plans for shelter or evacuation of the civil population”. Whitelaw reiterated the Home Office belief that the perceived neglect of public protection would seriously “undermine the credibility” of the deterrent. Whitelaw, and the Home Office, were entirely aware of the surge in public interest in civil defence in the previous months stating: “[the] increasing concern about civil defence in the Parliament and the media, and our supporters will expect action to follow the Review”. The Home Secretary initiated the Review with the goal of finding a cost-effective method of increasing civil defence standards in Britain and publishing *Protect and Survive* was seen as a vital part of the solution.²⁴

F6 and the Home Office prepared several reports on the findings of the HDR that the Home Secretary could present to the OD. One such report argued that the public was entirely

²³ TNA: HO 322/937, “Home Defence Review 1980 - The Current State of Civil Preparedness Report by the Home Defence Planning Sub-Committee,” March 19, 1980.

²⁴ TNA: HO 322/937, “Defence and Oversea Policy Cabinet Committee - Memorandum by the Secretary of State for the Home Department,” March 13, 1980.

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uniformed about the reality of national threats or the measures taken for their protection. This lack of public awareness was viewed as a major concern for the Conservative government who inextricably connected the value of the deterrent to the strength of civil defence. A perceived lack of national protection was thought likely to impede any future government decision to launch retaliatory missiles and weaken the morale of troops abroad, thus jeopardizing “the credibility of Britain’s deterrent strategy”. Protect and Survive took on greater importance as it was seen as a remedy to the problem of public perception, military morale and the deterrent. Approval to publish Protect and Survive found little resistance within government, the difficulty was in other associated civil defence expenditures in the HDR.²⁵

Whitelaw prepared a summary of his recommendations to the OD, and forwarded the draft to Brian Cubbon, Undersecretary of State for the Home Department, Leon Brittan, and Lord Belstead for further input. Secretary Whitelaw believed the fundamental obstacle to instituting the findings of the HDR was an “interdepartmental” obstacle. The required funding would have to be found within other Home Office departments. Whitelaw provided three recommendations he considered to be the absolute “bare minimum” of action:

- 1) Harness the efforts of already operating volunteer agencies
- 2) “Increase the effectiveness” of the UKWMO
- 3) Increase public information starting with the sale of Protect and Survive.²⁶

The publication of Protect and Survive was seen as very cost efficient, a crucial factor at a time of significant government cutbacks. Altogether, the publication of Protect and Survive would cost the Home Office £100,000, though it was considered that the booklet could be “self-

²⁵ TNA: HO 322/937, “Review of Home Defence Planning,” March 17, 1980.

²⁶ TNA: HO 322/937, “Defence and Oversea Policy Cabinet Committee - Memorandum by the Secretary of State for the Home Department,” March 13, 1980.

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financing” with enough sales. This was particularly exciting as self-financing was not a phrase typically connected with government initiatives.²⁷

On March 13th Robert Armstrong, Cabinet Secretary, held a meeting to discuss the report and speech draft that would go to the OD on the 20th. Brian Cubbon stated that the Home Secretary was working to counter the “growing public dissatisfaction” with civil defence that could prove detrimental to the nuclear deterrent.. The recommendations were estimated to cost £3 million in 1980, rising each year to £5.4 million by 1985. Armstrong agreed that more needed to be done but thought the OD would require more evidence of effectiveness in the proposals before any approved any decisions.²⁸

“The main problem” with the HDR was said to be financial, though selling Protect and Survive was seen as a first step to securing further investment.²⁹ Money was always a problem for civil defence, and the HDR proposals were rewritten several times in an attempt for Treasury approval. The Treasury approved of the concept of providing better information for the public but insisted that any increased funding for civil defence had to come from within the Home Office. It was thought that open debate on the prohibitive costs of national shelters would help public realize their impossibility. However, the Treasury repeatedly turned down the HDR reports as unable to convince them of their financial solvency. If the Home Office could implement their changes without increased expenditure, it was very likely the Treasury would not care what they did, as long as it did not cost more funding.³⁰

²⁷ TNA: HO 322/937, “Meeting of Defence and Overseas Policy Committee (OD) on 20 March - Brief for Home Secretary,” March 18, 1980.

²⁸ TNA: HO 322/934, “Note for the Record - Future United Kingdom Defence Policy,” March 14, 1980.

²⁹ TNA: HO 322/937, “RJ Andrew to Sir Brian Cubbon - Home Defence Review,” March 14, 1980.

³⁰ TNA: HO 322/937, “Cabinet - Official Committee on Home Defence (HDO) 1st Meeting Notes,” March 12, 1980.

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At the meeting on the 20th the OD considered all the documents and the draft of the Home Secretary’s public statement. Several matters were quickly agreed upon by the F6 staff and Cabinet Ministers. A Parliamentary statement from the Home Secretary discussing the government’s intentions to reinvest in civil defence was considered a sound idea. The Home Secretary was told to aim for an “undramatic” statement that diminished public concerns, discussed the preliminary improvements, and left the possibility of further improvements in the future open without raising expectations.³¹

While future impact may have been degraded, the Ministers agreed with Whitelaw that Protect and Survive should be sold to the public. The timing of the release was left ambiguous with a general sentiment that it would be more impressive if it were announced in Parliament first and then placed on sale. However, Ministers stressed that it would be “unwise” to actively promote sales of Protect and Survive. Ministers worried they could incite panic by repeatedly advertising the sale of the booklet. It was feared that the publication of Protect and Survive might foster the impression that the government believed war to be imminent. Protect and Survive was also seen as only concerned with nuclear attack, leaving the matter of conventional attack conspicuously absent. The Ministers reaffirmed that civil defence was an integral part of national defence and Protect and Survive played its part as support for the strength of the deterrent. Civil defense measures to protect from conventional bombing would be left to volunteer associations and Local Authorities and not the central government.³²

³¹ TNA: CAB 134/4367, “Minutes of Cabinet Meeting on March 20 1980 with Defence and Overseas Policy Committee and Home Office,” March 20, 1980.

³² TNA: HO 322/937, “Note to Mr. Pemberton from Mr. Howard (Ministerial Consideration of Home Defence Review),” March 25, 1980.

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Whitelaw became enthusiastic about the possibilities of the Conservatives being associated with the reinvigoration of home defence. The Home Secretary was so enthusiastic he began to bristle at the idea of an “undramatic” statement and looked to push through more recommendations in the HDR. Whitelaw then began to add to the draft, stating that the government’s stay-put policy would be re-examined, and a national shelter policy would be considered.³³

Before the letter was sent to the Chancellor, F6 sent a copy, along with the speech draft, to the Treasury. In the draft statement, where Whitelaw had written that Protect and Survive was only a beginning and that an even more comprehensive programme would be researched, the Treasury simply wrote: “A hostage to good fortune, going beyond what was agreed”.³⁴ The Treasury was content with the sale of Protect and Survive but not with any promise of further studies, though Treasury Minister J. Gulvin, requested a copy of Protect and Survive for himself.³⁵

Treasury Undersecretary Miss. Jennifer Forsyth argued that the speech went beyond anything the Treasury could recommend to the Chancellor. It was better to disappoint now, argued Forsyth, than to make false promises for later. Additionally, Forsyth added that she would “advise the Chancellor to oppose” the implications in the draft that substantial sums from the Contingency Reserve would go towards further improvements. The Treasury would not approve any statement that called for increased funding of civil defence that did not come from current Home Office expenditures. Furthermore, Forsyth found the description of the threat to nation as

³³ TNA: HO 322/937, “Draft Report on Meeting with Defence and Overseas Policy Committee on 20 March,” April 14, 1980.

³⁴ TNA: HO 322/937, “CH Taylor to JA Howard, F6,” April 8, 1980.

³⁵ TNA: HO 322/937, “RM Hoare to J Gulvin Re: Home Defence Review,” April 11, 1980.

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“alarmist” and at odds with the statement’s message that the sale of Protect and Survive does not indicate that any attack was likely.³⁶

In April, Peter Evans reported on “a surge of public interest [in civil defence] throughout the country”. Local Authorities had been bombarded with public requests for more information on nuclear protection. Those that felt inclined prepared their own information and classes on civil defence. Other Local Authorities criticized the strength of SRHQs while county bunkers were typically no more than a municipal building. Council Executives also complained that the SRHQs were hardened despite the fact that most of the post-attack administration would take place on a county level. Both the public and the Local Authorities were attempting to obtain more control over any post-attack scenarios.³⁷

The Times also reported that CND membership soared to previously unknown levels in the Winter of 1980, citing the recent “British obsession with the possibility of nuclear war”. The CND, after decades “crying in the wilderness,” had become undeniably popular, bolstered by all the public interest in Protect and Survive. Monsignor Bruce Kent, leader of the CND, credited the rise in membership to a nuclear false-alarm in the United States the previous November, yet this incident received little attention in the press. A more likely explanation for the rapid Winter growth of CND would be Peter Hennessy’s November articles on civil defence, which were quickly followed by an eruption of civil defence discussion in the media and in Parliament. As the Monsignor noted, the marches and shouting of political extremists in the past simply fell on deaf ears. It was the moderates, the average Briton, the ones who joined CND in record numbers, these people formed the public majority that the government conversed with, now more than

³⁶ TNA: HO 322/937, “Letter from Miss Jennifer Forsyth Treasury to Mr. P Heaton Re: Home Defence Review,” April 18, 1980.

³⁷ Peter Evans, “Priority for Planning Civil Defence at Local Level Urged,” *The Times*, April 2, 1980.

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ever in their past. Monsignor Kent found the messages in the recent articles by *The Times* “very sad”, as there was no honest survival in a nuclear war, save for disarmament and political discourse. The article concluded by identifying the government as terrifying, childish and belligerent.³⁸

By May, preparations for the sale of Protect and Survive were nearly complete. The bookstore chain WH Smith’s ordered 50,000 of the 150,000 copies of Protect and Survive that were to be printed. The Home Office aimed for a “low key” release with “very limited” circulation to the press.³⁹ The concern remained that pushing the sales of Protect and Survive could generate a public panic. As memorable as Protect and Survive would become, it had an entirely inconspicuous release. After all the back and forth, planning, and hand wringing, no one was even sure if it was out or not, even in the Home Office. The following month *The Times* described the release of Protect and Survive as “rushed out” and haphazard. The publication was a surprisingly confusing affair that seemed to catch most of the Home Office off-guard as they endeavored to find out who had initiated the printing.⁴⁰

The last the Home Office had heard regarding the publication of Protect and Survive was a memo from the HMSO that stated they could have the booklet out on sale by May 19th if they received the go-ahead by May 15th. Around May 10th, rumours began to reach the Home Office that WH Smith’s had already received their copies, though the Home Office was unable to validate if it were true. By May 13th the Home Office had prepared a circular regarding the sale of Protect and Survive with the sales date left blank as they waited for the word “go”. Later that day, a HMSO representative telephoned the Home Office to say WH Smith’s had been selling

³⁸ Ian Bradley, “Many Turn to CND as Nuclear Fear Increases,” *The Times*, April 24, 1980.

³⁹ TNA: HO 322/937, “Meeting of OD on 7 May 1980,” May 7, 1979.

⁴⁰ John Huxley, “Nuclear Shelter Plans to Be Printed,” *The Times*, June 23, 1980.

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Protest and Survive, not *Protect and Survive*. “The saga ... continued throughout the day”, as a bewildered Home Office attempted to find out what exactly was going on. F6 staffer Ken Day left the office to attempt to find a copy of *Protest and Survive* to compare its cover to *Protect and Survive*. The covers were nearly identical aside from the titles as CND had obtained a photocopy of the cover of *Protect and Survive*.

Mr. Day persevered and attempted to discover if stores had been selling *Protest and Survive* as an official government booklet. If the report was true, it was likely to become a massive embarrassment for the Home Office and staff scrambled to determine who authorized the printing of the booklet. Ken Day visited three WH Smith’s branches, yet none of them had *Protect* or *Protest and Survive* for sale. The Home Office telephoned another branch that informed them that they did not have *Protect and Survive* on sale, but “they could find you a copy”. Fellow F6 staffer Donald McCutcheon called the branch again as an anonymous customer and was told he could have an “under the counter” copy if he came in.

The Home Office was entirely perplexed as seemingly no one available knew what the status of *Protect and Survive* was after all the years of tight secrecy. Another F6 staffer was dispatched to nearby Victoria Station where they found the WH Smith’s news vendor with multiple copies for sale. The clerk of the Underground news stall said that despite what WH Smith’s officials might say, *Protect and Survive* was easily obtainable. However, other Home Office staff were unable to find further copies. WH Smith’s contacted the Home Office to state they would send a memo to all their branches instructing them to not sell *Protect and Survive* until they had received confirmation. In the meantime, WH Smith’s had pulled all the copies

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from the Victoria Station vendor, though they could not send out the memo to other branches for another two days.⁴¹

By the 16th neither the Home Office nor media knew conclusively whether Protect and Survive was on sale. The Home Office was unsure, the HMSO appeared to be operating without any oversight, and *The Times* was only able to gather vague mentions and hearsay. *The Times* seemed to have the most definitive answer with their May 16th article which commented on Prime Minister Thatcher receiving a “gift” at No. 10 from a group of Young Liberals. The Liberals attempted to deliver a jar of Vaseline, one of the recommended items in Protect and Survive. A very literal example of the people talking directly to their government about Protect and Survive. The apparent goal of the Young Liberals was to criticize the Home Office for their stealthy release of Protect and Survive that simply “appeared on bookstalls with no advance publicity”. *The Times* attempted to report on the status of the booklet, though they could not receive any answers from the Home Office. The best efforts of *The Times* managed to find out that the Young Liberals had purchased Protect and Survive on Thursday the 15th, though there were reports that the booklet first popped up the previous Sunday in Newcastle. From there the booklet appeared at a Charing Cross bookstore the following day and made appearances “here and there” throughout the week.⁴²

⁴¹ TNA: HO 322/937, “Note by Mr. Day,” May 13, 1980.

⁴² Frances Gibb, “Mrs. Thatcher Rejects Nuclear Safety ‘Gift,’” *The Times*, May 16, 1980.

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By the end of the month, Protect and Survive was clearly on sale and that was sufficient enough for the Home Office. On the 31st, a photo appeared in *The Times* of a Mr. Berry and his family squeezed into a lean-to of the specifications provided by Protect and Survive. The family were noticeably cramped in the small space. The caption noted that they were members of Survival Action Movement, a disarmament group against Protect and Survive and civil defence efforts in general (likely explaining the bleakness of the photo [Figure 17]).⁴³

Figure 17 The Nuclear Family: The Berry family as they appeared in *The Times* adhering to Protect and Survive instructions.



The May confusion in the Home Office over the status of Protect and Survive was likely enabled by the fact that all the senior staffers were preoccupied attempting to secure approval for the Home Secretary’s speech. *The Times* reported that month that the Home Secretary had transferred Ministerial responsibility for civil defence from Lord Belstead to Minister of State for the Home Office, Leon Brittan. Given the public interest in civil defence, it is likely that Whitelaw believed the discourse would be better served by a man in the Commons rather than a Lord.⁴⁴

⁴³ David Jones, “The Nuclear Family: Mr Laurence Berry,” *The Times*, May 31, 1980.

⁴⁴ Staff Reporter, “Civil Defence to Get Spokesman in the Commons,” *The Times*, May 26, 1980.

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Whitelaw had sent a draft of his speech to the Cabinet Office, Treasury, SHHD, DOE, MAFF, Ministry of Energy, DHSS and the MOD for feedback.⁴⁵ Around this time Whitelaw changed his draft to state “on sale now” when referring to Protect and Survive and moved the mention from the middle to the end of his speech.⁴⁶ As the Home Office received further news, the position of Protect and Survive in the Secretary’s speech was constantly shifted to reflect its reception. The Home Secretary was certain that Protect and Survive was a viable contingency “despite the ridicule heaped upon it” by people attempting to do away with nuclear civil defence altogether.⁴⁷

Despite his early confidence, the Home Secretary grew increasingly concerned that the association of all his reforms with Protect and Survive could scuttle his efforts. On July 22nd a draft of the speech had appeared with the mention of Protect and Survive still at the end of the statement, though it was now crossed out and referred to in generic terms rather than by name.⁴⁸ The draft was finally completed on the 6th, the day before Whitelaw’s statement to Commons.⁴⁹ While the Review was said to still be a work in progress, the statement represented a transformation in home defence. The statement, and associated Review, provided the long-awaited erasure of care and maintenance, doubled funding to Local Authorities, laid out numerous revisions, and set a policy of greater openness regarding civil defence. The Review cemented the deterrent as the foundation of British defence until the end of the Cold War.

Whitelaw’s speech on civil defence produced a remarkable reaction in the House of Commons. Naturally, it was fiercely derided by Labour and lauded by the Conservatives.

⁴⁵ TNA: HO 322/937, “Draft Home Defence Review Statement,” March 26, 1980.

⁴⁶ TNA: HO 322/937, “Revised Statement Submitted to Mr. Chilcot,” May 14, 1980.

⁴⁷ TNA: HO 322/939, “HDO(80)7 - Note by the Home Office on Review of Civil Home Defence Preparedness,” June 13, 1980.

⁴⁸ TNA: HO 322/937, “Amended Draft of Home Secretary’s Statement on Civil Defence,” July 22, 1980.

⁴⁹ TNA: HO 322/934, “JF Halliday to MA Pattison Re: Civil Defence,” August 6, 1980.

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However, the extent of debate demonstrated the newfound importance of civil defence within the British government following the Election of 1979. Labour’s newfound embrace of unilateralism collided with the Conservative commitment to the deterrent. Commentary on civil defence was negligible during the care and maintenance era as successive governments focused their financial efforts elsewhere. In Commons on August 7th, the fissure developed by the end of nuclear consensus was laid bare and the partisan politics of nuclear civil defence were made obvious. Clearly, the publication of *Protect and Survive* and the Home Defence Review had shifted British politics at a fundamental level.⁵⁰

In his statement, Whitelaw began by calling attention to the fact that civil defence reform was a high priority of the Conservative Party since they took office. As many warned in his draft, Whitelaw was quick to reassure that these improvements had no correlation to an increased government expectation of war. In fact, the institution of these measures to strengthen national defence was said to make the possibility of war even more remote.⁵¹ The first announced improvement was to the UKWMO and SRHQ bunkers. The earlier recommendations of harnessing the volunteer effort and increased funding for the HDC were then mentioned, though Whitelaw was interrupted by Liverpool Labour MP Eric Heffer who said the Home Secretary “must be joking”. Whitelaw did not acknowledge the remark and continued to announce the pre-HDR civil defence budget of £27 million would be increased 60% to £45 million by 1983. The entirety of the rise was to be funded from reallocations within the Home Office.⁵²

Whitelaw argued that it was “right” to have civil defence information available in peacetime and the public had a right to know what steps they could take to protect themselves.

⁵⁰ TNA: HO 322/853, “Home Office Circular No. ES1/1981 - Civil Defence Review,” March 20, 1981.

⁵¹ Whitelaw, William. *HC Deb*, 07 August 1980, Vol. 990, Col. 790.

⁵² Heffer, Eric and Whitelaw, William. *HC Deb*, 07 August 1980, Vol. 990, Col. 791-793.

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Whitelaw was sure to emphasize that all the improvements set out by the Conservative party were both “positive and cost-effective”.⁵³

The first attack came from Leeds Labour MP Merlyn Rees. The doubled funding to civil defence was seen as a waste and Rees asked Whitelaw if he would accept that it was impossible to shelter the nation and that it was a cruel scheme that some can afford shelters while others were to go without. Disarmament, according to Rees, was the only effective civil defence. Whitelaw quickly replied that he had clearly indicated the increase would be substantial and that civil defence was an essential component of decreasing the likelihood of war.⁵⁴

Several Conservative MPs congratulated Whitelaw, cheering the new initiatives as “extremely progressive” and finally riding the nation of a fifteen-year-old “mountain of neglect and indifference”. Labour MPs were not so magnanimous. Everything about the Home Secretary’s speech was derided as false, from his “shaggy-dog manner“ to his “nonsense” plans to protect the nation from nuclear war.⁵⁵ Many Labour MPs attacked the Home Secretary, towing the party line and insisting that unilateralism and nuclear-free zones were the only acceptable options to prevent war. MPs went on to accuse the Home Secretary of enhancing civil defence as a manner of conditioning the public to accept war as an inevitability and the deterrent.⁵⁶

Farce was a common tool used by Labour and disarmament supporters during the 1980s and it was used frequently in the House of Commons when discussing the HDR. Fife Labour MP William Hamilton asked the Home Secretary what quality of window whitewash the government would recommend to prevent nuclear flash damage, while another Labour MP asked Whitelaw to

⁵³ Whitelaw, William. *HC Deb*, 07 August 1980, Vol. 990, Col. 793.

⁵⁴ Rees, Merlyn and Whitelaw, William. *HC Deb*, 07 August 1980, Vol. 990, Col. 793-796.

⁵⁵ Messrs. Allaun, Banks, Cox, Hamilton and Whitelaw. *HC Deb*, 07 August 1980, Vol. 990, Col. 796-799.

⁵⁶ Heffer, Eric and Whitelaw, William. *HC Deb*, 07 August 1980, Vol. 990, Col. 799-800.

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take back his⁵⁷ The Labour derision continued as Warley MP Andrew Faulds asked if the Home Secretary would take back his “ludicrously inadequate” recommendations and admit to disarmament as being the only true form of civil defence.⁵⁸

The public, as did Parliament, had mixed reactions to the statement, mostly based around their own political beliefs. One *Times* article touted the budget increase to civil defence as very cost-effective. The UKWMO was said to modernize and Local Authorities would see their funding doubled. The £45 million figure was quoted, along with the 60% increase, and the smattering of “Labour laughter”. The article concluded by echoing the Home Secretary’s comments that increased public knowledge was “right” and that Protect and Survive could be bought for only 50p.⁵⁹ Another article in the same edition also described the figures of £45 million and 60% as quite progressive. The likelihood of war was said to be reduced and Local Authorities would receive the funding they said they desperately required. Protect and Survive was not mentioned in the article which instead focused on the volunteer effort and how the government would utilize it to great effect.⁶⁰

Peter Evans also penned an article, though his was less optimistic in tone than the previous *Times* reports. As Protect and Survive had omitted advice for chemical weapons, and the Home Secretary did not mention the matter, it was argued that the government was once again being spendthrift at the expense of national survival. While it was acknowledged that it was unlikely the Soviet Union would use chemical weapons on the public, the point was raised that the use of such weapons on military targets would likely affect nearby towns, who would

⁵⁷ Hamilton, William and Whitelaw, William. *HC Deb*, 07 August 1980, Vol. 990, Col. 800-801.

⁵⁸ Cryer, Robert; Faulds, Andrew and Whitelaw, William. *HC Deb*, 07 August 1980, Vol. 990, Col. 801-803.

⁵⁹ Parliamentary Correspondent, “Spending on Civil Defence to Rise to £45m a Year,” *The Times*, August 8, 1980.

⁶⁰ Hugh Noyes, “Civil Defence to Be Expanded by 60%,” *The Times*, August 8, 1980.

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have no defences. Despite a NATO handbook entitled *Standards and Rules for the Protection of the Civil Population Against Chemical and Toxic Agents*, neither the UKWMO, ROC, or HDC had any equipment to measure or resist chemical weapons. The NATO handbook stated that it was the duty of a nation to prepare, equip, and train the public to prevent chemical weapon casualties. Evans argued that despite Britain being a “world leader” in the production of gas masks and chemical weapon protection, there were no allocated supplies for the British public.⁶¹

A Lieutenant-General named John Crowley wrote to *The Times* to express his desire to be directly under a nuclear strike rather than suffering in a post-apocalyptic wasteland.⁶² A week later, *The Times* published General Walter Walker’s reply to Lieutenant-General Crowley’s letter. Walker was appalled at the “defeatism and ignorance displayed” by General Crowley. A strong “civil defence shield” supporting the nuclear deterrent would ward off attack. The most important factor to the General was morale, on the battlefield or homefronts, and civil defence sustained morale by projecting determination to defend oneself. A Mr. MJ Harrison also sent a letter in support of General Crowley, stating it was “refreshing to find someone admitting that he’d rather” not survive a nuclear war. Harrison was of the Labour opinion that the humane option for the government would be abandoning the pretense of civil defence and Protect and Survive with all its façades of “sandbags, soup kitchens and sanitary facilities”.⁶³

Some of the strongest opposition to Whitelaw’s recommendations came from Labour controlled City Councils, particularly large metropolitan areas such as Manchester and the Greater London Council. Civil defence was one of the very few areas of public works that received increased funding during the social reforms of Thatcherism. Labour was fiercely critical

⁶¹ Peter Evans, “Britain Has No Civil Defence Against Attack by Poisons,” *The Times*, August 16, 1980.

⁶² John Crowley, “Civil Defence,” *The Times*, August 14, 1980.

⁶³ Walter Walker, MJ Harrison, and Tony Paterson, “Civil Defence in a Nuclear War,” *The Times*, August 20, 1980.

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of the significant cuts to social programs and attacked the extra funding for civil defence throughout the 1980s. Aside from statements describing civil defence as useless, it became common place for many Local Authorities to protest the diversion of funds by simply refusing to implement the additions earmarked for civil defence and divert the funding back towards social programmes. The protest of Labour backed councils became the main obstacle to the Home Office efforts to improve civil defence, with many staffers complaining about the constant resistance they received from Local Authorities.⁶⁴

Peter Evans reported on the “rebel” councils that openly protested the increased civil defence funding for Local Authorities. The London boroughs of Hackney and Lambeth steadfastly refused to divert any effort towards civil defence. One Labour-supporting Executive for Hackney described all civil defence as an utter waste of time and money, repeating the Labour ethos of disarmament as the only effective civil defence. If the civil mutiny continued to spread, Evans reported that the Home Secretary might be forced to use the regulations in the Civil Defence Act of 1948 to “compel” the councils to fall in line.⁶⁵

Home Secretary Whitelaw grew increasingly impatient with rebellious city councils and spoke with the Association of County Councils, stressing his argument that any attack would have survivors, millions of them, and the more simple, straightforward, self-help they received from their government, the more would survive. It was simple humanitarian pragmatism. The Home Secretary considered any civil defence information as a form of “passive civil defence”, an essential component of national defence. Protect and Survive, and the increased funds for civil

⁶⁴ TNA: HO 322/944, “Draft Brief for the Meeting Between the Home Secretary, the ACC and AMA on Thursday 5 March,” March 2, 1981.

⁶⁵ Peter Evans, “Government Faces Challenge from Rebel Councils Over Proposal to Improve Civil Defence,” *The Times*, September 2, 1980.

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defence, were seen as a vital element of Britain’s defence policy, as much as the nuclear deterrent.⁶⁶

The insurrection of the Councils continued well into the following year as civil defence became a fundamental position in party politics. The left-leaning *Guardian* newspaper reported that despite the increased civil defence guidance promised to Local Authorities in the Home Secretary’s statement, the Home Office had made little effort to consult with Councils. The Association of County Councils, which was said to be Conservative controlled, had sent “an official complaint” to the Home Office regarding the lack of follow-through after the Review.⁶⁷

The Home Office had already set about condensing the Home Defence Review into a circular that could be distributed to Local Authorities. The Treasury was of the opinion that “great care” was taken in crafting the Home Secretary’s statement to Parliament and it should speak for itself. Treasury official JA Gulvin complemented the wording of the Parliamentary statement that achieved a correct balance between the need for improvement while not instilling false expectations or creating a panic that a threat was imminent.⁶⁸

By the time the Review had been edited into an efficient circular, the Home Office had endured months of criticism from Local Authorities and Labour supporters over the content in Protect and Survive. Home Office Circular ES1/1981 set out specifically to provide the information demanded by Local Authorities and improve the state of civil preparedness across the nation. Whitelaw’s entire Parliamentary speech was added as an annex to the circular as evidence that the government was “resolutely committed ... to the promotion of peace” through

⁶⁶ Home Affairs Correspondent, “Mr. Whitelaw Calls for Civil Defence Effort and Scorns Defeatists,” *The Times*, September 6, 1980.

⁶⁷ Paul Keel, “Councils Left in Dark over Nuclear War Precautions,” *The Guardian*, January 8, 1981.

⁶⁸ TNA: HO 322/944, “JA Gulvin, Treasury, to JA Howard, F6 Re: Home Defence Review 1979-80,” September 1, 1980.

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enhanced civil defence. Local Authorities were reminded that Protect and Survive had “been on sale for some time” and provided the public with simple, purposeful instructions on how to prepare themselves. The Circular offered advice on the use of volunteers, community involvement, wartime headquarters, and opportunities to liaise with other councils. Local Authorities were also told 75% of their expenditure on civil defence implementations would be provided by grants from the central government. It was noted that the total civil defence funding for Local Authorities had doubled from £4.4 million to £9 million following the Home Secretary’s Review and encouraged the Councils to “take full advantage” of the opportunities generated by the increased funding.⁶⁹

For more specific information, the Circular produced by F6 recommended other booklets on shelters that had been published by the Home Office and assured that still more research would be published soon. The Circular also returned to the long-standing problem of high-rise flats during a crisis. An answer was finally provided that while the Protect and Survive campaign would not be ideal, Local Authority Executives should conduct a survey of their districts to identify suitable buildings that could be used in an emergency by people in need of better protection than their homes. The Circular was signed by longtime Home Office staffer JA Howard who had now been promoted to F6 secretary.⁷⁰

Unfortunately for the Home Office, after several years had passed since the Home Secretary’s Review and the publication of Protect and Survive, Local Authorities were still obstinately refusing to implement any civil defence measures. In 1983, the Home Office would still find itself dealing with recalcitrant Local Authorities. When Mrs. PJ Gordon, Assistant

⁶⁹ TNA: HO 322/853, “Home Office Circular No ES1/1981 - Civil Defence Review,” March 20 1981.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

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Director General of the GLC, wrote to Brian Cubbon for further planning advice, she was informed that the HDR of 1980 already addressed her questions and recommended her council to plan a flexible approach to emergencies that could be scaled up or down as need be.⁷¹

Though it was born in secrecy, Protect and Survive would become a shared memory of the Cold War for many Britons. The pervasive view that the Home Office had suffered numerous leaks of information and grudgingly decided to publish the booklet, however, is false. Most information that was said to be leaked, was actually provided willingly by the Home Office to the media, believing openness to be the best policy to prevent rumours and fearmongering. As Protect and Survive became more popular in the Houses of Parliament, the January 1980 series on civil defence in *The Times* brought the booklet to national attention. The booklet’s notoriety continued to grow though the temperament in the Home Office remained so lax that the F6 initially had trouble determining if they had already printed the programme.

The decision to publish was indistinguishably linked to the status of civil defence in Britain at the end of the Cold War. With the end of the nuclear consensus, there were bold differences of opinion between the Conservative government and Labour supporters. This was particularly evident in Labour-controlled Local Authorities who continually refused to implement the changes recommended in the influential Home Defence Review of 1980. Opponents of the Conservative government described their efforts at civil defence as useless and routinely mocked Protect and Survive. The Conservatives would continue to support Protect and Survive, and civil defence, as key findings of their Home Defence Review and, as stressed in the resulting Home Office Circular, effective civil defence ensured an effective nuclear deterrent.

⁷¹ AMES 2/1/104 File 2, “David Heaton, F6, to Mrs. PJ Gordon, Greater London Council: Emergency Planning - Planning Assumptions,” January 26, 1983.

Chapter 7 – “Under the Kitchen Table with Tins of Baked Beans”: The Release of Protect and Survive

Few would ever predict how prominent the opposition to Protect and Survive was about to become in British cultural history.

Chapter 8 "A Guide to Armageddon": The British Media and Protect and Survive

The publication of *Protect and Survive* in 1980 was certainly memorable. The programme's usefulness as nuclear survival advice was debatable, though the furor it produced upon arrival is not. *Protect and Survive* was not accepted by most Britons, as shown in the debates it inspired. Those with disdain for the programme produced entirely more media than those who accepted the programme, significantly more. The majority amongst Conservative Party cohorts supported the programme as emergency education pedagogy. Newspapers across the political spectrum were at best neutral, however most successfully capitalized on the sensationalism left in the wake of the government's secret plans finally being revealed.

Thankfully, *Protect and Survive* was never tested to determine if it would have been successful in preserving life. However, as a government programme, *Protect and Survive* was undoubtably a failure. The programme failed to such an extent that its disastrous reception remains its greatest legacy. Polling in the 1980s indicated a notable lack of faith in the efficacy of *Protect and Survive*. What cannot be debated is the substantial imbalance of negative *Protect and Survive* media compared to supportive media. Even the most resounding support for the programme amounted to restrained acceptance. Thus, the question for historians and future government initiatives is not: *was Protect and Survive a failure?* The better question would be: *why was Protect and Survive such a conspicuous failure?*

As a political programme released by the Conservative government of the 1980s, *Protect and Survive* arrived at a disadvantage. It was unlikely that the campaign was ever going to gain the trust of the public during the political tempest of Thatcherite Britain. The programme was

destined to be attacked by Labour supporters simply for being a Conservative enterprise (despite its creation by the mid-1970s Labour Government). Furthermore, acceptance of Protect and Survive implied acceptance of the nuclear deterrent, which was its own battleground during the unilateralist movements of the decade.

The simplest explanation for the massive public rejection for the programme was the thoroughness of the misunderstandings that followed its publication. What the Tory government circulated was intended to be, essentially, "better than nothing", though the public had expected "total protection". It was a fundamental disconnect of expectations versus reality, which, aptly enough, was also one of the common criticisms of the programme. The cause of all the cultural conflict could be found in the core of Protect and Survive where the programme's main author, F6 Director Duncan Buttery's, intense pragmatism remained undiluted. The Conservative government assumed Protect and Survive would be received as reasonable recommendations for an unanswerable problem. The people of Britain, however, thought that their government was attempting to sell protective illusions as the shield that would protect their families from nuclear onslaught.

This misunderstanding is easily seen in British news media where critics reflected popular opinion and either cast Protect and Survive as absurd lunacy or as devious ploy. When framing the programme as absurd, critics of Protect and Survive cast the programme as surreal nonsense churned up by a clueless bureaucracy. This mockery weakened the credibility of Protect and Survive so effectively that it remains the prevailing reputation. When characterizing the programme as a mendacious scheme, critics would cast aspersions that the Government was planning ahead for their own benefit, the "bunkers for bureaucrats" trope.¹ These two critiques

¹ TNA: HO 322/939, "Letter from MAFF to F6 Division," June 9, 1980.

formed the basis for public opinion of Protect and Survive and for the British media who enthusiastically sensationalized the programme.

The Home Office never publicly declared Protect and Survive a failure. The worst acknowledgments of the programme stated it received a "mixed reception", however, in many restricted Whitehall documents, Protect and Survive was considered a disaster and frequently described as "much-criticized and ridiculed". The publication of Protect and Survive carried specific strategic objectives that the Home Office failed to achieve. The programme was expected to educate and prepare the public, gain their support, improve civil defence credibility, and rally national morale. In actuality, none of these goals were achieved and popular culture implies a woeful public acceptance of Protect and Survive.²

In the United States, the reputation of Protect and Survive was abysmal. Americans described Protect and Survive as "hair raising" and the "single greatest psychological fear factor in the minds of a generation". Nuclear anxiety was reported to be at unprecedented levels in the United Kingdom and rising rapidly. While restating many of the steps advised in the booklet, British and foreign journalists could not resist uttering sarcastic questions, wondering how someone could continue to breathe "huddled under a table". Whether in Great Britain or across the pond, a consensus formed amongst the public that Protect and Survive was "not a booklet designed to reassure its readers about the future of the world".³ Other researchers noted that more often than not, Protect and Survive was likely to inspire fear rather than confidence, particularly

² TNA: INF6/2490, "Home Office Public Relations Branch - Civil Defence Information and Publicity Programme," January 13, 1986.

³ Judy Mann, "Ending With a Bang -- And a Whimper," *The Washington Post*, May 27, 1981, sec. METRO Federal Diary Obituaries Classified.

amongst children, which explains the frequency of Protect and Survive references in nostalgic British documentaries on growing up in the 1980s.⁴

In one 1980 London survey, 68% of respondents rated the risk of a nuclear attack as "too low to worry about" while 26% stated the risk was "high enough to worry about". From the same survey, more people feared a nuclear power station exploding, food poisoning or flooding. The survey also found that of 314 respondents, only 99 thought the threat of nuclear attack was high enough that they would "buy a booklet" to prepare themselves. Interestingly, the number of respondents who would buy Protect and Survive decreased with the amount of news and documentaries they watched on civil defence, implying a significant lack of faith in government advice.⁵

An in-depth University study in 1985 indicated that out of the entire British population, adolescents were much more likely to believe a nuclear war would occur in their lifetime. This fear was distinct from the regular fears of youth and was considered a mental health phenomenon of serious implications, not a "product of propaganda". Youth were said to be uniquely susceptible to Protect and Survive's inadvertently unnerving character. This was particularly true amongst girls, suggesting an explanation for the high numbers of women in CND. A sense of hopelessness resided amongst British youth and a majority believed that nuclear weapons would not succeed as a deterrent to war. The study noted that denial or "resistance to knowledge" was also widespread among adults. The survey observed a "ludicrous underestimation" of the effects of nuclear weapons by "people who objectively should know better". Belief in the efficacy of Protect and Survive, as well as the nuclear deterrent, seemed to contradict itself amongst the

⁴ Thearle and Weinreich-Haste, "Ways of Dealing with the Nuclear Threat: Coping and Defence Among British Adolescents," 1986.

⁵ Barrie Gunter and Mallory Wober, "Television Viewing and Public Perceptions of Hazards to Life," *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 3, no. 4 (December 1983): 325–35.

public. The survey concluded that Protect and Survive was the manifestation of public denial, likely to inculcate a generation of adolescents who would distrust authority (unsurprisingly, CND also was frequently associated with youth punk culture).⁶

Even before the announcement of its publication in Home Secretary Whitelaw's influential address to Parliament in 1980, opinions on Protect and Survive were contentious. Initially, Whitehall reasoned that the mixed reception of Protect and Survive was principally due to public misinterpretation. The majority of the public, as perceived by the Home Office, acknowledged Protect and Survive for what it was, a guide to *increasing survivability* of a nuclear war, not a guide to *surviving* nuclear war. The result, according to the Cabinet, was "widespread ignorance among the public, the media and officials" about the nature of the threat and the protection possible. It concluded that Protect and Survive had simply "misfired," creating a revised version would be an overreaction. The best course of action was the establishment of a Ministerial Working Group to determine the most effective measures to increase its perception in British media. The videos of Protect and Survive, in light of the derision the pamphlet received, would remain classified from the public and the media. Releasing them at that point, it was argued, would only add to the ridicule and diminish their impact if needed for a future crisis (a common argument from Duncan Buttery to keep the entire programme classified).⁷

Soon after its publication, the public view of Protect and Survive was not judged to be encouraging and the government began to consider ideas to manage the problem. Public opinion of the programme consisted of a mixture of ignorance, anger, or apathy. Polls, surveys, and articles captured the public assumption that a nuclear strike could only be a total and catastrophic

⁶ Thearle and Weinreich-Haste, "Ways of Dealing with the Nuclear Threat: Coping and Defence Among British Adolescents," 1986.

⁷ TNA: HO 322/937, "Home Defence Review 1980 - The Current State of Civil Preparedness Report by the Home Defence Planning Sub-Committee," March 19, 1980.

thermonuclear blanketing of the nation without warning. This was the public interpretation of nuclear war, directly contradicting Home Office deliberations that considered a limited or accidental strike more plausible. The Government had hoped their efforts would inspire Britons to try and protect themselves, however, Protect and Survive led to a "climate of resignation" and morose lethargy that any benefits of the programme would be woefully inadequate. Some assumed such a horrific irradiated aftermath that even if Protect and Survive worked, it would only serve to prolong suffering.

One of the purposes of Protect and Survive and other civil defence initiatives was to dispel the certainty that a nuclear strike was unsurvivable. The contrary public reception arrived as a disappointing surprise to F6, who had hoped the publication of Protect and Survive would dispel the accusations of government secrecy and encourage civilian responsibility.⁸ Three years after delivering the classified programme the public demanded to see, Protect and Survive still evoked contempt in public surveys. There was also a widespread belief that the MOD were waiting in the wings to take command of the nation at the first breath of crisis. The Home Office eventually concluded that the release of Protect and Survive had initiated the protests and scorn for civil defence that they had been battling for years.⁹

The continued perception that Protect and Survive was the government's DIY nuclear attack remedy only furthered the rampant negativity. F6 attempted to provide advice for people without time to prepare, as well as for worst case scenarios, such as being caught in the open. Anti-Protect and Survive communities were quick to latch on derisively, as though the Government's best advice for a nuclear strike was to lie down in a ditch and pull their jackets

⁸ TNA: HO 322/1019, "Relations Between Central Government and Local Authorities Discussion Paper - JA Howard F6 Division," July 28, 1981.

⁹ TNA: HO 322/1021, "Nuclear Policy and Public Opinion," February 10, 1983.

over their heads. The public were incredulous that hiding in a ditch was the finest nuclear survival recommendation the Government could conjure. The jacket/ditch diagram became one of several public punchlines for the perceived joke that was Protect and Survive. Another common tactic for detractors was to simplify all the Government's advice down to "hiding under the kitchen table". Hiding under a table became a memetic gag at Protect and Survive's expense across Britain. One newspaper article summarized Protect and Survive as: "ineffectual advice on how to prepare for a nuclear attack [such as] close the curtains and hide under a table".¹⁰ Soon after the article, a recommendation to wash frogs before eating after an attack became associated with Protect and Survive as well, despite the obvious lack of frog related content in the programme.¹¹

It has been argued by several historians that distrust of nuclear civil defence was common in British history and merely amplified by Protect and Survive.¹² This legacy of nuclear distrust was active during the Protect and Survive period as in 1985, a man named Fred Barker was completing his Science and Technology doctorate from Manchester University. Barker's dissertation analyzed the political activity of British nuclear scientists during the creation of nuclear weapons in the 1940s. Barker also prepared an essay for Greater Manchester Council entitled *The Civil Defence Debate: Lessons from the Past*. In the paper, Barker argued that the uproar created by Protect and Survive was not unique and that "the history of British civil defence is a history of debate and criticism". The essay elaborated on the seldom discussed public resistance to civil defence measures following the Second World War. The resistance had reached a zenith, according to Barker, with the Conservative Government's election in 1979 and

¹⁰ Bharat Bhushan, "Marching against Nuclear Weapons," *Economic and Political Weekly* 16, no. 48 (1981): 1945–1945.

¹¹ Evans, "Frogs on the Emergency Menu," *The Times*, February 14, 1980.

¹² Hogg, "The Family That Feared Tomorrow," 2012.

release of Protect and Survive the following year. The Conservative enthusiasm for civil defence collided with "the peace movement" of 1979 and the increasingly public debates on unilateralism and Protect and Survive. To Barker, Protect and Survive had never, and would never, be considered acceptable by the British public.¹³

Civil defence always walked a razor wire of trying to allay public alarm while calling attention to danger. In 1981, Patrick Mayhew, Home Office Minister of State, privately asked Home Secretary Whitelaw for guidance regarding the deteriorating public opinion of civil defence. There was a growing conflict between the Conservative government and the public when it came to the implementation of civil defence. The Labour backed Local Authorities and Metropolitan Councils had to be persuaded to comply without being ordered, else risking further deterioration of the public view of civil defence. The Home Secretary suggested a publicity push in the House of Commons to promote the "successful distribution" of Protect and Survive. However, the initiative did little to improve Protect and Survive's public image. Defence Secretary John Nott, later concluded that promoting Protect and Survive had actually incubated alarm within the public that the government expected nuclear war to breakout at a moment's notice. The sentiment was in direct contrast to repeated messages from the Conservative Party, and the MOD, that deterrence was the best prevention to nuclear war.¹⁴

The next scheme to promote Protect and Survive was the notion of producing a revision that would provide advice for chemical weapon attacks, something which seemed to concern the public.¹⁵ Originally, advice on chemical weapon attacks was deliberately withheld by the Home Office as they concluded there was a negligible chance of the Soviet Union targeting civilian

¹³ MSS 181/3/1/10, "The Civil Defence Debate: Lessons from the Past by PhD Candidate Fred Barker, Manchester University," 1985.

¹⁴ TNA: HO 322/978, "Note of A Meeting Held on 18 November 1981 - Civil Defence," November 18, 1981.

¹⁵ See Conclusion.

populations and preventative measures would only produce undue stress for the public. The revision never materialized though significant work had been carried out by the Home Office.¹⁶

Mayhew quickly adopted a habit of combating the media to try and curb the "tide of anti-civil defence" opinions. This tactic was especially noticeable after Labour's successes at Local Council elections in 1981. A perceptible leftward lean had developed in city councils which contrasted the Conservative support in boroughs. The Public Relations Branch of the Home Office thought Mayhew's efforts were quite fruitful and advised the Minister to continue.¹⁷ The PRB even suggested the creation of a full-time Public Relations Adviser for civil defence, though F6 felt the appointment was unnecessary. Throughout the 1980s there was a publicity battle surrounding Protect and Survive that the Home Office feared they were losing.¹⁸

During a Home Defence Planning Subcommittee meeting in April 1981, it was noted that Protect and Survive continued to draw criticism a year after its release. The Home Office strategy had been to constantly downplay any criticisms as being drawn up by political opponents. Criticism was always to be referred to as "misconceptions" which came from "some quarters," and vocal minorities who were concerned that Protect and Survive was merely too simplistic. Thus, the underlying complaints were actually a desire for more substantial survival education including underground shelters blueprints, radiation sickness prevention, and measures against chemical warfare.¹⁹

Public opinion continued to dwindle during the final week of August 1981 after *The Evening Star* and *The News of the World* wrote particularly biting articles on Protect and Survive and the state of national civil defence. The double impact seemed to spur the Home Office more

¹⁶ TNA: HO 322/978, "Civil Defence Progress Report," November 9, 1981.

¹⁷ TNA: HO 322/978, "Home Defence Progress Report," November 3, 1981.

¹⁸ TNA: HO 322/978, "Note from Cooke," September 15, 1981.

¹⁹ TNA: HO 322/982, "Civil Preparedness for Home Defence 1981 Progress Report to Ministers," November 1981.

than usual and meetings were called to address the "raw and biased reporting" in the British media.²⁰ The Cabinet Working Group on Shelters met on August 26th to consider options that would raise the public profile of civil defence. One of the points was to address the members of the public looking to create shelters of their own expenses that were of a "higher standard" than those provided by Protect and Survive. There was a perceived demand for subterranean DIY shelters that the government believed they should encourage, even if doing so indicated that better options than Protect and Survive lean-tos existed.²¹

A Home Office Progress Report for the month noted the "enhancement of the Protect and Survive guidance" as a key objective going forward, citing a lack of public support in the programme's simplistic candor.²² An inter-departmental PRB/F6 working group was set up to monitor the "propaganda campaigns" against Protect and Survive and Conservative civil defence policy. The goal was to engage with the media and put out positive stories, a goal that the MOD were happy to contribute towards, given their concerns over public reactions to the incoming installation of Cruise Missiles.²³

By 1983 the Home Office had shifted their strategy of misdirecting criticism and believed public opinion of Protect and Survive could be ameliorated by changing the stay-put doctrine. Over the thirty-plus months that Protect and Survive had been released, a common denigration was the advice to remain in the home. Stay-put was understood as a fundamental component of Protect and Survive. A hybrid possibility was now being considered within the Home Office that would recommend a limited evacuation scheme for populations near military targets. It was argued that limited evacuation could "save many more lives" by clearing likely target areas. This

²⁰ TNA: HO 322/978, "CDP81 Home Defence Progress Report," September 3, 1981.

²¹ TNA: HO 322/980, "Terms of Reference of Working Group on Domestic Shelter," August 1981.

²² TNA: HO 322/978, "Handwritten Contributions to Progress Report," August 1981.

²³ TNA: HO 322/978, "CDP81 Home Defence Progress Report," September 3, 1981.

would have the benefit of incorporating self-evacuations that the Home Office assumed would occur despite their suggestions otherwise. A month later, F6 staff believed this to be an acceptable amendment to address public concerns and encourage acceptance of Protect and Survive. However, Ministers were wary that even limited evacuation could be seen as admitting fault or that Protect and Survive was created in bad faith and that evacuation had indeed been the better recommendation all along.²⁴

Protect and Survive clearly lacked public credibility, and yet there was great political danger in providing improvements. Worse still was the old concern that any revisions would foster panic amongst the public that the government was updating civil defence measures due to imminent hostilities. The difficult decision was compounded by the constant reminders from the MOD that the importation of American Cruise missiles could not become tangled in the civil defence quagmire. The Home Office was keenly aware that any revisions to Protect and Survive would provide a meaty bone to the relentless disarmament watchdogs who would no doubt seize the opportunity to castigate the government for endangering the public all along. As noted by Home Office Minister David Heaton, the Government would have to endeavour to find between civil defence pedagogy and "political penalty".²⁵

This problem of low public opinion of Protect and Survive was particularly intense in Scotland, a facet of Scotland's noticeably larger anti-nuclear movement. The lack of trust in Conservative civil defence policy extended to the Scottish Secretary of State, George Younger, who argued that Protect and Survive had no credibility. Protect and Survive was criticized as an extension of faulty stay-put policies which the public was decidedly against. Younger believed

²⁴ TNA: HO 322/998, "Cabinet Meeting- Official Committee on Home Defence - Home Defence Planning Sub-Committee," December 21, 1982.

²⁵ TNA: HO 322/1021, "David Heaton on Civil Defence Policy," January 10, 1983.

that Home Office efforts did not realistically address the "intensity of the opposition to civil defence" in Scotland. William Baird, of the Scottish Home and Health Department, complained he was constantly "riding two horses at once" telling the public the risk of war was close to nil while explaining the importance of Protect and Survive. Baird pleaded with the Home Office to give up the MOD belief that the public would ever consider nuclear bases as "places of security" and prepare a limited civilian evacuation of the areas.²⁶

Protect and Survive is a notorious Cold War document, treated more as propaganda than its intended purpose of public safety. It had been prepared for an emergency, to provide the best use of available public and government resources. However, even before it was publicly available, the secrecy of Protect and Survive created an impression in the media that it was "being hidden deliberately," creating an aura of suspicion. The public rejection was immediate, and the Conservative government was always fighting off the backfoot to dispel Protect and Survive's reputation as deceptive propaganda. There likely was no manner in which the Home Office could publish the programme that would not draw the ire of public opinion, which was exactly what transpired. The government failed to judge the amount of misgiving that classification of the programme created and only amplified the growing public concern over the lack of information on nuclear survival measures.²⁷

Bunkers for Bureaucrats

On September 19th 1983, F6 Director JA Howard received a printed draft of a new public information booklet titled *Civil Defence: The Basic Facts*, providing frank information on civil

²⁶ TNA: HO 322/1032, "Letter from Mr. Baird to Mr. Heaton - Paper on Civil Defence for OD(HD)," July 7, 1983.

²⁷ TNA: HO 322/918, "Note to Private Office, about Home Defence," June 19, 1979.

defence. Each of the 19 sections were written to answer a common question or dispel a common misconception (e.g. "shelter policy" or "protective factors"). At the end of the draft, Director Howard handwrote: "20: 'Bunkers for Bureaucrats' - It is important to have a convincing answer to this question, one which is frequently raised".²⁸

Also referred to as "bunkers for nobs", the term was a common mainstay of Protect and Survive castigation. The term became a particularly virulent off-shoot of Protect and Survive as it was usually backed by palpable anger at the thought of weaselly Ministers and civil servants hiding deep underground while telling the rest of the population to hold fast. It came to embody much of the political zeitgeist of the Thatcherite era, with the lower classes protesting a "chosen elite". It was so apt that eventually those within the Home Office took up the phrase as well and it became a common trope for the remainder of the Cold War.²⁹

The term made several appearances in the Houses of Commons. In one instance, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health and Social Security, Mr. John Patten, received a belligerent question from Labour MP Michael Meecher. Meecher asked if Protect and Survive was "at best a cruel deception or at worst a sick joke?". Meecher pressed the matter further, asking how £20m could be spent on fortified bunkers for the Government while "in Protect and Survive they tell the rest of us to whitewash our windows and wrap jackets around our heads?".³⁰

Even Cabinet members used the phrase in their meetings, lamenting its growing popularity. Protect and Survive seemed to be a rallying point for the most skeptical and untrusting civil defence protestors. Large numbers of the British public had come to believe that certain places (i.e., not military targets) were indeed safer than other places (i.e. military targets).

²⁸ TNA: HO 322/1028, "Draft Copy of 'Civil Defence - The Basic Facts,'" September 19, 1983.

²⁹ Ibid

³⁰ Meecher, Michael. *HoC Deb*, 23 Oct 1984, Vol. 65, Col. 539.

It simply would not do, and the Cabinet set about to determine how their constituents had come to distrust Protect and Survive. "Public cynicism" argued F6 Police Division Director Heaton, "has been fueled by mischievous contrasting of 'bunkers for bureaucrats' with 'enforced stay-put'.³¹

Director Heaton was not incorrect in his observation. Many dissidents, either of nuclear weapons, civil defence, or Thatcher's Premiership, explicitly accused the Government of preparing to leave the nation to perish while remaining safely underground. Labour Party documents stated as much, shaming the small groups of "governmental and military elites" formulating refuges for themselves and their families while the civilian population was expected to "stay-put". Worse still, it was claimed that the elites were concocting all these schemes knowing full well the severe casualty rates the public were expected to face. These casualty rates were often said to be much higher than the official rates put out by the Home Office.³²

This was certainly not a new phenomenon, as the term predated the release of Protect and Survive. The secret state was apparently not-so-secret, as the phrase appears in newspapers and media throughout the 1960s and 1970s. Evidently, the public naturally assumed their governments would have already procured their own survival in a nuclear war. Use of the term was also not restricted to the political Left, as some within the military took up the phrase. During the 1979 Home Defence Review conference, which led to the publication of Protect and Survive, Lt. Colonel James Dunsmore delivered an infamous (at least within Whitehall) presentation that clearly alluded to the bunkers for bureaucrats concept.

Dunsmore's lecture discussed a "rapidly increasing divergence" between the protections afforded to the military compared to the general public. This could only lead to resentment, it

³¹ TNA: HO 322/998, "Cabinet Office Meeting on Planned Evacuation Options," December 14, 1982.

³² TNA: HO 322/1019, "Advice Note - The Labour Party National Executive Committee," June 1981.

was argued, as the military would have their bunkers, however, could the troops report for duty leaving their families "virtually unprotected?" The solution, according to UKCICC, was not Protect and Survive, instead the government was asked to exponentially increase their civil defence budget to protect civilians, lest the Home Office created a "protected elite".³³

UKCICC insisted they be granted time to present at the study, though they were not initially invited. The danger of forming a protected elite was so concerning that not only did UKCICC request time, they deliberately spoke on the inadequacies of Protect and Survive after explicitly being told to refrain from the subject. In UKCICC's opinion, under stay-put, the mind was immediately drawn to images of officers and servicemen who were protected in their bunkers. If these enlisted ranks were protected, could they work effectively without their families also being protected? To UKCICC, the answer was clearly no, and they believed if those in the conference hall were protected, they would become an elite class in the public eye. The anti-elitism in the bunkers for bureaucrats trope was likely exacerbated by the political climate of Thatcherite Britain that pitted working-class Labour supporters against white collar Conservatives and social funding cutbacks.³⁴

Just weeks before the publication of Protect and Survive, BBC Radio 1 broadcast an influential audio documentary, "Can the UK Survive War?". It was indented as an investigative, though balanced, exposé, enticing listeners with the promise of never-before-revealed government secrets on nuclear war plans. Speaking with Police Superintendent Ian Parrot, the BBC host brought up the unspoken assumptions of "bunkers for bureaucrats". S.I. Parrot grudgingly acknowledged that "some" might be mandated to take up control centers during a crisis, though he vehemently denied that these selectees would have any better protection for

³³ TNA: HO 322/928, "MOD/UKCICC Statement at Home Office Home Defence Study," November 20, 1979.

³⁴ TNA: HO 322/928, "Home Defence Planning Assumptions," August 3, 1979.

their families than the rest of the nation. This was the trade-off given to protect Protect and Survive.³⁵

The host was quite candid about the obvious problem, that England had uniquely struggled with class throughout its history, and now stood on the verge of creating "a different class of person" who could protect himself and his entire family. Protect and Survive was now set to strike at the core of British culture as the public would receive one set of instruction, while "the favoured few" went subterranean. The programme then spoke with one of these favoured few: Gordon Renton, Assistant Under Secretary for the Home Office. Renton spoke thoughtfully of the immense difficulties of balancing class privilege with the continuity of the machinery of government. If one was permitted to bring "family", according to Renton, who could say how many branches of their family tree should be provided a bed?

It was a rhetorical question, one that Renton answered capably, emphasizing that these bureaucrats would be depending on Protect and Survive to protect their families, the same as the rest of Britain. "The entire system would collapse" argued Renton, if the public were expected to hide in their lean-tos while "certain bureaucrats were ensconced" in bunkers. Renton added that he had discussed the difficult issue with his wife and that, after providing for her shelter as best he could, he would do his duty to take up his assigned SRHQ, alone. Renton added that the SRHQs were not the invulnerable fortresses the public perceived them to be. No RHQs or SRHQs in the nation could survive a direct attack and so Renton dismissed the concept of "bolt-holes for bureaucrats".³⁶

F6 anticipated the negative perceptions that selective bunker admittance could come about when drafting a civil defence circular for Local Authorities. After announcing the

³⁵ TNA: HO 322/909, "Transcript of BBC Radio Program 'Can UK Survive War?,'" January 1980.

³⁶ Ibid.

publication of Protect and Survive, the circular went on to briefly acknowledge the survival arrangements of the government. Smallness was consistently emphasized, as though the provisions were rather ramshackle. Bunkers were "a few buildings" and the chosen staff were "small elements" of the central government. The Home Office reassuringly added that the number of civil servants would be "very small, and the number of politicians smaller still".³⁷ F6 determined that the process had to work this way, as the alternatives would be impossible. They briefly considered public shelters, however, the Home Office could never build enough for the entire nation, necessitating the creation of "entry lists". This would create a greater political nightmare: devising a list of who could enter and how it would be enforced.³⁸

The Home Office often lamented the pervasiveness of the bunkers for bureaucrats trope. In a situation report, F6 categorized the negative feedback as appearing "to concentrate on the preservation of government and bureaucracy". F6 argued that in actuality, the government "inherited" the bunkers. Many were remodeled Second World War bunkers, others built under Labour administrations. The higher civil defence budgets went towards updating the bunkers for use by regional governors in a crisis and were typically too fragile for any serious attacks and often lacked any supplies. Nonetheless, the increased funding towards civil defence, and with it the announced refurbishment of the bunkers, amplified the imagine of Thatcher's Government preparing their own security at the expense of the nation.³⁹

Academics further exploited public suspicions as a way to encourage unilateralism. In his infamous counter-booklet, *Protest and Survive*, prominent historian and anti-nuclear activist E.P. Thompson lashed out at Protect and Survive and elite bureaucrats. Thompson informed the

³⁷ TNA: HO 322/942, "Note by Mr. Morris about Presentation of Draft for Local Authorities," July 25, 1980.

³⁸ TNA: HO 322/943, "Home Defence Progress Report," March 6, 1981.

³⁹ TNA: HO 322/1021, "Civil Defence Policy, Note for Mr. Howard from Mr. Heaton and Mrs. Thompson," December 13, 1982.

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reader of the existence of bunkers for politicians and the military, "deep hidey holes" to protect the Government which found them "very comforting". The public were not invited, according to Thompson, instead they were to be issued Protect and Survive and told to survive two weeks in their cubby-holes. Thompson was quite adept at criticizing Protect and Survive, particularly when he aspired to rile up the public against Tory civil defence.⁴⁰

In his book, professor and activist Owen Greene announced that as soon as it was practical, government staff would be set up somewhere stable as SRHQs became the highest level of government. However, the Home Office never stated how many civilian staffers the military would take into their own bunkers.⁴¹ Greene also revealed that British Telecom had a "telephone preference system" which allowed them to instantly disconnect over 90% of national communications. Making matter worse, the BT list was blatantly rarified, with every phonenumber in Britain divided into three categories. Only "important individuals", placed in the highest strata, would maintain connections while the remainder of the country went dark.⁴²

Another complication, as admitted by the Home Office, was the ambiguity of control immediately following a nuclear attack. "Specialists or senior admins" were to be moved to "semi-secure centres" (which typically meant hastily fortified municipal buildings). "Higher level officials" would be evacuated to unspecified locations, and then brought to regional headquarters when safe.⁴³ Regional commanders, now in their evacuation locations, would not take command until their staff were assembled. The SRHQs, meanwhile, would be the authority in the land. However, some conspiracy theorists noted that Regional Military Commanders had

⁴⁰ E.P. Thompson, "Protect and Survive" (the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation, 1980), 16, END/19/36, London School of Economics Archive.

⁴¹ Greene, *London After the Bomb*, 83.

⁴² *Ibid*, pg. 71.

⁴³ *Ibid*, pg. 28.

their own bunkers and would, according to theory, take command. The establishment of special courts was hyperbolically extended into the MOD "providing firing squads to execute sentences of wartime special courts" and support "a local military takeover" of military elites.⁴⁴

On top (or perhaps underneath) all these theories were the Hawthorn megabunker outside London. The megabunker is the only one of its kind in Britain and is still in commission. Deeper and larger than any SRHQ, the classified contents (either people or equipment) remain a mystery.⁴⁵ All this and more was revealed by Duncan Campbell, an academic, journalist, member of GLC, and persistent thorn in the side of F6.⁴⁶ "It's England turned on its head" according to Campbell, "home defence is about the protection of *government* – if need be, *against* the civil population".⁴⁷ A section of *Civil Defence: Why We Need It* attempted to remedy the perception of bunkers for bureaucrats by stating senior Ministers and the Government would remain at their desks in a crisis, throwing in their lot with the people. Campbell angrily referred to this as "deception at its most unashamed". The desks were said to actually reside deep below ground in the recently refurbished bunkers for "the privileged few". Campbell went on to state that "the privileged few" were not even particularly exceptional people, chosen "by some Whitehall Strangelove" for their talents. However, unlike the US and the USSR, the privileged few might have shared the same fate as Britain, as even the megabunker was only 80-100 feet underground. For perspective, Campbell pointed out Raven Rock Mountain Citadel, 75 miles NW of Washington DC, was said to be some 600ft below ground.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ Duncan Campbell, *War Plan UK* (London, UK: Burnett Books, 1982), 177.

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, pg. 208.

⁴⁶ For further information on Duncan Campbell see Chapter 10.

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, pg. 15.

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, pg. 216.

American politicians were encouraged to burrow down and fight the good fight, while UK Ministers had to contend with genuine venom from the public. "It [was] not a question of bunkers for bureaucrats, or Little Hitlers" argued Geoffrey Cotterell of the PRB, "it [was] education". Still, American media enjoyed poking fun at Protect and Survive's illustrations of rubbish stacks and lavatory chairs. They wondered how the locations of shelters were being hidden from the public, though apparently not Soviet spies. The media enjoyed noting that Margret Thatcher "doubled civil defence spending", though Britain could still only produce "DIY survival manuals for homeowners". The manual, the "official guide on how to survive a nuclear holocaust" turned out to be "a \$1.40, 30-page manual called Protect and Survive" which was apparently "not very convincing," no matter where one lived.⁴⁹

Figure 18 Unassuming Elites: Duncan Campbell points out Leon Brittan and the hidden bunkers at his disposal



Campbell had much more to say about Government hiding spots in his role as journalist for the left-wing *New Statesman*. When Defence Minister Leon Brittan (Figure 18) went on a tour of SRHQs, Campbell leaped at the opportunity to further promote the image of a "ruling elite". Attention was drawn to the "widespread public and official cynicism" of bunkers in the United Kingdom. Brittan, top military brass, and other Ministers were all part

of "a five-tier hierarchical network" that would be whisked away to safety during a crisis. The rest of the public forced to make do with the "recently published" Protect and Survive advice that

⁴⁹ Maureen Johnson, "Civil Defense in Western Europe Remains Spotty at Best: Only a Few Countries Are Moving to Protect Citizens in the Event of Nuclear War," *Los Angeles Times*, August 8, 1982.

restricts their movement to ensure they "stay-put" so the elite can be shuttled to their bunkers.⁵⁰

The greatest of all these bunkers for elites was the legendary "Maggiebunker", its fabled size was said to hold the Prime Minister, her staff and Cabinet and most of the military administration of the UK. The location of the Maggiebunker escaped even Campbell's aptitude for secret finding.⁵¹

Campbell was certainly not shy about creating myths or providing theories of sinister Government plots that placed the "absurd" Protect and Survive at the centre of terrible conspiracies. "The exhortations of Protect and Survive" were said to be incongruent with the "concealed official expectations of what would happen during an attack. With threats and pleas Protect and Survive urges people to stay put. This *may* be good advice while you are sheltering from fallout; it is nonsense, except to the bureaucrats, before an attack". The articles may have been earnest attempts to save the public, or they may have been unbridled sensationalism to move some newspapers. Either way, Campbell would hold nothing back, especially when accusing the Tory Government of "deliberately trying to ensure that a large part of the population does not survive an attack".⁵²

Continuing into 1984, *The Evening Standard* ran an article titled "Who's Booked for the Bunker?". The article kicked up quite a kerfuffle at the Home Office where it was seen as a clumsy exaggeration designed to embarrass Whitehall.⁵³ In the article, an "unnamed military man" leaked to the paper that he was one of the few who would have to report to GLC Town Hall in the event of an attack. The military man stated he would do his duty and take up his post, thought it was very likely many others would not. The Labour boroughs, it was said, were all

⁵⁰ Duncan Campbell, "Bunkering down for Nuclear War," *New Statesman; London*, September 19, 1980.

⁵¹ Duncan Campbell, "World War III: The Military View," *New Statesman; London*, October 10, 1980.

⁵² Duncan Campbell, "Preview of World War III," *New Statesman; London*, October 3, 1980.

⁵³ TNA: HO 322/997, "Civil Defence: Evening Standard Article, 15 March," March 16, 1984.

becoming nuclear-free-zones and refusing to take up their civil defence duties. Worse still, little was happening even in Tory strongholds as more and more Britons began to consider civil defence "a government illusion designed to make people believe in their policy of nuclear deterrence". Another anonymous bunker invitee said he would bring his family along anyway, despite the prohibitions. Choosing your position in the civil defence debate of the 1980s had "become an emotional, political issue - vulnerable to distortion and manipulation".⁵⁴

The Government had prepared for such an eventuality. They provided their Ministers with a list of common questions they might receive regarding civil defence. It was important that all Ministers remained on the same page. One theoretical question asked if the purpose of civil defence was actually the protection of "a governing and military elite". "Certainly not" was to be the proper reply, followed by a statement that senior ministers were to remain in London to lead the nation during the crisis, and should London be attacked "they would be killed". Most HQs were said incapable of enduring a nearby attack, and whomever did survive would be dedicated to working *for* the survivors as the government must continue if the nation was to recover.⁵⁵

The prepared policy answers did little to sway public opinions. In 1985, Market Behaviour Limited were commissioned by the Home Office to research public attitudes to civil defence. The data was summarized as "even wider ignorance" amongst the public than already assumed in regard to civil defence. Civil defence plans were thought to be "remote, secret and elitist ('bunkers for nobs')" (Figure 19).⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Tom Pocock, "Who's Booked for the Bunker," *The Standard*, March 15, 1984.

⁵⁵ THCR 1/4/2 Part 1, "Nuclear Weapons: Public Attitudes," April 6, 1981.

⁵⁶ TNA: INF6/2490, "Civil Defence Information and Publicity Programme," January 15, 1986.

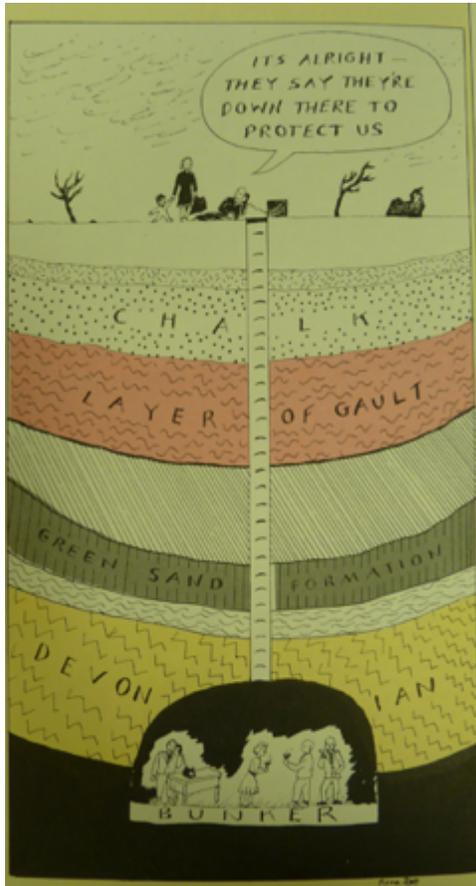
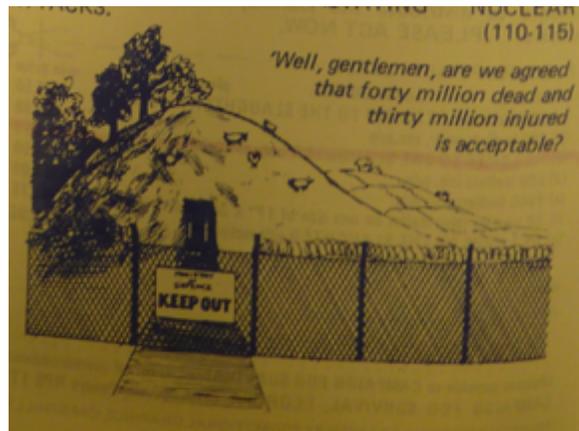


Figure 19 Bunkers for Bureaucrats: Anti-Protect and Survive booklets provide biting commentary through art.



Bureaucrats themselves harboured some odd views of bunker protocols, as shown by a Cabinet meeting where the issue of who would require protected accommodations was asked and each Home Office department was to prepare a report on their requirements. The Civil Service Department acknowledged that in a war, most of them could “be dispensed with entirely until it became clear as to whether or not we had a Service left to manage”. They requested placement for “12 – 20” staff members, though this was met with simply an underline and question mark from the Cabinet committee. F6 identified their current accommodations, the Emergency Operations Suite on Whitehall’s sixth floor, though they would prefer to be moved somewhere

that afforded a higher degree of protection. The Scottish Home and Health Department only requested that protected accommodation be provided for "our national treasures".⁵⁷

By 1986 the Home Office appeared to finally weaken in their resolution to dispel the bunkers for bureaucrats myth. A circular was prepared for Ministers on the public image of civil defence. The circular unambiguously stated that the public perception of Protect and Survive was "totally unsatisfactory". Regardless of any "benefits it may provide it failed to win over the public and rumours continued to swirl that it was all for a protected elite". Ultimately the advice in the Circular capitulated and told Ministers that they would just have to explain to the public in their own words that there was a "good reason" for the Government to have "protected accommodations".⁵⁸

With all the many opinions offered on the concept of bunkers for bureaucrats, perhaps none were as succinct as Labour MP Eric Deakins: "the Government are concerned solely with the survival of bureaucrats who will be invested with total power—ruling rather like demented Hitlers from their bunkers over a nuclear wasteland".⁵⁹

Newspapers

Newspapers of record enjoyed the sales brought about by reporting on Protect and Survive, though they rarely had kind words for the programme. Even *The Times*, which was typically centre-right, was, at its most generous, tolerant. The left-wing *Guardian* (and its associated far-left periodical *The New Statesmen*) however, were fiercely anti-Protect and Survive, particularly

⁵⁷ TNA: HO 322/958, "Cabinet Home Defence Planning Sub-Committee Meeting on Protected Accommodation Reports," February 6, 1980.

⁵⁸ TNA: HO 322/1024, "Civil Defence: Public Presentation," January 2, 1986.

⁵⁹ Eric Deakins. *HoC Deb*, 26 Oct 1983, Vol. 47, Col. 359.

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as an extension of Conservative policies and nuclear deterrence. Protect and Survive was a common target of ridicule, categorizing it as a grand ruse perpetrated against the public or simply "a load of tosh". A headline that read "Conservative Government did adequate job with little funding" would likely move fewer papers than learning about a government conspiracy and nuclear annihilation.⁶⁰

The printed attacks grew progressively nastier as Protect and Survive became well known. The programme had become a punchline and newspapers became a source of public debate. By 1985, *The Times* commented that Protect and Survive was "already out of date" when it was first published.⁶¹ One Brigadier wrote to *The Times* to voice his support for an earlier article by Peter Hennessy which recommended a return of the Civil Defence Corps. Rather than being volunteer based, however, Brigadier White suggested all youth out of school between 16 – 18 would be paid a fair wage to learn basic civil defence skills for six months with an option to volunteer afterwards.⁶²

Immediately following the release of Protect and Survive, *The Times* ran a week-long series on the programme, complete with photo inserts and public opinion. *The Times* was attempting to address the enormous increase of interest in civil defence. Their tone was mostly even, not accusing the programme of failure, but merely questioning how well it would work. Expert opinions were provided, though seldom, if ever, from CND or associated protest groups, who enjoyed greater coverage in left-leaning papers. *The Times* were often keen to point out that other European nations with seemingly more robust civil defence provisions had the luxury of low populations and status as unlikely targets. This would lead to questions regarding the efficacy of

⁶⁰ Peter Kellner, "London Diary," *New Statesman*, September 5, 1980.

⁶¹ Bevens Anthony, "Nuclear War Booklet Delayed," *The Times*, December 6, 1985.

⁶² Brigadier D. White, "Reviving Civil Defence," *The London Times*, December 12, 1979.

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Britain remaining a nuclear state, a debate in which *The Times* traditionally attempted to maintain neutrality.⁶³

In the United States, *The Boston Globe* reported on the sensationalism of Protect and Survive that was growing across Britain, and how it inspired action across the Atlantic. It was theorized that Labour was now a party of dissidents that adopted an official platform of "the renunciation of nuclear weapons". The paper reported that CND brought a "pamphlet" to Capitol Hill, filled with "horrors" on every page. In New England it was said Protect and Survive held a terrible reputation, mostly based on the negative reports in papers such as *The Guardian* where the programme was mocked and depicted as an odd British joke. Effort was made in the article to distance Protect and Survive from American efforts, as US shelters were said to have a higher standing amongst the public. Protect and Survive shelters, on the other hand, were derided as useless. Stealing a page from British papers, *The Globe* suggested a "stiff upper lip is called for" when dealing with British civil defence "laughingly called Protect and Survive".⁶⁴

Though they would have fared well amongst the sensationalism, British newspapers never ran ads for the booming self-bunker industry and spoke of them negatively as a public service. The Home Office prohibited the advertisement of nuclear shelters as the industry was too illusive to regulate. The scoop in British papers was thus buyer beware as unscrupulous builders were trying to cash in, with prices in the tens of thousands, without any regulatory standards. Reporters reminded readers that the shelters were likely never to be put to use, and if they were, there would be no refunds if they failed. *Building Magazine* reported on the interest in shelter sales in an article titled *Building for the Bomb*. F6 Division were quite interested in the article and proceeded to discuss its implications in a Working Group. The article was replete

⁶³ Freedman, "Does Civil Defence Claim Too Much?," *The Times*, March 26 1980.

⁶⁴ Mary McGrory, "Numb to the Nuclear Threat," *Boston Globe (1960-1988)*; *Boston, Mass.*, May 10, 1981.

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with Protect and Survive photos and chronicled the "revived UK interest" in civil defence that Protect and Survive generated.⁶⁵

New Scientist magazine featured *A Shopper's Guide*, reporting on the spate of new shelter companies desperate to exploit the public's lack of confidence in Protect and Survive. Over 300 companies in Britain alone materialized to service the demand, some charging more than £30,000 (over £100,000 in 2020). The article cautioned readers that few of these companies had any kind of expertise and operated on the basis that if their wares are faulty, it would be far too late for anyone to seek recompense.⁶⁶

Many papers were belligerent, eager to point out when any organized group had something critical to declare about Protect and Survive. *The Guardian* was keen to discredit Protect and Survive as a Conservative scheme. The paper enthusiastically reported when NALGO, a 800,000 member public service union, was describing Protect and Survive as a tool to make the public believe nuclear war "could be survived".⁶⁷ The Home Office and F6 were acutely aware of the tremendous influence the papers had in forming public opinion and another Working Group was formed with the expressed mission of countering news media and winning the war for public credibility.⁶⁸

Television News documentaries

⁶⁵ Mark Moore, "Building for the Bomb," *Building*, September 5, 1980.

⁶⁶ Laurence Godfrey, "A Shopper's Guide to Nuclear Survival," *New Scientist*, July 24, 1980.

⁶⁷ Michael Morris, "NALGO to Oppose Civil Defence Exercise," *The Guardian*, July 5, 1982.

⁶⁸ TNA: HO 322/1019, "Mr. Watson, Association of County Councils to JA Howard, F6," July 26, 1982.

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At 9:50pm, Wednesday May 20 1982, BBC1 aired a nuclear strike documentary that captured the nation. *QED: A Guide to Armageddon* was memorable for the horror of its graphic recreations of damage to landmarks and people. It was a video experiment, that put the claims of Protect and Survive on trial. It was quite evident that unlike *Panorama*, QED had not secured the support of the Home Office, as they had no audio or video of the programme, simply the recently published booklet. Narrated by journalist Ludovic Kennedy, with thanks to Peter Goodwin, author of *Nuclear War: The Facts on our Survival*, and physicist Bruce Sibley (from *Panorama*), and written and produced by Mick Jackson, who would later direct *Threads*. It is worth noting that all men were noted unilateralists and Labour supporters.

Guide opened with a blinding light faded into an image of the Great Cross atop St. Paul's Cathedral in central London. The programme then began to breakdown each step of a nuclear blast one mile above the Cathedral, beginning with heat. Temperatures as hot as the Sun would scorch everything in vicinity. Cars, offices, clocks, windows and even people were depicted melting. The bronze Great Cross was said to be vaporized while paintings were shown combusting in the National Gallery. Further out, in St. James' Park, trees burned, grass was charred, and the lake boiled dry in an instant. Further still, outside Battersea Dogs Home, several

Figure 20 A Graphic Message: QED shocks the viewer with the horrors of nuclear bombs



miles from initial ignition, asphalt, tyres, and entire busses liquified. Everything exposed to the flashpoint burned within a four-mile radius. The effect on human flesh would be identical to butchered meat, shown by charring a side of pork. Only at the seven-mile mark, near Wimbledon, were burns said to be "treatable" though the makeup showed the wounds as

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horrendous (Figure 20). Even 8.5 miles away, at Kew Gardens and the National Archives, the heat was said to be sufficient to melt raincoats and cause second degree burns.⁶⁹

Three seconds after detonation, the area around the Cathedral was visibly destroyed as the shockwave smashed the area "like a giant, million-ton fist". Within seconds, 2000 mph winds spread total destruction as far as Bayswater, 3 miles away. The damage to people in this area was said to be beyond severe. Within an area as wide as 500 square miles, enough to reach Essex, every window was shattered. This was unforgettably demonstrated by blasting a window frame next to a pumpkin, with the shards embedding deeply within.⁷⁰

Guide then asked the viewer, "what can city dwellers do for protection"? Here, in North London, the programme introduced a couple, Joy the banker, and Eric the musician, of Finsbury Park, 3-4 miles from the blast centre (Figure 21). The narrator stated that "the Home Office published this pamphlet, Protect and Survive". As the pages were flipped through, it was said

Figure 21 Pages Come to Life: Actors in QED (above) follow the instructions of Protect and Survive exactly (below)



⁶⁹ Mick Jackson, "A Guide to Armageddon," Youtube.com, *QED* (BBC Broadcasting House, London, England: BBC One, May 20, 1982), Youtube.com.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

that the booklet contained advice to protect oneself from fallout after an attack. "There's little advice on the immediate effects" of blast and heat, however the booklet did provide advice for fire protection.⁷¹

The programme asked, "how would they survive at 3.25 miles"? Surprisingly, in regard to heat, they fared "quite well" as the whitewash blocked 80% of the intensity. "Joy and Eric should survive... at least for 17 seconds". A model of their row of houses was then detonated as the narrator commented "after that, the blast destroys their terrace of houses". Again, it was noted that "there's no guarantee that the booklet will protect you from blast if you live closer than 6 – 8 miles". Though it was grudgingly said that families outside this area may survive the resulting fallout with adherence to Protect and Survive.⁷²

Apparently reconstituted, the couple were then shown reading *Domestic Nuclear Shelters*, a far more detailed than Protect and Survive shelter publication produced by the Home Office. The book had plans for different levels of shelters, though it was noted that none of them were "overnight affairs". The plans began with a Type 1 shelter, a below ground garden shelter, though text stated that most London homes would not have a sufficiently large garden. Type 2 was a steel and brick indoor shelter, much like the Morrison shelters of the Second World War. It was said to be formidable enough to survive a two-storey house collapsing upon it. Impressive though that sounds, if the viewer was in the firezone of an attack, "you might not only be roasted, but suffocated". The Type 2 shelter "only works 4.5-5 miles away, and even then, there might be no one to dig you out".⁷³

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

After this, the Type 3 and 4 shelters required a private company for anywhere between £8000 to £20000, unaffordable "beyond a fraction of the population". If the viewer was fortunate enough to be in the bunker during the blast, there was then the problem of neighbours. The programme stated "you're likely the only home in the area to have such a shelter ... are you prepared to use force to keep others out? Will you be safe"? Clearly, *Guide* did not support the neo-liberal pedagogy of Protect and Survive.⁷⁴

After spending upwards of £20000 for a purpose-built shelter (extra for a Swiss-made "oxygen producing unit") then, finally, the viewer might be "at last, reasonably safe". Right on cue, the narrator returned to add "safe, that is to say, from a single warhead ... but a single warhead is unlikely". Then a map of London was shown with an ever-increasing number of circles appearing. The ultra-shelters may have worked for one warhead but "a reasonable estimate" (by whom remains unknown) would be 30 bombs launched all around London.⁷⁵

Guide also hired a couple to spend nearly two weeks entirely within the small garden trench-shelter depicted earlier. The sanitation consisted of a bucket and while it was described as "a nightmare," it was said it would be worse after a real blast. The viewer was asked if they could imagine "the confusion, the disorientation" or the fate of family and children. After 12 days the viewer, adhering to Protect and Survive, would emerge to find "a wasteland for which little in your experiences would prepare you". An ominous choir sang over matte paintings of bombed out London landmarks as the viewer was told "your real problems could just be beginning...".⁷⁶

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

The Home Office was resentful of the obvious politics at work, tearing at Protect and Survive's credibility. They were disappointed in the BBC and going forward, would no longer participate in civil defence documentaries. While the physical effects of a nuclear blast depicted on the programme "were broadly in line" with what was published in *Nuclear Weapons*, *QED* took liberties with times and places. F6 noted that it was not explained that the types of burns depicted on the documentary were for people in open space, directly in the path of the heat flash, not protected as instructed by Protect and Survive. This aggravated the Home Office further as the principle objective of Protect and Survive was to "ensure that people were *not* caught in the open" before an attack.⁷⁷

Reviews of the programme tended to match the political beliefs of the reviewer, though almost all were shocked by the horrific and haunting recreations. "What a cheery little number we've got here!" opened one review. *QED*'s bait-and-switching with the fate of the couples was described as a "brisk, visually nimble, sometimes overly playful style". Critic Peter Lennon used a humorous tone, countering the detailed descriptions of visual destruction before adding that after an attack, a few people would then "complain to their local MPs about this vandalism". The deluxe shelters were outlined, noting that for "a spare £10,000" the reader could receive a lavatory and "better quality tins of stew". Lennon remarked that the critical weakness of Protect and Survive shelters, or the uber-bunkers, was that one would need the foresight to be in one before the bombs went off. There were no images of "social mayhem" according to Lennon, as "these programmes deliberately attempt to keep the emotional level low". Political stances were left glib as Lennon was pleased that neither side of the media were discussed, "both those who

⁷⁷ TNA: HO 322/1028, *Civil Defence: The Basic Facts*. October 1983.

go vicariously to war [and] those who habitually plead for negotiations" as they would be equally vaporized.⁷⁸

Some reviews simply went to great lengths to retell what type of destruction would befall each landmark on the perimeters of concentric blast rings around London. The sensationalism of seeing landmarks blow up and sides of pork burned were transferred to the page as reviews attempted to capture the attention of the reader.⁷⁹ Other reviews latched onto the clear partisan politics of civil defence at play in the programme. *Guide* originally opened with a warning "not to draw any overt political message" from the programme. To critic John Naughton, it was abundantly clear the producers "meant *party* political message, of course". There was a deliberate unilateralist emphasis with each narrator quip on the failures of Tory published Protect and Survive. For many, it was "impossible not to read a deeply political message" from the programme which was "crudely" conveying their opinion that there was no safety from nuclear weapons, and thus no justification for ownership. This was of course the mantra of the Labour Party of the 1980s.⁸⁰

The BBC followed the programme with an hour-long documentary called *The Underground Test*. Broadcast on BBC2, it followed Ken and Liz's two-week trial buried underground in a garden shelter. Clips had been used in *Guide* though the couple's ordeal was now given full focus. Naughton remarked that the documentary demonstrated "the absurdity" of Protect and Survive, though this message lost its thunder as Ken and Liz turned out to be "one of the best comic double-acts in the business". Ken would greet the camera every morning with "Good mornin' gintlemin" while dour Liz complained of cold. Although contained in their

⁷⁸ Peter Lennon, "Features," *The Listener*, May 20, 1982.

⁷⁹ "Out of the Air," *The Listener*, August 5, 1982.

⁸⁰ John Naughton, "Television," *The Listener*, August 5, 1982.

miserable surroundings for two weeks, Ken and Liz "hammed and wisecracked their way to immortality". As a result, Naughton was laughing rather than seething "at the government's callousness towards its subjects" with Protect and Survive. Houghton concluded that if he had to be stuck in a shelter during the end of the world, he hoped it would be with Ken and Liz. Likely not the message that Jackson was hoping to impart on the viewer.⁸¹

After the *Panorama* special three years prior, "the nuclear debate [was] back on the television's agenda" with the *Guide's* special rebroadcast in 1983. Critic Peter Fiddick was also stunned by the human analogues, with emphasis on the charred pork and shredded pumpkin. It was said that interest in civil defence had not abated, carried from *Panorama* to "last year's" broadcast of *QED* and its subsequent rebroadcast at the height of the Protect and Survive debates. Fiddick understood that the wealth of civil defence media on television brilliantly captured the zeitgeist of the nation, as "if some researcher were to ferret out all the reports, discussions and documentaries, the list would seem quite long ... exposing different facets of a complicated and changing bundle of issues".⁸² Fiddick also commented that Jackson better delivered on the promises of *The War Game*, with the benefits of published government information, colour television, and the advances in modern make up and special effects. All of which were delivered with "surgical detachment" that left no doubt in the viewer that the power of a nuclear strike would leave no one unscathed, even with Protect and Survive.⁸³

Finally, *Guide* was re-broadcast again in 1984, this time along the debut of Mick Jackson's seminal *Threads*, and the long-anticipated debut of *The War Game*. Played close together, the seeds of *Threads'* infamous annihilation scenes were obvious in its precursor,

⁸¹ "The Underground Test," *QED* (BBC Broadcasting House, London, England: BBC Two, May 20, 1982).

⁸² I would like to thank Peter Fiddick for his very observant appreciation of this project, 25 years in the future.

⁸³ Peter Fiddick, "The Nuclear Balance on Television," *The Listener*, April 21, 1983.

Guide. Jackson had decided to pursue the creation of *Guide* following the publication of *Protect and Survive*. His goal was to "address the debates" that *Protect and Survive* inspired that typically avoided "showing nuclear war entails showing that deterrence had failed". It would not be very memorable for a programme to prepare for a nuclear attack that never occurs. That week had many more sensational displays of nuclear destruction in store for the British public.⁸⁴

Newsnight Debate & On the 8th Day

The final week of September 1984 marked a culmination of sorts as all things British civil defence converged. For their "After the Bomb" week the BBC collected a line-up of civil defence programmes, of which *Protect and Survive* featured prominently. Both *Panorama* and *QED* were re-broadcast and *The War Game* was broadcast for the first time after twenty years of banishment. *Threads* and its American counterpart, *The Day After*, also debuted to British television audiences with unforgettable images. Afterwards, a new documentary on nuclear winter titled *On the 8th Day* was broadcast on BBC2 on September 24th and popular newsmagazine programme *Newsnight* was set to broadcast a live debate immediately afterwards.

On the 8th Day was different in focus from its predecessors. In 1982, a Swedish study had suggested a new reason to fear nuclear war, the concept of a nuclear winter.⁸⁵ By 1984 the theory had caught fire and the model swept through anti-nuclear circles. The hypothesis was straightforward: no matter where the bombs went off, enough nuclear explosions would burn all the stored chemicals in urban areas and kick up so much soot and smoke into the upper atmosphere that sunlight could only partially penetrate. The result was to be "twilight at noon", a

⁸⁴ Ibid

⁸⁵ PJ Crutzen and JW Birks, "The Atmosphere After a Nuclear War: Twilight at Noon," *Ambio* 11 (1982): 114–25.

nuclear winter, where global temperatures were to drop tens of degrees, freezing crops, causing animal extinctions and prompting starvation across the Earth for months or even years.⁸⁶

Nuclear winter struck a chord in 1984 and became the *en vogue* doomsday scenario for unilateralists and anti-deterrence activists. Now it could be argued that any nuclear attack could jeopardize the entire planet. The theory called together many like-minded members of the scientific community. Politics soon became inseparable from the concept in much the way civil defence had a few years earlier. While the validity of the theory was quietly debated, even to this day, many scientists recalled the partisan enforcement of nuclear politics in the 1980s. Research now shows "the believers in Nuclear Winter had a political agenda". Some kept their counterpoints to themselves out of fear of being blackballed for going against the political-scientific collective. With a convincingly unified message, dozens of books and articles were written, and nuclear winter soon found its way to television. *On the 8th Day, Threads* and the *Newsnight Debate* all focused on the concept of nuclear winter.⁸⁷

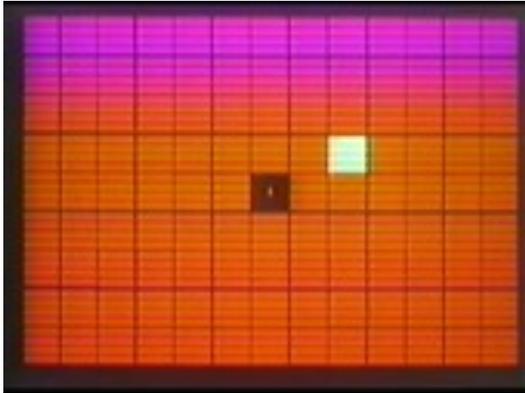
On the 8th Day was a very straightforward documentary, mostly concerned with the nuclear winter phenomenon. The programme's message was that nuclear strategy should be upended as no civil defence system could resist the environmental collapse brought about by a nuclear winter. An image appeared of a single red warhead, said to represent all the megatons of explosives used throughout the Second World War. The screen quickly filled with hundreds of

⁸⁶ Owen Greene, Ian Percival, and Irene Ridge, *Nuclear Winter: The Evidence and the Risks* (Cambridge [Cambridgeshire] : New York, N.Y.: Polity Press ; BBlackwell, 1985).

⁸⁷ Lawrence Badash, *A Nuclear Winter's Tale: Science and Politics in the 1980s* (MIT Press, 2009).

warheads, representing the megatons of global nuclear arms. A small fraction was then

Figure 22 Scales of Destruction: A pictograph of explosive potential from *On the 8th Day*, September 24 1984



highlighted in white, said to be enough to bring about nuclear winter (Figure 22).⁸⁸

Civil defence became the focus of the last quarter of the program. A computer image of the United Kingdom was drawn, with many red dots said to represent a “minimal strike” on only military targets. If, as the Home Office stated, up to 70% of the nation survived a nuclear attack using Protect and Survive, the narrator asked what

life would look like in the town of Ludlow, located in the centre of Wales, that was seemingly left unscathed by irradiated red dots. British civil defence plans were said to be based around a two-week warning, Protect and Survive, and a two-week sheltering period (Figure 23).

Unfortunately, the survivors would emerge from their now filthy burrows to find “no water, no fuel, no electricity, no food, no banks, no industry...not even soap or matches”.

There was to be a month of twilight, during which no grain crops would survive, and England’s climate would then be similar to Iceland’s. Ensuring the viewer’s understanding, the programme finished in silence with a text card that reminded all that 77% of Great Britons lived in urban areas.⁸⁹

Figure 23 An Island Bridged: Likely nuclear target sites in Britain from *On the 8th Day*



⁸⁸ Michael Andrew, “On the 8th Day,” Video, *Natural World* (BBC Two, September 24, 1984), Youtube.com.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

Chapter 8 - "A Guide to Armageddon": The British Media and Protect and Survive

Following the documentary, the BBC went directly into the live broadcast of the *Newsnight* nuclear debate. Hosted by acclaimed journalist John Tusa, an influential panel of politicians and academics was gathered to discuss civil defence, *On the 8th Day*, and *Threads*, which they had viewed the previous night. The objective of the debate was to answer three questions:

1. *Can nuclear escalation be controlled to stop short of mass destruction and nuclear winter?*
2. *What lessons can be drawn about Britain's civil defence programmes and nuclear winter?*
3. *What effect does the nuclear winter hypothesis have on deterrents and are they still valid?*⁹⁰

Along with some military men and nuclear strategists, *Newsnight* assembled: Robin Cook, Labour MP and advisor to Neil Kinnock; George Walden, Conservative MP; and John Cartwright, SDP defence advisor. Tusa informed the viewer that Defence Secretary Michael Heseltine had been invited but declined. A Home Office representative was also requested and also declined. Both absences were products of the poor reception *Protect and Survive* received in the earlier BBC documentaries. Some academics and politicians in the debate believed nuclear escalation could be stopped, while others disagreed. No consensus was found other than the observation films could not simply suggest the horrors of nuclear war; the war would have to be escalated to nuclear attack to discuss the issues and make compelling television.

Next, Tusa asked what implications could be made seeing that *Threads* was made based upon the Home Office civil defence document *Protect and Survive*. Eric Alley, President of the Institute of Civil Defence, had accrued some popularity amongst unilateralist protestors after his

⁹⁰ Chris Fox, "24 September 1980 Nuclear Debate," *Newsnight* (BBC Broadcasting House, London, England: BBC One, September 24, 1980), Youtube.com.

appearance on *Panorama*. On January 26 1981, CND Grimsby Director Audrey Atkins wrote to CND director Bruce Kent to provide information on Eric Alley, who had written to complain about the recent actions of CND. Alley had first gained the attention of CND with his defence of Protect and Survive on *Panorama*. Alley would later converse with CND, clarifying his position that until nuclear weapons were gone, he would champion the strongest civil defence possible for Britain.⁹¹

Previously, in September, Alley was having dinner with Minister of Home Defence Leon Brittan and several overseas delegates after a Regional Civil Defence Scientific Advisors Conference in Humberside. Several members of the CND offshoot, END, picketed the dinner shouting slogans and carrying placards reading "No Hiding Place". According to Alley, they became abusive towards the delegates. The protestors then marched eight miles to the town of Wayne "where Eric Alley had his super-bunker, the one that's been on the television – *Panorama*". Mrs. Atkins then joked about the odd Controller (Keith Bridge) "who made the 'ultimate sanction' comment" on the same episode.⁹²

On *Newsnight*, Alley offered his conclusions: "nothing we've seen invalidates civil defence because it's no use sitting down, folding our hands and saying there's nothing we can do about it. We've got to do something and ensure our preparations, however small, can do something for people". Dr. Philip Steadman, author of *Doomsday: Britain After Nuclear Attack*, countered that Protect and Survive deceived people into thinking the effects of nuclear war were survivable. Tusa interjected that the problem was not "who can guess the number left alive, but what can you do for those who *ARE* alive?". Grudgingly, Steadman conceded that Protect and

⁹¹ MSS 181/3/3/3, "Letter to CND Chairman Hugh Jenkins from Eric Alley, County Emergency Planning Officer for Humberside.," January 13, 1981.

⁹² MSS 181/3/3/3, "Mrs. Audrey Atkins to Mr. Bruce Kent Re: Eric Alley," January 26, 1981.

Survive could protect people from fallout, though now with nuclear winter, they were "merely postponing the agony".⁹³

Alley and Steadman went back and forth, with Alley stating "we've never downplayed the effects, we dealt with them as we saw them" and Steadman argued "it's the whole posture, trying to avoid discussion, trying to – I mean, the very title of Protect and Survive, clearly tended to carry a comforting impression". Tory MP George Walden remarked that if nuclear winter was indeed real, it made the concept of nuclear-free zones even more useless. Walden maintained that Protect and Survive and the deterrent did not increase the likelihood of war and that "buying insurance does not mean you are preparing for an accident". Walden was very consistent with Conservative policy towards Protect and Survive and appeared very well researched.⁹⁴

Robin Cook took up the Labour cause, attacking Protect and Survive as a Conservative plot to make the nuclear deterrent palatable. "I'd like to point out" argued Cook "in the film, the family that did take advice- the utter futility of Protect and Survive" did not fare well. Cook then pointed out that the house in *Threads* was reduced to rubble, the people in cellars were trapped and those that did survive found they were open to radiation poisoning. Cook summarized the Labour/unilateralist movement by concluding "there's no way for the people of Sheffield to protect themselves other than getting out of Sheffield. Civil defence is about protecting the government, the police and the army". SDP MP John Cartwright added that when it came to Protect and Survive "there's nothing dependable there behind the facade". Cartwright noted that the Government's entire civil defence strategy depended on the cooperation of Local Authorities, many of whom refused to participate.⁹⁵

⁹³ Fox, "24 September 1980 Nuclear Debate."

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

Chapter 8 - "A Guide to Armageddon": The British Media and Protect and Survive

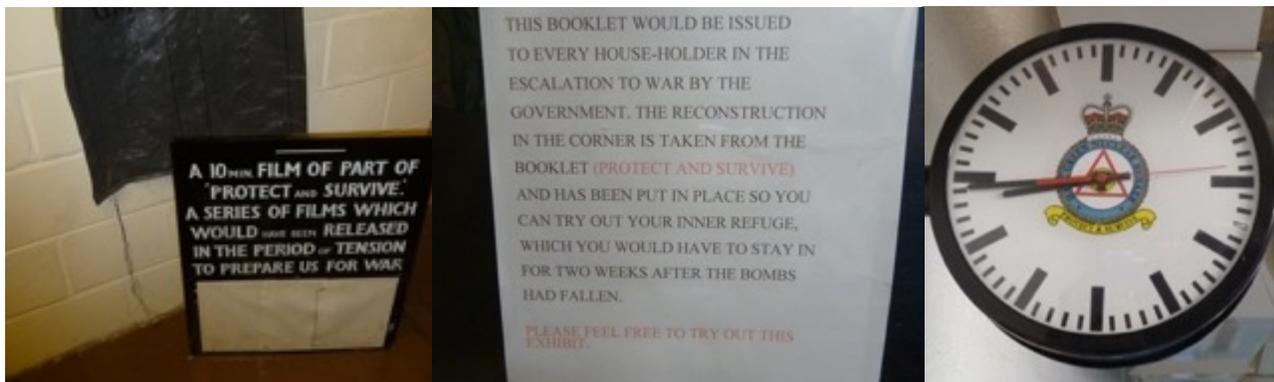
Alley had the final word and confidently reiterated his points: "I don't know what film you saw. It was an indirect attack, if it was direct Sheffield would have been a smoking crater. Those that did prepare, Protect and Survive, one of them survived. The people in the cellar died because a couple of looters went around and smashed their 'eads in!". During the 1980s, it would appear that the anti-nuclear media accomplished one goal, their visualizations of nuclear war made an attack look so horrible, the deterrent seemed the greatest form of civil defence. The news-documentaries were very popular amongst British viewers. Noticing the response that nuclear civil defence generated, a wave of popular culture would soon arrive that would solidify Protect and Survive as synonymous with Britain and the Cold War.⁹⁶

⁹⁶ Ibid.

Chapter 9 Skeletons, Celtic Rock, and Irradiated Sheffield: Protect and Survive and Popular Culture

Few government programmes have inspired as much popular culture content than Protect and Survive in the 1980s. References to the programme appeared everywhere from fine art to protest graffiti. The creations, unfortunately for the Home Office, were almost always highly critical of the efficacy of Protect and Survive. More often than not, the image of Protect and Survive that Britons received from popular culture varied between laughably hopeless at best, to chilling governmental contempt for the nation. Exploring these cultural artefacts reveals a crooked image of the Protect and Survive as a horrific scheme that helped the programme become a vivid memory of many Britons (Figure 24).

Figure 24 Part of the Era: Protect and Survive content is a prominent part of many SRHQ bunkers now converted museums.



However, the response to, or even the creation of, Protect and Survive can come as little surprise to those who study British literature and note the pervasive predilection for dystopia and apocalypse. The insulation of Britain by the North Sea is one of the nation's defining

Chapter 9 - Skeletons, Celtic Rock, and Irradiated Sheffield: Protect and Survive and Popular Culture

characteristics. After the Romans departed circa 400 AD and the Normans arrived near the turn of the millennium, Britain faced conflicts throughout the early modern period, beginning close to 1500 AD. Arguably, the greatest threats of invasion, the Spanish Armada and Napoleon's fleet were dashed upon the rocks of Britain or defeated in the sea that surrounds her. Artists, aristocrats and commoners alike prided themselves on the perceived invulnerability afforded to the island nation by nature. Both psychologically and geographically, Britons were isolated from mainland Europe. Invaders would have to brave the miles of open sea, the might of the Royal Navy and the circumference of rocky shores. Any aggression would provide a significant military advantage for Britain and the resulting feelings of protection wove themselves into the national tapestry.

England was truly the "ultimate island" and her citizens the ultimate "island race; even when they possessed the largest empire the world had ever seen, they could seriously cherish their splendid isolation".¹ The disassociation of having the largest empire in the world and an isolated home helped the small island of England conquer half the globe while keeping their homeland secure; continental powers had no such luxury. Until the twentieth century Britain could look upon Europe and the rest of the known world from their perch, but with the progression of military technology and the advancement of flight, England's splendid isolation was irrevocably shattered.

Britain's cultural shift from splendid isolation to isolated target manifests itself as a constant theme in British creative media that depicts the future, specifically in Britain's predilection for dystopian science fiction. With the advent of air warfare, Britain's fears of airborne apocalypse at

¹ Nicholas Ruddick, *Ultimate Island : On the Nature of British Science Fiction*, Contributions to the Study of Science Fiction and Fantasy ; No. 55 (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1993), 58.

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the hands of *The Bomber* are reflected in numerous works of science fiction from the First World War and the inter and post-war years as demonstrated in films such as *Things to Come* and *The War Game* that directly influenced the staunch reactions to *Protect and Survive* in the 1980s

The effects of the loss of a global empire, and the effects of perished isolation have shaped fictitious British futurescapes in a truly unique manner. Before examining the concepts of isolation and civil defence in national culture, it is useful to analyze “the most obvious characteristic of British science fiction - that it is pessimistically obsessed with catastrophe”.² Dystopia has been a mainstay of science fiction since its inception, and serves as the perfect tool for the author to warn the reader of whatever dangers are present to society. A dystopian future is one of universal hopelessness, it is the epitome of a culture's fear, its worst nightmares realized. “Dystopia, in the sense of a bad place anywhere, is by contrast the obsession, at one time or another, of the great majority of Western science fiction writers”.³ While a wealth of science fiction films and television series have been produced that depict bleak futures, even a cursory glance will reveal significant cultural differences with Britain's. Dystopian science fiction can depict protagonists fighting a corrupt future, and more often than not, the protagonist “emerges, pitiful but unbowed and unchanged, with the human spirit, however tatty, almost always triumphant”.⁴ Conversely, a specific trend in British science fiction tends to depict, at best, the protagonist managing to survive until the end of the tale in a continually un-redeemable dystopian future or otherwise failing completely. *Protect and Survive* unintentionally tapped into

² Ruddick, 10.

³ John Charles Griffiths, *Three Tomorrows : American, British and Soviet Science Fiction* (London: Macmillan, 1980), 98.

⁴ Griffiths, 115.

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a volatile distress in British popular culture, and the response to the programme was as dramatic as the media it inspired.

In addition to the prevalent island motifs is the theme of the future dystopia and the catastrophe of which it was birthed. The idea of catastrophe is often a part of British fiction, the fears of a nation put to paper in the form of an apocalypse. With no great singular disaster, catastrophes in British fiction often took the shape of shattered civilization, the perverse lack of Victorian values intended to shock the reader. British science fiction became its own genre independent of British fiction, incorporating the island foundation and notions of catastrophe into the futurism of emerging scientific fields. The enormous popularity of the works of H.G. Wells helped legitimize the genre as the “import of scientific ideas into the nineteenth-century condition of English novels, the British literary tradition became acclimatized to the idea of disaster at the same time as what we might now call British science fiction was being born”.⁵ Naturally, the notions of catastrophe, apocalypse, and dystopia are not exclusive to British science fiction, but their irredeemable nature is a common trait of the genre. While other Western nations produced science fiction, they lacked the unique experiences of the crumbling British Empire as seen in works such as *The Time Machine*, *The Terror of the Air*, *1984*, *The Shape of Things to Come*, or *The Day of the Triffids*. This unprecedented loss of power, while not the apocalypse of Britain, was the apocalypse of the British Empire, and would leave an indelible mark on national culture. The loss of the Empire and geographic isolation with the rise of technology would produce a civil defence strategy which would become focused on prevention over survival.

⁵ Ruddick, *Ultimate Island*, 101.

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This empirical British apocalypse grew even more noticeable as America grew to a true world power after the World Wars while England fell to a distant third. The isolation of the once unchallenged island was compounded by the growing threat of modern warfare and a distinct streak of pessimism established itself in British future-stories. This evolutionary point is where the hallmarks of British science fiction are created and the layers of island motifs, catastrophes and pessimism blend into a unique British creation. British author Alan Moore admitted the influence that past British apocalyptic works had on his career:

“I think there's always been a traditionally apocalyptic side to British science fiction, from H.G. Wells onwards. I mean, most of Wells' stories are potentially apocalyptic in some sense or another... the chilling picture of a blind humanity and people just reacting with despair ... But I think it just has something to do with the climate of the British Isles more than anything else. (laughs) It probably magnifies by 10 apocalyptic thoughts. But it's a very real tradition, and it's something that's been with me all through my literary development”⁶

The pessimism Moore describes is a key factor in stories of British futures as “the conflict invariably ends in defeat for the individual, but the drama of opposition is substantiated with such intensity that the predictability of the outcome is more than balanced by the sense one has of reading the truth about a principal fact of modern life”.⁷ While there are many calling cards in British science fiction, there is also a frequently used theme or image of “the Bomber” that is often depicted as much in civil defence plans as English literature.

⁶ Graeme McMillan, “Moore On British Apocalyptic Fiction,” io9, accessed November 9, 2017, <https://io9.com/5235814/moore-on-british-apocalyptic-fiction>.

⁷ William Steinhoff, “Utopia Reconsidered: Comments on 1984,” in *No Place Else: Exploration in Utopian and Dystopian Fiction*, ed. Eric Rabkin, Martin Greenberg, and Joseph Olander (Carbondale, Ill: University of Southern Illinois Press, 1983), 148.

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The bomber is a foundation of British dystopian futures and civil defence as both depict the Bomber as the cause of future disasters. Films and later television began to compliment literature as the most popular forms of media soon after their respective creations. It stands to reason that the authors of media for these mediums would attempt to influence the viewership as much as possible, and so incorporate many themes that were already heavy in public consciousness as “the most historically significant aspects of a period will be conveniently and clearly reflected” in these works.⁸ Decades before the Blitz, or even before the usefulness of flight could be refined for combat, Britain began to sense the devastating impact technology would have on its once impenetrable fortress. As technology advanced in the late nineteenth century, invasion scare stories became quite popular in Britain and had lasting impacts with both their target audiences and civil defence planners. These stories, and those of the Inter-War years, fed off the scientific discoveries of the time and were filled with fantastical threats to Britain such as “flying submarines, tunnels dug from Japan ... which an invading force of super-tanks was sent, and flesh factories for fabricating artificial soldiers to serve as the canon-fodder of future wars”.⁹ These tales became wildly popular and spurred the creation of a science fiction sub-genre referred to as invasion scare stories that captured “the characteristic expressions of public anxiety about defence in the Edwardian period”.¹⁰

However, not only the public lived in fear of the bomb/er, as the educated and influential were not above the paranoia generated by Britain's sudden loss of geographic advantage. The works of British science fiction impacted influential leaders such as Winston Churchill who

⁸ Martin Ceadel, “Popular Fiction and the Next War, 1918-1939,” in *Class, Culture and Social Change : A New View of the 1930s*, ed. Frank Gloversmith (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1980), 162.

⁹ Ceadel, 164.

¹⁰ Brett Holman, *The Next War in the Air: Britain's Fear of the Bomber, 1908–1941* (Routledge, 2016), 180.

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wrote an article theorizing about the “deadly ray” that could be developed soon and rain destruction upon Britain.¹¹ With the benefit of hindsight, the idea of national leaders living in fear of science-fiction worthy doomsday weapons may seem difficult to believe. This fear was quite real and persisted well into Postwar Britain and influenced the creation of Protect and Survive. In the 1980s, Churchill’s “deadly ray” became Margaret Thatcher’s “Soviet Beam Weapon”.¹² Even by 1983, the leaders of the nation were drawn to a need to protect the nation from all manner of technological threats regardless of their actual existence. As Thatcher’s personal secretary would provide the Prime Minister bundles of requested reading at night, the need to research the latest threat to Britain directed Thatcher to magazine articles discussing unrealistic superweapons that would decimate the nation.¹³ The leaders of Britain and all their resources were fraught with the same fears as the man on the street with the latest Sci-Fi page-turner.

Finding media opposed to Protect and Survive during the 1980s is hardly a difficult task. Support for Protect and Survive was subtle, typically displayed by not complaining. The volume of against-media suggests that, as a government initiative to increase the credibility of British civil defence, Protect and Survive can only be judged as a failure. Even the Home Office and Thatcher’s Government were painfully aware that the programme had become something of a national joke. While its usefulness may have been limited, the Home Office believed the programme still had merit. The Home Office maintained throughout Thatcher’s Governments

¹¹ Winston Churchill, “Shall We All Commit Suicide?,” *Nash’s Pall Mall Gazette*, September 1924.

¹² “Copy of Aviation Week & Space Technology Article from May 2 1977 for PM Thatcher’s Reading” (Ministry of Defence, Whitehall, London, April 19, 1983), THCR 1/4/5 Part 2 (1983), Churchill Archives Centre, Churchill College, Cambridge.

¹³ NHR Evans, “Cover Letter for ‘Laser and Particle Beam Weapons’ Excerpt by NHR Evans to Secretary AJ Coles, Esq.” (Ministry of Defence, Whitehall, London, April 19, 1983), THCR 1/4/5 Part 2 (1983), Churchill Archives Centre, Churchill College, Cambridge.

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that despite the relentless criticism of the programme, Protect and Survive was “effective, despite the ridicule heaped upon it”.¹⁴

And ridiculed it was. All manner of social classes and political leanings could be found amongst the detractors of Protect and Survive. Denigration came from unilateralists, Labour supporters, academics, journalists, scientists, students, artists and filmmakers. Their criticisms of Protect and Survive, however, reimagined the programme as something it was never intended to be, namely guaranteed protection from nuclear war. It may be a small consolation for F6 Division, but vilification of the programme often originated from ancillary political gripes or the maintenance of Britain as a nuclear power (disregarding Labour’s creation of the programme and its prolongation with Polaris). With all the disparaging comments made of Protect and Survive, few if any argued that the advice itself would not save *some* lives on the peripheries of nuclear strikes. It was, ultimately, “better than nothing” after all. Therefore, attackers of Protect and Survive typically came at the programme from one of three avenues: conspiracy, ridicule, or ineptness.

Ineptness was the least used tool. These critics maintained that the Government was performing their duty with civil defence. The problem, however, was that Protect and Survive was the rushed work of fussy civil servants. The conspiracy tactic argued that the Conservatives hoped to fool the public into complacent acceptance of nuclear weapons, under the erroneous belief that they would be protected. Some of these criticizers went as far as suggesting that the Tory Government were actively plotting the end of the nation so they could emerge as a kind of new order. This was the bunkers for bureaucrats motif that called attention to the disparity between Protect and Survive advice and SRHQ bunkers. Ridicule was the most utilized, though

¹⁴ TNA: HO 322/940, “HDO(80)7 Annex C - Public Information and Shelter Policy,” June 1, 1980.

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it typically overlapped with the other techniques. Arguments using this method cast the Conservatives as total fools and Protect and Survive was the supreme product of their foolishness. The programme would be mocked, derided, and satirized in all forms of media, made to seem the equivalent of opening an umbrella when the bombs began to fall.

Most of the lasting memories of Protect and Survive are reflected by its infiltration into British ¹⁵pop culture. From art to television, Protect and Survive appeared in virtually every form of popular culture and became indelible part of Thatcherite Britain. As more time passes, the 1980s have become suitably nostalgic and recollections of Protect and Survive abound. The host of a BBC programme, *How TV Ruined Your Life*, fondly recalled being positively terrified by the clips of Protect and Survive that were shown on *Panorama* and in *Threads*.¹⁶ The National Archives also hosted a month's long exhibition on the programme to capitalize on public interest. Recollections appear in newsprint more and more frequently, as well as television, and Youtube. The SRHQs are teeming with Protect and Survive imagery, their gift shops brimming with reprints, buttons, mugs, and videos. Protect and Survive is a vital tool to set the unsettling mood of the bunkers, even more so than the creepy mannequins and dimmed hallways.

Television

¹⁵ All photos by Joseph Buscemi, in 2012 inside Kelvedon Hatch, Essex, except (right) Clock in Hack Green, Crewe.

¹⁶ "Fear," Television, *How TV Ruined Your Life* (BBC Broadcasting House, London, England: BBC Two, January 25, 2011), Youtube.com; Capell, "If the Bomb Drops..."; Mick Jackson, *Threads*, TV-Film (UK: BBC, 1984).

Figure 25 Poking Fun: The Gormless Neil talks to the audience while attempting to make tea. Note his stereotypical CND and Karl Marx posters.



The Young Ones was a quirky, unique, and popular BBC sitcom. It was both inspired by Monty Python, and nothing at all like Monty Python. *The Young Ones* put the mad into madcap, making frequent use of non-sequiturs, cutaways, and fourth wall breaking in a manner not popularized again until modern cartoon sitcoms. The show centred around four university students living together in a rundown home and their adventures in 1980s Britain. Each of the four men who shared the house represented an archetypical 1980s London university student. Vyvyan was the punk, Neil was the meek neo-hippie leftist (a member of the “woolly hat brigade” as Michael Heseltine would say), Rick was the revolutionary activist, and Mike was the Essex Man, the Conservative minded businessman (Figure 25).¹⁷

In one episode, a plane dropped a massive red bomb straight through their house and into their kitchen. Neil was quick to action and announced, “I’m going upstairs to get the incredibly helpful and informative Protect and Survive manual!”. The reference to the programme’s

¹⁷ Geoff Posner, “Bomb,” *The Young Ones* (BBC2, November 30, 1982).

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helpfulness drew snickers from the studio audience. Next, Rick declared his solution: “I’m going to tell Thatcher that we’ve got a bomb! And if she doesn’t do something to help ‘the kids’ by this afternoon, we’re going to blow up England!”. Rick’s list of demands were to destroy poverty, destroy capitalism and have the pop band Dexy’s Midnight Runners play in the university library. Mike told Rick he already told the band to set up in their lavatory, to which the camera cut to a four-minute performance by the actual band.¹⁸

Returning to the kitchen, Rick confronted Neil who was setting to work on Protect and Survive’s advice by painting himself white. “I’m painting myself white to deflect the blast” announced Neil. The crowd cackled at the satire of whitewashing, an

Figure 26 Not Ones for Subtlety: Witless Neil finds Protect and Survive quite useful.



established part of Protect and Survive mockery (Figure 26). Rick chastised Neil for “Racial discrimination!”. Neil proudly pointed out his sandbags on the table, in this case, literal paper bags filled with sand. Rick the Marxist cliché, walked out and arrived at a drab, generic government office to send a telegram to enemy No. 1 for British socialists writing:

Thatcher – we’ve got a bomb! Do what we want, or we’ll blow it up! – Anon¹⁹

Back at the house, Neil had made a laughable shelter out of a bedsheet and folding table. When the bomb began to tick, the three men leaped into Neil’s shelter, pushing Neil out. The bomb then cracked open and a little toy plane flew out, the dropped bomb had apparently been

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

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an egg from the airplane all along. *The Young Ones* was the perfect show, its zany humour perfectly capturing the opinion that Protect and Survive was a laughable advice pamphlet, perfect for satire.²⁰

Literature

During the 1980s, angst over the nuclear debate and the Tory Government were played out all across “subsidized theatrical houses and on the Fringe. Theatre people had from the beginning been active in CND”.²¹ Anti-nuclear references that would make CND proud appeared in several short run plays around Britain.²² Many took introspective, philosophical looks at what it meant to be in a society threatening itself with annihilation, and what would it look like afterwards. A nuclear musical was even produced titled *Wartime Stories*, following the tribulations of a family preparing for a nuclear attack and the collapse of societal norms as tensions rose. The musical opened with the aptly named Mr. and Mrs. Average, with their copy of Protect and Survive, about to get to work on their garden trench. The pamphlet caused one critic’s mood to drop expecting “another easy bit of mockery at the expense of those other people ... who obediently [placed] their trust in [the booklet]”.²³

Novels also tackled the topic of civil defence in the 1980s, though some were more memorable than others. Raymond Briggs’ graphic novel *When the Wind Blows* is the standout example, remaining relevant to this day long after its topic was resolved. The novel fostered a

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Alastair Smart, “Peter Kennard: Unofficial War Artist, Imperial War Museum, Review: ‘From Hard-Hitting to Hectoring,’” *The Daily Telegraph*, May 14, 2015, sec. Art Reviews.Pg. 291.

²² Riddley Walker, *Goat, The Tragedy of King Real, The Overgrown Path, The Genius, Red Black and Ignorant, Tin Can People, and Great Peace.*

²³ Irving Wardle, “Theatre,” *The Times*, August 1, 1984.

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connected so well with the public that it became a play, an audiodrama, a film and a great David Bowie song. All inspired by a bit of emergency education penned by Duncan Buttery a few years earlier.²⁴

1984's *The Defence Diaries of W. Morgan Petty* was a peculiar edition to the list of art against Protect and Survive, certainly more obscure than Briggs' work. Author Brian Bethell took it upon himself to write into various newspapers and magazines as a Mr. W. Morgan Petty at 3 Cherry Lane who wished to inform the editors and the Government that he had declared his home a Nuclear Free Zone. The novel was part protest, part art, and all unique, seemingly mocking Protect and Survive, yet also nuclear-free zones. Bethell's performance took odd twists and turns, sometimes taking the form of companies renting actual announcement space in the *Times* asking for W. Morgan Petty to get in contact with them for interviews. The interactive lunacy was collected into a humorous novel, where Mr. Petty struggled with Protect and Survive advice, grew frustrated with his inability to contact Mrs. Thatcher or Mr. Andropov, and made his NFZ sign big enough that any bombers could see it from the sky and leave him be.²⁵

Over a decade after Protect and Survive's release, Robert Swindells' *Brother in the Land*, from 1994, revisited the topic with the thoughts of a British man recounting the events that led to his existence in a post-nuclear dystopia. *Brother in the Land* discussed Protect and Survive more directly, chastising it as useless to prevent destruction, the powers that be again disappointing the people they were intended to protect. As stated by the main character, "they brought this book to school once, Protect and Survive, or some such title. It was pretty horrible, but it didn't tell the

²⁴ Raymond Briggs, *When the Wind Blows*, 1982, Graphic Novel, 1982.

²⁵ Brian Bethell, *The Defence Diaries of W. Morgan Petty* (London, UK: Viking, 1984).

half of it. Not the half of it. It had a lot in it: the burns and the blast and the radiation and all. But there was nothing about ... how it leaves you useless”.²⁶

Art and Posters

The antagonism between the Government and the GLC was palpable throughout the 1980s. Though both camps could self-identify as “the government”, they had entirely divergent messages to the public when discourse turned to civil defence. The GLC-Labour-academia-CND amalgam eventually gave birth to an anti-civil defence poster campaign by the GLC, attempting to win the propaganda war with the Home Office, at an amazing cost of over £264,000. The GLC broadcasted a one-sided conversation decrying Protect and Survive with posters, billboards, and walk-through exhibitions. The discourse Londoners had with their Local Authority took the form of Tube posters stating, “only one in four reading this poster would survive a nuclear attack on London: it is unlikely to be you”.²⁷

Flamboyant socialist and GLC Chairman, Ken Livingstone, along with his lieutenants, delivered an extravaganza of protest, commissioning anti-civil defence artwork from photographer Peter Kennard and renting billboards across the city. The GLC went as far as re-creating a Blitz era exhibition on civil defence in Covent Garden, “Blackout to Whitewash: Civil Defence Since 1937”, complete with garden shelter for guests and lectures on how the Tory Government was withholding target locations, effectively binding the hands of the Council (the proliferation of derisive references to whitewashing windows continued). A “GLC Fact Pack” was also handed out, containing four Kennard posters, essays and artwork, as well as a message

²⁶ Robert Swindells, *Brother in the Land* (Penguin UK, 1994), 28.

²⁷ LMA: GLC/RA/COOS/02/026, “GLC Civil Defence Publicity Campaign Invitation Package,” April 4, 1985.

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from Livingstone against nuclear weapons and civil defence (Figure 27).²⁸ Livingstone's right hand man, Illtyd Harrington, Chairman of the GLC, announced the campaign in a press statement, describing the "striking" photos and the fact that Londoners would finally be able to "evaluate vital facts about civil defence" that have been hidden from them by the machinations of the Tory Government.²⁹

Figure 27 Trainspotting: GLC NFZ recruitment poster of unknown date auctioned on ebay.co.uk 2019.



Peter Kennard created his photo series in 1980 following the publication of *Protect and Survive* after his incredulity that the Government would print such advice. Already a unilateralist,

Kennard was incensed at the "totally ludicrous instructions" in *Protect and Survive*, to take down curtains and "resume normal activities – after a Third World War!". As an artist, Kennard recognized the effort by the Government to control the discourse through authority and created an independent call to arms. Kennard pictured his anti-nuclear art being digested and reproduced in dozens of ways, taken up by activists and labelled with information, turned into logos or badges. The purpose of the work was to create a dialogue, to get people talking about civil defence in Britain, and Kennard wanted his work out of the world of fine art and into the world

²⁸ GLC NFZ recruitment poster of unknown date auctioned on ebay.co.uk 2019.

²⁹ LMA: GLC/RA/COOS/02/026, "GLC News Service: GLC Launches Civil Defence Information Campaign," April 11, 1985.

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of popular culture. This was the process that brought his art to the attention of the GLC who displayed the works across the city with their own anti-civil defence information overlaid.³⁰

The haunting posters, titled *Target London*, were visually striking, exactly as intended, to capture as much attention as possible, to compel visceral reactions in the public viewer. They were powerful and memorable, with Kennard's juxtaposition of nuclear war with other common elements. The skeleton reading *Protect and Survive* became emblematic of the political conflict taking place between Government and its citizens (Figure 28). The superimposition of Cruise missiles on to *The Hay Wain* landscape of pastoral Britain was said to be displayed in dorm rooms across the nation (Appendix B). For their purposes, the GLC would cover the images with text that exemplified the horrors of nuclear war. Typically, a reassuring quotation from *Protect*

Figure 28 Target London: Kennard's iconic artwork used to great effect by the GLC.



³⁰ Alastair Smart, "Peter Kennard: Unofficial War Artist, Imperial War Museum, Review: 'From Hard-Hitting to Hectoring,'" *The Daily Telegraph*, May 14, 2015, sec. Art Reviews.

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and Survive would be quoted ironically over an image of destruction, while the GLC was also fond of using excerpts from *London After the Bomb*, indicating their cooperation.³¹

The collection repurposed dreadful imagery as part of British iconography, personalizing the terror of nuclear annihilation that gripped the nation during the Thatcherite Era. The success of the series was likely due to the effortless manner that the posters assailed the core of “English people’s feelings for their country,” marking Protect and Survive undeniably British. The art was to some memorable, and to others scandalous. The missiles of destruction set perfectly within images that challenged British concepts of memory and security. The message was clear: no one was ever truly safe in Kennard’s Britain, even with Protect and Survive. The extracts from Protect and Survive, which one art critic called an “absurd publication” were delivered with sardonic precision, mocking the programme to its pedogeological core. The critic’s favourite lampooning of “governmental imbecility” was found in the image of the nation ablaze with Protect and Survive extolling the virtues of having a fire extinguisher handy.³²

Music

The music of 1980s served to capture the hostility between authority and citizenry over the tensions of the Cold War. Anti-nuclear messages abounded in the music of the day, reflecting what was perceived as important to artists at the time. Protect and Survive was referenced, always negatively, in several songs by British artists. The message was always resentful in tone, against the conniving Tory Government, foisting nuclear destruction onto an ignorant public.

³¹ Peter Kennard, *Target London (Series)*, 1985, Photograph, 1985, Art.IWM ART 15819, Imperial War Museum Archives London. See APPENDIX B.

³² Richard Cork, “Art,” *The Listener*, August 8, 1985.

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The cooperation between artists and protesters allowed a CND offshoot of younger members, called Second Generation, to host a series of concerts titled *No Nukes Music*, with a variety of eclectic artists, all united against the deterrent.³³

“Protect and Survive” by British rock band Jethro Tull was likely the first song to discuss the programme as it was impressively timely, being released only a few months after the publication of the booklet in August 1980. Frontman Ian Anderson, known for his political rebukes, was inspired to write the song after obtaining a copy of the booklet. As with many other artists, the image of a Conservative government attempting to lull the public to their doom with naïve advice compelled Anderson to create the single. It is a frenetic, fast-paced song, tapping out a repetitive beat with synthesized backings.³⁴

A quick song, the lyrics are composed entirely of the ineffective nature of Protect and Survive and the loss of the components of everyday life. Lyrics reflect the singer waiting for all the functions that are not arriving: “our postman didn’t call, 8lbs of overpressure wave seemed to glue him to the wall”. The lyric was impressive for its discussion of atmospheric overpressure several years before *London After the Bomb* would publish their findings that the shelters of Protect and Survive would not hold up for 80% of the nation. The song memorably concluded with an anti-Government jab, when the public were under the crosshairs while the Government elites protecting themselves deep underground: “Self-appointed guardians of the race with egg upon their face, when steady sirens sing all-clear they pop up, find nobody here”.³⁵

A few years later in 1987, Scottish Celtic rock band, Runrig, released their *The Cutter and the Clan* album. The band is notable for being on Chrysalis Records, the label company

³³ Ian Walker, “With the Peace Protesters,” *New Society*, July 3, 1980.

³⁴ Scott Allen Nollen, *Jethro Tull: A History of the Band, 1968-2001* (McFarland, 2001).

³⁵ Jethro Tull, *Protect and Survive*, Record, A (London, UK: Chrysalis, 1980).

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owned by Ian Anderson. “Protect and Survive” was a lively up-tempo song, common of the group, with memorable lyrics about the preciousness of life and how it can be threatened. The music video featured the group playing in a dense forest amongst nature, with panoramic shots of the Scottish Highlands, all suddenly fragile under the threat of nuclear war. The memorable chorus repeated the song’s message on the sanctity of life, “Once in a lifetime, you live and love ... once in a lifetime, the sun goes down, protect and survive”.³⁶

Protect and Survive’s notoriety was prodigious enough to inspire contempt outside the UK by preeminent Irish folk rock group The Dubliners. Celebrating their 25th anniversary, the Dubliners put out a very successful double album featuring the song “Protect and Survive”. The song is long and memorable, a rousing chronicle of ineffectual advice from within Protect and Survive with a solid compliment of resentment for bunkers for bureaucrats. References were made to politicians, Polaris, Cruise, sub-regional bunkers, and four-minute warnings. The group was clearly passionate about the song and it was quite evident they were familiar with Protect and Survive. The culture and criticism surrounding the programme are featured within the referential lyrics of the song: “Well the government’s made a document, to help prevent embarrassment, and in the event of an accident, catching us with our trousers down ... and the name of this piece of paper is, Protect and Survive”.³⁷

Many other songs reflected Protect and Survive without as much emphasis on the programme itself. Kate Bush released her enchanting song “Breathing” in 1980. The song was sung from the point of view of a mother’s baby, still in the womb. The baby feared fallout being breathed in by the mother. Bush claimed to be inspired by a documentary she saw on nuclear war

³⁶ Runrig, *Protect and Survive*, Record, The Cutter and the Clan (Edinburgh, Scotland: Chrysalis, 1987).

³⁷ The Dubliners, *Protect and Survive*, Record, 25 Years Celebration (Dublin, Ireland: Harmac, 1987).

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and given the release date; it is likely the song was inspired by the *Panorama* special. Another Scottish band, Big Country, released “1000 Stars” on their 1983 debut album. It was an emotional song about losing control of life due to the schemes of politicians. One memorable lyric followed, “There are people I have loved, hypnotized by lies, in defensive disguise, some say protect and survive, I say it’s over”.³⁸

Any discussion of songs in protest of Protect and Survive would be remiss to not have “Two Tribes”. Released by British band Frankie Goes to Hollywood in June 1984, it was the most successful of all songs against Protect and Survive. The lyrics of the song itself did not reference the programme, but it was a thumping dance mix with a soaring chorus of “when two tribes go to war, a point is all that you can score”. The song was an anti-nuclear weapons anthem, focused on the arsenals of the two superpowers, poised to wipe out humanity. The song did however feature Protect and Survive’s narrator, Patrick Allen, re-recording his instructions from the programme in his memorable, reassuring timbre. The rhythm continued to build while Allen’s voice can be heard, “Keep the doors shut. Do not go outside the house until you are told it is safe”. Several lines were recorded, including the ever-memorable advice on wrapping family in bin bags.³⁹

³⁸ Big Country, *1000 Stars*, Record, The Crossing (London, UK: Mercury, 1983).

³⁹ Frankie Goes to Hollywood, *Two Tribes*, Record (London, UK: ZTT, 1984).

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As a dance club track, the song was remixed dozens of times, with each mix having a distinct cover referencing the global conflict between the US and the USSR, with the back cover providing disarmament information (Appendix C). The *Annihilation Mix* had a still from the music video featuring President Reagan and Soviet Leader Konstantin Chernenko locked in fierce gladiatorial combat. The *Reagan Says No More Mix*, which featured Reagan and Thatcher in a waltz, sold particularly well in the UK (Figure 29). The track also included a Reagan

Figure 29 Music with a Message: Two album covers from remixes of *Two Tribes*, with memorable Cold War iconography. Further covers can be seen in APPENDIX C.



impersonator making observations such as, “Just think: War breaks out and nobody turns up”. The popularity of the song was instantaneous, its timely message captured public tensions at a perfect moment, it entered the UK charts at number one and went on to become the 11th best-selling UK single of all time (during the 1980s).⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Simon Reynolds, *Rip It Up and Start Again: Postpunk 1978-1984* (Penguin, 2006), 385.

Films

In the mid-1980s a “growing sense of frustration” was building within the Home Office as they realized they could never capture the nation’s attention as convincingly as popular culture.⁴¹ One week of television specials on nuclear war did more to encourage shelter sales (intentionally or not) than four years of government media.⁴² The history of the British anti-civil defence films can be traced back to *The War Game*, the influential docudrama by director Peter Watkins. Filmed in 1964 for the BBC, who controversially decided not to air the film after seeing the finished product. The BBC of the 1960s operated under a much more conservative mandate than the BBC of the 1980s. Twenty years later, in 1984, *The War Game* finally premiered on the BBC during *After The Bomb Week*, a weeklong lineup of anti-nuclear programming which also debuted the similar film, *Threads*.

Also premiering that week was an American anti-nuclear docudrama, *The Day After*. All three films took the form of exposition around a nuclear Armageddon. *The War Game*, in the style of a documentary film crew providing information and images of a shattered and burned post-attack civilization; *The Day After* with a more traditional disaster-movie narrative though still factually based; and *Threads*, a hybrid of the two, a narrative story following characters struggling to survive, but also containing researched text overlays and voiceovers.

Directed by the acclaimed Nicholas Meyer for ABC television in 1983, *The Day After* can be called the American *Threads* (or *Threads* can be called the British *The Day After*, if you prefer). The two tv films are remarkably similar in production, performance and even

⁴¹ TNA: HO 322/1024, “Proposed Civil Defence Film,” April 11, 1983.

⁴² “Why Nuclear Shelters Are Booming,” *The Times*, October 10, 1984.

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distribution. *The Day After* was a sensation, shocking the Britain and North America alike, becoming an unforgettable Cold War moment, shared by millions around the globe. Over 100 million viewers tuned in to the ABC Sunday Night Movie to see the destruction of America. *The Day After*, as with *Threads*, became a cultural watershed and a mainstay of modern 1980s documentaries. The 46-rating share recorded for *The Day After* makes it the highest rated (as in percentage of the nation watching simultaneously) tv film of all time, to this day.⁴³

Both films captured the fear and paranoia of people living under the threat of the Bomb. The TV films were depicted with such terrifying reality, they caused physical illness in many susceptible viewers, particularly children, who suffered greater nuclear anxiety than previous generations.⁴⁴ The films were one of a kind examples of event-television, a cultural happening that had real-life implications after the broadcast. For *The Day After*, US Secretary of State George Schultz recorded an after credits message assuring the nation that the Reagan Administration was doing everything in its power to avoid nuclear war. This recording played after a post credit text that explained that the film actually downplayed the effects of nuclear war for narrative purposes.⁴⁵

The similarities continued as both the BBC, ABC (and their Canadian affiliates) anticipated the terrifying effect the films would have on national psyches. Before the premier of *The Day After* ABC warned viewers with a somber introduction from one of the film's actors, John Cullum. For *Threads*, the BBC had host John Tusa caution the British public on the distressing nature of what they were about to see. In North America, TBS owner Ted Turner

⁴³ "Top 100 Rated TV Shows Of All Time," *TV By The Numbers* (blog), March 21, 2009, <https://tvbythenumbers.zap2it.com/reference/top-100-rated-tv-shows-of-all-time/>.

⁴⁴ Gunter and Wober, "Television Viewing and Public Perceptions of Hazards to Life."

⁴⁵ Daniel Cordle, *Late Cold War Literature and Culture: The Nuclear 1980s* (Springer, 2017), 112.

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advised viewers that their intention is not to frighten, but to inspire world peace with graphic depictions of nuclear war. In Canada, Vancouver's CKVU president Peter Weissbach, informed the audience that the decision to air *Threads* was not an easy, but it was necessary. CKND

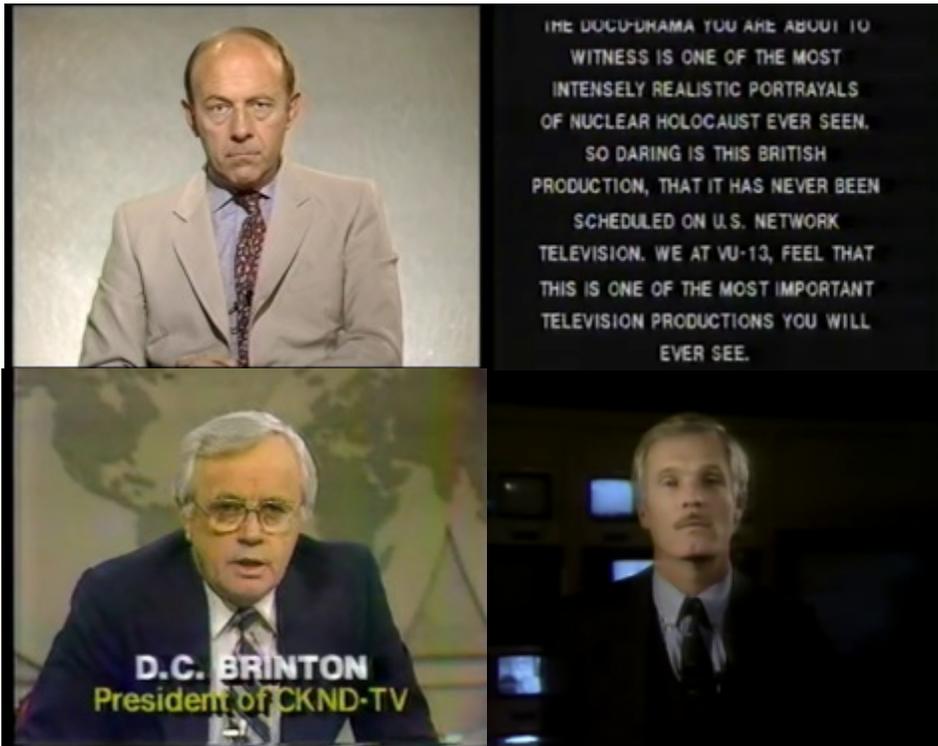


Figure 30 Words of Caution: Many networks felt a need to warn viewers about the disturbingly graphic depictions of nuclear war they were about to witness in *Threads*. (Clockwise from top left): John Tusa on BBC2, prefilm text on CKVU Vancouver, DC Brinton on CKND Winnipeg, and Ted Turner on WTBS.

Winnipeg's viewers were greeted by station president DC Brinton, who cautioned: "you will not be watching a pleasant drama ... it makes [The Day After] look like a walk in the park" (Figure 30). Both films aired without commercials (standard for BBC but unique to American television) and ABC had counselling hotlines pre-arranged, something never done to date, and never repeated since. ABC provided a 1-800 number for traumatized viewers while the CND provided advanced leaflets with their own counselling number. British author Chas Newkey-Burden recalled becoming physically ill after viewing *Threads* as an 11-year-old, so much so that he

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formed a CND branch the next morning with fellow youth who were more “petrified than political”.⁴⁶

Both films were followed by a live televised debate on nuclear weapons, reflecting both the politicizing and sensationalizing of civil defence. Americans watched *Viewpoint*, hosted by Ted Koppel, while the British witnessed the *Newsnight Debate* with John Tusa. In terms of influence, the edge may go to the American film, however. Ronald Regan recorded that he felt “greatly depressed” after the film. An unsubstantiated rumour has it that the film led directly to Regan signing the impactful Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty with Soviet Leader Gorbachev. The anecdote is referenced in many peer-reviewed books, though director Nicholas Meyer maintains that tale was apocryphal.⁴⁷

While both films premiered the same night for British audiences, their content, though very similar, were said to have differences characteristic of each nation. Though apocalyptic, *The Day After* contained a difficult to quantify, vague optimism that was not present in *Threads*. *The Day After* ended with the main character, though badly wounded, walking towards the next town, intent on helping the rebuilding effort. *Threads* went to great lengths to portray the end of Britain, and British society, entirely. One British critic described moral distinctions as *The Day After* being “tainted” by subtle hope and optimistic American sensibilities, turning the film into yet another disaster-movie.⁴⁸

In 1984, one British entrepreneur was building a luxury nuclear shelter and selling occupancy at £3000 plus annual fees. The day after *Threads*, he was able to double his rate.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Dan Stone, *The Oxford Handbook of Postwar European History* (OUP Oxford, 2012), 459.

⁴⁷ *The Oxford Handbook* ... also recounts the anecdote as fact.

⁴⁸ Jim Dyer et al., “Medicine And The Media,” *British Medical Journal (Clinical Research Edition)* 289, no. 6449 (1984): 914–15.

⁴⁹ Evans, “A Doorway to Life after Doomsday?,” 1984.

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One review of the *Threads* summed up the film with one word, “Horror”.⁵⁰ Russell Hoban, author of *Riddley Walker*, a post-nuclear dystopian play and novel (see above), recalled his experience attending a preview screen of *Threads*. The preview audience was said to have left in total silence, still recovering from the vaporization of British civilization. *Threads* was so effective, according to Hoban, that “it cancelled all aesthetic distance between our unthinking and the unthinkable”.⁵¹

Another *Listener* critic recalled that the BBC did not permit *QED: A Guide to Armageddon* to visualize the deterrent failing, and evidently, times were more permissive two years later as it failed catastrophically in *Threads*. Cultural critic Benjamin Woolley was shocked by the “suffering without understanding” that the characters had faced. It recalled for him the characters in *When the Wind Blows*, both attempting to survive with “the laughably inadequate” advice in the Government pamphlet *Protect and Survive*. Woolley found *Threads* the scarier of the two tv films, as the war in *Threads* progressed so subtly, it was entirely plausible. The imagery of *Threads* was “powerful and disturbing,” with the bureaucrats worse than useless, and British society rapidly descending into the worst primitivism.⁵²

Critic John Naughton was less impressed than most. He found not much new being brought to the nuclear destruction table, though he admired the effort of *Threads*. Naughton found the film predictable, though better than *The Day After*. Naughton may have simply been attempting to be a contrarian however, as he is of the lone opinion that the annihilation in *Threads* was actually overoptimistic in its portrayal of the moribund society operating as they

⁵⁰ Peter Davalle, “Today’s Television and Radio Programmes,” *The Times*, September 24, 1984.

⁵¹ Russell Hoban, “Russell Hoban: A Personal View of *Threads*,” *The Listener*, September 27, 1984, 3.

⁵² Benjamin Woolley, “Drama,” *The Listener*, September 20, 1984.

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would have in the middle ages. Naughton also wondered how a plastic Sainsbury bag could look so fresh thirteen years after a nuclear attack.⁵³

JK Huston, County Emergency Planning Officer for West Sussex Council, wrote to F6 to inform them that he and his staff had recently watched *Threads*. The Council believed a companion film should be created, taking place in a county where the Bomb did not strike, showing the importance of civil defence. Huston did not provide any ideas on how a film of people surviving a nuclear attack just fine would be very compelling.⁵⁴

The following year, the Central Office of Information conducted an interview of 80 people for their thoughts on civil defence. Some of the most common opinions were that it was, “run by military, controlled by government, secretive and elitist, cold, inhuman, futile and somewhat absurd”. The absurd comment concerned COI, and they pushed further, replies were broken down to opinions that “mentioned the ‘daft advice’ in Protect and Survive, while others had seen it parodied on tv shows”. Ultimately, COI considered scrapping the survey results as one of the most common factors shared amongst respondents was that they had seen a repeat of *Threads* a few weeks earlier and associated it with official civil defence.⁵⁵

Directed by Mick Jackson and written by Barry Hines, *Threads* became notorious for its graphic depictions of nuclear attack and for traumatizing a nation. Mick Jackson had also created the slightly traumatic *QED*. The early shots of shredded pumpkins were a source of inspiration for *Threads*. As with *The Day After*, *Threads* was credited with forcing some Britons to seek psychological counselling the morning after, a testament of the film’s visceral impact. While *The*

⁵³ John Naughton, “Television,” *The Listener*, September 27, 1984.

⁵⁴ TNA: HO 322/1024, “Civil Defence Film,” February 12, 1985.

⁵⁵ TNA: INF6/2490, “Civil Defence: Preliminary Attitudinal Research,” September 5, 1985.

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War Game focused on the unnamed people of Kent, *Threads* followed the lives of a couple, Jimmy and Ruth, and their connected families.

The film was memorably set in Sheffield, much to the delight for some Sheffielders, though it was purposely filmed to have been any British town, Jackson hoped to instill fear in every viewer. Sheffield also served as a transit and industry hub to the rest of Britain, the centre of the nation, a gateway between the North and South, East and West. *Threads* was a wonderfully insightful title, capturing all the delicate and fragile connections that made modern life possible, and how easily they could be severed. This is brought to life by the opening shot of a spider weaving a fine web, with power and phone cables superimposed.

The narrator makes their first voiceover as the web is woven informing the viewer: “In an urban society, everything connects. Each person’s needs are fed by the skills of many others. Our lives are woven together in fabric. But the connections that make a society strong also make it vulnerable”. An ideal introduction to the film the viewer is about to consume, already forcing a realization of the kind of devastation that would befall a developed nation like Britain, without its many threads of connection. Jackson went to considerable lengths to obtain civil defence plans from the Home Office and made constant reference to *Protect and Survive*.⁵⁶

A web also served as a visual representation of Britain’s wartime communications system. Jimmy and Ruth are introduced, him an affable chap and her a sweet British girl. They sit in their car, precariously balanced on the edge of a cliff, providing a beautiful view of Sheffield. They are connected to the nation through the radio, informing them of the latest overseas crisis which Jimmy switches off. The young couple, like the nation, are poised on a precipice, close to the edge of oblivion. While other nuclear disaster films go to great lengths to

⁵⁶ Mick Jackson, *Threads*, TV-Film (UK: BBC, 1984).

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detail the scenario leading to missile launch, *Threads* plays out mostly as it would for the characters in the film. Bits and pieces of the deteriorating situation are caught in the background, on passed televisions, overheard radios or glimpses of newspapers.

A letter is delivered by police to the Controller of a Sheffield borough, who then proceeds with official protocol, gathering the Home Office War Book and proceeding down the lengthy checklist of steps. A woman at a CND rally is speaking on money being wasted on nuclear weapons while a man yells at her to get back to Russia.

Figure 31 Captive Audience: Townsfolk watch *Protect and Survive* through a shop window in *Threads*



The first threads were being cut, movement and communication were restricted, while news mentions that the skirmish in the Middle East has seen the use of a “battlefield” nuclear device. The government publishes the newsprint edition of *Protect and Survive* and broadcast the videos on television (Figure 31). As the public slowly catch on, a grocery store is already madness, the shop owner gouges his prices and the customers resort to looting. Ruth’s parents notice their

neighbour attempting to self-evacuate, though they later find roads out of town are blocked by police, enforced stay-put.⁵⁷

The Controller looks somberly at the family photos, a nod to the many “bunkers for bureaucrats” articles in newspapers about bunker dwellers being unable to bring their families. *Protect and Survive* media now airs on all channels as the BBC converts to the Wartime Broadcasting Service. Jackson is to be credited for obtaining the highly illusive programme

⁵⁷ Ibid.

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video for his film (Figure 32). In *Threads*, Protect and Survive plays in a noticeably low-quality state. It is possible that the clips in *Threads* are a recording of a recording, with Jackson collecting the video clips from a BBC copy of the *Panorama* special two years prior.

The Local Authorities are unsure of their duties while Jimmy's working-class parents remove their doors and construct their Protect and Survive lean-to as Ruth's middle-class family takes to their basement. Suddenly, air sirens blare in the town square as people run in every direction. On screen text describes the first bomb, it exploded high above the North Sea refinery. An air burst, it generates a massive EMP that damaged all electronics across the nation. Power

Figure 32 Emergency Education: A family creates the familiar lean-to as Protect and Survive plays on television (left) and radio (mid).



lines overload, cars falter, and sirens go silent, Mick Jackson begins to cut more threads of society. Then a detonation outside of Sheffield, likely targeting the nearby airbase. Jimmy runs off which is the last the viewer sees of him.

The attack continues to play out almost verbatim from what was predicted in *London After the Bomb*. Text reads that 80mt had been dropped on Britain with 3 – 9 million instant casualties. A woman screams, the screen goes white, and the audio falls silent as a detonation occurs over Sheffield. The heat flash melts vehicles and instantly sets fire to the room where Jimmy's family hid. More text reads that 3000mt have been dropped worldwide, 210 in the UK alone with 2/3rds of all houses on fire.

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The camera pans the wreckage of Sheffield, charred hands stick up between gaps of rubble, past melted faces with upturned eyes. The lean-to has survived the blast though Jimmy's parents are not well off, his mother's hair already gone, face burnt, Ruth's parents wail in the dark of their basement. Text informs the viewer that an hour later fallout descends, and a ground explosion detonates over Crewe.⁵⁸

The voiceover states explosions have blown away most roofs leaving homes open to fallout dust. One week is said to have passed and food was now government controlled as a foreboding soldier in full hazmat keeps watch outside a warehouse. Inside the municipal bunker, staff are trapped with poor ventilation, their entrance covered with debris (Figure 33). Mobs attempt to break into food stores guarded by the Army, and some are shot. 16 days have now passed, past the two-week shelter period recommended by Protect and Survive. A sea of survivors slowly shuffles into a bombed-out hospital, though the doctors and nurses can provide no care.⁵⁹

Figure 33 Best Laid Plans: The Local Authority are trapped in their bunker. Meanwhile, the Protect and Survive lean-to holds fast, but is left open to the elements.



A group of strangers emerge from Ruth's basement with cans of food. They are grabbed by a passing army patrol who uncover that the looters had

killed the family and the soldiers enforce capital punishment. More time has passed, and the

⁵⁸ Possibly a reference to Hack Green SRHQ, located outside Crewe. Its location was not well known by 1984, leaving it as either a coincidence or very impressive research by Jackson and Hines.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

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viewer is informed healthy people are forced into reconstruction, food sorts itself out, as more starve or vanish, more food becomes left for the remaining. There is no spare fuel to burn, nor spare manpower to dig, and thus 10-20 million Britons are said to remain unburied. Rescue crews finally get to the Local Authority bunker only to find them all dead, in darkness, having suffocated days ago, the Controller still at his desk.

As the film progresses forward four months, Jackson makes it evident that there are no survivors in *Threads*, even if they still live. Poison, starvation, disease, exhaustion, despair, violence and neglect all claim victims in the millions. There is no England to rebuild, no recovery to support, no government nor assistance. 3 to 8 years, the viewer is told that the population has reached a new minimum, 4 – 11 million, equal to medieval Britain. Further in the future, time is irrelevant, “the last scenes of the film lose their specificity of time as well as place, to suggest a process of destruction extending into the whole climate of the region”.⁶⁰ Children are educated by a recording of children’s programming, the video is in terrible condition, as are the stunted children. These children are the future of Britain, and Jackson puts forward that therefore there is no future for Britain. Dystopian cinema often portrays a pre-industrial society working towards a future, though this is not the case in *Threads*. The destruction of the nation is so complete, not even the language has survived as two boys fight over a dead rabbit shouting “giss’n! come on. Giss’n!”⁶¹

Later, Ruth’s child is shown pregnant and wandering into a shack, what serves for a clinic in the future. Ruth’s grandchild represents the future of England itself, and the future is not optimistic. A nurse hands the baby to Ruth’s daughter in a tattered and bloody cloth. The baby is

⁶⁰ David Seed, “TV Docudrama and the Nuclear Subject: The War Game, The Day After and Threads,” in *British Science Fiction Television: A Hitchhiker’s Guide*, ed. John R. Cook and Peter Wright (London: I.B.Tauris, 2006), 63.

⁶¹ Jackson, *Threads*, 1984.

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silent. Ruth's daughter begins to pull back the cloth, and what she seems causes her to scream though the frame is paused before she makes a sound. This is the last image of *Threads*, before credits play in silence, Ruth's daughter's face contorted in horror looking at her child, whether deformed or stillborn, the child, as England, has little future.

Threads was effective for many reasons, particularly for the manner in which it destroys any "protective illusions" of Protect and Survive the viewer may have harboured. *Threads* depicted "the cruel sham of the government's Protect and Survive". One author noted the "nice touch of irony" that the bureaucrats were suffocated under town hall, and the "disintegration of the threads of [British] civilization" were unraveled. The critic found the text overlays and unseen voiceover as distracting however, recalling that they "pulled one back from the imaginative identification with the characters". This evidences the vicariousness that made Protect and Survive so compelling to the nation. People identified, even though they were simple cartoons in Protect and Survive, with the characters of these films as they morbidly wished to picture themselves in the horrific situations, to see if they could survive, to find out what they would do if the bomb dropped.⁶²

The references to Protect and Survive in *Threads* were very deliberate. Director Mick Jackson went to great lengths to research both the programme and the intended response to nuclear war by the British government. As with most references to Protect and Survive in British popular culture, the programme was used as shorthand to deride the Conservative government and to position any attempts of civil defence as entirely foolish. Artists against the deterrent were able to use Protect and Survive for their purposes to frighten moderates into believing they lived in jeopardy as long as unilateralism was prevented from liberating the nation.

⁶² Dyer et al., "Medicine And The Media," 1984.

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Raymond Briggs' 1982 graphic novel was so compelling, it became successful and critically acclaimed in virtually every medium, including film. As Lord Rea stated in the House of Lords, the story "poignantly [described] the slow death from radiation of an elderly couple in a rural area who have done all the right things as instructed in *Protect and Survive*".⁶³ The title, *When The Wind Blows*, was taken from *Protect and Survive* itself, specifically the excerpt "fallout is the radioactive dust falling where the wind blows it".⁶⁴

The Home Office circulated a memorandum to combat the negative influence of *When the Wind Blows* on civil defence, reminding staff that the Government should not be in the literary review business. *When the Wind Blows* may have become "the anti-Bomb comic book", according to F6 staff PA Stanton, though Briggs did not write it as such, he simply "thought it was an interesting theme". The story was a comic book, not "a tract on civil defence," and the Home Office hoped it would be treated as such. Besides, argued Stanton, the couple in the book failed to heed the advice of *Protect and Survive* at every opportunity, the book was endorsing civil defence. Unfortunately, Stanton had fantastically misjudged the book and it quickly became one of the most memorable anti-nuclear stories of the 1980s.⁶⁵

When the Wind Blows was known between pro and anti-unilateralists alike. At a performance of a play rendition of the book, notorious critic Irving Wardle noted with contention that the Coalition for Peace Through Security began blaring *Rule Britannia* on speakers and handing out anti-CND literature. Wardle believed that if they read Mr. Briggs' book, they would consider the Bloggs family (the book's protagonists) allies. Wardle argued that the Bloggs would also hate the CND if the government told them too, though this is a mischaracterization of their

⁶³ Lord Rea. *HoL Deb*, 16 Feb 1983, Vol. 439, Col. 313-315.

⁶⁴ Central Office of Information, *Protect and Survive* (London, UK: HMSO Crown Copyright, 1980).

⁶⁵ TNA: HO 322/1032, "PA Stanton on Civil Defence - The Basic Facts," September 14, 1983.

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trusting nature, the Bloggs are likely to find hating anything impossible. Wardle was perplexingly angry towards the Bloggs characters, as though they offended him. According to Wardle, the Bloggs were the ideal “docile, uncomplaining, inexhaustibly obedient pair of little Englanders”. This is a fundamental misinterpretation of the characters as their compassion and gentleness made them relatable to every reader. Wardle called Briggs’ work a great comedy on *Protect and Survive*, mocking its “smooth bureaucratic advice”. However, Briggs beautifully wrote the characters with empathy, or at least pity, while Wardle wrote with contempt. Wardle concluded by stating the anguish in the actors’ voices transcended the page though it was a weakness that the play latched on to the comedy and compassion of the book.⁶⁶

One *Times* article called nuclear fears the “ultimate terror of our times”. The “huge sales” of *When the Wind Blows* were said to be indicative of Briggs’ subversiveness, as he exposed the “unconscious doomsday comedy of ... *Protect and Survive*” and its vagaries as “pitifully inadequate”. Jim Bloggs had “touching confidence” in the government, and Hilda had as much trust in Jim, thus they suffered together through radiation sickness. Like Wardle, Robinson called the Bloggs’ “pathetic” for their nostalgia and ignorance, missing the essence of Briggs’ work. The film was said to stand above the book however, due to stellar performances from voice actors “John Mills and Peggy Ashcroft”.⁶⁷

When the Wind Blows was also part of a legal debate in 1987. It was reported that teachers could be sued by parents, and the Home Office, if they played the film in class. The Department of Education and Science argued that unbalanced school discussions would violate the Education Act, which banned schools from lopsided political lessons and from teachers

⁶⁶ Irving Wardle, “Theatre,” *The Times*, April 22, 1983.

⁶⁷ David Robinson, “Curiously Potent Tract for the Times,” *The Times*, February 6, 1987.

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pushing their own agendas. If the “tragic story” of the couple using Protect and Survive was to be discussed, balanced and opposing views were required to be a component of the curriculum.⁶⁸

Lord Bishopton once asked Lord Elton in the House of Lords if he would listen to the radioplay of *When the Wind Blows* at 8pm that night so that he could understand “the natural fears and anxieties of ordinary people”. Elton replied that most of his fellow Lords had read the book and already know full well people’s fears, it was not as though the Conservative government wanted people to think nuclear war was not horrific. Next, CND member Lord Jenkins of Putney asked Lord Elton if the government would take care to not indoctrinate the public into acceptance of nuclear weapons, to which Lord Elton replied “if anyone was” attempting to indoctrinate the public, it was Lord Jenkins of Putney, with his constant accusations that what the Government did out of “compassion and prudence” was “dictated by” folly or cruelty.⁶⁹

James “Jim” and Hilda “Ducks” Bloggs were a happily married couple. One morning Jim explained that there might be a war on again, and with that, bombing to prepare for, just like the last War. He recalled “govern-mental” advice and cheerily reassured Hilda that they would get through it all, just like last time.⁷⁰ Three days later Jim received some official leaflets (Protect and Survive) from the Government (Figure 34). Back in the day, it was all garden trenches and blackouts, but

⁶⁸ Sheila Gunn, “Teachers Risk Being Sued over Cartoon,” *The Times*, February 17, 1987.

⁶⁹ Lord Bishopton and Lord Elton. *HoL Deb*, 7 Feb 1983, Vol. 438, Col. 986.

⁷⁰ Jimmy Murakami, *When the Wind Blows*, Film (Recorded Releasing, UK, 1986).

Figure 34 Governmental Advice: Explicit references to Protect and Survive abound in Raymond Briggs, *When the Wind Blows*, 1982, Graphic Novel, 1982.



now with advancements, Jim remarked, “it’s all very modern now with indoor shelters and cushions”. Jim began tinkering away at building the lean-to to exact programme specifications. Jim seemed confused about floor joists, just as Buttery predicted, while Hilda fretted about nicking the paint. Jim read a bit about keeping doors closed to prevent fire and Hilda asked how when he removed them all to make the shelter (this contradictory advice is not actually in Protect and Survive, though thanks to the film, many people believed it was).⁷¹

Protect and Survive informed Jim that they required 14 days of food and water, so he headed off to the bakery to get 14 loaves, though they were all out. They fill 14 glass bottles with water and placed them on the floor. Hilda was shocked that they had to stay in such a cramped space for two weeks, Jim replied “ours is not to reason why”, as Briggs mocked those who might follow the programme. Jim began to intimate that they needed plastic bags for waste, though Hilda would have none of it, she sternly informed Jim she will use the toilet like a civilized person. Jim painted the windows white, as told, while Hilda was apprehensive about him dripping onto the curtains (Figure 35).⁷²

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

Figure 35 That Old Joke: Whitewashed windows provide opportunity for another job at the expense of Protect and Survive.



Jim moved a wardrobe up to the windows as Protect and Survive suggested, then remembered he heard something about “paper bags”, and they wondered if they should wear them. The 3-minute warning came on the radio, Jim was frantic to get Hilda into the shelter, though she wanted to get the washing done. The radio shouted at

them to “stay home!”, an obvious criticism of stay-put. The blast shattered the whitewashed windows while Hilda was worried about curtains and cushions. Jim shared nostalgic stories about the spirit of the Blitz while Hilda kept confusing the Russians with Germans. They spend the night in the lean-to and by morning they exit and complained of headaches.⁷³

Jim tried to make tea but there was no water (their open bottles fell over). Without radio or tv, Jim excitedly waited for the daily newspaper to see pictures of the bomb going off. Soon they grew worse with headaches and chills and decided to wait for the emergency services that never arrived. Later that day, Hilda began to complain of all the dust everywhere and Jim suddenly remembered there were supposed to stay inside their refuge. Both began feeling worse, a common symptom at their age according to Jim. The Bloggs continued to deteriorate and by the next day they are dehydrated and immobile. Jim spoke wearily of Britannia rising again after the war and starting up the old empire. Their gums bleed, a common condition of not brushing claimed Jim, as they became too weak to move. Jim and Hilda are relieved they gave their son the “govern-metal” leaflet, he and his family must have been safe. As their hair began to fall out,

⁷³ Ibid.

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a common condition of getting old said Jim, the two, barely able to talk or move, decided to put on the paper bags and crawled into the shelter as a precaution in case another bomb fell. Here the book ends while the film zooms out with M-A-D sounding in Morse code on the radio.⁷⁴

With so many references to Protect and Survive in popular culture, it is of little surprise that the programme remains such an intense memory for many Britons. Images of nuclear catastrophe were easy entertainment to sell to intrigued audiences. However, their efforts to subvert the programme into an advertisement for government warmongering failed to impede the British nuclear programme. The artists were not alone in their attempts to capitalize on the association of Protect and Survive with folly, as they drew inspiration from the eclectic alliance of demographics already adept at attacking the programme.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

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The reception of Protect and Survive was destined to be poor with certain sections of the public. Labour would inherently despise the program as a Tory creation. CND would accuse the programme of propping up the nuclear deterrent. However, a unique conglomeration of demographics formed when Labour departed the nuclear consensus. Taking on the cause of unilateralism, Labour openly established ties with CND. The public relationship encouraged like-minded groups to join their cause of assailing Protect and Survive. The result was an unlikely alliance against Protect and Survive that drew research, donations, and support from across the scientific and academic communities, as well as artists, city dwellers, communists, middle-class professionals, youth, socialists, and counter-culture peaceniks. All of which combined in a united association to discredit Protect and Survive by a variety of means.

Support for Protect and Survive was scarce and tepid. There were few cheers that the programme was a brilliant creation. Even the support from the Conservative Government was hardly effusive. Not from lack of confidence in the programme, but embarrassment at the public mockery it endured. The efforts of the Home Office were typically subdued attempts to clarify the intentions of the programme and advertise its adequacy given the financial limitations. Most supporters thought “it was better than nothing”. Better than nothing became the mantra of pro-Protect and Survive media, calling attention to the millions outside of blast areas who would require protection from fallout. For some, the argument was effective. Protect and Survive would have provided some benefits to a sheltering family, even if the amount of benefit was considered

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low. The sheer volume of anti-Protect and Survive media, however, made it virtually impossible to argue that the programme was anything but a failure.

As a government initiative to promote openness, it rallied opponents against the cause, providing vital ammunition that the Government was attempting to dupe the nation. Through all the overwhelming criticism however, the Conservative government won the 1983 General Election handily. Ultimately suggesting that the support of Protect and Survive was either silent or passively accepted. In other words, the Government’s efforts to promote Protect and Survive were also “better than nothing”.

Conservative support for Protect and Survive was hardly voluntary. Prime Minister Thatcher and Defence Secretary Heseltine developed an internal mandate to protect (or more likely improve) the reputation of British civil defence and Protect and Survive. The initiative, however, typically sought to delegitimize anti-Protect and Survive media by labelling protesters as far-left communists. Attacking the attackers became much more important than simply protecting Protect and Survive. The Conservative efforts intensified considerably when the Government began preparing for the arrival of US Cruise missiles, a critical period for British defence. Support for the nuclear deterrent could not be jeopardized by anti-Protect and Survive rogues and the programme became the focal point for more than civil defence, Protect and Survive had become the cornerstone of Conservative nuclear policy.

At the 1982 Conservative Party Conference, Prime Minister Thatcher stated, “the first duty of a Conservative Government is the defence of the realm”. This was the culmination of a civil defence improvement initiative that began with the previous election in 1979 and was exemplified by the publication of Protect and Survive to promote transparency and social

investment. The Tories characterized themselves as the Party with a “noble tradition” of defending the island, as documented with a long historical basis.¹

The defence cuts from the previous Labour Government created “dangers”. Protect and Survive would need to be published, though it was not perfect, to mend some of the danger. The programme was always considered a rather “simple expedient” of emergency shelter. When the programme was set to be published, Conservative MP Robert Banks stated, “I hope that that does not happen,” as the public would not receive what they were expecting. Britons would want a “more realistic approach”, more formidable fortifications, something they could build immediately, not the emergency lean-tos of Protect and Survive. Later in the debate Brittan would make the famous statement, “this is not a secret pamphlet and there is no mystery about it”, however, it may have needed to be “updated and revised”.² *The Times* later reported on the debate stating that a total “review of civil defence” was said to be underway.³

Later that year, The Earl of Cork and Orrery pointed out that Labour’s detractors of civil defence claimed it was worthless and could save only a few lives. The Earl countered that what would be better to spend money on, if not something that could save lives? Lord of Strathcona and Mount Royal supported the Earl, arguing that the precautions given by the Government in Protect and Survive “simple though I admit they are”, would save millions more, unless, Labour succeeded in their efforts to dissuade people from following the advice and gave up entirely.⁴

Lord Elton, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Office, provided a lengthy endorsement of Protect and Survive in 1982. Lord Elton advocated that even a small

¹ THCR 2/6/2/104, “Liaison Committee Meeting: Presentation of the Government’s Nuclear Policy (Defence),” October 14, 1982.

² Banks, Robert. *HoC Deb*, 20 Feb 1980, Vol. 979, Col. 378.

³ Unattributed, “Revision of Pamphlet on UK Civil Defence,” *The London Times*, February 22, 1980.

⁴ Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal. *HoL Deb*, 3 Dec 1980, Vol. 415, Col. 504-510.

crowded island, such as Great Britain, would find benefits from Protect and Survive. The British public had “a right to know” how to defend itself and Protect and Survive was part of a movement of openness. Ministers and journalists were invited to bunkers, to read publications, to participate in candid interviews, and visit the HDC. Protect and Survive was the initial spark of this movement. The Labour Party’s National Executive Council schemes to repudiate Protect and Survive were said to be “the height of irresponsibility”. Lord Elton later added the famous quip that the recent rise of nuclear-free zones was a useless phenomenon, it was as if “a bald man writing ‘rain free zone’ on top of his head and expecting to remain dry”.⁵

Every few months in Parliament, the Conservatives would be called upon to defend Protect and Survive from the latest assault by the Labour Party. Minister of State Leon Brittan claimed Protect and Survive would be updated as further research developed, though at the moment the programme was the finest the Home Office could produce. Critical Labour MPs were said to be doing a disservice to their country.⁶ One debate in the House of Lords was particularly combative, with several Labour Lords decrying Protect and Survive as useless and that civil defence, as proposed by the Tories, was a bold-faced lie. Frequent Conservative civil defence champion Lord Belstead argued that the point of Protect and Survive was “to help people help themselves”.⁷

Civil defence continued to have negative connotations in the Labour Party. Conservative MP Neil Thorne found the remarkable “public criticism of civil defence” recently seen in Great Britain to be a direct consequence of the Home Office decision to publish Protect and Survive. The booklet, it was said, was being misrepresented, derided, and taken out of context. Fairly or

⁵ Lord Elton. *HoL Deb*, 23 July 1982, Vol. 431, Col. 1102-1106.

⁶ “Nuclear Advice Rethought,” *The Times*, October 8, 1980.

⁷ Lord Belstead. *HoL Deb*, 2 July 1981, Vol. 422, Col. 285.

not, the Conservatives suffered “embarrassment” with Protect and Survive and Thorne hoped the pamphlet would be updated rather than discarded.⁸

In March of 1983, Secretary Heseltine appeared on a BBC Radio programme titled *Lunch Time News*. One of the first questions for Heseltine was whether or not he agreed with critics of Protect and Survive that any nuclear war would be a total war. The Secretary of Defence reiterated Conservative policy, that their strategy was to deter the use of nuclear weapons in the first place, and this policy had kept peace for 37 years.

Heseltine was asked whether the notable critics, such as the British Medical Association, were correct in their assertions that civil defence and Cruise made Britain a bigger target? The Secretary answered, “I don’t see how doctors could make that deduction”. The host countered, “Fine, do you agree when they say they will have 33 million casualties and almost no facilities?”. The “danger” of their report, argued Heseltine, was that it made the worst assumptions for an attack, so much so that Protect and Survive, or any civil defence programme, would look useless. Secretary Heseltine concluded that if Protect and Survive was truly needed, the medical profession would be the first “to criticize the Government that [they] had done nothing”. Heseltine stated that he “deplored” those critical of Protect and Survive as the best defence was to plan for as much as possible, and the key to promoting Protect and Survive was to include it in this planning.⁹

Many other factors contributed to the lackluster promotion of Protect and Survive. The Home Office was apprehensive about Protect and Survive in bookshops and actively promoting its sale to the public. One of the required conditions before the Conservatives felt comfortable publishing Protect and Survive was that it not be sold for profit. The calculated price of £0.50

⁸ Thorne, Neil. *HoC Deb*, 24 March 1983, Vol. 39, Col. 1083-1088.

⁹ “BBC 1 Lunch Time News” (Westminster, London: BBC Radio One, March 3, 1983).

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was believed to be sufficient for the publication to be “self-financing”, as it could never come across as a money-making scheme. This internal inhibition explains the lack of examples of the Government extolling the virtues of Protect and Survive, aside from its sufficiency. When public opinion was turning against the programme, the Home Office quickly decided against any sort of campaign to encourage adoption, rather the emphasis was to be placed on persevering the new Government attitude of “openness” in regard to civil defence. Thus, the main selling points for Protect and Survive was the adequacy, the transparency, and the low cost of production.¹⁰

Defending Protect and Survive often involved dispelling some of the most common critiques of the programme. One of the most common misconceptions that the Home Office wished to dispel was the notion that one could only survive a nuclear attack in an underground bunker. This developed into the Home Office’s repeated explanations of Protective Factors (PF) and the belief that most homes already offered good protection from fallout. Protect and Survive was to be promoted on its simplicity and uncomplicated pragmatism. For those that desired more detailed or comprehensive shelter plans, the Home Office would direct them towards the companion booklet *Domestic Nuclear Shelters*.¹¹

The emphasis on the intent of Protect and Survive was key, *Domestic Nuclear Shelters* was not to be advertised as a superior text, more accurately it was to have a different intent, one for the homeowner who wished to go beyond Protect and Survive’s simplicity. *UK Defence Program: The Way Forward* was then published by the Conservative Party to clarify civil defence and its role in the defence of the nation. The booklet recommended a raise in defence spending to face the challenges of the growing Soviet military. However, according to the

¹⁰ TNA: HO 322/940, “Draft Review of Civil Home Defence Preparedness by Home Office,” June 19, 1980.

¹¹ TNA: HO 322/944, “Draft - Scottish Office Circular No ES(SCOT)/1981 : Home Defence Review 1980,” February 12, 1981.

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Conservative Party, the increase must be spent wisely on deterring war altogether, rather than “flashy” troops or ships.¹²

It was clear that support for Protect and Survive, particularly by the Tory government, was tied to civil defence policy. Deterring war was argued as significantly cheaper than fighting a war, and certainly safer. Protect and Survive served this role as a cost-effective program that would demonstrate the resiliency of the nation. The other key component of Conservative support for Protect and Survive was humanitarian duty. Tory MPs and Home Office staff often expressed that it was the duty of every responsible government to prepare for nuclear war, no matter how unlikely. There would presumably be millions of survivors after an attack, and even more would be saved if some precautions were taken, and these people would need some system in place for the restoration of society. This goal was seen as undisputable and MPs were advised to take this route if questioned on the efficacy of Protect and Survive.¹³

The year after publication, attacks on Conservative civil defence policy, including Protect and Survive, had become so common that the Party prepared a report for Ministers on precisely what to say in line with Party policy.¹⁴ A publication was prepared for Tory MPs with sections on opponents and dissenters, public opinion, brief points for presentations, and a glossary. A short list of questions and answers was also prepared titled “fallacies and misconceptions”. The fallacies section was emblematic of the Tory approach, presenting common questions from disruptive types, and step-by-step answers on how to properly correct their assumptions.

Question 16 asked why British civil defence was “so bad” compared to other countries. The responding MP was to indicate that in many respects the United Kingdom was actually

¹² Secretary of State for Defence, *The United Kingdom Defence Programme: The Way Forward* (London, UK: HMSO, 1981).

¹³ THCR 2/6/2/104, “Presentation of Defence Nuclear Policies,” December 1, 1982.

¹⁴ THCR 2/6/2/104, “Britain’s Nuclear Policy: The Key Points to Make,” November 23, 1982.

ahead of many countries, particularly in warning, detection, continuation of government and available public information.¹⁵ Question 26 read: “Isn’t the advice in ‘Protect and Survive’ and other government publications useless?”. The correct Tory response began with, “Not at all”. Then the MP was to stress that the booklet was not expected to help people survive a nuclear blast, but to significantly increase survival rates against fallout for people far enough away. Protect and Survive was above all else, “common-sense”.¹⁶

Perhaps the biggest, or perhaps most obvious supporter of Protect and Survive was a briefly published periodical titled *Protect and Survive Monthly (PSM)*. However, looking through the periodical today, it is difficult to differentiate between earnest Protect and Survive support and the sheer commercialism of DIY survival culture. This perception was shared with much of the British public and the magazine failed to find an audience. DIY civil defence was one of the few “growth industries in Mrs. Thatcher’s Britain” during a period known for cutbacks. A new breed of survivalist emerged, and their “hub” was *Protect and Survive Monthly*.

PSM launched December 1980 for £7.80 per year. However, it only lasted a year before folding, though some notable nuclear expertise was attached to the magazine. Bruce Sibley of *Panorama* and *QED* fame authored *Surviving Doomsday* in 1977, and also served as Chief Editor while Dr. Michael Hall was medical consultant.¹⁷ A one-page flyer advertised *PSM*’s status as invaluable advice for “everyone” on protecting their families from nuclear, chemical or conventional attack. The inclusions of conventional and chemical attack were notable, as the Home Office decided against including them in civil defence pedagogy.

¹⁵ THCR 1/4/2 Part 1, “Prepared Answers for Questions to MPs,” October 1981.

¹⁶ THCR 1/4/2 Part 1, “Nuclear Weapons: Public Attitudes.”

¹⁷ Michael J. Hall, “Nuclear Weapons Proliferation, Medicine’s Supreme Challenge,” *British Medical Journal (Clinical Research Edition)* 282, no. 6274 (1981): 1477–1477.

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Instilling anxiety served as one of the chief selling points of the magazine with its constant admonitions of coming disaster. The flyer made frequent references to “you and I” to appear as a trusted source of information, speaking directly to the reader. The advert stressed that *PSM* was “independent of all political and other organizations” and that it was prepared to be critical when necessary.¹⁸

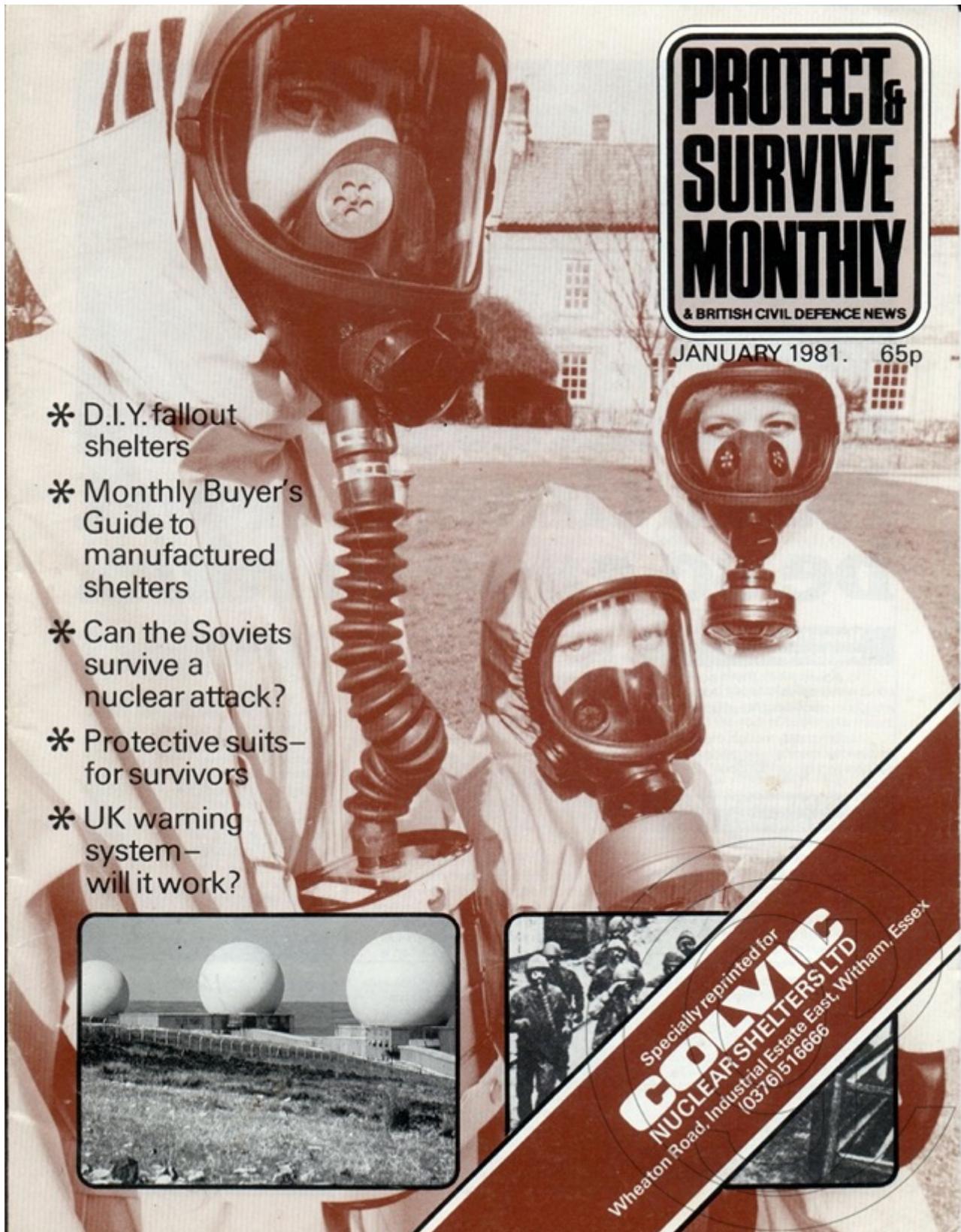
While *PSM* discussed the advantages of Protect and Survive, they never missed an opportunity to load their pages with (quasi-legal) ads for shelters, survival tools, rationed food stores, and all manner of nuclear preparation (Figure 36). NBC (nuclear, biological, chemical) hazmat suits were advertised side by side, highlighting their different options and comfort levels, like fashion advertisements. *PSM*'s subtitle was “the homeowners guide to surviving a nuclear attack”, which, much like Protect and Survive, emphasized the homeowner as target audience. The magazine warned that it could not be held responsible for advertiser products, likely due to the fact that there would be no one left to sue if they failed. Either way, no company offered insurance against nuclear attack as the likelihood was considered “too remote”. Adverts hawked bunkers from £950 to £20000 with prices rising for models of “Norse of Teutonic origin” according to one critic.¹⁹

PSM's dependence on bunker contractor adverts likely contributed to the magazine's brief publication history. Notorious Protect and Survive critic Duncan Campbell gave a rare credit to the Home Office for their decision to ban shelter advertisements. A conflagration of bunker companies that came to be directly following Protect and Survive attempted to capitalize on what could have been a nuclear gold rush. Bunker companies sent dozens of letters to the Home Office seeking an official endorsement or work contracts. Correctly acknowledging the

¹⁸ MSS 181/3/3/3, “Protect and Survive Monthly Subscription Advert and Form,” 1981.

¹⁹ Ruth Brandon, “Out of the Way: Bring out the Bows and Arrows,” *New Society*, July 9, 1981.

Figure 36 A Traditional British Garden Home: The premier edition of Protect and Survive Monthly features a monthly gazing at her husband while he and his child stare down the reader. A large ad for nuclear shelters takes up the bottom corner.



unregulated free-for-all that surrounded the industry, the Home Office “refused to endorse anyone or anything – quite rightly – and a de facto ban on advertising” was implemented. The advertising ban made it difficult to locate bunker builders and likely prevented many people from getting taken for thousands of pounds.²⁰

Though they only survived a year, the magazine had enough support that they managed to put on a successful two-day conference. The conference lectures were captured on low quality audio cassettes, currently kept at the Imperial War Museum. One of the lectures was from a well-to-do gentleman introduced as Mr. Mihale. Mr. Mihale spoke about the usefulness of nuclear shelters to store wine (when not in use).²¹ It is difficult to decipher if his insight was sincere or in jest, though several anti-Protect and Survive documents reproduced the joke as genuine, taking it as an example of the kind of clueless Conservative man who would support the programme.²² Two years later, the comment was repeated in *The Daily Telegraph*. This time, the author claimed to be a member of the BMA who wanted to remain anonymous. The mystery remains whether the author was the return of Mr. (Dr?) Mihale or an activist impersonating a wealthy, yet ignorant, Protect and Survive supporter.²³

The wine comment also appeared in *PSM*, with one journalist commenting on the suggestion to use an unneeded bunker as a “sauna or wine cellar ... which also suggests the class of customer expected”. As the craze expanded, companies were selling memberships to literal holes in the ground where future shelters would be built at £3000 per adult with £520 a year for upkeep.²⁴

²⁰ Campbell, *War Plan UK*, 497.

²¹ Chris Baraniuk, “The Bleak, Chilling Magazine for Nuclear Doomsday Preppers,” accessed August 28, 2017, <http://www.bbc.com/future/story/20170831-the-grim-and-chilling-magazine-for-nuclear-doomsday-preppers>.

²² Robin Young, “Fine Wines Offer Much to Savour,” *The London Times*, October 21, 1981.

²³ Unattributed, “Drink and Survive,” *The Daily Telegraph*, March 7, 1983.

²⁴ Evans, “A Doorway to Life after Doomsday?” 1984.

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The fifth issue of *PSM* had a vicious editorial by IAS Clarence accusing “the Labour party, and its fellow-travelers, [as being] in the vanguard of the surrender lobby”. This was one of dozens of partisan articles, *PSM* was open in its hatred for the Labour party and their contention to surrender Britain’s nuclear status. As Labour voting journalist Ruth Brandon opined, the “politics of the civil defence lobby are pretty right-wing [and] increasingly rabid”. Nowhere, wrote Brandon, was this as evident than within the pages of *PSM*.

Protect and Survive Monthly had enough notoriety to even spawn an archival periodical: *Sanity Magazine - The Voice of CND*. Beginning in September of the following year, every CND member was encouraged to subscribe to CND’s official periodical. The annual subscription fee was £6.00 and automatically enrolled one in CND if they were not already a member. All sales of *Sanity* went to causes for unilateralism, namely the continued operation of CND. As fierce as *PSM* was in their aversion to unilateralist Labour voters, *Sanity* would prove their equal, with constant animosity for Conservatives, the deterrent, and Protect and Survive. While *PSM* folded, *Sanity* had a captive audience of over 100,000 CND members by 1984 and also offered a “Supports Subscription” of £10. The special subscription did not come with anything extra but was said to be “vital to the successful launch of *Sanity*”.²⁵ The only surviving collection of *Protect and Survive Monthly*, with all its talk of doomsday survival bordering on “obsession,” is currently owned by the British Library.²⁶

Unsurprisingly, one of the principal sources of organized Protect and Survive criticism was the Labour Party, which formed the centre of the alliance against Protect and Survive. Labour had a vested interest in targeting Protect and Survive as Conservative Party propaganda to prop

²⁵ THCR 2/6/2/40 part 2, “COPY - Sanity Subscription Advert,” 1982.

²⁶ Chris Baraniuk, “The Bleak, Chilling Magazine for Nuclear Doomsday Preppers,” accessed August 28, 2017, <http://www.bbc.com/future/story/20170831-the-grim-and-chilling-magazine-for-nuclear-doomsday-preppers>.

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up the nuclear deterrent. After the Labour loss at the 1979 General Elections, the Party replaced James Callaghan as leader with dyed-in-the-wool unilateralist Michael Foot. Under Foot, the Labour Party finally embraced unilateral disarmament after decades of oscillation.²⁷ For the 1983 General Election, Foot released the 1983 Labour Party Manifesto, advocating unilateralism and other policies going farther Left than the Party had ever been. The result was a thorough trouncing at the polls leading to the replacement of Michael Foot with Neil Kinnock as party leader. Kinnock too was a self-described “committed unilateralist”, and the attacks on Protect and Survive and the nuclear deterrent continued.²⁸ Labour fared better at the 1987 General Election, though still lost handily to the Conservatives. Labour opposition to Conservative policies may have ultimately contributed to their defeats as polling showed that even the majority of Labour supporters preferred to maintain or improve civil defence and the nuclear deterrent.²⁹

Despite the fact that Labour had brought the United Kingdom into the nuclear club, modernized and maintained the missile systems, and created Protect and Survive under Wilson’s second government, Labour used the programme to attack the Conservatives. Labour aligned themselves closer than ever to CND, truly believing that the people were on their side. Labour chiseled at the Tory civil defence platform relentlessly, attempting to win favour with the public. Labour attacked to such an extent that F6 objected they had reduced Protect and Survive to nothing but empty papers in the hands of untrained and uncaring Council Executives, making “a mockery” of the programme and Conservative civil defence initiatives.³⁰

²⁷ Morgan Wood Wellman, Barnet Evans, Alan Robert Gordan Derk Richard, “Nuclear Disarmament,” *The Times*, October 1, 1981.

²⁸ AMES 2/1/104 File 2, “Letter from Neil Kinnock to Ian Bater,” February 16, 1983.

²⁹ “Civil Defence,” *The Guardian*, September 23, 1982.

³⁰ TNA: HO 322/1019, “Raymond Morris to David Heaton,” June 25, 1982.

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Labour’s chief tactic involved parlaying their success in metropolitan Local Authorities into national support. Concerted efforts were made to spin Local Council popularity as the will of the people, and any acts to proliferate civil defence as the actions of warmongering Conservatives. The goal was “persuasion rather than coercion ... by providing the maximum information” on civil defence and other policies to influence public opinion. While they may have lost the elections, Labour was quite successful at misrepresenting Protect and Survive.³¹

In the years following the release of Protect and Survive, there were dozens of fierce debates on civil defence in both Houses of Parliament. A long-time critic of the programme was far-left Labour MP Frank Allaun. Allaun was a vocal CND member and proud communist. In a twist on the Conservative answer to media questions guide, Frank prepared a Labour equivalent. If a Labour MP was asked about close relations between Labour, CND and the Communist Party, Allaun advocated MPs to point out that communists are peaceful and support many common policies, such as road safety. Allaun also advised MPs to label Protect and Survive as “a delusion” and “a form of mental conditioning” existing only to inculcate the public “for the next war”.³²

Allaun also ridiculed Protect and Survive in the House of Commons, depicting it as so entirely without merit, the very notion of calling it “advice” was surreal. It was a simple yet brilliantly effective tactic, when Allaun proceeded to read the contents of Protect and Survive aloud to the House, allowing the text to speak for itself. Allaun began: “We are supposed to make a fallout room to protect ourselves and our families against radioactivity and the pamphlet states ‘use a table and cover it with heavy furniture ... and stay there for at least 48 hours’”. Allaun continued, mocking the drawings of the family, the idea of whitewashing windows,

³¹ TNA: HO 322/1019, “Minister Mayhew to Mr. Chope about CD Regulations,” April 26, 1982.

³² MSS 181/3/3/22, “Nuclear Weapons: Questions and Answers by Frank Allaun MP,” January 26, 1981.

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collecting a fortnight’s worth of food, and building forts out of upended furniture. Protect and Survive was completely “pathetic” according to Allaun who conceded that the only “realism” in the booklet was the reference to “placing the body in another room”.³³

Conservatives would generally acknowledge that Protect and Survive was an easy document to ridicule when taken out of context. In 1980, Labour MP James Kilfedder sardonically asked Home Secretary Brittan when the Government would do more than “just publish that silly booklet”. Home Secretary Brittan described the flaw of Protect and Survive: it was simple advice, and therefore simple to “ridicule”. Joking about Protect and Survive made it an easy target for popular culture and Labour exploited every opportunity.³⁴

The following year, MP Ioan Evans, a long-time Labour member, inadvertently complimented Protect and Survive while attempting to insult *Civil Defence: Why We Need It*. When comparing *Civil Defence* to Protect and Survive, Evans argued that *Civil Defence* was “miserable and pathetic compared to Protect and Survive”. Home Office Minister of State Patrick Mayhew countered Evans’ remarks by claiming few things were of less use as Labour supported nuclear-free zones and that *Civil Defence*, and Protect and Survive, were both useful documents that could save millions of lives.³⁵

In 1983 Lord Rea brought up the “increasingly facile talk” by the Conservatives that nuclear war was something which could be survived with proper measures. Protect and Survive was called the ultimate embodiment of this fallacy.³⁶ So too did Labour MP Dr. Summerskill state when claiming the Government had been providing conflicting advice. Protect and Survive dictated that “[we] must all stay in our homes” yet now small-scale evacuations were being

³³ Allaun, Frank. *HoC Deb*, 1 July 1980, Vol. 987, Col. 1322.

³⁴ Brittan, Leon and Kilfedder, James. *HoC Deb*, 18 Dec 1980, Vol. 997, Col. 535.

³⁵ Evans, Ioan. *HoC Deb*, 26 Nov 1981, Vol. 13, Col. 1426-1429.

³⁶ Lord Rea. *HoL Deb*, 16 Feb 1983, Vol. 439, Col. 313-315.

debated (which she knew as Director at SAB). Secretary Mayhew thanked Dr. Summerskill for her belief that “civil defence should be taken seriously” and hoped that she would pass on that view to the rest of the Labour Party.³⁷ Even Conservative MP Alex Carlile complained that Protect and Survive had been “mauled to pieces” by both parties. An impression was forming that the programme was entirely inadequate at best, and dangerously inept at worst. MP Carlile hoped more would be done by the Government to protect ordinary people.³⁸

Labour MP Bruce Millan had a conciliatory approach, claiming that Labour was not against civil defence per se, though they recognized Protect and Survive as “an exercise in dishonesty and deceit”. Protect and Survive stated that nuclear war could be survived with some basic precautions, however, the Labour Party “simply [did] not believe that”. Protect and Survive was now an “infamous document” that had been “comprehensively derided and ridiculed ever since its publication”. Millan argued that it was via the policies and implications of Protect and Survive that the Conservatives had turned civil defence “into an acute political debate”, not Labour.³⁹

Labour mockery of Protect and Survive had risen to such a crescendo that some Conservatives regretted ever having it published. One Lord shared similar opinions to Duncan Butterly, in that both believed the programme should never had been printed in “peacetime”. It was not “very well received” and the publication of such a serious document in peacetime removed its gravitas and importance, making a lark of the booklet. “It was jeered at and ridiculed, as well it deserved, for suggesting that anyone getting under a table in the middle of the kitchen floor for 48 hours could survive a nuclear blast” and all Protect and Survive had

³⁷ Dr. Summerskill and Mayhew, Patrick. *HoC Deb*, 5 May 1983, Vol. 42, Col. 383.

³⁸ Carlile, Alex. *HoC Deb*, 26 Oct 1983, Vol. 47, Col. 378.

³⁹ Millan, Bruce. *HoC Deb*, 26 Oct 1983, Vol. 47, Col. 385-388.

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amounted to was “so much nonsense”.⁴⁰ Labour MP Gavin Strang simply stated in regards to Protect and Survive: “no Government publication has ever been subjected to as much justified ridicule as that one”.⁴¹

During that same debate, the Conservatives attempted to position nuclear-free zones as the Labour equivalent of Protect and Survive, that is, something useless and easy to ridicule.

Labour MP Reg Freeson then alluded to the tremendous civil defence conflicts between the Conservative national Government and Labour controlled metropolitan Local Authorities:

It is now well established that the advice in the Government pamphlet "Protect and Survive" is nonsense ... Do the Government really believe that my two young children, for instance, will survive if they hide under a table? ... That is another official suggestion. Whether or not we agree with the local authorities and the GLC over the policy of nuclear-free zones, let us be non-party for a moment. Who is trying to fool whom—those who use the device of the nuclear-free zone to try to awaken public awareness, or those who, on behalf of the Government, put out documents such as that?⁴²

A “nuclear-free zone” (NFZ) was a municipal region that passed an agreement to prohibit nuclear power plants or nuclear weapons (even during transport) within their boundaries. There exists some debate as to whether Hackney or Manchester were the first NFZ in 1980, though Manchester was the first Local Authority to forward their resolution to other Authorities, asking them follow suit. Manchester was a Labour stronghold and with the Labour declaration of unilateralism, Manchester Council relished the opportunity to stand against Tory policies. Manchester Councilor Bill Risby declared “the British people do not want nuclear weapons ... and we will help get rid of them”. National polls indicated that Labour supporters did not favour unilateralism, though Labour policies typically found greater support in large cities.⁴³

⁴⁰ Lord Ross of Marnock. *HoL Deb*, 1 Nov 1983, Vol. 444, Col. 540.

⁴¹ Gavin Strang. *HoC Deb*, 26 Oct 1983, Vol. 47, Col. 373.

⁴² Reginal Freeson. *HoC Deb*, 26 Oct 1983, Vol. 47, Col. 137.

⁴³ TNA: HO 322/853, “Summary of Content of Newsnight Item on Nuclear Free Zones,” July 17, 1981.

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The NFZ movement facilitated several clashes between Councils and the central Government. By 1981 the Greater London Council (GLC) declared London a NFZ, though the Government continued to transport nuclear weapons through the city via the capitol rail network. Formally, there was little recourse for Councils against the national Government and they typically turned to non-compliance whenever possible to stall civil defence associated initiatives. When acknowledging that they were unlikely to change national policy, the GLC reported their goal was to “undermine Britain’s international credibility” as a nuclear/military power by representing the majority of its populace in opposition to Government actions. When the MOD prepared to renovate Strathclyde’s nuclear submarine base to equip the new Trident missile systems, the Council voted to have all nuclear weapons, and the base, removed. However, the MOD could, and did, ignore this resolution and went forward with their placement.⁴⁴

GLC Consultant and unilateralist Duncan Campbell once wrote that NFZs had “swept the country” and represented a fundamental part of British culture: “the resistance of Local Administrations to Whitehall”.⁴⁵ The virulence of resistance to civil defence at Council levels was perplexing to the Home Office. There was little interest in civil defence amongst Local Authorities throughout the 1960s and 1970s, but with the publication of *Protect and Survive*, people noted that “the disarmament lobby [began] to focus its attention upon civil defence, arguing that it was nothing but a confidence trick, fostering the delusion that nuclear war could be survived”.⁴⁶

By 1985 there were 170 NFZs and the Conservative central government and Labour Councils continued to clash. NFZ Bradford Council refused to make *Protect and Survive*

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Campbell, *War Plan UK*, 449.

⁴⁶ Lexa Hilliard, “Local Government, Civil Defence and Emergency Planning: Heading for Disaster?,” *The Modern Law Review* 49, no. 4 (1986): 476–88.

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available as they argued it was “designed to mislead the public into believing that adequate protection [was] available and therefore limited nuclear war” would be acceptable.⁴⁷ As Labour ridiculed Protect and Survive as useless, Conservatives attempted the same with NFZs. Lord Elton famously quipped that “the declaration of a nuclear-free zone no more absolves one from the need for [civil defence] than the declaration of a rain-free zone absolves one from an umbrella”.⁴⁸ Many Local Authorities refused to participate in any civil defence initiatives or Home Office/MOD civil defence exercises. The rebellion reached such an extent that the Home Office was sheepishly forced to cancel their Operation Hard Rock exercise in 1982 due to low Council participation. Home Secretary Whitelaw attempted to save face by announcing the exercise was delayed as he was “not satisfied with local planning”.⁴⁹

F6 Director Howard lamented the “local swing to the Left and the damaging impact of the CND campaign against civil defence have militated against local commitment to civil defence responsibilities, [they simply] drag their feet”.⁵⁰ Later, Home Office Minister Patrick Mayhew spoke at the Third Conference of Nuclear Free Zone Councils in Manchester Town Hall on December 3 1982. The GLC used the opportunity to corner the Minister, asking how he could vociferously justify Protect and Survive and stay-put while secretly considering limited evacuations. One counsellor asked if he would deny the “existence of a *secret* Cabinet office Working Party kept *secret* from Parliament”. Another continued to demonstrate extreme mistrust asking why the Government continued to promote Protect and Survive when so many scientists found it “completely useless”.⁵¹

⁴⁷ “Bradford District Council Minutes,” April 29, 1981.

⁴⁸ Lord Elton. *HoL Deb*, Vol. 459, Col. 104, Jan 22 1985.

⁴⁹ Home Secretary Whitelaw, *HoC Deb*, Vol. 27, Col. 202, 14 July 1982.

⁵⁰ TNA: HO 322/1019, “Relations Between Central Government and Local Authorities Discussion Paper - JA Howard F6 Division,” July 28, 1981.

⁵¹ TNA: HO 322/997, “Hetherington to Whitelaw,” December 22, 1982.

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The questions set off a chain reaction and more were hurled. Another counsellor asked if “disorientated survivors” could even re-establish an earnest society after nuclear war. Another shouted that Local Authority employees should “not become the subjects of indoctrination by the Government to help perpetuate the myth that civil defence makes nuclear war survivable”. And so it went until Minister Mayhew simply left.⁵²

NFZ initiatives were no trifling matter, they quickly became massive and expensive propaganda initiatives designed to subvert Conservative defence policies. Baroness Cox discussed the extent of the NFZ/CND/Labour overlap, as Local Authorities held unilateralist rallies, subsidized “CND directly with cash,” and in Sheffield, John Coleman, Member of the Communist Party and a local CND Secretary, was hired as a NFZ officer.⁵³ In 1985, David Regan, Local Authority professor at the University of Nottingham, published a study entitled *It Costs a Bomb*. Regan determined that between 1980 and 1985 NFZs had diverted over £10,000,000 of public funds towards unilateralist propaganda in a “constitutionally inappropriate” manner. Local Authorities were using NFZs to entirely outstep their jurisdictions to undermine Government policies via quasi-legal means.⁵⁴

The insurrection grew more adamant as the Home Office attempted to delegate greater civil defence responsibilities to Local Authorities in 1983. Despite their obstinance the Authorities were seen as “the first line of civil defence” with greater potential than the central government to help following a nuclear attack. The Home Office saw the Council rebellions as “amateurish” efforts to weaken civil defence and encourage more aggressive CND protests. The

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Baroness Cox. *HoL Deb*, 04 Feb 87, V.484, Col.208.

⁵⁴ David Marsland, *Education for Defeat: Freedom, Defence and the Local Community* (International Freedom Foundation, 1988), 17.

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Home Office soon found that their troubles were just beginning as all the Local Authority blowback was soon to be eclipsed by the most powerful Council of all, the GLC.⁵⁵

The GLC had become a staunchly anti-Thatcherite throughout the 1980s, though it had not always been that way. A classified Home Defence Review, written years before *Protect and Survive*, proposed that the most effective civil defence measure would be for families to stay in their own home. For stay-put to succeed, the Home Office would require the use of additional shelters and the cooperation of Local Authorities. The decision had a major consequence as the Home Office would now have to “drastically” update the advice given to the public during a crisis. Thus, *Protect and Survive*.⁵⁶

In 1973, Duncan Buttery sent a Home Office circular to all Local Authorities to inform them of their new responsibilities for civil defence. The circular met little hostility as it was only with the release of *Protect and Survive* that civil defence became contested. Buttery proposed civil defence advice that would be issued to the public in times of growing tension with “local schemes of self-help”. The “advice”, that became *Protect and Survive*, was designed to prevent public self-evacuation and endorse stay-put as families would receive the best “protection by staying in their own homes”.⁵⁷

Local Authority dispositions changed with the release of *Protect and Survive* as “the climate of public opinion [was] altered very dramatically after” its publication. The GLC argued that “virtually none” of the Home Office civil defence efforts were concerned with saving lives. *Protect and Survive* and stay-put, according to the GLC, were only concerned with protecting

⁵⁵ TNA: HO 322/997, “Draft from Heaton (GLC & CD) Covered by a Minute from Mrs. Thompson,” November 15, 1982.

⁵⁶ TNA: HO 322/798, “Brief for Sir Philip Allen on Home Defence Review,” July 6, 1971.

⁵⁷ TNA: HO 322/997, “Home Office Circular No ES3/1973 - Home Defence Planning Assumptions,” February 7, 1973.

government “staff and resources for the aftermath”. The GLC concluded that Protect and Survive, and civil defence, were now “meaningless and cosmetic,” and they were given insufficient funds to do something of their own volition. It was clear, the GLC claimed, that civil defence was inexorably linked to nuclear deterrence and they “reject [Protect and Survive] entirely”.⁵⁸

By the end of 1980, Labour-led boroughs had virtually no civil defence preparations or commissioners appointed. Edward Leigh, Conservative GLC Councilor for Richmond, published a civil defence pamphlet in an attempt to compel the Council into action. Leigh advised readers in London to “buy a rabbit’s foot” as it would be of much greater use to their survival than their Councils. If the situation continued to deteriorate, Leigh advocated for the return of all civil defence control back to central government and the return of the CDC.⁵⁹ On May 7 1981 the situation did indeed deteriorate, dramatically. Boisterous far-left socialist Ken Livingstone replaced Labour moderate Andrew McIntosh as GLC leader. Livingstone immediately set to task attacking Tory policies and mocked Protect and Survive frequently, particularly the “emerge and resume normal activities” advice, as if, he argued, anything would be normal after a nuclear attack.⁶⁰

Stalling was already the policy of the GLC Labour Group before “Mr. Livingstone ousted Mr. MacIntosh” and the “leftward tendency of the new leadership”. However, the Home Office was still surprised with the determination of Livingstone to bring all civil defence preparations to a halt. F6 Director Howard remarked that instituting any Home Office civil defence improvements would “clearly not be possible in London”. The 1974 Civil Defence Regulations

⁵⁸ AMES 2/1/104 File 2, “Government Proposals for New Civil Defence Regulations - Council’s Detailed Response,” February 9, 1983.

⁵⁹ Edward Leigh, *Civil Defence: A Time for Commitment* (London, UK: Bow Publications Ltd., 1980).

⁶⁰ Ken Livingstone, *If Voting Changed Anything, They’d Abolish It* (London, UK: Collins, 1987), 232–33.

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granted the Home Office the authority to transfer GLC civil defence functions to “friendly” boroughs and have these extra duties charged to the GLC, though this was thought impracticable.⁶¹

Within the Home Office, the issue came to be called “The GLC Problem”. At best, the GLC could be compelled to do the minimum preparations required, as per the letter of the law. At worst, the GLC could completely refuse and legal measures would have to be taken. The Legal Advisors Branch informed F6 that if the GLC formally refused to do any preparations at all, the Home Office was provided some powers to commandeer the boroughs. However, there was little the Home Office could do if the GLC stuck to the letter of the law, and not the spirit, doing only the absolute minimum.⁶²

Simon Turney, Chairman of the GLC Public Services and Fire Brigade Committee, wrote to Home Secretary Whitelaw to elaborate on the GLC’s position. Turney stated that the “Labour Majority at County Hall” made no secrets of their opposition to Protect and Survive and noted the Labour Manifesto called for the abolishment of what was seen as improvident spending on civil defence. Any spending on civil defence was argued to be futile and misleading, a devious scheme to defraud the public into acquiescence. In light of Prime Minister Thatcher’s recent cuts, the GLC would view any efforts to compel them to spend on civil defence as “entirely inappropriate”.⁶³

Battle lines were being drawn. Labour Councils clearly did not approve of putting finances towards civil defence at a time of significant Tory cuts to other social programs. The lack of funding and resources excuse was just another page in the GLC trick book to hold up

⁶¹ TNA: HO 322/853, “Folder Notes by JA Howard, F6,” June 1, 1981.

⁶² TNA: HO 322/978, “Progress Report - Ken Day, F6,” July 13, 1981.

⁶³ TNA: HO 322/853, “Simon Turney’s Meeting Request for Secretary of State Whitelaw,” August 13, 1981.

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Conservative civil defence policies.⁶⁴ In retaliation, the Home Office concocted a new plan. The Civil Defence Act of 1948, and the Civil Defence Regulations of 1951 and 1974, would now be supplemented by a new bill, the Civil Defence Regulations of 1983. The 1983 regulations would grant the Home Office some means of encouraging the GLC to take up their responsibilities. As well as raising the minimum legal preparations required, the 1983 regulations granted Local Authorities 100% reimbursement from the Government for the costs associated with the implementation of civil defence. Rather than attempt to push through the new Regulations immediately, the Government set the voting date for after the Easter Recess of 1983, to allow the GLC to provide their comments.⁶⁵

The 1983 Regulations were a major battle in the war between London and Thatcher’s Government. All the collective ire of Labour voters in Britain had become centralized in the GLC who constantly quarreled with national government. The animosity became so intense that Thatcher used the Tory majority in Parliament to push through the complete abolition of the GLC, returning London to a region of self-governed boroughs. The 1983 Regulations were a practice run to pass anti-GLC legislation through the House in an attempt to bring the Council to heel. Once again Protect and Survive was serving as a focal point for the conflict between the Tories and Labour. Forwarding the Regulations to the GLC for feedback before the vote was an act of goodwill, Labour would be unable to derail any Tory legislation in Parliament.⁶⁶

Rather than capitulate, the GLC chose to intensify and formalize their opposition to Protect and Survive and the “unacceptable” civil defence schemes of the Government. In a surprisingly narrow vote of 43 – 32, the GLC voted to oppose the new Civil Defence Regulations

⁶⁴ TNA: HO 322/1019, “New Civil Defence Regulations,” August 26, 1982.

⁶⁵ TNA: HO 322/1019, “Civil Defence Grant: 100% Reimbursement,” August 20, 1982.

⁶⁶ LMA: GLC/RA/COOS/02/023/001, “Government Proposals for New Regulations under the Civil Defence Act 1948 - Council’s Response,” January 19, 1983.

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and the associated increase in Local Authority responsibilities contained therein. The Council noted wide opposition to the new regulations from “local authorities, peace groups, trade unions, churches, professions and the public at large”. It was then officially recorded by the GLC that there could be no protection from the horrors of nuclear war while Britain remained a nuclear state. Furthermore, the Council noted for the record that Protect and Survive was created with ill intent to “mislead the public” and cast nuclear war as survivable.⁶⁷

The GLC’s next tactic was to dig in their heels against Government pressure and reaffirm their stance that there was no way to adequately prepare civil defence without being told precisely which areas contained classified military targets. As slow as the GLC had been with civil defence compliance, Livingstone now demanded that all actions should cease until the Government disclosed classified military targets. Livingstone was well aware that the Home Office would refuse to provide such targets to the GLC and he made an excellent show of his hands being tied by bureaucratic inaction.⁶⁸ The ploy succeeded in that it “tied the Home Office up in knots” which became the “main thrust of [the GLC’s] attack on the Thatcher government [though] in truth, it was more of an irritant”. In his most memorable stunt, Livingstone posted massive anti-Conservative/Thatcher billboards outside London County Hall, directly across the Thames and in full view of Parliament.⁶⁹

Unfortunately for Livingstone, the GLC, Labour, and the alliance against Protect and Survive, the 1983 General Election was Labour’s worst showing since the Second World War. Some political analysts claimed that the GLC’s mismanagement may have contributed to Labour’s rout. Newspapers demonstrated that in a single year Livingstone had diverted over £50

⁶⁷ “Proceeding of the Meeting of the Council Held at The County Hall on Tuesday 23 November 1982,” in *1982 Greater London Council Minutes* (London, England: Howard Jones, 1983).

⁶⁸ Livingstone, *If Voting Changed Anything, They’d Abolish It*, 232–33.

⁶⁹ John Carvel, *Citizen Ken* (Chatto & Windus, 1984), 153–55.

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million to far-left fringe political causes which then became associated with Labour squandering.⁷⁰ After the election, the GLC set itself deliberately against the national Government, brazenly politicking against the Conservatives. Hundreds of thousands of pounds were spent on a poster campaign against civil defence while £35,000 were spent to create a film for primary schools called *Policing London*. In the partisan film, the Metropolitan Police were cast as violent, racist, and incompetent with a song instructing, “communities must rebel”.⁷¹ When the wasteful spending on political bickering reached public attention, “Livingstone failed not only in the key objective of bringing down Thatcher, but also in implementing many of his policies”. Greater attention would be paid to the distribution of GLC finances and with a majority government, the Conservatives were set to push through a number of policies, much to the GLC’s dismay.⁷²

First, the Home Office sent notice to the GLC of the Government’s intentions to abolish the GLC entirely and delegate its responsibilities to each borough, including civil defence obligations.⁷³ On the same day, October 21st 1983, David Heaton of F6 informed the Chief Executives of Local Authorities that the new Government would pass the 1983 Civil Defence Regulations which would come into effect December 1st.⁷⁴ The following day the *Guardian* objected to the Government’s actions, labelling them as “pressing the Councils into service”. Under the new Regulations, Councils would have to maintain updated plans for the continuation of essential services during war, prepare and designate emergency centres, train staff for civil

⁷⁰ Andrew Hosken, *Ken: The Ups and Downs of Ken Livingstone* (Arcadia, 2008), 147.

⁷¹ Baroness Cox. *HoL Deb*, 22 Jan 86, v.470, c.248.

⁷² *Ibid*, pg. 113.

⁷³ LMA: GLC/RA/COOS/02/023/002, “Minister of State Douglas Hurd to Council Leader Simon Turney,” October 21, 1983.

⁷⁴ LMA: GLC/RA/COOS/02/023/002, “Summary of Main Points Arising from a Meeting at the Home Office on 21 October 1983, Queen Anne’s Gate R.858,” October 21, 1983.

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defence, organize volunteers and conduct a survey of possible evacuation sites. All these requirements were considered the minimum. *The Guardian* also accused the Government of waiting to take the wind out of the sails of a large CND rally in London that day.⁷⁵

On October 26th the Bill came before the House. Labour MPs fiercely assailed Protect and Survive and labelled the new regulations as shameless manipulation. Labour MP Reg Freeson delivered a lengthy polemic against Protect and Survive, claiming that it was, among many other things, “trying to fool people into thinking that [the Conservatives] intend to provide genuine civil defence”. Alex Carlile piled on his contempt for the program: “Protect and Survive has been mauled to pieces on all sides, and that includes some Conservative Members”. Labour likely had little chance of succeeding with the Tory advantage, though they recorded their fervent opposition. The Civil Defence Regulations 1983 passed 335 -195.

In London Town Hall, Duncan Campbell, council consultant and ardent anti-Protect and Survive author, voiced his displeasure, arguing that the point of Tory civil defence was only the maintenance of the Machinery of Government. Campbell accused the Government of preparing a system of military rule for the moment tensions began, including “the removal of subversives”, control of the population through Protect and Survive, and the use of troops to forcibly keep “urban zombies” out of rural areas. The goal of Protect and Survive was merely to “retain tacit public support” for Britain to remain a nuclear state. Protect and Survive was immutable to the maintenance of the deterrent and the new regulations required Local Authorities to capitulate, despite partisan objections.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ John Carvel, “Councils to Be Pressed into Civil Defence,” *The Guardian*, October 22, 1983.

⁷⁶ LMA: GLC/RA/COOS/02/023/001, “Nuclear Free Zones National Steering Committee Advice to Local Authorities,” December 3, 1982.

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Campbell, on behalf of the GLC, took his opinions to the *Times*, calling the new regulations “ill-drafted, contradictory, and aimed primarily at misleading the public about the risks of nuclear war”. The Regulations served only to justify Protect and Survive as a “public palliative [and] scheme” to support the deterrent. Campbell attempted to pass responsibility back to the Conservative Government as they had failed to provide “critical information on the effects of war”. The GLC, through their mouthpiece Campbell, assailed Protect and Survive from every avenue possible.⁷⁷

Douglas Hurd, Minister of State for Home Affairs, replied in the *Times* the following morning. Hurd argued that the Home Office was not privy to the detailed attack targets of the Soviet Union. As they had been “patiently explaining” to the GLC, attack could come in many forms, from one bomb to 100, and thus a general defensive approach was required. Hurd refused to accept the GLC sandbagging as an excuse to “sit back and do nothing to carry out” the civil defence requirements to which they were now obligated.⁷⁸

Seeking the final word, GLC Civil Defence Sub-Council Leader, Simon Turney, replied to Hurd three days later, also in the *Times*. Turney pronounced the Home Office efforts as “seriously misleading, ambiguous, inadequate” and that their civil defence planning was “generally inept”. The political spat continued to play out in the public media and Turney concluded that the GLC would not act without a more complete list of targets. Battle lines were being drawn that would only lead to the end of the GLC.⁷⁹

The GLC Tories hoped the Council would now finally take action on civil defence. Conservative Councilor Neville Beale asked Turney if the GLC would now “carry out its legal

⁷⁷ Duncan Campbell, “Sheltering behind a Wall of Silence,” *The Times*, December 6, 1983.

⁷⁸ Douglas Hurd and Neil Thorne, “Commonsense on Civil Defence,” *The Times*, December 7, 1983.

⁷⁹ Simon Turney, “Plans for Civil Defence,” *The London Times*, December 10, 1983.

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responsibilities” or would they continue to use target locations as “an excuse to delay”? Turney replied that the Council was to form “a committee” to see what steps could be taken without the required information from the Home Office. Beale then asked, “would the Council follow its legal responsibility to carry on with the recently enacted Civil Defence Regulations”? Turney replied that the Home Office threat to delegate civil defence to each Borough was a “lunatic proposal” and the Council would “put a lot of effort into being constructive in [their] opposition to the Government’s policies and the new Regulations”.⁸⁰

To settle the stalemate, Director JA Howard forwarded the GLC a draft Home Office circular that was intended to clarify what was legally required from the Council. The edited copy he received in return had been savaged with corrections and comments on every paragraph. Sections on Protect and Survive were edited to read the programme was “dangerous make-believe ... a bizarre concept better suited to the land of myth”.⁸¹ Frustrated, Hurd called for a GLC meeting to be attended by several members of the Home Office, as well as other Councilors. The meeting bore little fruit and discourse was tense and accusatory. Turney called the circular “a chunk of gruyere cheese” and Hurd insisted that exact targets were not required for effective civil defence planning. To the contrary, focusing entirely on specific areas would have made the preparations “rigid and brittle”. Little was accomplished.⁸²

In the months that followed, the GLC had successfully avoided most civil defence requirements, lamenting that they could not act until their Committee had determined the likely outcome and targets of an attack on London. The Committee’s report would later evolve into a book. As progress continued, the GLC resorted to unusual ideas such as creating their own

⁸⁰ “Council Questions at GLC Meeting 20 December 1983,” December 20, 1983.

⁸¹ LMA: GLC/RA/COOS/02/023/002, “War Emergency Planning for the Fire Service - Draft Circular,” March 5, 1984.

⁸² LMA: GLC/RA/COOS/02/023/002, “GLC Summary Note of a Meeting Held at Home Office on 26 March 1984,” March 27, 1984.

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“Protect and Survive” (it did not come to pass), and taking out a full-page attack ad against Tory civil defence in the *Daily Mirror*.⁸³

Eventually, the GLC ran out of road. In a noted victory for Margaret Thatcher, the GLC was abolished April 1 1986 and its powers delegated to its representative boroughs. They had successfully stalled the Home Office, albeit until their removal from the playing field. Despite Livingstone’s best efforts, the Tory majority in Parliament saw fit to enact their legislations and “while Ken had the billboards, Maggie had the votes”.⁸⁴ The GLC did not go quietly however and managed to leave a parting gift for the Conservative Government. After several years, the GLC’s report on the Home Office’s “continuing lack of guidance” was ready for publication.⁸⁵

By 1983, the impasse between the Home Office and the GLC had become crystalized. Believing that they could not proceed without detailed information from the Home Office, the GLC created a commission to gather the data themselves and provide answers. The commission set out to answer some “specific questions” beyond target locations, most notably “the utility of domestic self-protective measures described in ... Protect and Survive”.⁸⁶

On April 13 1984, the Home Office issued a request for the GLC to update them on the status of their progress on the new civil defence regulations. The GLC reply, sent May 18, deferred to the “failure of the Government to provide” the necessary information to proceed, and as such, the Council had taken no steps and commissioned a study to determine the likely targets and plausible outcome of a nuclear attack on London. The Committee’s report had now become the “Greater London Area War Risk Study (GLAWARS)”. Aside from probable targets, the

⁸³ LMA: GLC/RA/COOS/02/024/005, “Video Films on the Council’s Civil Defence Policy,” March 1, 1985. Greater London Council, “Civil Defence: The Home Office versus the GLC,” *The Mirror*, April 26, 1985.

⁸⁴ Tony Travers, *The Politics of London: Governing an Ungovernable City* (Macmillan International Higher Education, 2003), 137.

⁸⁵ LMA: GLC/RA/COOS/02/024/005, “Mrs. DM Buckle, GLC, to Mrs. Thompson, F6,” May 1985.

⁸⁶ LMA: GLC/RA/COOS/02/024/003, “Planning Assumptions and ES2/1984,” 1984.

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stated goal of the study was to evaluate the “efficacy of possible civil defence measures”, particularly Protect and Survive. They concluded by asking the Home Office to confirm that their reimbursement for civil defence preparations on the estimated cost of the study, £300,000, would be sent promptly.⁸⁷ On June 28 the Home Office replied that the GLC study was not a sanctioned or required civil defence preparation, and as such, they would receive no reimbursements. By July 12 the estimated cost of the study was now £450,000. Two weeks later the Home Office replied that after being “carefully reviewed”, GLAWARS did not fall under the purview of the civil defence regulations.⁸⁸

GLAWARS was not published for another two years, however, from the very first page, it was quite clearly fiercely against Protect and Survive. The book began with an overview of Tory civil defence, declaring that “the public [was] skeptical” of its intentions.⁸⁹ The study also concluded that the GLC could take no action without specific Home Office targets. The Home Office refusal to publish military targets jeopardized lives as the GLC could not plan accordingly for evacuations. Thus, the one-size-fits all approach to civil defence was cost-effective, though of limited use.⁹⁰ For the GLC, even if it worked, Protect and Survive would only extend the “fear, exhaustion, disease, pain and long lonely misery” of post-attack reality.⁹¹

Though it was maintained that there was a “coercion implied” by Protect and Survive and the advice within, the GLC recommended the public to stay-put until specific targets were revealed by the Home Office.⁹² The Commission also stated that Protect and Survive could only

⁸⁷ LMA: GLC/RA/COOS/02/024/001, “GLC Director-General to F6 Division JA Howard Re: Request for Grant under Civil Defence Regulations,” May 18, 1984.

⁸⁸ LMA: GLC/RA/COOS/02/024/004, “Mr. KH Cooper, F6, to Mrs. DM Buckle, GLC,” July 31, 1984.

⁸⁹ Robin Clarke, *London under Attack: The Report of the Greater London Area War Risk Study Commission* (New York, N.Y.: Basil Blackwell, 1986), 2.

⁹⁰ Clarke, 253.

⁹¹ Clarke, *London under Attack*, 11–12.

⁹² Clarke, 261-262.

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be considered effective against specific forms of attack and was generally unsuitable for the majority of Britain”.⁹³ The GLAWARS Commission noted their desire to distance themselves from Protect and Survive as they found it a “grossly misleading” attempt to “deceive the public”.⁹⁴

GLAWARS was received by the Home Office and thoroughly discussed, however they took little to no action from the study. GLAWARS was said to have confirmed what Whitehall and the Conservative Party assumed about the GLC report: it was an attempt at sensationalism and sabre-rattling by London Labour. Notably, the Report contained a footnote that stated Protect and Survive had been “withdrawn” and a replacement would arrive later that year (1986).⁹⁵ However, no official withdrawal of Protect and Survive was ever put out by Whitehall, rather, the Home Office quietly stopped publication circa mid-1985.⁹⁶

The Medical Community and Academia

When finally published, Protect and Survive inspired a scrutiny of civil defence unlike any Britain had experienced. In 1982, SANA (Scientists Against Nuclear Arms) formed “the most vocal and effective of the Government’s critics”, according to unilateralists. Some organizations attacked Protect and Survive subjectively (e.g. via ridicule), while groups such as SANA argued objectively, with facts and science to disprove the Government’s advice.⁹⁷

⁹³ Clarke, 301-2.

⁹⁴ Clarke, 291.

⁹⁵ Clarke, 256.

⁹⁶ Clarke, 261-262.

⁹⁷ MSS 181/3/1/10, “The Civil Defence Debate: Lessons from the Past by PhD Candidate Fred Barker, Manchester University,” 1985.

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SANA contributed one of the most frequently utilized sources of Protect and Survive criticism: their revised casualty estimates. SANA notably argued that current civil defence was useless as the information the Government used to calculate post-attack casualties was overoptimistic and faulty, thus invalidating the figures used to calculate survivability in Protect and Survive. The Home Office computer calculations were created in 1977 and did not show that Protect and Survive worked, rather the data showed that F6 had overestimated the programme’s effectiveness, leading to overvalued PF.

The radii the Home Office used for initial blast damage area were also argued to be too small when compared to SANA and US military calculations. If correct, SANA’s figures would invalidate Protect and Survive’s utility as more people would be within the initial blast (of which the programme would not help) and more homes would be damaged, greatly lowering their PF. The SANA figures were invaluable to the continued protests against Protect and Survive. The new estimates were used by many academic texts and studies, as well as an influential British Medical Association report. Eventually, during a 1983 radio interview on BBC’s *World This Weekend*, Home Office Minister Patrick Mayhew reluctantly acknowledged that the Home Office accepted some of the revised SANA figures “but not the conclusions drawn from them”.⁹⁸ The Home Office argued that though there was a possibility that they underestimated the blast radii, Protect and Survive maintained its usefulness for people on the periphery of blast areas. However, CND and like-minded groups took the Mayhew admission as evidence that the Home Office finally “admit[ed] they were wrong”.⁹⁹

⁹⁸ “Interview with Home Office Minister of State Patrick Mayhew,” Radio, *World This Weekend* (London, UK: BBC Radio One, March 6, 1983).

⁹⁹ MSS 181/3/1/10, “The Civil Defence Debate: Lessons from the Past by PhD Candidate Fred Barker, Manchester University,” 1985.

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Interestingly, one of the authors of the SANA report thought their services might be needed by the Home Office to improve their research. Dr. Stan Openshaw, writer of *Doomsday: Britain After Nuclear Attack* and noted panelist on the *Newsnight* nuclear debate, wrote to Defence Secretary Heseltine on March 8 1983, a few days after the BMA’s pessimistic report. Openshaw introduced himself as the developer of the computer casualty models used by SANA, the BMA, and CND and asked if he could provide the government with more accurate calculations. The professor noted that he was not a member of CND, nor any political party, and his only interest was in further research. Heseltine thanked Openshaw, yet declined, stating the matter was more of a Home Office issue.¹⁰⁰

Prof. JP Steadman of Open University and SANA produced further research on the new figures in 1989. Steadman was also known for collaborating with Dr. Openshaw on *Doomsday* as well as a 1983 study on the new casualty models. Steadman also penned several civil defence newspaper articles and appeared on the *Newsnight* nuclear debate. Steadman concluded that the Home Office figures were critically distorted by inflated PF values that assumed no blast damage to homes.¹⁰¹

Outside scientific studies, many medical opinions on Protect and Survive were also offered. A collection of thirty-one academic papers, edited by the Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR), discussed all aspects of civil defence, from Protect and Survive to nuclear winter. They provided several medical reviews of Protect and Survive that were mostly straightforward, describing it as helpful in some cases, particularly for limited attacks. Opinions served their political beliefs, arguing that on a wide scale attack Protect and Survive “[could] not ensure

¹⁰⁰ TNA: HO 322/1027, “Dr. Openshaw to Mr. Heseltine Re: Nuclear War Casualty Prediction Techniques,” March 8, 1983.

¹⁰¹ J. P. Steadman, “Computer Models of the Effects of Nuclear Attack on Britain: The Home Office and Its Critics,” *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*. 152, no. 2 (1989): 157–81.

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conditions for post-attack [survival]”. The only truly effective form of civil defence was said to be a “sound, comprehensive, bilateral disarmament agreement and the prevention of nuclear war”.¹⁰²

The Royal College of Nursing also shared their disapproval of Protect and Survive. In 1983, Labour MP Bruce Millan cited an excerpt from the Royal College of Nursing’s report on Protect and Survive:

The Home Office booklet 'Protect and Survive' is, in our view, a naive and misleading misrepresentation of the effectiveness of the measures recommended as a means of protection in anticipation of a nuclear attack. All the Government's civil defence policy is a misleading representation of the real problems that we should face in the event of a nuclear war. The Government have not persuaded the BMA, the RCN or any expert or professional body outside the Home Office, as my hon. Friends have said, on the credibility of their civil defence policy.¹⁰³

Less politically ambiguous was the Medical Campaign Against Nuclear Weapons (MCANW). MCANW was an organization of medical professionals which hosted unilateralist symposiums. A 1983 MCANW report indicated that 160 NFZs were refusing to participate in civil defence and, as such, the Government was set to pass new regulations (the 1983 Regulations) to compel a higher standard of compliance. “Many” NFZs were said to be “working to discredit” Protect and Survive as well as any new regulations. The organization also emphasized the need for preventative medicine, asking members to inform the public and the media, putting pressure on the DHSS and the “hypocrisy” of central government.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰² Christine K. Cassel, Michael McCally, and Henry Abraham, *Nuclear Weapons and Nuclear War: A Source Book for Health Professionals* (New York: Praeger, 1984).

¹⁰³ Bruce Millan. *HoC Deb*, Vol. 47, Col. 387, Oct 26 1983.

¹⁰⁴ Sheila Adam and Claire Ryle, *Nuclear War Planning and Civil Defence* (Cambridge, UK: Medical Campaign Against Nuclear Weapons, 1983).

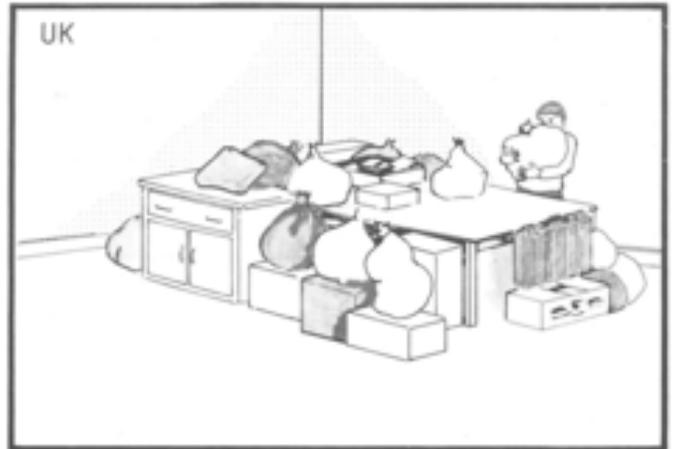
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Not all organized medical opinions of Protect and Survive were negative. Jane and Tony Smith published a series of positive articles on Protect and Survive in the *British Medical Journal*

(Figure 37). The Smiths acknowledged the “disagreement over the numbers” (casualty figures) in the medical community “owing to the assumptions” of the Home Office. The resulting public opinion of civil defence was becoming increasingly biased, associating “preparedness” with countries such as Switzerland and “inaction

[with] successive British governments”. Some opinions of Protect and Survive within the scientific community claimed the program made “nuclear war [seem] acceptable” while others claimed it formed the backbone of deterrence. West German civil defence, as an example, involved evacuations, education and shelters, and was praised, however they also had strict laws to enforce “stay-put” to prevent some families from fleeing. Conversely, the UK relied on “what individual families [could] do at home” for shelter via Protect and Survive. The Smiths praised Protect and Survive’s frugality, as well as the epidemiological benefits of lower infection rates than communal shelters and less psychological strains while sheltering with family rather than strangers. Protect and Survive was also said to be more effective now that it can be pre-read. “The derision” that Protect and Survive faced, such as the ridicule of whitewashing windows,

Figure 37 Artist’s Rendition: A shelter is drawn to Protect and Survive specifications in Jane Smith and Tony Smith, “Attitudes Towards Civil Defence And The Psychological Effects Of Nuclear War,” *British Medical Journal (Clinical Research Edition)* 283, no. 6297 (1981): 963–65.



British policy relies on last-minute construction of boy-scout play houses. (Adapted from *Protect and Survive* with permission from HMSO.)

indicated a “degree of ignorance” amongst the British population and the need for open debate and education (Figure 38).¹⁰⁵

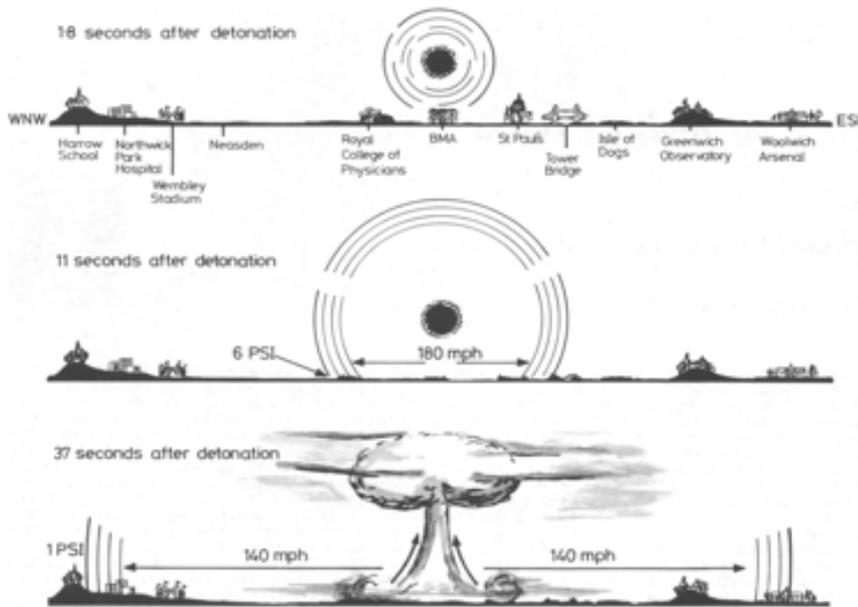
The second article of the series was also complimentary towards Protect and Survive.¹⁰⁶

Fallout protection was said to be “relatively easy to achieve”, explaining the increasing benefits of being on the ground floor or basement of a multistorey structure with further materials to absorb radiation. If Protect and Survive was not utilized, the common British house was

estimated to block 50% of fallout radiation, and a basement was estimated to lower radiation to 1/10 (PF 10) of outside levels.

Following Protect and Survive, covering walls

Figure 38 Closer to Home?: Notice that in this image ground zero is centred over the BMA rather than the typical St. Paul’s Cathedral as seen in *London After the Bomb* (Figure 42). From Jane Smith and Tony Smith, “Medicine And The Bomb: Nuclear War: The Medical Facts”.



¹⁰⁵ Jane Smith and Tony Smith, “Attitudes Towards Civil Defence And The Psychological Effects Of Nuclear War,” *British Medical Journal (Clinical Research Edition)* 283, no. 6297 (1981): 963–65.

¹⁰⁶ Jane Smith and Tony Smith, “Medicine And The Bomb: Nuclear War: The Medical Facts,” *British Medical Journal (Clinical Research Edition)* 283, no. 6294 (1981): 771–74. Compare to map in *London After the Bomb* (3.5.3)

with 18 inches of earth, raised PF levels to 100, the same as an unshielded basement of a flat tower.¹⁰⁷

The importance of early fallout protection was documented in the third article as long term exposure was chronicled. The Smiths recalled the Peace Park monument in Hiroshima (Figure 39) that was built in honour of a girl who attempted to fold 1000 paper cranes before her death from exposure. While 80% of fallout was said to fall within the first 24 hours, the remainder entered the troposphere and stratosphere, where it could stay for years or millennia, depending on the element isotopes.¹⁰⁸

As with most things Protect and Survive, the Smiths’ *Medicine and the Bomb* series proved controversial. One review objected to the mention that Protect and Survive was said to prevent many casualties, while its ineffectiveness against blast and heat was not elaborated. There was also said to be no mention of help for families in high rise flats or others who might be unable to implement the reinforcements themselves. The critic’s best civil defence advice was said to be a reduction of nuclear weapons and public pressure from the medical community (as stated by the BMA).¹⁰⁹ A second critique of the series objected to its implication that a nuclear attack would never come as a complete surprise. Unlike the Smiths, the more the critic read the series, the more he believed Protect and Survive to be “ludicrous” with its references to kitchen tables and boy scout shelters. Again,

Figure 39 The Hiroshima Peace Park Monument: Discussed in Jane Smith and Tony Smith, “Long-Term Effects Of Radiation,” (1981).



¹⁰⁷ Jane Smith and Tony Smith, “Radiation Injury And Effects Of Early Fallout,” *British Medical Journal (Clinical Research Edition)* 283, no. 6295 (1981): 844–46.

¹⁰⁸ Jane Smith and Tony Smith, “Long-Term Effects Of Radiation,” *British Medical Journal (Clinical Research Edition)* 283, no. 6296 (1981): 907–8.

¹⁰⁹ Berry Beaumont, Andrew Haines, and Ian R. F. Ross, “Medicine And The Bomb,” *British Medical Journal (Clinical Research Edition)* 283, no. 6303 (1981): 1406–7.

referring to the BMA report, more input from the medical community was said to be the best preventative measure.¹¹⁰ The common weakness of the efforts of the medical community was their lack of influence in public debates. That would all change when the BMA took up the cause and published a paperback report for the British public.

The BMA

The 1983 BMA report on civil defence was more popular than anyone imagined. It was clear that there was a public desire for unemotional scientific feedback on civil defence, possibly to use logic to soothe emotional fears. BBC Radio 4’s long running *World at One* programme ran a segment on the BMA report the day of release. Host Robin Day summarized the report as the “end of civilization” and introduced an interview between Science Correspondent James Wilkinson and Dr. John Harvard, General Secretary of the BMA. Harvard’s first takeaway from the report was that there would be no medical services after a strike other than wandering doctors helping with clean water and infection control. As Wilkinson questioned if there had only been a single strike, Harvard referred to the report and stated they checked with a “number of authorities and only one (F6 Minister Ray Morris underlined the word on the transcript and wrote “the Government” alongside) indicated” the possibility of a single strike. When asked about Protect and Survive, Harvard commented that it would be “little protection against fallout” to which Morris could only add “?”.¹¹¹

¹¹⁰ Brian McMullen, J. R. Butler, and K. D. Bledin, “Medicine And The Bomb,” *British Medical Journal (Clinical Research Edition)* 283, no. 6301 (1981): 1265–66.

¹¹¹ “BMA Civil Defence,” *World at One* (London, England: BBC Radio4, March 3, 1983).

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The Home Office was not blindsided by the report. On June 29 1981, the BMA held a near unanimous vote of 600 members that agreed to study Protect and Survive to determine if it held “any value”. One doctor stated that “the public was being bombarded with documents such as Protect and Survive” and so doctors must test its validity. The Home Office were made aware of their intentions and also received an advanced draft of the study.¹¹² Director Howard found the study to be a “dispassionate summary” that was too “subjective” on civil defence. When the study stated, “A good ... rule of thumb would be five tons per head of population” Howard countered “why not 1, 10, 20, 1000!?”¹¹³

The majority of the book was spent discussing known nuclear effects, while also arguing against optimistic Home Office blast damage figures. Significant time was spent on chronicling the “hopeless” state of the NHS, medical professionals, and disease control following an attack.¹¹⁴ Surprisingly, their most resolute objections to Protect and Survive was that the supplies list recorded water and sugar but not salt. Salt was said to be crucial for rehydration, which itself would be critical with the diarrhoeal conditions within cramped shelters.¹¹⁵

The Home Office PF values when following Protect and Survive were also discussed. The BMA challenged that the Home Office materials assumed houses to be symmetrical rectangular boxes with identical wall thicknesses and no fallout accumulating on windowsills or roofs, and none entering into the house via damage. These factors were said to incorrectly increase the Home Office PF values, corrupting all their calculations.¹¹⁶

¹¹² Timmins Nicholas, “BMA to Launch Inquiry on Value of Civil Defence,” *The Times*, July 1, 1981.

¹¹³ British Medical Association, *Report of the Board of Science and Education Inquiry into the Medical Effects of Nuclear War* (British Medical Association, 1983).

¹¹⁴ *Ibid*, pg. 43.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid*, pg. 101.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid*, pg. 52.

After supplies and PF values, the next criticism of Protect and Survive was its lack of consideration for psychological factors. No examples were made with people being unprepared, promoting the image that all Britons started their fortifications at the first sign of crisis. Having everyone prepared also assumed that the homeowner was successful in finding enough food, water, and fortification materials while millions of others were frantically doing the same. Further, the programme assumed an unnatural serenity during the two weeks of sheltering in cramped, unhygienic conditions, with family who may have needed medical attention. The importance of considering psychological states was that each time a homeowner stepped out of the shelter they lowered its PF value.¹¹⁷

On television, Secretary of Defence Michael Heseltine appeared on BBC One’s *Lunchtime News*. When asked if he agreed with the BMA assertion that nuclear war could not remain isolated, Heseltine replied that the doctors were making an assumption on something that was inherently unknowable, though the policy of deterrence had kept peace for 37 years. The doctors, according to Heseltine, should not offer geopolitical conclusions and by using the worst assumptions, they created scenarios so horrible there were no preventative steps possible. Heseltine concluded with the notable comment that “[the doctors] would be the first to complain if [the Government] did nothing to prepare”.¹¹⁸

Papers on both sides of the political spectrum reported on the BMA’s findings with a fervor unmatched in the history of Protect and Survive. More coverage was given to the book than any other commentary on Protect and Survive, eclipsing the works of CND or other academics. On the Right, the programme was said to reinforce the need for a strong deterrent, while the Left had no shortage of poor impressions from the BMA report, labelling Protect and

¹¹⁷ *Ibid*, pg. 73.

¹¹⁸ “BBC 1 Lunch Time News,” 1983.

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Survive as: “hopelessly inadequate”, “Useless”, “ridiculous ... fit for a Siberian loony-bin”, “futile ... inaccurate and misleading”, “a trap ... impossible”, “Horri-fying”, “a distorted picture”, “only minimal protection ... hopelessly unrealistic ... false ... ridiculous”, and “a myth ...dangerously unrealistic ... seriously deficient ... ineffective”.¹¹⁹ It was a catastrophic collection of reviews of the Home Office programme, and even the strongest Tory papers had little good to say of Protect and Survive after reading the Report.

Other papers argued that the BMA overstepped their bounds and maintained there was some use for Protect and Survive. *The Daily Mail* astutely noted that Protect and Survive had always been “a grisly gift to CND satire” although the BMA were now pontificating beyond their skillsets. The *Mail* asked how the BMA could know of the Soviet Union’s intentions: “have [the BMA] put their stethoscopes to the evil heart of the Kremlin?”. The BMA were encouraged to discuss their expertise on radiation sickness and civil defence, though their “quack Kremlinology” was unwanted.¹²⁰ The article remained disappointed that the only civil defence noted as “worthwhile” were the typically ridiculed Protect and Survive suggestions to whitewash windows and stock up on potable water.¹²¹

A *Times* article summarized that the Report proved effective civil defence was “impossible”. The Home Office argued that the Report distorted outcomes and downplayed the helpfulness of Protect and Survive, which was their “humanitarian duty”. The Report had the last

¹¹⁹ Andrew Veitch, “Doctor Urges End to Planning for After the Bomb,” *The Guardian*, March 7, 1983; William Thomson, “Holocaust Planning ‘Useless,’” *Daily Telegraph*, March 7, 1983; Unattributed, “DOOMSDAY,” *Sunday Mirror*, March 6, 1983; David Fletcher, “Medical Aid Plans Futile in A-War, Say Doctors,” *Daily Telegraph*, March 4, 1983; Bill Wainwright, “Doctors Warn of 33 Million Nuclear Dead,” *Morning Star*, March 4, 1983; Arthur Smith, “Atom War Horror, by Doctors,” *Daily Mirror*, March 4, 1983; Clare Dover, “Doctors Spell Out Horror of Bomb,” *Daily Express*, March 4, 1983; Unattributed, “Doctors in Chilling Despair,” *The Guardian*, March 4, 1983; Nicholas Timmins, “Nuclear Survival Plans ‘a Myth, as Attack Would Destroy Helth Services,’” *The London Times*, March 4, 1983.

¹²⁰ Unattributed, “Seers or Quacks?,” *Daily Mail*, March 4, 1983.

¹²¹ Paul Crosbie, “Doctors on the Bomb,” *Daily Mail*, March 4, 1983.

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line in the article which stated that Protect and Survive may help some, however, the physical and “psychological shock” after an attack would have left society helpless.¹²²

The *Guardian* applauded the Report as evidence of Conservative public endangerment. Journalist Andrew Veitch provided two spirited articles. The first reiterated some findings of the Report, chiefly that there could be no single attacks, the only outcome was a full 200mt blanketing, or, if Cruise were installed, up to 800mt. The Home Office after-attack prognosis was dangerously optimistic as the report claimed even a 1mt bomb would cripple the NHS. Veitch was pleased that “there [were] no recommendations” in the Report, hoping Britons would make their own decisions on disarmament.¹²³

The second Veitch article reiterated the Report’s analysis of Protect and Survive, namely that it was useless, and at best it would have caused millions to suffer in agony while there would be no relief from medical professionals or the Government. The BMA Report was said to be “the most authoritative” study to date exposing the failures of Protect and Survive. Veitch reiterated that while a single missile attack would be improbable, it would still decimate the NHS and graphically retold the reported effects of nuclear weapons and radiation on the human body. While the BMA was not the first to make the claim, the article also vividly repeated that doctors would not treat radiation sickness, painting a harrowing image in the mind of the reader of becoming a walking casualty with no chance for recovery.¹²⁴

The most partisan article was from the *Daily Star*. It targeted Michael Heseltine relentlessly, facetiously lamenting that “his boss, Mrs. Thatcher, has given him an impossible task”, manically trying to plug holes in the argument for deterrence and Protect and Survive. The

¹²² Nicholas Timmins, “Doctor’s Nuclear Report Attacked,” *The London Times*, March 4, 1983.

¹²³ Andrew Veitch, “Doctors’ Warning on Life After the Bomb,” *The Guardian*, March 4, 1983.

¹²⁴ Andrew Veitch, “Doctors’ Grim Picture of Britain After Nuclear Attack,” *The Guardian*, March 4, 1983.

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best defence to the BMA Report Heseltine could produce was said to be “cheap jibes” and that his comment that Protect and Survive would mean millions lost, rather than tens of millions, was “insanity”. With a most conspicuous leftward tilt, the article concluded that “Briton simply cannot be defended in a nuclear war” and called for the reader to join the CND’s Easter demonstrations.¹²⁵

Within Whitehall, the BMA Report produced a significant amount of paperwork and defensive memorandums. F6 Director Howard received the report March 1st and felt “it [was] a bad report for us: clearly the BMA have swallowed hook, line, and sinker the propaganda of disarmament groups, including SANA”. The Home Office prepared a rebuttal on the “efficacy of civil defence” and the Department of Health and Social Security (DHSS) should present Government evidence as the report was set to seriously damage NHS attitudes to civil defence.¹²⁶ The DHSS were astutely proactive however, and informed the Home Office that leading a “government rebuttal of the Report” was beyond their capabilities as they took their data from the Home Office.¹²⁷

F6 Director JA Howard prepared a brief memo on the Report for Defence Secretary Heseltine. Howard called the BMA Report “a distorted picture” and all within Government with “responsible positions” had a humanitarian duty to “maximize survival opportunities”.¹²⁸ The Report’s theory that the amount of mt detonated over Britain would increase fourfold with Cruise installed was entirely baseless assumptions. The report was dismissed as “fallacious [and] irresponsible”.¹²⁹

¹²⁵ Unattributed, “Come off It, Michael,” *Morning Star*, March 4, 1983.

¹²⁶ TNA: HO 322/1027, “British Medical Association - Inquiry into the Medical Effects of Nuclear War,” March 1, 1983.

¹²⁷ TNA: HO 322/1027, “SMO Dr. MJ Prophet to JA Howard Re: BMA Report,” March 4, 1983.

¹²⁸ TNA: HO 322/1027, “Civil Defence - BMA Report,” March 3, 1983.

¹²⁹ TNA: HO 322/1027, “BMA Report Briefing for PM,” March 3, 1983.

Home Office Minister of State Patrick Mayhew also prepared a sizeable brief for Heseltine as well as the Secretary’s “Ministerial Group on Defence Policy PR”. The Report was said to be “damaging to civil defence” in several ways and could have jeopardized British civil defence. Mayhew stated that, as a result of MACNW pressure, the BMA had produced a prejudiced and “biased” report. Despite the “Conservative traditions” of the BMA, they had produced an assumptive and sensationalist report that would have likely become “propaganda for the disarmament movements [such as] SANA and other ... quasi professional” groups.¹³⁰ Mayhew concluded the brief in his own handwriting: “we do not need the doctors to tell us that a nuclear attack can damage our health – and that the best way of avoiding one is to maintain our deterrent”.¹³¹

The following year, when the Report was published in paperback it sold surprisingly well, and many British doctors objected, arguing the BMA had veered too far into the political sphere. The first sentence of the new forward informed the reader that the “purpose” of the report was to scientifically and objectively calculate the medical consequences of nuclear war on Britain. The findings were to be taken separately from politics with no opinion on the nuclear debate or civil defence and the Report would not state whether civil defence made war more or less likely.¹³²

The BMA’s public paperback edition was ultimately more critical of the Home Office usage of Protect and Survive rather than the programme itself. The report stated that the impression the BMA had of Protect and Survive was that it was designed mainly for post-attack

¹³⁰ TNA: HO 322/1027, “Report of the BMA Inquiry into the Medical Effects of Nuclear War,” March 3, 1983.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² British Medical Association. Board of Science and Education, *The Medical Effects of Nuclear War: The Report of the British Medical Association’s Board of Science and Education*. - (Chichester ; Toronto: Published on behalf of the British Medical Association by Wiley, 1984).

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fallout protection, not blast protection. The report did give credit to the value, even if minimal, of Protect and Survive to prolong survival for millions on the periphery of blast areas. Overall, “the elements of planning – the personal individual precautions” of Protect and Survive did indeed “have merit” according to the BMA’s research.¹³³

The conclusions of the Report were not unanimous amongst Medical professionals. A Dr. Hugh Gough-Thomas wrote to Director Howard, specifically to inform the Director that he should not believe that “the majority of medical and nursing” professionals found civil defence to be “pointless”.¹³⁴ Howard notified DHSS Senior Medical Officer Dr. Prophet who replied, “unfortunately,” those who disagreed with the BMA could run afoul of the more “vociferous” voices “within the CND syndrome”.¹³⁵ The Home Office Scientific Research and Development Branch (SRDB, formerly the SAB) prepared two reports, each meticulously rebutted the BMA publication chapter by chapter. The SRDB claimed the report was unceasingly biased. The SRDB found clear influence of CND and leftism throughout the Report which only served to legitimize the CND position that Protect and Survive was a deception.¹³⁶

With the initial release of the BMA report, the news cycle moved so swiftly that within days of release, newspapers were already running BMA objections to the Home Office objections. The BMA disagreed with the Home Office inferences that they only used “worst case assumptions” as they felt a single strike was an impossible event. The BMA also took umbrage with Secretary of Defence Heseltine’s comments that the BMA’s report was “quite irresponsible”.¹³⁷ The paperback BMA Report was said to have had “global significance”.¹³⁸ Dr.

¹³³ Ibid, pg. 107.

¹³⁴ TNA: HO 322/1027, “Dr. Hugh Gough-Thomas to Director Howard,” April 8, 1983.

¹³⁵ TNA: HO 322/1027, “BMA Report - Dr. Hugh Gough-Thomas,” April 15, 1983.

¹³⁶ TNA: HO 322/1027, “BMA’s Report of Their Inquiry into Medical Aspects of Nuclear War,” April 8, 1983.

¹³⁷ Nicholas Timmins, “BMA Takes on Critics of Nuclear Report,” *The London Times*, March 5, 1983.

¹³⁸ Thomas Land, “The War That Cannot Be Won,” *The Contemporary Review*, November 1, 1981.

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Deitch, in *The Lancet*, called the BMA Report “devastating” to Prime Minister Thatcher’s use of nuclear weapons as deterrent. The Report was said to have reduced British civil defence plans to “scavenging skills and luck” and “ridiculed” Protect and Survive as impractical.¹³⁹

World Medicine also recounted the BMA Report. The magazine claimed the Report was the “definitive analysis” of nuclear attack, though debate would, and should, continue in the medical community. While the Report was “meticulously non-political”, the magazine believed it was impossible to have a medical opinion without a political one. This was an astute conclusion by the magazine as all too often the doctors of the Report would offer unqualified opinions on geopolitics and Soviet intentions. Their expertise lied in predicting the effects of radiation on the human body, not on the best tactical means of preventing expose to nuclear weapons. As the Report claimed a single Hiroshima-level bomb would “overwhelm the NHS”, the only solution was preventative medicine to ensure a nuclear exchange never occurred. This would bring the debate to the benefits of deterrence versus unilateralism. With such a conclusion, the BMA Report could not help but enter the “political quagmire” of civil defence.¹⁴⁰

Academia

Unsurprisingly, the response to Protect and Survive within universities was overwhelmingly negative, with even greater conformity than amongst Labour supporters. This was of course entirely predictable, given the Protect and Survive association with Conservatism, despite its

¹³⁹ Rodney Deitch, “Commentary from Westminster - Medical Effects of Nuclear War,” *The Lancet*, March 12, 1983, 602.

¹⁴⁰ Unattributed, “Time to Take Sides in the Arms Debate,” *World Medicine*, March 19, 1983.

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humble Labour roots. Critical references to Protect and Survive can be found in dozens of academic books, and many were influential to this study though not utilized directly.¹⁴¹

British academia began a noticeable lean to the left following the Second World War, and with Labour’s courtship of CND and unilateralism in the 1980s, it formed a key member in the alliance against Protect and Survive.¹⁴² Animosity was further intensified with Margaret Thatcher’s noted rancor for academics. Thatcher often skirmished with academia, and they with her. Thatcher’s distaste for what she saw as the neo-Marxist, unilateralist, academic-types, the “woolly hat brigade” as she and Secretary Heseltine labelled them, became a defining component of Thatcher’s Britain.¹⁴³ At times, Thatcher seemed to resent the very existence of the bourgeoisie academic sort, famously quipping “Oh, what a luxury!” to a student who declared his major as History while on a university tour.¹⁴⁴

The two often “trespassed ... on each other’s territories” with Thatcher’s frequent appeals for a return to the liberal Victorian values of Pax Britannica to pull the nation out of its Post-War decline. Already weary of her conservatism, many academics bristled at Thatcher’s unwelcomed intrusion into their domain, and some crusaded for the abolishment of all things Thatcher. With the growing alliance against Protect and Survive spreading across Britain, there would be an

¹⁴¹ Royal United Services Institute for Defence Studies, *Nuclear Attack: Civil Defence : Aspects of Civil Defence in the Nuclear Age : A Symposium*, 1st ed.- (Oxford ; Toronto: Brassey’s Publishers Ltd, 1982); Philip Bolsover, *Civil Defence: The Cruellest Confidence Trick* (Campaign for nuclear disarmament, 1980); Paul Rogers, Malcolm Dando, and Peter Van den Dungen, *As Lambs to the Slaughter: The Facts about Nuclear War* (Arrow Books, 1981); I. Tyrell, *The Survival Option: A Guide to Living Through Nuclear War* (London, UK, 1982); Jeannie Peterson, *The Aftermath: The Human and Ecological Consequences of Nuclear War* (Pantheon Books, 1983); Stan Openshaw, *Doomsday: Britain after Nuclear Attack* (Oxford, England: Blackwell, 1983); Gwyn Prins, John Barber, and Cambridge University Disarmament Seminar, *Defended to Death: A Study of the Nuclear Arms Race*, Pelican Books (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, Eng.: Penguin Books, 1984); Philip A. G. Sabin, *The Third World War Scare in Britain: A Critical Analysis* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1986); Cassel, McCally, and Abraham, *Nuclear Weapons and Nuclear War*.

¹⁴² Robert Anderson, *British Universities Past and Present* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2006).

¹⁴³ Nicholas Timmins, “Can the CND Stay Non-Violent?,” *The London Times*, March 9, 1983.

¹⁴⁴ Unattributed, *The Durham University Journal* (The University of Durham, 1994), 3.

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inexorable confrontation with Thatcher who “considered herself to be an anti-Marxist above everything”.¹⁴⁵

The conglomeration was a remarkably consistent association between Labour, academia, the GLC, artists, the CND, and communism, all united against Protect and Survive.¹⁴⁶ Universities were a major source of CND membership, not only amongst the academics, but with the students, as CND’s followers trended younger following the release of Protect and Survive.¹⁴⁷ Most left-wing sensibilities were said to be an ideal match with CND’s unilateralist aims.¹⁴⁸ The connection was so convincing for Thatcher and her Cabinet, that they frequently referred to the CND as a “communist organization”. This was a label CND would frequently attempt to dispel to varying degrees of success.¹⁴⁹ As Conservative MP Christopher Chope famously quipped: “most people would identify CND with the Labour party and the Communist party. I know of no Conservative Member who supports CND”.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁵ Bernard Porter, “‘Though Not an Historian Myself ...’ Margaret Thatcher and the Historians,” *Twentieth Century British History* 5, no. 2 (January 1, 1994): 246–56.

¹⁴⁶ THCR 2/6/3/72, “Letter from the RT Hon Michael Heseltine, MP, Secretary of State for Defence to Conservative MPs and Candidates in Marginal Seats,” April 22, 1983.

¹⁴⁷ John Minnion and Philip Bolsover, *The CND Story: The First 25 Years of CND in the Words of the People Involved* (Allison & Busby, 1983).

¹⁴⁸ Esmée Sinéad Hanna, *Student Power! The Radical Days of the English Universities* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014).

¹⁴⁹ MSS 181/3/3/22, “Nuclear Weapons: Questions and Answers by Frank Allaun MP,” January 26, 1981.

¹⁵⁰ Chope, Christopher. *HoC Deb*, 22 Jan 1986, Vol. 90, Col. 62.

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At times, the Conservative accusations of communism received significant push-back, such as the occasion when Secretary Heseltine was sued for libel by CND vice-chair Roger Spiller. Heseltine had sent a letter April 1st 1983 to all MPs and candidates in marginal seats after CND said they would oppose those seats.¹⁵¹ In the letter, Heseltine stated that the CND council was “the left or extreme left” and listed some members with far-left political associations. According to Heseltine, Spiller was “associated with the International Socialists”. Spiller argued that International Socialists no longer existed and that he had never been a member. It is assumed the two settled out of court as no further references could be found in newspapers or the Thatcher Archives.¹⁵²

The cohabitation of CND, communism, and academia was so ubiquitous that in 1983 a cohort of frustrated academics signed an anti-CND petition, attempting to distance themselves from the group and its association with communism, however, little came of their efforts.¹⁵³ The petition aside, the tripartite alliance continued forward throughout the 1980s, with offerings of “peace studies” and “nuclear disarmament” courses to forward their causes in universities, while the CND branch Teachers for Peace also incorporated the activism in schools (Figure 40).¹⁵⁴

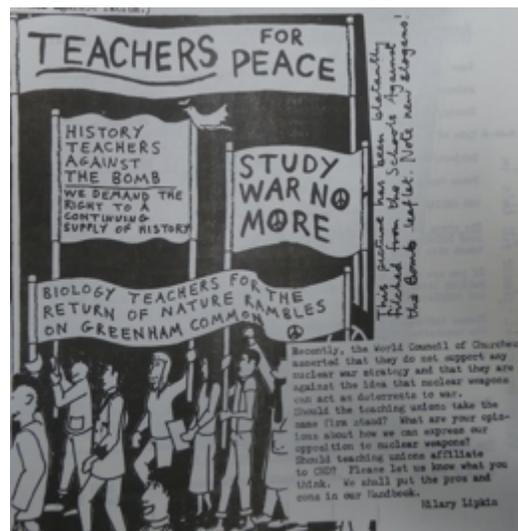


Figure 40 Teachers for Peace: A CND newsletter highlights unilateralist protests from the academic community. From: MSS 21/1655/153, “Teachers for Peace,” January 1982.

¹⁵¹ THCR 2/6/3/65, “Libel Action by Mr Roger Spiller,” July 27, 1983.

¹⁵² Peter Kellner, “Heseltine: The Open Record,” *The Times*, January 15, 1986.

¹⁵³ Wendy Berliner, “Academics Sign Anti-CND Letter,” *The Guardian*, October 22, 1983.

¹⁵⁴ Theodore M. Hesburgh et al., “NUCLEAR WAR: A Teaching Guide,” *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 40, no. 10 (December 1, 1984): 1s–32s.; C. Cassel, M. Garland, and M. McCally, “Design of a Course on the Medical Consequences of Nuclear War,” *Journal of Medical Education* 57, no. 11 (November 1982): 866–68.

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The overlapping of schools and personal politics became a source of anxiety for many Conservatives. Speaking in 1986, Conservative MP Edward Leigh called peace studies “the most noticeable form of political indoctrination in the past two or three years”. The courses were often imbued with the teacher’s political endorsement for CND, and only taught unilateralism. Leigh called it subversive teaching, that inculcated only one form of thinking. Leigh had visited one school that had a CND poster on one wall, and on the other, a poster of Margaret Thatcher with a scrawl that she should be shot.¹⁵⁵

In the House of Lords, Baroness Cox referred to a correspondence she received from a pupil in Oxfordshire that spoke at length on growing familiarity between teaching, the Left and CND. The student wrote that, ““for far too long, teachers have been exploiting the naivety of many, using their positions of influence by indoctrinating 14 to 17-year-olds ... A *CND* propaganda film was organized ... *CND posters* advertising the Bruce Kent ... In the fourth and fifth years, ‘current affairs’ became a compulsory lesson. In these lessons they have had a talk by a striking miner, a Labour Party political broadcaster ... No other material illustrating another perspective was given”.¹⁵⁶

Academics occupied many leadership roles within CND and facilitated protests and speaking engagements on most campuses. One notable example was historian EP Thompson, who not only aligned with CND, but with the Communist Party of Britain. However, he renounced the Party following the 1956 occupation of Hungary and became a socialist. It was a nearly universal trait within universities, and many academics contributed to the alliance and penned their own anti-Protect and Survive works.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁵ Edward Leigh. *HoC Deb*, Oct 21 1986, Vol. 102, Col. 998.

¹⁵⁶ Baroness Cox. *HoL Deb*, Mar 15 1986, Vol. 473, Col. 637.

¹⁵⁷ Richard Barnet, “A Frightening Security,” *The New York Times*, November 14, 1982.

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A pair of academics from the University of Manchester (the birthplace of the NFZ) produced a dedicated rebuke of Protect and Survive. Their article argued that Protect and Survive “[embodied] selective and misleading images of nuclear war to the public”. The fault was said to lie with the programme’s images of survival in physical terms, without corresponding images of psychosocial non-survival. Protect and Survive was considered entirely “anti-democratic” and its simple cartoon images were insufficient depictions of the horrors of post-attack survival. The programme’s simple home precautions for the “intelligent, obedient” public were part of an “ideological web” of misinformation created by the Government.¹⁵⁸

Churcher and Lieven took umbrage with Protect and Survive’s implication of a single nuclear detonation. This assertion, as well as the implication that communication would continue after an attack, allowing survivors to speak with their Local Authority, was dismissed. It was more likely there would be no Local Authority after an attack. “Thus”, the article concluded, “the reader [was] given the comforting impression that he or she [would] not be alone, that those who knew better [would] be there to offer succor and advice, and that [the whole unpleasant] business [would] only last for fourteen days”. It was a “distortion by omission” as nothing was said of the injured, sick or those physically unfit to carry out preparations to survive. Nothing was offered on closed schools, hospitals or prisons, the bedlam for food, the isolation of disconnected phone lines and the “psychological effects of terror”. The article also reflected the common academic and CND belief that Protect and Survive worked to hasten an immediate military dictatorship after an attack.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁸ John Churcher and Elena V. M. Lieven, “Images of Nuclear War and the Public in British Civil Defense Planning Documents,” *Journal of Social Issues* 39, no. 1 (1983): 117–32.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

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Dr. Lawrence Freedman, of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, was a noted moderate, and frequently discussed Protect and Survive in academia and newsprint. In a 1980 article, Freedman discussed the possibility of Great Britain becoming the first ex-nuclear power with the upcoming Trident debate. Within the article, Freedman stated that the 1980 Whitehall study (likely referring the 1979 Home Defence Conference) produced Protect and Survive which served as “the government trying to prepare the people for something nasty”. Protect and Survive was responsible for the CND revival as well as the “leftward surge in the Labour Party” as unilateralism, socialism, and “every other left-wing cause” was invigorated with Michael Foot in November.¹⁶⁰

The following year Freedman published a book on Britain’s nuclear future. Freedman had developed a mixed opinion of Protect and Survive, categorizing the programme as well-meaning though impractical. The Freedman book agreed that DIY shelters were the best option for the public as there was truth in the Home Office assertion that evacuation could simply move people to areas of even greater danger. However, relying on Protect and Survive would be useless as the Home Office required several weeks warning of an attack in order to print, let alone distribute, a copy of Protect and Survive to every home in Britain. Ultimately, the programme was said to be mostly a component of Conservative nuclear strategy for promoting civil defence.¹⁶¹

New Society called Freedman’s book chilling in both subject matter and conclusions. Inspired by the research of Dr. Freedman, the periodical set out to survey 1000 Britons on nuclear issues. The study produced some surprising thoughts on civil defence in 1980. The broad view was that most people thought civil defence education, such as Protect and Survive, would

¹⁶⁰ Lawrence Freedman, “Britain: The First Ex-Nuclear Power?,” *International Security* 6, no. 2 (1981): 80–104.

¹⁶¹ Lawrence Freedman, *Britain and Nuclear Weapons* (London: Macmillan for the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1980).

help “a little”. Though the differences in responses to the question between Labour and Conservative voters was much smaller than anticipated. While Conservatives trended slightly more positive, the most popular responses were 34% Conservatives and 33% of Labour. However, most people also assumed they, and the nation, would not survive any nuclear war. Even given this pessimistic outlook, the majority of respondents still preferred Britain retain its nuclear deterrent.¹⁶²

It would be confirmed by future studies, but the *New Society* poll was the first to show that Labour went against their own supporters when they went unilateral in 1980. Even among Labour voters, only 26% favoured Britain becoming an ex-nuclear power. Furthermore, the survey confirmed earlier studies that the elderly, the middle class and men had less fear regarding the likelihood of war. When asked what they would do if there would be a nuclear attack in 24 hours, the greatest response, 28%, was to seek shelter at home with Protect and Survive. The next most common responses were “hope for the best” and “I don’t know” with 26% and 22% respectively. *New Society* noted an uptick in civil defence interest after the *Times* ran their series on the “much satirized guide”, Protect and Survive, in January 1980.¹⁶³

Duncan Campbell

Of all individuals, EP Thompson might be the most remembered opponent of Protect and Survive. Although, there was another critic who was far more prolific, at least in sheer volume of criticism. After obtaining his MSc, Duncan Campbell became a journalist for the *Guardian*’s left-wing periodical *New Statesman*, becoming well known for his exposé work on government

¹⁶² David Lipsey, “What Do We Think about the Nuclear Threat?,” *New Society*; London, September 25, 1980.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

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secrets. Campbell led an unparalleled charge against Protect and Survive with a zeal bordering on obsession. Campbell also joined the GLC Public Services and Fire Brigade Committee as consultant. Campbell’s role on the Public Services and Fire Brigade Committee lent legitimacy to his voice and allowed him to effectively interfere with F6 initiatives. Along with dozens of anti-Protect and Survive articles for the *New Statesman*, Campbell published a voluminous, nearly 500-page assault of the Conservative government’s civil defence contingencies, with ample critique of Protect and Survive. It might be said that if anti-Protect and Survive had a face, it would have been Duncan’s.

Campbell typically combined biting ridicule with insidious accusations of treachery when writing on Protect and Survive, he was not one to hold back opinions. Campbell wrote with acerbic intensity, suggesting a personal fascination beyond the profits of sensationalism. When Protect and Survive became the hot-topic of the 1980s, few capitalized as frequently as Duncan Campbell. Perhaps the greatest praise for Campbell would be in the minutes of a Cabinet Committee meeting with the Prime Minister. When the topic turned toward the most worrisome anti-civil defence pressure groups, they were listed as: “scientists, doctors, teachers, and journalists. Particularly ... Duncan Campbell”.¹⁶⁴

In December 1983, Campbell wrote a scathing attack piece in the *Times*, claiming that the Home Office’s refusal to specify classified military locations was jeopardizing the safety of GLC, as well as the entire nation.¹⁶⁵ Even the House of Lords had remit to discuss Duncan Campbell. Baroness Gardner of Parkes reminded the Lords that Mr. Campbell was “convicted at the Old Bailey in 1978 for an offence under Section 2 of the Official Secrets Act” for his

¹⁶⁴ THCR 2/6/2/104, “Liaison Committee Meeting: Presentation of the Government’s Nuclear Policy (Defence),” October 14, 1982.

¹⁶⁵ TNA: HO 322/997, “Minister of State Douglas Hurd to Chief Editor Charles Douglas-Home,” December 6, 1983.

previous publications, and suggested that his latest works be promptly ignored as the work of a charlatan, and credited him with convincing the GLC to carry “out no civil defence planning whatsoever”.¹⁶⁶

Impressively, Campbell’s infamous crusade against Protect and Survive began before the programme was even published. On February 11 1980, Home Secretary Whitelaw discussed Protect and Survive in Parliament and claimed “most houses offer reasonable protection against [fallout and] can be substantially improved by a series of quite simple do-it-yourself measures”.¹⁶⁷ In a multipage polemic against Protect and Survive, Campbell referred to the Home Secretary’s statement as one of the “biggest lies in modern history” and an ultimate deceit disguised as war preparation.¹⁶⁸

In 1980, the Home Office allowed press to view maps and scenarios for the upcoming MOD exercise titled Square Leg. Campbell reported this as evidence that the Government knew precisely where the bombs would fall and all claims otherwise, such as in the “absurd pamphlet” Protect and Survive, were “intentionally dishonest and misleading”. “Art treasures” were said to “take precedence over city dwellers - who the government does *not* intend to survive”. To Duncan, the scenario used in Square Leg demonstrated “the doctrines of Protect and Survive to be corrupt ... explicit deceit [and a] cynical writing off of the urban civil population”.¹⁶⁹ The exercise was said to have revealed the Government’s malevolent post-attack schemes including roadside execution courts and internment of subversives and “disgruntled minorities” who ought to have known better and obeyed Protect and Survive. Furthermore, Campbell reported that “the

¹⁶⁶ Baroness Gardner of Parkes. *HoL Deb*, 6 Feb 1985, Vol. 459, Col. 1131.

¹⁶⁷ Home Secretary Whitelaw. *HoC Deb*, 11 Feb 1980, Vol. 978, Col. 413.

¹⁶⁸ Incorrectly stated as February 12th in the article.

¹⁶⁹ Campbell, “Preview of World War III,” 1980.

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concept of triage has scarcely been used - or even thought about - since the bloodshed of the Somme” would be revived to manage overwhelmed trauma centres.¹⁷⁰

Campbell famously referred to the Protect and Survive video segments as an “utterly dishonest propaganda film”. “Protect and Survive” was said to be the carrot while “the stick [was] provided by the preparations” in Home Office Circulars for civilian containment. “Defence strategists” were said to be in agreement that “civil defence [was] used as a device to sell nuclear weapons and the deterrent to the public”.¹⁷¹ When discussing “the fruitcake Right” and their civil defence agenda, Campbell accused “Maggie” of attempting to install a US-like New Right in Parliament.¹⁷²

In 1982, to promote the release of his book *War Plan UK*, Campbell published a series of articles in the *New Statesman* regarding Protect and Survive. Campbell was most excited by the removal of Protect and Survive content from an updated MOD exercise stating, “the most striking alteration between successive drafts concerned the much-derided official booklet, Protect and Survive. The title is now so embarrassing to the Home Office that it was deleted from the second draft”.¹⁷³ In a following article, Campbell reported with great enthusiasm his discovery of the “Maggiebunker”, nicknamed Corsham, on Old Shaft Road in Hawthorn. The bunker was to be the hub of British post-attack defence and its largest, deepest shelter. The previous Home Office mention that Ministers would “be at their desks” during an attack was said to have been “pure deception”. In actuality, the “desks [for the] privileged few” were below ground. As reported in *The Times*, Prime Minister Thatcher was known for insisting that her

¹⁷⁰ Campbell, “World War III.” (This was perhaps a misunderstanding, or an attempt to shock the reader, as triage was/is commonly used in medical emergencies).

¹⁷¹ Duncan Campbell, “Death Trap for City Dwellers,” *New Statesman*; London, September 25, 1981.

¹⁷² Duncan Campbell, “The Fruitcake Right,” *New Statesman*; London, March 12, 1982.

¹⁷³ Duncan Campbell, “Hard Luck at Hard Rock,” *New Statesman*; London, September 17, 1982.

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Ministers (and herself) take up their actual roles in civil defence exercises. To Campbell that meant “Mrs. Thatcher had been true to her Iron Maiden image by insisting on playing her own role. *The Times* has reported on the enthusiasm with which Mrs. Thatcher left Downing Street for the ‘Maggiebunker’”. “For those not qualifying” for the bunker, Campbell informed the reader, “all that [would be] left [was] the lunacy of Protect and Survive”.¹⁷⁴

Baroness Gardner of Parkes doubted Duncan Campbell’s claim of “five years’ research for his 500-page anti-civil defence book called *War Plan UK*”.¹⁷⁵ Nonetheless, the book remains an impressive and referential volume on Protect and Survive. In London Council, a motion was passed that recommend a copy of *War Plan UK* be purchased for each of the 92 members at a cost of £6.95 each. Their Public Services and Fire and Brigade Advisor’s book was said to “assist [them] in the performance of their duties under” current civil defence regulations. Campbell, it seemed, provided the information that the Home Office refused.¹⁷⁶

War Plan UK soon caught the attention of F6 Director JA Howard. Director Howard complained that in the court of public opinion, the Government had yet to counter the propaganda and “substantial” impact of Campbell’s book.¹⁷⁷ In their equally expansive rebuttal, *War Plan UK*’s thesis was summarized as: “civil defence [was] a charade,” created entirely for the security of bureaucrats and the machinery of government in war.¹⁷⁸ While Protect and Survive was called “the ultimate exercise of Twentieth Century marketing skills”, Campbell’s *War Plan UK* was certainly no slouch.¹⁷⁹ as his book boasted, “*War Plan UK* reveals where the

¹⁷⁴ Duncan Campbell, “Maggie’s Bunker,” *New Statesman; London*, September 24, 1982. Duncan Campbell, “Figures of Death,” *New Statesman; London*, October 1, 1982.

¹⁷⁵ Baroness Gardner of Parkes. *HoL Deb*, 6 Feb 1985, Vol. 459, Col. 1131.

¹⁷⁶ LMA: GLC/RA/COOS/02/025, “Concurrent Report by the Solicitor to the Council on War Plan UK,” May 18, 1983.

¹⁷⁷ TNA: HO 322/1024, “Proposed Film on Civil Defence,” April 11, 1983.

¹⁷⁸ TNA: HO 322/1028, *Civil Defence: The Basic Facts*, 1983.

¹⁷⁹ Campbell, *War Plan UK* (1982). Pg. 150.

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privileged few will go: full details of hundreds of bunkers and who will use them”.¹⁸⁰ Inside, the reader would be rewarded with shocking truths: the Home Office expected the British public to “obligingly behave like a group of imbecilic, thoroughly disciplined sheep”. Campbell’s “principle objection” to Protect and Survive was that it simply would not work.¹⁸¹

Campbell also discussed his theory of the great fraud of civil defence. Having civil defence, it was said, indicated that a government believed deterrence might fail and thus, there was a need to show the public they were considered. there was no civil defence, then the public would grasp that they were defenceless and would object to becoming a nuclear target. Thus, Protect and Survive was created, with “techniques which are simple, policies which are cheap and easy to implement, and yet somehow are effective and save lives”. Now, the Home Office have convinced the public they were protected, while encouraging them to not focus too hard on what they were being protected against. It was the new “emperor’s clothes”.¹⁸²

It was also uncovered by Campbell that even within the Government, Minister’s knew of Protect and Survive’s inadequacy and attempted to prevent publication. Campbell discussed the tale of JA Hibbert, leader of the Devon Emergency Volunteers Civil Defence Organization, who, in 1977, implored Home Secretary Whitelaw not to publish Protect and Survive as it was grossly “ineffective and misleading”. Hibbert exclaimed to deaf ears that Protect and Survive’s advice amounted to “huddling under a ramshackle collection of tabletops and sandbags”.¹⁸³

Conspiracies abounded as Campbell revealed Home Office documents that emphasized a need for covert measures to shore up supplies during a crisis, without conflicting “with Protect

¹⁸⁰ Campbell, *War Plan UK*. Back cover.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid*, pg. 155.

¹⁸² *Ibid*, pg. 443-444.

¹⁸³ *Ibid*, pg. 169-170.

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and Survive regarding sandbagging, fourteen days’ supply of food, etc...”.¹⁸⁴ Campbell reused his carrot-stick metaphor from *New Statesman*, finding it the perfect summation of Conservative policies. Protect and Survive was a mixture of “carrots, sticks, and keeping-in-ignorance”. The carrot was the programme’s advice to stay where one would be protected, in one’s home. The stick was the “threat” that those self-evacuating may find that their homes had been commandeered by the Local Authority to billet other evacuees Campbell added that this was an outright lie and that the Home Office had never encouraged Local Authorities to survey suitable homes before an attack. This was false as by 1983 there had been many attempts by the Home Office to encourage stubborn Local Authorities to survey their districts for suitable shelters.¹⁸⁵ Campbell inadvertently corrected himself in later chapters referring to *Home Office Circular ESI/81* which also encouraged Local Authorities to survey their districts.¹⁸⁶

In his examination, Campbell had even obtained a 1976 draft copy of Protect and Survive and noted that little was changed except the draft had “even more extraordinary idiocies that its successor”. In this case referring to the suggestions to cover shelters with pillows and mattresses (which provide almost no PF) instead of the bags of earth. Grudgingly, this led Campbell to admit that “some of the underlying assumptions of Protect and Survive were sound”. This included the increased PF values which provided “an enormous difference” when it came to fallout casualties. *War Plan UK* also contained what was likely the only compliment Campbell had ever paid to Protect and Survive, “for people living in rural areas ... Protect and Survive helps”. The compliment was a change of pace, if a bit lost amongst the 500 pages of accusations

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid*, pg. 160.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid*, pg. 153.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid*, pg. 465.

and contempt for the programme, such as saying that millions of people would be “killed by Protect and Survive”.¹⁸⁷

In general, the book’s figures on post-attack survival were abysmal. Campbell recalled a letter from Duncan Buttery that a post-attack Britain would be hard pressed for oil, and the likely attack of the North Sea refineries would require at least 10 years to rebuild. The early drafts of Protect and Survive also suggested that only those “over 35” leave shelter for repairs. Campbell labeled the suggestion the worst example of “cynicism in Protect and Survive’s glib advice”.¹⁸⁸

Campbell’s post-attack landscape continued to deteriorate. SAB advisors theorized there would be many “Z zones” following an attack: zones where homes would receive lethal doses of fallout, even while adhering to Protect and Survive.¹⁸⁹ At the 14-day mark, those within the Z zones, who Campbell referred to as “zombies”, would emerge gravely ill, perhaps moribund walking radiation casualties, and would not receive any medical treatment. One of the most terrifying images Campbell had ever created, and likely effective at converting many readers into unilateralists.¹⁹⁰

EP Thompson

Duncan Campbell may have written the most Protect and Survive related content, but EP Thompson is typically the writer most associated with the programme. Edward Palmer Thompson was a Second World War veteran and committed socialist. Thompson became a prolific British historian who had an equally prolific career as a unilateralist. Thompson worked

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid*, pg. 150.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid*, pg. 76.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid*, pg. 61-68.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid*, pg. 73.

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alongside the CND, to the extent that he helped create END, the European Nuclear Disarmament. Where once he was acclaimed for his work on the history of society, he is remembered for his grander thoughts on the future of society. An informal *Times* poll ranked Thompson as the second most influential postwar British intellectual, behind fellow historian, AJP Taylor.¹⁹¹

Thompson was known for his biting criticisms of his targets, where he became adept at very gracefully skewering opponents. Thompson had a gift for “elegant evisceration”, allowing him to craft an artful legacy of ad hominem attacks. After his seminal work, *The Making of the English Working Class*, Thompson became deeply involved with nuclear peace activists, becoming “the most visible, feisty and eloquent spokesman of the European peace movement”.¹⁹²

The career Thompson crafted as a nuclear naysayer was quite astounding, to the point that the *Times* referred to Thompson as the “man who has done more than anyone else to rouse the national conscience over nuclear weapons”.¹⁹³ It was a reputation he earned for his gift of the written word, even if his prognostications about the imminent catastrophic end to the Cold War were, fortunately, incorrect. Before the 1983 General Election, Thompson was quoted stating, “it would be a surprise if Margaret Thatcher remains in office”. Thompson also claimed, “the Cruise missiles won’t be allowed in Britain, there will be roadblocks and massive demonstrations if the Tory government tries to bring them in”. Thompson played his part well, doing little to dissuade stereotypes, Thompson looked every inch the bourgeoisie socialist academic that the mind

¹⁹¹ Bryan D. Palmer, *E.P. Thompson: Objections and Oppositions* (London, England: Verso, 1994), 142.

¹⁹² Barnett, “A Frightening Security,” *The New York Times*, November 14, 1982.

¹⁹³ Ian Bradley, “The Great Crusade Gets under Way,” *The Times*, October 25, 1980.

conjured when thinking of a CND unilateralist, aptly described as a “scruffy intellectual ... living in baronial comfort” on his expansive estate.¹⁹⁴

Thompson made his name with *Working Class*, but his work on Protect and Survive made his name throughout the disarmament community and beyond. Thompson became known for his thoughts on Cold War civilization, that it had become “a sham” and he fiercely resented American “science-fiction escapism and technological pride”.¹⁹⁵ The historian had developed a pessimistic view on the fate of the planet with the increasing tensions of the Cold War in the 1980s. Protect and Survive particularly inspired resentment from Thompson who said, “the futilities of Protect and Survive” were part of erosion of the democratic process and the “oiling of the machinery of national emergency”.¹⁹⁶ It was this resentment which led Thompson to publish his first work on Protect and Survive, which elevated him from a “private citizen and historian into being a famous (or infamous) public person”.¹⁹⁷

It was the 1980 publication of his academic dismantling of Protect and Survive, caustically titled *Protest and Survive*, that connected Thompson to the programme more than any other writer (Figure 41). *Protest* was incredibly successful, both in its literary objectives and commercially, selling over 50,000 copies in its first year. Thompson’s “polemic *Protest and Survive*, pour[ed] ... unrivalled scorn” onto Protect and Survive through thoughtful satire and compelling use of the “bunkers for bureaucrats” trope.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁴ Tim McGirk, “E. Thompson: Tom Paine of Europe’s Antinuclear Protest,” *The Christian Science Monitor*, July 8, 1982.

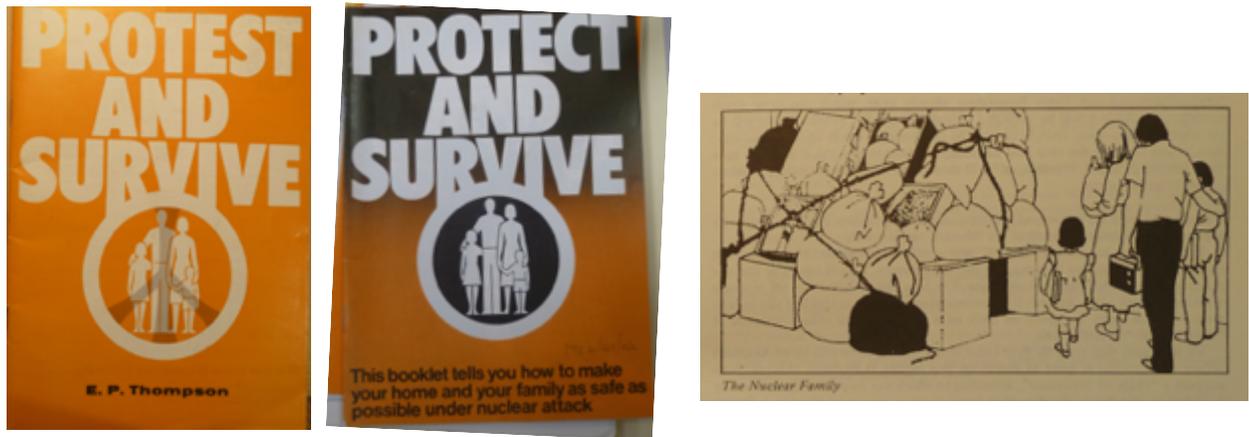
¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁶ Edward Thompson, “Notes on Exterminism, the Last Stage of Civilization,” *New Left Review*, no. 121 (May 1, 1980): 3–31. Pg. 14.

¹⁹⁷ Palmer, *E.P. Thompson*, 132.

¹⁹⁸ Lipsey, “What Do We Think about the Nuclear Threat?,” 1980.

Figure 41 The Art of Satire: Cover and inside graphic from *Protest and Survive* and cover of *Protect and Survive* (1980).



Thompson’s pages were composed of scathing ripostes to *Protect and Survive* and Margaret Thatcher’s civil defence initiatives. *Protest* received tremendous acclaim, even being referred to as a 1980s equivalent of Thomas Paine’s Revolutionary War treatise, *Common Sense*.¹⁹⁹

It was claimed by one journalist that Thompson decided to turn his focus onto *Protect and Survive* when he picked up the pamphlet and read its caution “to clean radioactive dust-off frogs before eating them”. Afterwards, he was suitably “outraged [and] fired back” in the form of *Protest and Survive*. This is, of course, entirely untrue as there were no mentions of frogs in *Protect and Survive*. The frog advice had become something of an urban legend which was frequently attributed to *Protect and Survive*. In actuality the frog notice was from a *Times* piece, which itself was quoting and mocking a pamphlet by a tiny survivalist group.²⁰⁰

Protest began with a rebuke and reprint of a letter in the *Times* from M.E. Howard, Chichele Professor of the History of War at Oxford. Before the publication of *Protect and Survive*, Howard believed Cruise would make the UK a larger target, so much so that a robust

¹⁹⁹ McGirk, “E. Thompson.”

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

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civil defence programme was needed, one that was “not covert and concealed”, to be the foundation of deterrence. Thompson agreed that Cruise made the UK a bigger target but vigorously disagreed that civil defence was required to ensure that whatever minimal population was required to send out a retaliatory strike would survive. To Thompson, the “deep structure of the Cold War [was] mutual fear”.²⁰¹

Protest maintained that there was no effective form of nuclear civil defence and that the concept of deterrence was a “pipe dream”. The politicians would abscond to their “deep hidey holes” while the rest of Britain would be provided Protect and Survive. The programme was said to offer some protection for those outside the blast radius, although those within would be graphically incinerated. Survivors would emerge to devastation beyond contemplation, to such an extent that even if the majority of the Island had been “saved” underground, Thompson was “uncertain” why they would be saved.²⁰²

This outcome was the reason for “Whitehall’s reluctance” to publish Protect and Survive. “The people of this country have been made dull and stupid by a diet of Official Information” argued Thompson, clearly resentful of programme supporters. In closing, Thompson predicted there would be a “civil defence bombardment ... at the next international crisis”, through which the Home Office would control information, restrain dissidents, and give nigh unlimited power to the Government. The compelling words of the text informed the reader that, “we must protest if we are to survive. Protest is the only realistic form of civil defence”.²⁰³

After the success of *Protest*, Thompson was invited to deliver the prestigious 1981 Dimbleby Lecture on the BBC, typically viewed by millions. However, after learning of the

²⁰¹ Thompson, “Protest and Survive,” 1980, 44.

²⁰² *Ibid*, pg. 16.

²⁰³ *Ibid*, pg. 31.

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unilateralist content of his lecture, the BBC withdrew the invitation, selected a pro-nuclear speaker, and transferred the entire event to radio.²⁰⁴ BBC Director-General Sir Ian Trethowan was rumoured to have “pleaded” with Thompson to not deliver his lecture, fearing the controversy it would bring to the network. A few months later, Thompson delivered a lecture in NFZ Worcester City’s Guildhall titled “NOT the Dimpleby Lecture”. Following the lecture, it was printed as a pamphlet titled *Beyond the Cold War: NOT the Dimpleby Lecture*. This too was then published in an edited book titled *Beyond the Cold War: A New Approach to the Arms Race and Nuclear Annihilation*.²⁰⁵

The lecture was a stirring work of unilateralism and global politics. The essay was built upon the simple thesis that Europe had been trapped into a Cold War between two superpowers, both of whom were incentivized to perpetuate the war and Europe’s split status. The Cold War would never end until the people of Europe realized they were “a spiritually united continent ... distinct from American commercialism and Russian communism” and cast out their weapons of atomic destruction.²⁰⁶ The UK could do their part by putting a stop to “the oiling of the machinery of national emergency, the contingency planning of the Cabinet Office [and] the futilities of Protect and Survive”.²⁰⁷

The attempt to muffle Thompson’s Dimpleby Lecture likely resulted in significantly more exposure than it ever would have achieved had it actually been presented. CND stated they were “very disturbed” by the BBC decision to ban the lecture and accused them of censorship.²⁰⁸ Conversely, others were disappointed by the contents of the lecture, considering it “shallow,

²⁰⁴ Moyra Grant, *The British Media* (London, England: Comedia, 1984), 17.

²⁰⁵ Palmer, *E.P. Thompson*, 133.

²⁰⁶ Barnet, “A Frightening Security,” 1982.

²⁰⁷ Edward Palmer Thompson, *Beyond the Cold War: A New Approach to the Arms Race and Nuclear Annihilation* (Pantheon Books, 1982), 68.

²⁰⁸ CND Add 2/1, “CND Annual Conference 1981 - Resolutions,” November 13, 1981.

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unanalytical, often ill-informed and full of ad hominem attacks”.²⁰⁹ When Thompson spoke at the British Association for the Advancement of Science Conference in 1981, he was introduced as “not-the-Dimbleby-lecturer”. There Thompson delivered an effective lecture which argued that the deterrent was untenable as it only postponed war by making the weapons catastrophic, rather than addressing the political tensions that would start a war.²¹⁰

Thompson’s next big work was *The Defence of Britain*, a direct sequel to *Protect and Survive*, published in the midst of the 1983 General Election. *Defence* was likened to a 19th Century political treatise “reminiscent of Cobbett”.²¹¹ This time around, Thompson had little to say on Protect and Survive directly, though he was fully prepared to lecture upon the Tory Government, unilateralism, the upcoming election, the Falklands War, and peace on Earth. Thompson expressed his contempt for Prime Minister Thatcher and Secretary Heseltine (who was only hired to “defend [the] administration against CND”), and his admiration for Mr. Foot poetically. Foot was the only politician with a conscience and thus would receive no media attention, while the Tories did not even have a disarmament plan for him to criticize.²¹²

Many events had transpired since Thompson published *Protect*, and the British public were now aware of what the Armageddon of nuclear war would bring. The Government attempted to “tranquelize the public mind” with Protect and Survive and civil defence, it was hoped they now knew better. Local Authorities had declared themselves NFZs and saved taxpayer “money for more useful purposes”. The BMA Report had proven the fraud of civil defence and “even Mr. Heseltine [would not] be able to dismiss the BMA as a bunch of pro-

²⁰⁹ Andrew J. Pierre, review of *Review of Beyond the Cold War: A New Approach to the Arms Race and Nuclear Annihilation*, by E. P. Thompson, *Foreign Affairs* 61, no. 2 (1982): 462–462.

²¹⁰ Timmins, “Can the CND Stay Non-Violent?,” *The Times*, March 9, 1983.

²¹¹ Palmer, *E.P. Thompson*, 133.

²¹² Thompson, *The Defence of Britain*, 17.

soviet Marxists”. All that was left was for the public to vote in Labour, forbid Cruise, and entirely exit the nuclear arms race.²¹³

Thompson had accomplished a great deal after his unilateralist essays of 1980. He published many more well-received essays and books, such as his edited book *Prospectus of a Habitable Planet* in 1987. They carried on the same way, lamenting the Tories and their voters, despising the state of British civil defence, and hoping for a nuclear-free exit in the near future. Before the 1983 General Election Thompson had predicted that within five years there was a 40% chance that a nuclear strike would lead to the Final War and a 40% chance the world would undergo a radical transformation that was unimaginable and give up nuclear weapons (what would happen with the other 20% was not mentioned). One thing was certain to Thompson: not a single Cruise missile would be allowed on UK soil. If their installation were attempted, it was to end with “internment camps for peace demonstrators”. While his predictions did not come to pass, the world did undergo the “cultural sea change” he had expected, and as the Cold War ended, Thompson remained the quintessential “political romantic”.²¹⁴

London After the Bomb

War Plan UK and E.P. Thompson had welcomed company on the Home Office list of agitations. During one F6 meeting it was lamentably announced that they had not produced any civil defence work nearly as “substantial” as *London After the Bomb* to win the hearts and minds of the nation. *London* was written by Open University lecturer Owen Greene in 1982. Greene also contributed to *Doomsday* and *Nuclear Winter*, though *London* was his most influential book.

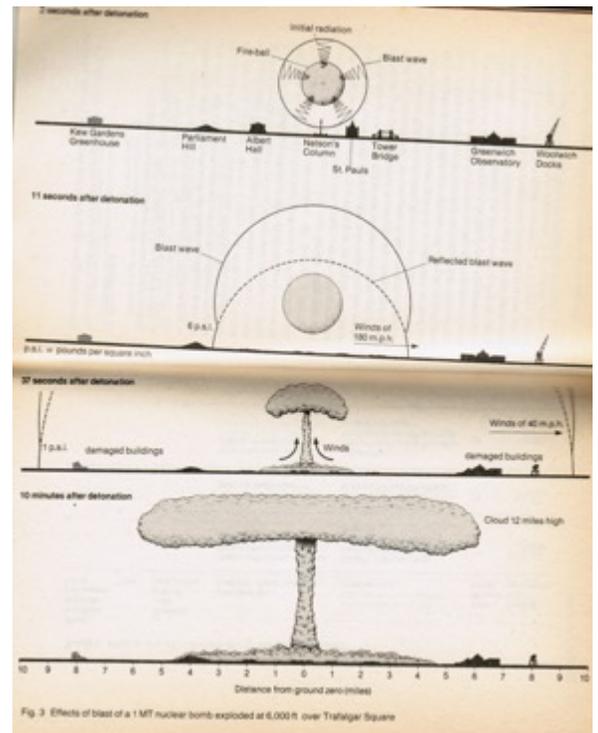
²¹³ Ibid, pg. 16.

²¹⁴ Brad Pokorny, “He Sees Hope for a ‘no’ to War,” *Boston Globe* (1960-1988); *Boston, Mass.*, May 5, 1983.

While the updated SANA casualty figures were often cited in academic works, *London* was the first to introduce the computer models to the commercial market (Figure 42).²¹⁵

After its publication, Imperial College physicist and coordinator for *London*, Dr. Philip Webber, wrote to Minister of State Patrick Mayhew to claim that Protect and Survive was deliberately misleading the public as to the true horrors of nuclear. Dr. Webber also inquired as to why it had seemingly taken the publication of *London* and the popularization of the new casualty figures for the Home Office to finally initiate a review of their own figures. Expressing the frustration that *London* had caused them, F6 Director JA Howard replied that “a review was well under way [long before] your book” was published.²¹⁶

Figure 42 Too Close: *London After the Bomb* centres their map on Nelson’s Column instead of the BMA (Fig. 38)



F6, unsurprisingly, disagreed with the numbers produced by the SANA study, to the extent that they declined to estimate any casualty figures for the Square Leg exercise, fearing whatever number they put would be used as propaganda against them. The SRDB (formerly SAB) also disagreed with the figures from *London*, believing they were “too high”, particularly in the regard of casualties from fallout as adherence to Protect and Survive would greater lower those numbers.²¹⁷

²¹⁵ TNA: HO 322/1024, “Proposed Film on Civil Defence,” April 12, 1983.

²¹⁶ TNA: HO 322/1027, “JA Howard to Dr. Philip Webber, Imperial College,” March 15, 1983.

²¹⁷ TNA: HO 322/1027, “Home Office SRDB Report on BMA ‘Medical Effects of Nuclear War,’” April 8, 1983.

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Aside from the debate on casualty figures, *London* was a commercial success due to the fact that its contents were simple, clear and effective, in much the same manner that Protect and Survive was intended. *London* had two main objectives, the first was to evidence that the higher SANA casualty figures were more accurate than the Home Office calculations. The SANA numbers were based upon recent computer models and data from the US Office of Technology Assessment (OTA), roughly analogous to the SRDB. The second objective was the disreputation of Protect and Survive as helpful advice due to its overestimation of its efficacy.

London After the Bomb began by stating it was written “in response to official publicity,” Protect and Survive. The programme was said to be part of a resurgence of civil defence preparations, dating back to the secret development of Protect and Survive by the Home Office in the 1970s.²¹⁸ All civil defence work was said to be fraudulent as the Sandys’ Defence White Paper of 1957 stated that there was no effective protection from nuclear weapons. Yet, in 1982, the Home Office asserted that the protection afforded from Protect and Survive was both “practical and effective”.²¹⁹

The effectiveness of Protect and Survive by Greene was argued to be a product of overoptimistic casualty figures which the Home Office arrived at through five principle misassumptions: underestimating the extent of blast damage, underestimating blast casualties, overestimating the average PF of British houses, not considering the negative effects of blast damage to PF levels, and “glossing over” the most extreme obstacles to survivors. The Home Office had “severely underestimated” the effects of a nuclear strike on London, resulting in a divergence of casualty figures which led Greene to some significant accusations.²²⁰

²¹⁸ Ibid, pg. 81.

²¹⁹ Greene, *London After the Bomb*, 3.

²²⁰ Ibid.

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Protect and Survive shelters were said to have been able to withstand a blast pressure of 1.5psi. Using these figures, and the scenario suggested in the Square Leg exercise, the outer rings of blast damage would create 1-2psi, collapsing over 85% of Protect and Survive shelters in the GLC. Continuing to use these figures, the Home Office failed to consider damaged roofs and windows and suggested a PF of 20 in periphery zones whereas Greene contended the resulting PF would likely be closer to 5-10.²²¹

In earlier Home Office circulars, the estimations were shown to be more in line with the OTA calculations, yet these figures changed by the time Protect and Survive was published. To Greene this indicated some willful ignorance at best, or unbridled treachery at worst. “Whatever the reasons” for Protect and Survive to forge casualty figures, the result was said to be the appearance that war was “more survivable than it really would be”. Worse still, to Greene, the “increasingly vigorous promotion” of Protect and Survive came at a time when US Cruise missiles were close to being deployed in Great Britain. This was a clear insinuation that Protect and Survive was created to dupe the public into security, allowing Cruise to be installed without protest.²²²

Evacuation and PF values would be of little importance given the considerable lengths *London* went to in describing the horrific hopelessness of post-attack life. Home Office figures calculated a one-year post-strike survival rate of 75% given adherence to Protect and Survive. Greene suggested that 50% of the population would have been wiped out in the initial blast alone. Combining this figure with the higher fallout casualty rates in *London*, Greene would have

²²¹ *Ibid*, pg. 44-46.

²²² *Ibid*, pg. 99-100.

suggested 75% as casualties one year after strike. Then, Greene contended survivors would be met with martial law, forced labour, unelected leaders and vanished human rights.²²³

To arrive at this dystopia, Britons would first have to survive their shelters. *London* catalogued a terrifying list of morbid endurances one would face using Protect and Survive. Unadvertised likelihoods included minor to major injuries going untreated with constant cramped positions, impossible cleanliness and a radiation lowered immune system. All these torments would be amplified by the probable miasma of vomit and human waste. Psychological stress, terror, depression, disorientation, paranoia and claustrophobia were all expected to be present. Smaller bodies are more susceptible to radiation sickness, creating a likelihood that parents would have watched their children pass and would be unable to move them out of the shelter for several days. Provided the shelter period was not interrupted by looters. Given these predictions, it was easy to understand why Greene chose to judge Protect and Survive as a “worthless collection of faulty assumptions [only fit for] delaying the inevitable a few miserable weeks”.²²⁴

As with other Protect and Survive opponents, Greene did an effective job of providing visceral imagery of the programme’s lacking efficacy. Throughout *London*, Protect and Survive was said to promote “individual survival” though it was never linked to neoliberalism. It was instead seen as a selfish competition to succeed where one’s neighbours failed. The government was in essence a non-entity, it was the homeowner’s trial to prepare their space and survive as a compact unit, not in grouped communities, likely contributing to the acrimony Protect and Survive accumulated from Marxist academics. All the while a bureaucratic elite would have carried on deep belowground and provided advice “plagued with difficulties” to the rest of the

²²³ Ibid, pg. 69.

²²⁴ Ibid, pg. 55-56.

populace. Given all this, there was little wonder how the “widespread lack of confidence” for Protect and Survive came to be.²²⁵

Nuclear winter had become the fashionable new issue of 1984 amongst many academics, particularly as it was provided by their own research. The Home Office took the theory seriously, spending significantly for research and focusing SRDB staff towards an answer.²²⁶

By 1985, Greene codified the theories into a more rounded understanding of the nuclear winter concept in his book, *Nuclear Winter: The Evidence and the Risks*. Greene was hardly optimistic and advocated that even small detonations would lead to a catastrophic nuclear winter. Therefore, Greene concluded, civil defence truly was without merit as nuclear winter would envelope the entire globe regardless of targets. The CND were quick to accept the book, citing its findings in many promotional materials and adding it to their catalogue of nuclear non-fiction.²²⁷

The Psychological Aspects of Nuclear War was an interesting take on nuclear weapons and civil defence, considering the tremendous toll nuclear war would take on the psyche. Highlighting other works on bomb effects by other academics such as Openshaw, Steadman and Greene, Thompson argued that after oil, gas, mining, and electricity ceased immediately following an attack, the majority of the population would be psychologically incapable to function. Furthermore, the destruction of families, institutions, landmarks, and crops from nuclear winter would have caused unrecoverable “cultural damage” that would have doomed civilization.²²⁸ Thompson also entered the Protect and Survive debate, and repeated many earlier critiques, such as the assumption that there would be a single strike alone. The capacity of the

²²⁵ Ibid, pg. 84-85.

²²⁶ LMA: GLC/RA/COOS/02/024/003, “Draft GLC Analysis of Consolidated Home Office Circular ES2/1984,” October 11, 1984, 1.

²²⁷ Owen Greene, Ian Percival, and Irene Ridge, *Nuclear Winter: The Evidence and the Risks* (Polity Press, 1985).

²²⁸ James A. Thompson, *Psychological Aspects of Nuclear War*, 1st ed. (Chichester ; Toronto: British Psychological Society and JWiley, 1985), 5.

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society that emerged from the two-week shelter period was said to be unclear. The stress and shock of those two weeks without any communications to further isolate would have “severely increased psychological stress”.²²⁹

Nuclear War – Facts on Survival was another book in which Protect and Survive was argued to only assist a small portion of Britons on the periphery of blast zones. Ultimately, civil defence was indeed a scam and civil defence was said to make nuclear war more likely as it was “far cheaper to attack than to defend in nuclear war”.²³⁰ Goodwin then objected to the lack of advice beyond the fortnight shelter period. Interestingly, the book then provided a thought experiment on a fictional Jackson family from Birmingham. As in *Threads*, the Jacksons attempted to survive a nuclear attack using Protect and Survive. The Jacksons did not fare well. They encountered constant failures, such as broken windows which they attempted to block with wardrobes and furniture. After several pages of confusion and constant horror, the Jacksons “broke down with nervous exhaustion, almost giving up the seemingly impossible task of keeping the fallout as far away as possible”.²³¹ While Protect and Survive was said to “contain useful, potentially lifesaving information”, the “great deal of criticism” it received was accurate.²³² In the end, Goodwin dismissed the Jackson’s tale as: the most “likely possibility is that they would die, crushed flat by a pile of bricks while filling the bath” or rushing through other errands of Protect and Survive.²³³

²²⁹ Ibid, pg. 33.

²³⁰ Peter Goodwin, *Nuclear War, the Facts on Our Survival* (New York, N.Y.: Rutledge Press, 1981), 73.

²³¹ Ibid, pg. 103.

²³² Ibid, pg. 76.

²³³ Ibid, pg. 112-113.

The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament

When it came to Protect and Survive criticism, all roads led to the CND. No public organization expended greater energy to damage the reputation of Protect and Survive than the CND (as Duncan Campbell does not count as an organization). CND was the lynchpin that held together all the disparate members of the alliance against Protect and Survive, which provided CND an easy target for all their anti-nuclear efforts. Thanks to the release of Protect and Survive, CND membership rocketed above 100,000, and enabled them to hold massive rallies and officially allied themselves with the Labour Party. With all this momentum however, the Conservative still won a resounding victory. However, the popularity of CND outside already leftist circles has been consistently over estimated. It is clear for all to see, CND accomplished tremendous events, their enrollment skyrocketed, and they seemed to be of the people, however they may have been a vocal minority all along.

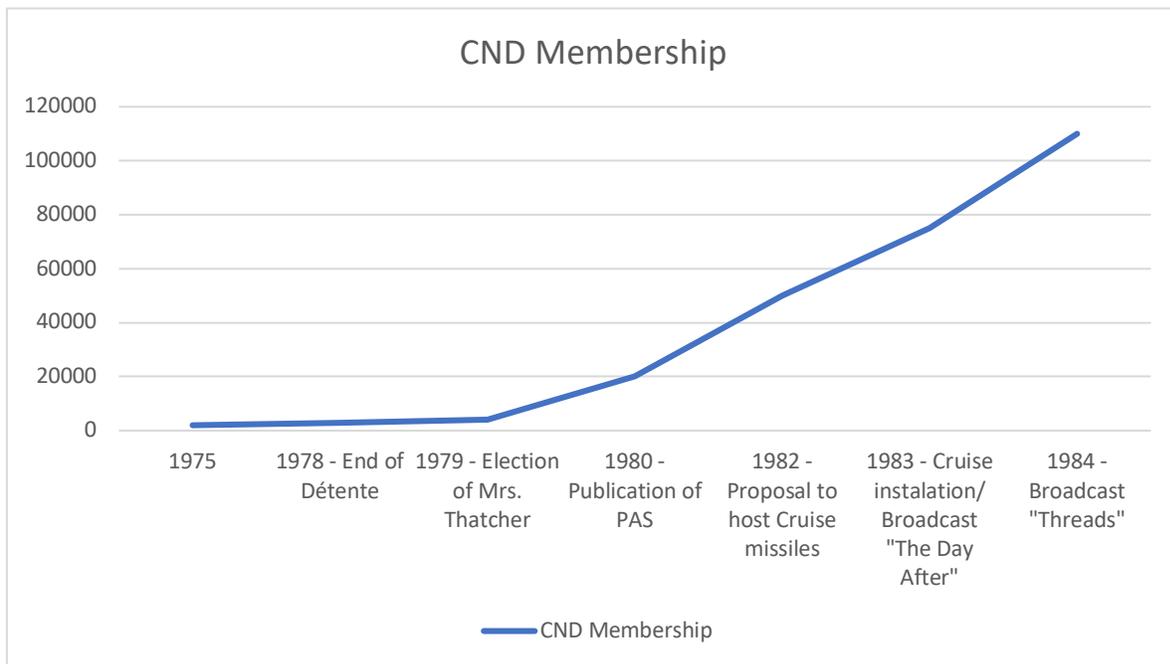
When considering their status with the Left, CND were a fundamental component of 1980s British politics. However, their perceived national popularity may have been a product of positive feedback. CND actions were often described This insulation from reality becomes prominent in publications such as the *New Statesman* which compared to the centrist coverage in *The Times*. The anti-nuclear/anti-Protect and Survive CND was a unifying cause for the Left, though they enjoyed more of a lukewarm reception with the rest of Britons. While being CND meant being anti-deterrent, and being anti-deterrent meant being anti-Conservative, it did not mean being a Labour voter.

The CND dates back to 1955 when they created the “peace symbol” as their logo. Since then they led a focused crusade against nuclear weapons in Britain. Part of their longevity is ascribed

to their single topic focus, unilateral disarmament. While other left-leaning organizations were pulled in too many directions, CND remained steadfast. CND during the time of Protect and Survive was directed by Bruce Kent, a Catholic priest. Kent’s politics led him to resigning his priesthood in 1987 rather than avoid politicking in the General Election. Defence Secretary Michael Heseltine was always wary of Kent’s ability to inspire others and made him, and the CND, “the target of a special government pub relations campaign”. Kent directed CND during its enrollment surge of 1980, though he attributed the rush to “outside factors” rather than himself. Undoubtedly, one of the main factors was the Conservative release of Protect and Survive, a programme American journalist William Tuohy referred to as a “frightening primer” for survival in a nuclear war.²³⁴

Table 7: CND Membership and World Events

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²³⁴ William Tuohy, “Movement Trying to Make Disarmament an Election Issue: Priest Leads Britain’s Nuclear Opponents Incomplete Source,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 22, 1983.

²³⁵ Graph compiled by Joseph Buscemi based on data from: Thearle and Weinreich-Haste, “Ways of Dealing with the Nuclear Threat: Coping and Defence Among British Adolescents,” 1986.

CND was the unilateralist hub of the Cold War and the primary antagonist of Protect and Survive. The Home Office had endless memorandums regarding the latest CND initiatives and their damaging impact to nuclear public opinion. “The Local swing to the Left in May 1981,” argued F6 Director Howard, “and the damaging impact of the CND campaign against civil defence,” had eroded much of the Home Office efforts to establish civil defence in Britain. The Home Office decision to shift civil defence focus to conventional attacks and civil emergencies was likely an attempt to counter the successful CND campaigns which made Protect and Survive seem inept. Despite Conservative success, The Home Office conceded that “CND [had] seized the public relations initiative”.²³⁶

The CND resurgence of 1980 was meticulously cultivated by members who argued the Campaign needed to distance themselves from the unrealistic fringe, the “long hair weirdos” of the 1950s, and move into the “realism of the 1980s”. Part of this new image was an unabashed connection with Labour, academia, artists, and communists which they obtained through using *The Guardian* exclusively for interviews.²³⁷ One year after the release of Protect and Survive, CND had over 1000 groups across Britain, 300-400 new members per week, and had already outgrown the new spacious offices they had recently moved into.²³⁸

CND, it was noted in 1984, had the luxury of over 100,000 members and 50 full time staffers. The Campaign was said to be “winning the propaganda battle” by swaying the population despite Labour’s struggles. Conservatives claimed they had the harder road as they had to appeal to the public’s sense of “self-sacrifice” to support the deterrent. Until the end of the

²³⁶ TNA: HO 322/1019, “Relations Between Central Government and Local Authorities Discussion Paper - JA Howard F6 Division,” July 28, 1981.

²³⁷ MSS 181/3/3/22, “CND Advertising Plan,” February 1981.

²³⁸ CND Add 2/1, “CND Annual Conference 1981 - Resolutions,” 1981.

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Cold War, CND was a Conservative concern, seeming to weaken defence policy by appealing to the “emotional, excitable fringe”.²³⁹ To the outsider, CND and the alliance against Protect and Survive succeeded despite their status as “an extraordinary collection of bedfellows”.²⁴⁰

John Nott, Heseltine’s predecessor as Defence Secretary, wrote to Conservative MP Peter Emery and Margaret Thatcher via her private secretary Ian Gow.²⁴¹ Nott warned that the Government was losing “the information war” to CND and a dire need had developed to improve their civil defence reputation nationwide. CND were adept at manipulating media and popular culture. They had managed, warned Nott, to make a “misleading and unbalanced” film like *War Game* an effective propaganda tool despite the film being prohibited and the fact that “15 years after the film was made deterrence continued to maintain peace!”. Although Protect and Survive was concerned with “saving life and alleviating suffering,” the Government could not compete for attention with CND’s “hysterical public meetings and marches”.²⁴²

It was entirely true that CND was amazingly successful at organizing protests throughout the 1980s. One 1982 CND rally gathered 150,000 supporters. Conservative MP Peter Shipley attended the march and anthropologically reported back to the Party on the culture within CND. They were described as mostly young or families with young children. Despite their courtship with trade unions, CND was categorized as a “very middle-class movement” with a lack of visible minorities or tradesmen. The organization seemed to be composed of either rebellious youth, or stereotypical well-to-do academic socialists. Shipley summarized the crowd as, “archetypal *Guardian* reading parents”, eating granola while their children were made to watch a

²³⁹ AMES 2/1/104 File 2, “NCCD Summary of Recommendations for the Creation of Effective Civil Defence in the UK,” January 21, 1981.

²⁴⁰ Harding J. C., “Humane Rationale of Civil Defence,” *The Times*, January 6, 1981.

²⁴¹ Who was tragically assassinated in 1990.

²⁴² THCR 2/6/2/46, “John Nott, MOD, to Peter Emery,” March 2, 1981.

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Punch and Judy show with Regan and Thatcher as the puppets. They only seemed to be related by a common opposition to “civil defence,” perfectly evidencing the connecting force within the alliance against Protect and Survive.²⁴³

Peter Shipley was very keen to observe CND culture, and the following year he authored a report titled *The Peace Movement*. This time around, Shipley observed CND in similar circumstances at a tremendous rally in October 1983. The protest was claimed by CND to be “the largest numbers of marchers ever”, though Shipley remarked it did little to correct their “problem”. Shipley believed CND had “lost the public debate” when the Conservative Party won a lopsided victory in the recent General Election. Though CND memberships continued to rise into 1984, Shipley erroneously argued that they had allowed the public favour they had gathered “between 1980 and 1982 to evaporate”. The group looked weak, defeated, and leaders like Kinnock and Kent were now pushing for “a nuclear freeze rather than instant unilateralism”.

Dowdy middle-class socialists were being replaced by young “anarchists and punks” who Shipley predicted would only erode what was left of their public support through aggressive and violent protests.²⁴⁴ CND had always been known for their off-kilter protests. When protesting exercise Square Leg, 40 CND members lied on the ground outside Islington Town Hall, “moaning and shrieking” while a “policeman scratched his chin and a small dog went over to lick a face or two”. Two minutes later, they all popped up and shuffled off (Figure 43).²⁴⁵

The group was also known for its decades long camp-out at Greenham Commons MOD base. Home Secretary Brittan was worried about a large protest at Greenham over the 1983 Easter holiday. Brittan had the press in mind and wanted reassurance that local police could

²⁴³ THCR 2/6/2/40 part 2, “Conservative Research Department Memorandum,” June 7, 1982.

²⁴⁴ THCR 2/6/3/65, “The ‘Peace’ Movement - Peter Shipley,” October 27, 1983.

²⁴⁵ Peter Evans, “Exercise in Beating Bomb Starts with a Protest,” *The Times*, September 20, 1980. Accompanying photo in black and white below.

provide containment without resorting to the PR disaster of military police. The MOD even

Figure 43 Lie Down for Peace: CND protesters feign casualty outside Islington Town Hall. Sept 1980



maintained a list of

CND events that they often shared with police.²⁴⁶

The CND seemed to have a reputation for turning violent at moment's notice that was entirely undeserved. CND maintained an unblemished record of non-violence throughout their efforts. Non-violence had actually become a resolution within the organization, as leadership believed their opponents were waiting for a violent dust up to discredit CND. The most physical CND ever became was acting like their strings were just cut and flopping to the ground when policemen tried to carry them away. They were hardly the crack team of violent revolutionaries their opponents made them out to be. In fact, on one occasion a large CND group blocked the

²⁴⁶ TNA: HO 322/1021, "Nuclear Policy and Public Opinion," February 19, 1983.

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entrance to Greenham Common to stop the installation of Cruise missiles. Unbeknownst to them, while they sat peacefully through the night, the MOD had simply used the rear entrance.

Shenanigans, ranging from clever to irritating, were a surprisingly effective tool for CND publicity as it typically garnered them positive media attention, which was further embellished in left-leaning papers. The Government had little to challenge the “quite insidious CND propaganda”. When Home Secretary Whitelaw addressed attendees before the Torchlight VIII exercise, he declared that, above all else, the Government “must not underestimate the capacity of CND to cause mischief”.²⁴⁷

In 1984, CND “agents” clipped a hole in the wire fencing and snuck onto the grounds of the Hack Green SRHQ, outside Crewe. Security was so minimal that the mischief makers had ample time to raise a CND flag up the radio tower along with other banners, scrawl propaganda on the walls of the entrance, and jam one of the door locks with glue. No mention of the event turned up in the press.²⁴⁸ In 1988, Cheshire Constabulary, who were responsible for the security of Hack Green and had a hard-wired intruder alarm connection, passed along a leaflet to the Home Office. The leaflet had been found taped to the entrance at Hack Green with regards from “the Little Sisters”. Constabulary could not determine when, or how, they gained access, though there were no damages or disturbances found other than a single clipped link in perimeter fencing. As an interesting note, the Cheshire Constabulary despised the Hack Green security system, its false alarms, and being responsible for monitoring the bunker. The moment the Cold War seemed to have concluded, they wrote to F6 insisting they take back the keys and remove the alarm installation from the HQ as soon as possible.²⁴⁹

²⁴⁷ TNA: HO 322/986, “Draft: Speaking Notes for Home Secretary at Exercise Torchlight VIII,” February 1, 1982.

²⁴⁸ TNA: HO 322/995, “Note for File Re: Break-in at Premises and Associated Security Matters,” February 21, 1984.

²⁴⁹ TNA: HO 322/995, “Cheshire Constabulary to F6 Re: Regional Government Headquarters (RGHQ) 10.2 at Hack Green,” January 18, 1990.

The antics of CND might never have brought about disarmament, though it certainly earned them attention from some very high places. A Cabinet meeting with Prime Minister Thatcher in 1982 discussed the concern over CND’s rising public profile. Until that year, it was said that nuclear weapons were generally accepted by the British public as a deterrent and as NATO members. Now, it was said there was a growing ambivalence towards the deterrent, caused, specifically, by CND, their response to Protect and Survive, and their protests against the modernization of their defence with Cruise and Trident. It was decided that the Party could not sway the hardliners, the dyed-in-the-wool, socialist, academic, unilateralist type that made up the alliance against Protect and Survive. These CND types were younger, fiercely anti-American, and pacifists, very unThatcherite. Thus, the Conservatives would focus their efforts on courting those in the middle, the type of people who would “normally support Conservative defence policies” but had fears regarding Cruise or Protect and Survive.²⁵⁰ UKWMO Director Raymond Morris had serious concerns regarding the remarkable success of CND efforts to capture public attention and subverting the desired image of Protect and Survive. Counter measures were urgently needed, and the Government felt they could turn the tide through factual information that CND was obfuscating.²⁵¹

Thus, efforts were made, for quite some time, to fight back and gain public favour through information. The National Council for Civil Defence chair wrote to the *Times* to argue that CND were entirely wrong in their civil defence beliefs. Their biggest fallacy was that Britain required no civil defence at all, even if they unilaterally disarmed. “In an increasingly dangerous” world, it was noted, civil defence was vital to protect civilians and CND was steering

²⁵⁰ THCR 2/6/2/104, “Note of Liaison Committee Meeting Held in No 10 Downing Street on Wednesday, 24 November 1982,” November 24, 1982.

²⁵¹ TNA: HO 322/1024, “Note of Meeting on 21 September at Home Office Public Relations Branch,” September 23, 1982.

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Britain into “the disarmament trap” that the nation fell into during the 1930s. Back then, “equally sincere proponents of peace argued that Nazis” had no aggressive intentions and rearming would only provoke them further.²⁵²

Still, the Conservatives were losing ground to CND via their disciplined and organized methods of public engagement. Pamphlets and leaflets were a useful tool for CND, providing facts from their point of view, with time for the reader to re-read the information. Bradford Council Labour candidate Bob Cannel threw his lot completely in with CND with such a pamphlet. The press, according to the pamphlet, did not provide the true details of Protect and Survive and its sinister purpose. Prime Minister Thatcher wanted voters to believe “Russians are insane monsters like the Nazis”, as this earned her votes from “racialists”. This was the same brand of “mutual racial hatred” that began the First World War and would lead to “the Final War”. If Tories gained control of the Council, Cannel added, they would wipe out the CND library exhibitions and spend government money on “civil defence lies” such as Protect and Survive. Scary stuff indeed.²⁵³

To court the union vote, CND prepared an entire magazine and leaflet package called the CND Peace Pack for NUPE (National Union of Public Employees). NUPE Deputy General Tom Sawyer wrote to Labour leader Neil Kinnock and forwarded him a pack, exclaiming that they recently attracted “very good publicity” with the portfolio. The first pages provided a list of CND material available for sale or rent including: *Sanity* 50p, *The War Game* £15 film rental, *QED – A Guide to Armageddon* £12 film £10 video, CND Badge 10p, *War Plan UK*, *When the Wind*

²⁵² Edward Leigh and Tony Kerpel, “Looking to Our Defence,” *The London Times*, December 18, 1980.

²⁵³ THCR 2/6/3/65, “Should Britain Give Up Nuclear Weapons?,” 1983.

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Blows (incorrectly written as “Where”), *London After the Bomb* and a pack of cards created by *Spark* “exposing the dubious benefits” of Protect and Survive.²⁵⁴

The Peace Pack was also stuffed with pamphlets. One took a questions and answers approach to convey their information quickly and simply. Ecoropa, one of the multitudes of CND offshoots of the decade, printed *Nuclear War – The Fact You Should Know...* The pamphlet was neatly laid out with threats of bunkers full of bureaucrats plotting the destruction of Britain, extolling the imperative need to withdraw Protect and Survive and reorganize British defence. One question asked: “Yet, the Home Office booklet Protect and Survive states our Local Authorities will help”. The reply was a vicious antithesis of all things Protect and Survive. It was stated that Protect and Survive “dangerously misleads us” by playing down the true effects of nuclear war. The advice was “glib ... questionable ... insufficient ... fatuous [and] marginal at best”. It concluded (written in all caps); “PROTECT AND SURVIVE IS A PIECE OF CALLOUS WHITEWASH WHICH EFFECTIVELY CONDEMNS TO DEATH THE MAJORITY OF THE POPULATION”.²⁵⁵

Another argued that due to the immense cost of national bunkers, some untold billions, the Government devised the stay-put scheme. Protect and Survive was a symptom of this scheme, designed to wipe out 2/3 of the nation. Protect and Survive was “irresponsible” and had “been widely castigated for its irresponsible advice”. Secret bunkers for government elites on the other hand were built without concerns over cost, public awareness, or public access. A more

²⁵⁴ AMES 2/1/104 File 2, “National Union of Public Employees - NUPE Cares About Peace Education and Information Pack,” August 19, 1983.

²⁵⁵ MSS 21/1055/264, “Nuclear War: The Facts You Should Know - And What You Can Do To Help Prevent It” (Ecoropa, 1981).

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“credible” system than Protect and Survive would be to provide training for a safe and more “realistic” scenario, such as a single accidental strike, nuclear accident or conventional attack.²⁵⁶

CND also realized that some of their far-left bedfellows within the alliance were off-putting and divisive to Britons who were undecided on nuclear matters. One CND member, Simon Shaw, wrote to the *Daily Telegraph* to clarify that CND’s resistance to civil defence was simply a process towards achieving total global disarmament. Shaw added that while CND lacked trust in the present Soviet regime, they did not believe that they had plans towards global domination. The Soviet Union wished to work towards “peaceful coexistence” and members of CND joined for the “best reason”; to preserve Britain from nuclear war.²⁵⁷ Shaw’s letter likely did little to convince political fence sitters, though F6 noticed “increasing anxiety” over the CND assault on Protect and Survive, lowering the morale of professional and volunteer civil defence workers as well as public confidence. The MOD were also concerned with CND’s ceaseless efforts to undermine Protect and Survive and demoralize national resolve for the deterrent policy.²⁵⁸

Minister of the Home Office, Patrick Mayhew, eventually wrote to Secretary of State Whitelaw, attempting to impress upon the Secretary the severity of the CND situation. CND had pushed the Government to a civil defence “crossroads,” and the Cabinet had to decide “whether to go on, deviate, or turn back”. Mayhew had supported the 1980 release of Protect and Survive as a key component of the Government’s attempt to bolster deterrence through increased public credibility and transparency. Unfortunately, this was the chink in the armour that CND chose to attack. CND’s goals were to take Britain out of the Cold War entirely. CND desired a Britain

²⁵⁶ AMES 2/1/104 File 2, “Defending Britain Without the Bomb,” September 1982.

²⁵⁷ Simon Shaw, “Responsibility, Not Conspiracy, by CND,” *The Daily Telegraph*, August 27, 1980.

²⁵⁸ TNA: HO 322/943, “Third Home Defence Progress Report,” December 12, 1980.

that was neutral, socialist, unilaterally disarmed, and likely out of NATO. Fortunately, Mayhew stressed, voting and polls had consistently demonstrated the public did not support any of these goals, though acceptance was increasing.

To that end, CND concentrated their efforts to nullify Protect and Survive, make it appear useless, and persuaded the public that “in any war all would be killed” [sic]. This disarmament design had been accelerated with the coming introduction of Cruise missiles, as those living near their launch sites were told that unimaginable megatonnage would be dropped upon them in a pre-emptive strike. The CND plot had reached such an extent the MOD began to pressure the Home Office to give up on Protect and Survive, consider it a casualty of the culture war, and let CND destroy the programme’s credibility. This was preferred to rattling CND’s sabers in a public debate and drawing further attention and opposition to Cruise.

Mayhew vigorously disagreed on abandoning Protect and Survive and encouraged the Home Secretary to continue the programme. It would be an irrecoverable loss, Mayhew warned, to hand such a success to the CND and allow them to bully the Government into retracting civil defence. What the Government needed to do, according to Mayhew, was “get [their] act together properly and win the argument” with CND. Double-down on Protect and Survive with a successor booklet, *Civil Defence: Why We Need It*, emphasize the conventional benefits of Protect and Survive, and utterly refuse to capitulate to recalcitrant city councils by providing them with their demanded list of target areas.²⁵⁹

The alternative was dubbed by F6 as “Option X”. Option X would entail the comprehensive abandonment of nuclear civil defence and a diversion of said funds to other government functions. After meeting with the Cabinet, Home Secretary Whitelaw reported that

²⁵⁹ TNA: HO 322/1021, “Note for Secretary of State Re: The Civil Defence Scene,” January 11, 1983.

Option X was deemed “unacceptable”. Option X would have critically weakened the deterrent and likely encourage a pre-emptive strike. Furthermore, the Cabinet appreciated that CND would immediately claim a substantial victory, and likely would have mocked the Government relentlessly for finally conceding the futility of nuclear civil defence and make ever greater progress towards unilateralism. Thus, despite the torrent of criticisms, from every corner of popular culture, the Home Office would continue to support Protect and Survive.²⁶⁰

A Youtube series titled *Video Scaries* collects visuals from popular culture that scared the nation. Protect and Survive was listed amongst the greatest fears from British television, alongside British icons such as the menacing Daleks of Doctor Who. Though the episode spent the majority of its time mocking the futility of whitewashing windows, as had been done throughout its past, the host provided a small observation that the Home Office shared: “Protect and Survive still has a lot of significant weight. To think that if we ever had to endure a nuclear attack, that this video will still probably bear the same implications and assistance as it did all those years ago”.²⁶¹

²⁶⁰ TNA: HO 322/1021, “David Heaton on Civil Defence Policy.”

²⁶¹ Protect and Survive – Video Scaries (January 23 2019). Adam Martyn. <https://youtu.be/dkQ805yKZD8>. (Accessed March 12, 2020).

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Protect and Survive was an attempt at public education, though politics also played a role, particularly in regard to Britain’s nuclear defence policy. Some historians consider the political component of Protect and Survive dictates that the programme should be classified as “propaganda”. In the humanities this term often has negative thematic connotations of indoctrination, which may be undeserved for the programme’s earnest attempt at emergency education. Education historian John Preston indicates that education which exists in the public sphere should be considered a form of public pedagogy. The public pedagogy theory of Protect and Survive provides an insightful viewpoint of the programme and disaster education.

Preston categorized Protect and Survive as “surge pedagogy”, a method of didactic education intended to be consumed by the public as rapidly as possible during a crisis. As an analogy, the programme would have witnessed the nation frenetically cramming for an exam with possible lethal repercussions. Surge pedagogy also provides an explanation for Protect and Survive’s failure. From the start, F6 Director Buttery designed the programme to be used as surge pedagogy during a crisis. Protect and Survive’s publication in peacetime, as Buttery cautioned, was misrepresented and its didactic intentions became inert. The pedagogical functions of Protect and Survive were to impart emergency instructions that sacrificed optimal structures for expediency. The programme’s didactic role was never intended to provide the ideal civil shelter nor was it intended to be studied at leisure.¹ One reason a revised Protect and

¹ Preston, “The Strange Death of UK Civil Defence Education in the 1980s,” 225.

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Survive never materialized was the misunderstanding of its educational intent. This fundamental misattribution of Protect and Survive explains the programme’s lack of support and the hesitancy of the Home Office to release a revision that would likely face the same obstacles. The booklet and videos of Protect and Survive were methods of surge pedagogy while the public expected, or desired, stolid pedagogy. This methodical pedagogical approach already existed as *Domestic Nuclear Shelters*, published by the HMSO in 1981. The Home Office believed the content of Protect and Survive was not in need of revision, rather the method the content was delivered needed to be corrected, though the Home Office lacked faith they could provide the necessary changes.

Three factors can explain why the revision of Protect and Survive never arrived. The first was the adequacy of what had already been created, as the Home Office never attempted to make technical changes to Protect and Survive. The programme was always designed to be updated as new research became available, however all current information indicated it was effective for its role. Even when semi-evacuation was considered, all the same obstacles to revising stay-put emerged, Protect and Survive remained the logical response.

The second factor was the strength of nuclear culture within the British government and population. While the revision was delayed by the typical glacial speed of bureaucracy, specific concerns from the MOD, FCO, and NATO concerning the programme’s relation to the deterrent trumped any fundamental changes. While the public humiliation of Protect and Survive is considered an indication of success for the CND, British adherence to the deterrent was never questioned. Nuclear culture remained firmly ingrained throughout the United Kingdom, even with Labour’s rejection of the nuclear consensus. The by-product was a protest paradox, where

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CND’s success at delegitimizing Protect and Survive prevented any revisions from being made as the Government was wary of similar treatment for a new civil defence policy.

The final reason is evidenced in the eventual outcome of Protect and Survive - it was simply rebranded. The Home Office realized the problem was marketing, not content. In the late 1980s, significant amounts of money were spent by the Home Office to improve the dissemination of civil defence advice in a new all-hazards campaign. This switch to all-hazards civil protection, along with the delegation of responsibilities to Local Authorities with the new Civil Defence Act successfully shifted the onus of responsibility. Finally, the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1988 fundamentally altered the purpose of civil defence, to protect the public from attack by the Soviet Union, eliminating the need for any further revision.

Aside from other departments fretful that a revision might enflame the nuclear debate, the Home Office never felt truly motivated to alter the advice. Documents related to a revision of Protect and Survive were common between 1980 to 1982 but then slowed dramatically with approaching installation of American Cruise missiles in Britain and the new Civil Defence Regulations in 1983. However, CND never forced the Government to consider unilateralism, even in private. Revision material floated through the sea of bureaucratic documents and half-started initiatives within the Home Office until the Chernobyl Disaster of 1986 and then faded entirely by 1987 with the release of the civil protection film *Should Disaster Strike*. As the Cold War ended, F6 Division adopted an all-hazards approach to civil defence (now called civil protection). Almost overnight, Protect and Survive became a peculiar artefact from another time.

Even before the programme was written, the Home Office always intended to update Protect and Survive if research ever indicated that stronger emergency home shelters could be constructed. However, when examining the different iterations of the revision, it becomes

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evident that one of the core factors that prevented the revision’s publication was the Home Office’s earnest belief in the efficacy of Protect and Survive; better rapid response options never materialized. Any changes to the core advice within Protect and Survive were minimal, even as new research indicated increased casualty estimates.²

As early as 1973, the likelihood of future revisions to Protect and Survive were discussed. The Home Office acknowledged that it was unlikely that adherence to stay-put would be absolute and instructions were made that Local Authorities should continue to plan for billeting and displaced peoples who fled their homes.³ Despite the assertions of various peace movements, no evidence exists that stay-put was ever intended to be physically enforced. In 1976, F6 Secretary Buttery noted that the intentions of Protect and Survive, to provide the basics of fallout resistance for unprepared individuals, was unlikely to be reformed in the future as he could not envision better advice for the task. However, Buttery always intended that the programme was not meant to be a static document. Instead, it was envisioned that Protect and Survive would be inter-stitched with relevant updates as needed.⁴

By 1981, the Home Office had gone as far as creating two draft chapters for a “rewrite” of Protect and Survive. The first was titled “modern weapons” which contained assembled research on chemical weapons by SAB, the Scientific Advisor Board. Chapter 2 “conventional weapon effects,” was longer and more detailed than the first chapter, though it contained little information on sheltering that was not already included in Protect and Survive. Despite the

² TNA: HO 322/1027, “Home Office SRDB Report on BMA ‘Medical Effects of Nuclear War,’” April 8, 1983.

³ TNA: HO 322/997, “Home Office Circular No ES3/1973 - Home Defence Planning Assumptions,” February 7, 1983.

⁴ TNA: INF6/2531, “Memo on Protect and Survive Videotapes from Robert Yeates to Gerry Evans Esq.,” May 25, 1976.

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wording used, there was little attempt to actually rewrite the advice in Protect and Survive, rather it appeared that a revision would serve as an expansion to the original publication.⁵

The distribution of Home Office Circular ES/81 indicated that Protect and Survive was “under review” though Local Authorities should continue their civil defence preparations as indicated.⁶

In early 1983 the revision outline had expanded to four booklets: Weapon effects, Protective measures, Civil defence in peace and war, and Material for issue in a crisis. ‘Survival under fallout conditions’ and ‘Care of the sick and injured’ would be carried over from Protect and Survive largely unchanged while a new chapter titled “The effect of ionising radiation on the human body” was added.⁷ By 1984 work was being prepared to expand the scope of emergency education by uploading Protect and Survive to television-text systems such as Ceefax and Prestel. The BBC confirmed that Protect and Survive could be adapted to teletext on a single floppy disc, easily updated as necessary. This was thought to be even more effective pedagogical dissemination than the Protect and Survive video chapters as notes could be taken during a crisis, negating the need for a booklet. When asked in 1984 by the BBC, the PRB, Public Relations Office, of the Home Office indicated that Protect and Survive would be revised within a year.⁸ By 1985 the revision was briefly mentioned as “in progress” in the 1985 F6 Division Performance Review.⁹

One of the additions to the revision of Protect and Survive was the information on protection from chemical weapons. The implementations of information on chemical weapons in draft copies reinforced the notion that Protect and Survive served a highly specialized function,

⁵ TNA: HO 322/980, “Draft of Rewrite of Protect and Survive,” October 2, 1981.

⁶ TNA: HO 322/853, “Home Office Circular No. ES1/1981 - Civil Defence Review,” 1981.

⁷ TNA: HO 322/960, “Note of Meeting 25 January 1983,” January 25, 1983.

⁸ TNA: INF6/2531, “Re: Protect and Survive,” July 19, 1984.

⁹ TNA: HO 322/933, “Home Office Annual Performance Review 1985 - F6,” 1985.

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and the small revisions were only added as a measure of public pacification, not actual concern. When the Home Office first began to collect feedback on a possible revision, one of the most common concerns was the lack of information on chemical weapons. These concerns persisted despite the fact that the JIC, Joint Intelligence Committee, believed the likelihood of the Soviet Union using chemical weapons against civilian targets was practically nil.¹⁰

A few days after Home Secretary Whitelaw delivered his speech in the House of Commons on the publication of Protect and Survive, the Home Office had already begun plans for “plussed shelters”, more advanced than those in Protect and Survive.¹¹ For those interested in the new proactive shelters, plans were drawn up for “next level garden shelters” with increased durability. The advice of Protect and Survive to stay-put, prepare provisions, and filter air particles all remained intact. On October 13 1980, the F6 Division called a meeting in Whitehall with SAB Chairman J Cotterill, representatives from COI, Central Office of Information, and the PRB, and also Mr. R. Haines, the Home Office Chief Architect.

Suggestions for emergency shelter revisions were provided, though none were tabled that would entail a revision to Protect and Survive’s advice. What was ultimately agreed upon was the drafting of a second booklet, building on Protect and Survive, that would be simplified to a “plain man’s guide” for more labour-intensive shelters. The Home Office group’s intention was to clarify the Government’s civil defence position, that they were not recommending ad hoc Protect and Survive shelters as the ideal shelter provision, and as such the companion book was to be called *Plan for Survival*. Ultimately, the new information package did not materialize

¹⁰ TNA: HO 322/910, “Soviet Special Forces - Meeting with Sir Peter Matthews on 22 April 1981,” April 22, 1981.

¹¹ TNA: HO 322/959, “Working Party on Shelter and Evacuation Policies,” August 26, 1980.

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though *Domestic Nuclear Shelters* contained most of the intended purposes from *Plan For Survival*.¹²

In March of the following year, the Home Office attempted to stem the flow of Protect and Survive revision inquiries with the issue of Home Office Circular ES/81. The circular maintained civil defence status quo and encouraged Local Authorities to survey their borough’s buildings for suitable emergency shelters. This was one of the first attempts to directly answer the issue of protecting citizens with low PF housing. Unsurprisingly, Local Authorities, particularly the Greater London Council, soundly rejected the circular. Municipal shelter surveys had been suggested for years, as far back as 1970, however the suggestions were routinely opposed by the GLC and other left leaning metropolitans at every opportunity as a show of resistance against ideological complacency with the deterrent. The circular also incorporated some acknowledgements of the communal overtones of earlier civil defence circulars. Civic cooperation was now verbalized as the “good neighbour” approach, encouraging homeowners to maintain their own shelters, while cooperating and sharing aid and resources with their neighbours.¹³

The Cabinet Committee on Home Defence continued the revision debate. They suggested that revision should be avoided, and they welcomed a new collection of information composed of already printed advice from other available booklets, particularly *Domestic Nuclear Shelters* and its detailed companion book *Domestic Nuclear Shelters – Technical Guidance*.¹⁴ This was the beginning of several significant Government efforts to rebrand rather than revise Protect and Survive by repackaging already available research. By September 1981, work continued on the

¹² TNA: HO 322/960, “13 Oct 1980 Meeting of the Home Office Working Group on Shelters (WGS),” October 13, 1980.

¹³ TNA: HO 322/853, “Home Office Circular No. ES1/1981 - Civil Defence Review,” 1981.

¹⁴ TNA: HO 322/982, “Minutes of Meeting Held at Queen Anne’s Gate on 8 July 1981,” July 8, 1981.

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amalgamated shelter booklet, and plans were made to expand the Protect and Survive video content with more detailed shelter guidance, though these plans were also deferred. An interesting avenue of possibility was opened in the early 1980s however with discussion of the implementation of an evacuation scheme.¹⁵

For a time in the early 1980s, a limited evacuation scheme was researched to compliment Protect and Survive and stay-put. Rather than evacuating entire cities, F6 debated the feasibility of evacuating either people from likely target areas, women and children, essential workers, or people with inadequate housing. Progress was made though all plans ultimately became untenable for various reasons, serving only to re-enforce the necessity of stay-put. In addition to these difficulties, any attempt at small-scale evacuation always came to the same conceptual problem: suggesting any form of evacuation would inherently compromise the validity of stay-put (how could some citizens be evacuated while others were left to fend for themselves?) which would have jeopardized all future government emergency education initiatives.

The Cabinet Defence and Overseas Policy Committee met on May 1 1980 to “urgently” report on the state of civil defence before the Home Secretary’s August announcement. An argument was tabled that no viable alternative to stay-put existed and therefore the Government must harness the power of the British institution of civic volunteerism. Borough comradery and civic duty were the thought to be the most “politically attractive and cost effective” measures to improve British civil defence. Delegation of civil defence responsibilities to Local Authorities, perhaps even limited evacuation planning, were thought to improve public confidence. The

¹⁵ TNA: HO 322/980, “Revision of Protect and Survive - Content of Crisis Material for the Media,” September 8, 1981.

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Ministers did not rule out the possibility of a centralized evacuation scheme, if it could be financially feasible, to allay public anxiety and curtail self-evacuation.¹⁶

A well populated Home Office meeting took place on April 14 1981 consisting of the multi-nested committees of the Working Group on Shelter and Evacuation of the Home Defence Planning Sub-Committee of the Official Committee on Home Defence of Cabinet. SAB, the MOD, FCO, and other Departments also attended to calculate what would be involved if civil defence revision included population dispersal. The video chapters of Protect and Survive were screened before addressing the problems facing an evacuation scheme including cost, logistics, and stability of the nation’s war fighting capability.

Though difficulties would surely develop, the alternative of not having any preparations was argued to make public acceptance of stay-put unlikely. Prepared calculations found that evacuation from all populous areas would entail some 25 million Britons while evacuating only those close to high-risk targets amounted to 10 million. Efforts were focused on lowering the number of evacuees by focusing on priority classes such as essential workers, the elderly or infirmed, women and children, or families in low PF housing. All departments were tasked their roles to play in delivering on any evacuation scheme, though few, if any, followed through on their preparations.¹⁷

Concurrently, SAB was undertaking vast amounts of research with their American equivalent to obtain greater understanding of the immediate effects of nuclear blasts and increase survival probabilities. The US and USSR civil defence arrangements were considered ideal between their combination of in-situ shelters and limited evacuation from target areas. It was

¹⁶ TNA: HO 322/941, “Mr. Hastie-Smith of Cabinet Office Draft of Letter for Approval by the Home Secretary on Civil Home Defence Policy,” July 1, 1980.

¹⁷ TNA: HO 322/958, “Minutes of Home Defence Planning Sub-Committee Working Group on Shelter and Evacuation,” April 14 1981.

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recognized however, that population density was a unique obstacle for the UK. SAB and F6 were tasked with producing a report on the most at-risk boroughs of Britain as well as the “general feasibility” of an organized voluntary evacuation of women and children during a crisis.

However, confidence in a solution remained low.¹⁸ When Cabinet met again in October 1980 the focus of civil defence revision was now on the shorter warning time and increased likelihood of a conventional war preceding any nuclear strike, as predicted by the JIC. Permanent shelters and dispersal were discussed, though they quickly encountered the same obstacle of enforcement of shelter admittance and evacuation selection without physical measures.¹⁹

Revision and dispersal debates continued into 1981 when the Home Office produced a lengthy esprit de corps report on civil defence, population dispersal, and the public. The demographics and societal attitudes of cohesion and cooperation found during the War were said to be waning. Lack of homogeneity dictated that virtually every concept of evacuation led to an unmanageable number of Britons to transport, forced to house together and remain accommodating. The report reached an “inescapable” conclusion that even the most meticulously pre-planned evacuation schemes (which would require millions spent on new staff and equipment) would be extremely difficult to conduct, unlikely to remain peaceable, and would inevitably completely interfere with the nation’s ability to contribute to a land battle in Europe. F6 Director Howard added that a comprehensive revision of Protect and Survive would be a heavy burden on SAB and F6 requiring at least a year of dedicated effort.²⁰

The focus should therefore shift to a revision of public education efforts to demonstrate stay-put as the only “sensible” policy. The goal was reaffirmed that the surge pedagogy of

¹⁸ TNA: HO 322/939, “Population Dispersal and Shelter Policies,” June 13, 1980.

¹⁹ TNA: HO 322/958, “Cabinet Official Committee on Home Defence - Home Defence Planning Sub-Committee - Working Party on Shelter and Evacuation,” October 1980.

²⁰ TNA: HO 322/1003, “Mr. Howard to Ms. Pedler Re: Revision of Protect and Survive,” December 20, 1982.

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Protect and Survive increased survivability away from ground zero and “the intelligent reader” could already utilize the advice within *Domestic Nuclear Shelters* in advance of a crisis. New shelter instructions produced heated debate, as F6 Director Howard wrote “only serve to undermine stay put!” next to mentions of the introduction of peacetime education on conventional and nuclear attack.²¹ Protect and Survive could be eliminated, though the F6 Division remained adamant that the programme’s simple measures could save millions who would otherwise be lost to radiation fallout. Anti-fallout education remained sound and the revision might instead be enhanced with sturdier emergency structures to resist blast pressure. Once again, onus was shifted so that Local Authorities should be surveying their boroughs for suitable communal shelters for people with insufficient housing.²²

Evacuation and public education continued to be debated despite the same crescendo of problems that appeared without solutions. By 1982, Cabinet were under further pressure to have their evacuation policy settled before the Government pushed through the civil defence revisions of 1983. The multi-tiered group of Department representatives, under the cover of top security classification, freely acknowledged the underlying fault of British civil defence. Stay-put pedagogy and Protect and Survive failed as it was obvious some areas of Britain were inherently more dangerous than others. As long-time F6 staffer Ken Day frankly remarked: “only a fool would believe that no part of the UK would be safer than any other”.²³

The MOD and FCO on the other hand, continued to argue that nuclear bases must be associated with security rather than danger, particularly with the installment of Cruise missiles the following year. The MOD and FCO were key opponents of any form of evacuation or

²¹ TNA: HO 322/939, “Population Dispersal and Shelter Policies,” June 13, 1980.

²² TNA: HO 322/1025, “Planning for Home Defence and Civil Emergencies in the United Kingdom,” July 22, 1982.

²³ TNA: HO 322/998, “Ken Day Commenting on MOD Suggestions,” January 13, 1983.

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population dispersal. Not only would they politically denigrate military bases, secret installations would have to be disclosed while the tens of thousands of MOD essential workers would collide with the millions attempting evacuation from target areas. The subcommittee agreed that while limited evacuation might be beneficial, the political obstacles were substantial, including the image of acquiescing to the peace movements demanding revision of Protect and Survive.²⁴

A month later, the establishment of an evacuation scheme became extremely unlikely when news of what the Cabinet were debating had leaked to the *Guardian*. The peace movements had proliferated the protest paradox, as the more success they obtained in exposing Government planning ensured that the Government were less likely to implement any changes, lest they invoke significant political controversy and encourage further CND attacks.²⁵

RJW Clark, Director of the Scottish Home and Health Department, provided the rare voice of optimism within the Cabinet. Clark believed that the foundation of CND’s argument against civil defence was that none could exist in the face of nuclear war. Clark maintained that if the Government presented the public with a credible and comprehensive civil defence policy that included limited evacuation, communal shelters, and adherence to Protect and Survive, then CND would have no foothold in public discourse.²⁶

Consideration for a semi-evacuation had existed in one form or another as far back as 1971, consisting mostly of hold over schemes for women and children from the War.²⁷ By 1983 the realities of population dispersal in modern Britain proved insurmountable: Which areas were safe? Which were unsafe? Who should be evacuated? Where should they go? What will we do when they get there? How can we afford it? How can we safely disclose Cruise sites?

²⁴ TNA: HO 322/998, “Cabinet Interim Report on an Official Evacuation Scheme,” November 30, 1982.

²⁵ TNA: HO 322/998, “Planned Evacuation Options,” December 13, 1982.

²⁶ TNA: HO 322/998, “SHHD: Planned Evacuation Options,” January 6, 1983.

²⁷ TNA: HO 322/799, “Report by the Chairman of the Official Committee on Home Defence,” May 12, 1971.

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Defence Secretary Michael Heseltine provided the official verdict to abandon population dispersal schemes in a letter to MP Richard Page. Regarding proposals to move strategic nuclear bases away from civilian conurbations, Heseltine firmly replied that there were to be no plans to move targets or citizens as a country as densely populated as Britain had targets everywhere.²⁸

One of the outcomes of CND’s prominent cultural visibility in the 1980s is the assumptions that CND’s objectives were congruent with popular opinions. This is one of several misconceptions within the historiography of Protect and Survive that this study aims to dispel. To many, CND and the peace movement were not counterculture, as they “articulated the views of a sizeable portion” of Britain.²⁹ While their enrollment skyrocketed and many shared their cynicism of Protect and Survive, they never exited the outer fringes of British society. For all their notability and media coverage, CND remained the “woolly-hat brigade,” an odd amalgamation of unilateralists with a common middle-class phenotype.³⁰

This produced a phenomenon that this study has coined as a protest-paradox: The anti-nuclear images produced by CND and popular culture, succeeded in terrifying the nation. However, the strategy worked against the protestors as the public came to further support the deterrent as opposed to becoming a nuclear-free state. Nuclear war had been depicted as so horrific, so totally unsurvivable, that the public collectively resolved they would rather have some means of active deterrent than to remain entirely defenceless against Soviet targeting.

²⁸ TNA: HO 322/997, “MP Michael Heseltine to MP Richard Page,” January 18, 1983.

²⁹ Preston, “The Strange Death of UK Civil Defence Education in the 1980s,” 230.

³⁰ See previous chapter.

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Following the publication of *Protect and Survive*, support for unilateralism decreased from 33% to 15%, even amongst Labour voters, with support for the deterrent rising as high as 82%.³¹

Protect and Survive had a precise pedagogical function to deliver civil defence instruction as expeditiously as possible. While the majority of Britain dismissed *Protect and Survive*'s efficacy, they remained supportive of the deterrent. Throughout their history, and particularly the 1980s, CND correctly self-identified as “genuinely alternative culture”, apart from the solidified nuclear culture of the UK. As pressure mounted from exigent forces such as the alliance against *Protect and Survive*, the pedagogical function of any *Protect and Survive* revision was always intended to remain intact. Mockery and satire may have reduced the credibility of *Protect and Survive*, though it failed to reduce the credibility of the deterrent. The majority of the population wanted Britain to remain a nuclear state. The public held little faith in any civil defence measures, encouraging the belief that the best measure was to prevent a nuclear war from every starting, with the threat of mutually assured destruction.³²

The Conservative government held similar views, albeit with more faith that *Protect and Survive* would have indeed saved lives. Even at the most hypothetical levels, discussion of forfeiting the nuclear deterrent was simply never entertained by Whitehall nor the Conservatives. The proliferation of British nuclear culture encouraged the enormous success the Conservatives enjoyed at the polls throughout the 1980s. The Conservatives recognized the role *Protect and Survive* played in the maintenance of the deterrent. Labour's departure from the established policy of deterrence likely contributed to their historic political losses unequalled until the 2019 General Election.

³¹ David Butler, *The British General Election of 1983* (London: Macmillan, 1984).

³² Richard Taylor, *Campaigns for Peace: British Peace Movements in the Twentieth Century* (Manchester University Press, 1987), 299.

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John Preston argued that the Government valued palatable and defensible emergency education over practical, implying a mendacious scheme to keep everyone indoors. Labour also held similar thoughts, though supporting evidence remains lacking. One of the greatest weaknesses of the alliance was their failure to provide an alternative for the deterrent, arguing that being neutral would remove Britain as a target, though this plan had no recourse in case of Soviet attack. Ironically, it was their alternatives to civil defence, the deterrent surrogates, that offered little practically.³³

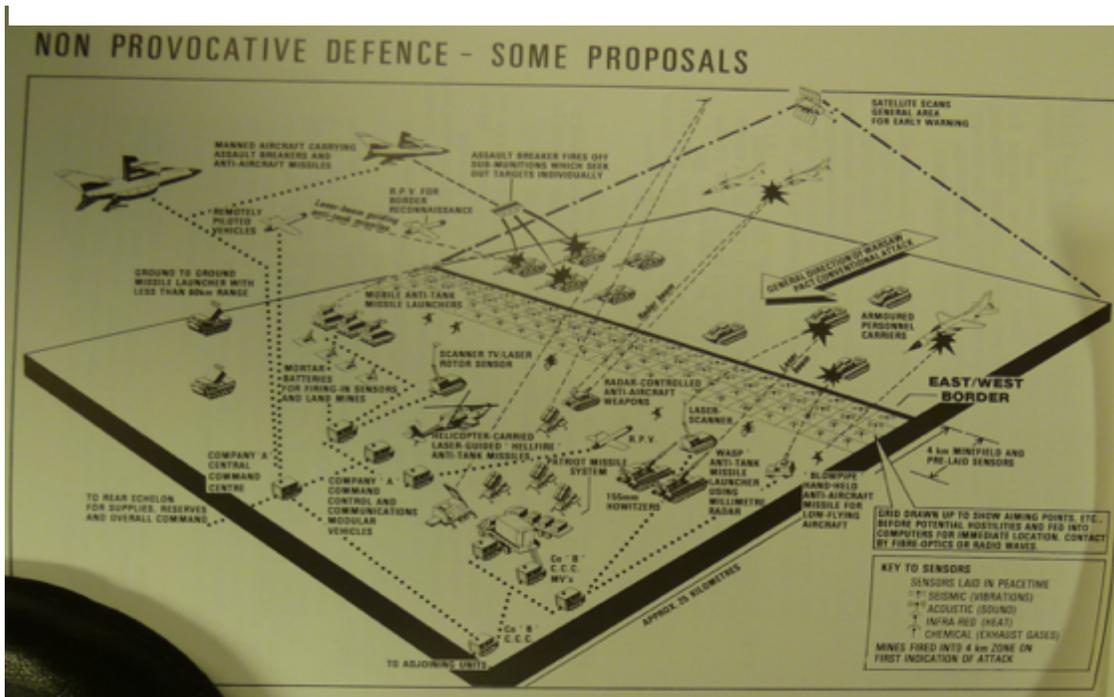
There were ideas to expand Britain’s armed forces at enormous cost, while others argued for evacuation, or investment in cutting edge military technology, similar to the Strategic Defence Initiative of the United States, to repel or deter Soviet aggression. The Home Office maintained that people self-evacuating, taking to the hills, at the first sign of trouble would be absolute pandemonium. Uncontrollable, unorganisable, dangerous, and prone to hunger, crowding, looting, etc. Oddly enough, even famous unilateralist media, such as *Threads*, depicted chaos and destruction for self-evacuees with people running about on gridlocked highways as the bombs fell. Those that prepared and protected, survived.

³³ Preston, “The Strange Death of UK Civil Defence Education in the 1980s,” 2015.

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The main deterrent substitute for the alliance was a programme and organization titled Just Defence (Figure 44). This “non-provocative defence” would see Britain armed with enormous armouries of defensive weapons systems, making invasion unthinkable. The sentiment was to “deter – as opposed to threaten”.³⁴

Figure 44 A Just Defence: Illustration of non-provocative from the *Just Defence* pamphlet, 1981.



Protect and Survive was labeled “irresponsible” and the provision of training and facilities to protect life after a single nuclear strike were said to be superior alternatives (though this was also a role for which Protect and Survive would be ideally suited).³⁵

In early 1983, a revision of civil defence education was discussed by Prime Minister Thatcher and representatives of the Home Office, MOD, and FCO as a function of confidence between government and citizenry. A recent study had confirmed that 72% of Britons were

³⁴ Just Defence in action: Frank Barnaby and Stan Windass, “Defence Without Fears - How Electronics Have Made Nuclear Weapons Obsolete” (Just Defence, 1981), The Churchill Archives at Cambridge.

³⁵ MSS 21/1055/264, “Nuclear War: The Facts You Should Know - And What You Can Do To Help Prevent It,” 1981.

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against unilateralism. The efforts of CND to weaken support for the deterrent through Protect and Survive castigation had failed. Formerly constrained by the threat of provoking metropolitan Local Authorities, the Cabinet was now encouraged to reiterate their civil defence pedagogy and take the offensive once the 1983 Civil Defence Act regulations had passed and Cruise installation was successfully fulfilled.³⁶

Thatcher’s impression was that civil defence education should be associated with deterrence as well as other emergencies, increasing the difficulty of any detractors to dismiss the usefulness of preparedness (this eventually came to pass with the all-hazards approach of the late 1980s). Foreign Secretary Francis Pym added his concern that the Soviet Union would think less of the deterrent if the UK appeared to be unsure of their civil defence planning. Defence Secretary Heseltine believed government education should build off the public distaste for unilateralism while the Prime Minister agreed and asked for a steady, didactic campaign with no “launching”, it should “simply be”. F6 Secretary Heaton agreed to postpone any revisions until later in the year, following Cruise.³⁷

Two years on, when surmising Protect and Survive, new F6 Director Janet Thompson concluded that “a hard lesson has been well learned here”. Research by marketing consultant groups had shown conclusively that the public found the emergency surge pedagogy of Protect and Survive “totally unsatisfactory” despite the fact that it could be “very effective”. CND had convinced Britain that Protect and Survive was useless, yet all this accomplished was instilling tremendous apathy and cynicism in civil defence, leading to inaction that could jeopardize lives that would have been otherwise saved. CND was unable to erode nuclear culture and instill similar cynicism in the deterrence. Thompson recommended the Home Office turn to passive

³⁶ TNA: HO 322/1021, “Nuclear Weapons and Public Opinion,” January 31, 1983.

³⁷ Ibid.

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protection schemes, emphasizing the openness of Government planning and the importance of protecting food, water, utilities, communication, MAFF, transport etc.³⁸

Established institutions often accumulate political momentum over decades that cannot be easily diverted, even via “exogenous shocks”. Conversely, opposing forces within these institutions can become so formidable they nullify each other producing a “policy vacuum”. This was not the case for the revision of Protect and Survive within the Home Office. The exigent forces critical of Protect and Survive were insufficient to challenge nuclear culture, and oppositional forces within the Home Office contributed towards, but were not strong enough to explain, the delay of emergency education media.³⁹

Throughout the 1980s the Home Office worked towards a revision of civil defence pedagogy, although they were opposed by institutional forces who feared a new civil defence campaign would attract the attention of those against Protect and Survive. An active alliance would make more effort to disrupt Britain’s nuclear programme. Preston suggests this institutional friction slowed and ultimately impeded any revisions. This is certainly one aspect, though there were other significant factors. Political consensus is often a powerful determinant of “institutional inertia”. Decades of nuclear consensus accumulated into formidable nuclear culture which instilled such inertia within the Home Office that revision efforts were often stalled without much opposition. Whitehall viewed Protect and Survive as pedagogical misuse rather than a fault of nuclear deterrence. The Home Office put up little resistance when delay was

³⁸ TNA: HO 322/1024, “Mrs. Janet Thompson, F6 Secretary, on Civil Defence Research and Public Presentation,” October 23, 1985.

³⁹ Preston, “The Strange Death of UK Civil Defence Education in the 1980s,” 227.

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suggested, often content to invest more time in marketing research than challenging British nuclear culture.⁴⁰

Two types of institutional resistance slowed the revision of Protect and Survive. The first was the lackadaisical effort from other Home Office departments to contribute any useful material. Revision seemed possible between 1980 and 1982, though F6 noticed the miniscule contributions from other Departments.⁴¹ MAFF and the DHSS in particular were noted for their tardiness and disinterest in any comprehensive revisions.⁴² The consideration of a limited evacuation scheme required mountainous volumes of research, occupying a considerable amount of the modest staff of the SAB that often left them unable to contribute anything meaningful. Progress came only as fast as the slowest contributor, and F6 often announced delays to any revisions of civil defence policy pending input from other Departments.⁴³

Beyond disinterest and typical bureaucratic inertia, the other obstacle to any revision of Protect and Survive was Britain’s established nuclear culture that resisted any initiatives which threatened acceptance of the deterrent. Even though the nuclear consensus had ended during the tumultuous 1980s, nuclear culture, both inside and outside the government, remained secure. There was a firm belief that the deterrent made the likelihood of a Soviet attack on the UK negligible. The nuclear consensus agreed to the double indemnity of civil defence education and the deterrent. Publication of Protect and Survive in 1980 was not connected to any increase in war risk, but a deliberate effort to reverse the neglect of the care and maintenance decision and demonstrate renewed vigor in preparedness.

⁴⁰ James Mahoney and Kathleen Thelen, *Explaining Institutional Change: Ambiguity, Agency, and Power* (Cambridge University Press, 2010), 127.

⁴¹ TNA: HO 322/943, “Home Defence Progress Report,” October 23, 1980.

⁴² TNA: HO 322/978, “Civil Defence Progress Report,” November 9, 1981.

⁴³ TNA: HO 322/982, “Civil Preparedness for Home Defence 1981 Progress Report to Ministers,” November 1981.

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More importantly, Soviet conventional forces increased throughout the 1970s, enough so they could conceivably launch a lightning attack of limited gains in Europe before any retaliation. NATO’s policy of first use of nuclear retaliation to military aggression was dependent on maintenance of the British deterrent. Protect and Survive and its pedagogy were thus “an essential ingredient in the capacity of a nation to withstand con attack involving aerial bombardment of targets near centres of population”.⁴⁴

A system of comprehensive nuclear shelters, in a manner that would effectively protect the entire nation, could never be accomplished without unprecedented spending and construction. There were few reasons to substantially revise Protect and Survive as it served its purpose efficiently and economically. “In short”, as F6 Director JA Howard wrote, “we can never totally exclude the risk of nuclear war, but we can legitimately discount it as a reason for disruptive and expensive civil defence measures against improbable contingencies at the far end of the threat spectrum”.⁴⁵

In early 1983, Home Office Secretary Patrick Mayhew wrote an expressive letter to Home Secretary Whitelaw rhetorically asking why Britain wanted civil defence. Secretary Whitelaw famously announced on August 8 1980 that civil defence was a critical component of defence policy, supporting the legitimacy of the deterrent. However, Mayhew believed the primary purpose of civil defence pedagogy was humanitarian. The number of British lives it could save in a crisis was not inconsiderable. Some measure of civil defence preparation was a humanitarian right that should be expected of any government.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ TNA: HO 322/997, “Future of Civil Defence Policy - Attack Assumptions,” November 17, 1982.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ TNA: HO 322/1021, “Defence Secretary’s Meeting on 8 February The Nuclear Debate and Civil Defence,” February 7, 1983.

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The humanitarian thesis was the solution F6 had been arguing in favour of for the last three years, though this also allowed CND to latch on to civil defence media as a means of protesting the Bomb. Many within the Home Office still maintained the humanitarian necessity of Protect and Survive.⁴⁷ CND desired a neutral Britain, argued Mayhew, yet they had begun to realize Britons did not support unilateralism and so they argued everyone would perish in a nuclear war and thus, civil defence was an unnecessary fraud.

The coming instillation of Cruise was contributing to this viewpoint as people living near Cruise sites wanted to know how they would be protected during an attack, and they did not care for the answers the Government offered. Thus, warned Mayhew, there was a chance the nation’s mind would be poisoned against civil defence and the deterrent in 1983 without a united front within the Home Office. The MOD and the FCO were pressuring Whitehall to forgo any civil defence revisions that year, even the upcoming new regulations. The enactment of the regulations in Parliament, without a Protect and Survive revision, was to be the compromise. However, there would never be a “right time” to revise civil defence. The following year would likely witness the MOD asking the Home Office to let the dust of Cruise settle before any revisions, and another excuse the year after that. Mayhew wanted Whitelaw to maintain the momentum of the new regulations and not neglect any civil defence revisions.⁴⁸

The Home Office remained convinced that the problem with Protect and Survive was presentational, not operational. Much of the British public disregarded the low risk of war and focused instead on the relatively miniscule provisions Protect and Survive would offer versus unimaginable nuclear catastrophe. Working with a low risk probability dictated a low-cost civil

⁴⁷ TNA: HO 322/998, “D Brennan, Cabinet Office to D Heaton, Home Office Re: Planned Evacuation Options,” January 13, 1983.

⁴⁸ TNA: HO 322/1021, “Note for Secretary of State Re: The Civil Defence Scene,” January 11, 1983.

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defence policy, as it was virtually impossible to do anything worthwhile without considerable spending. Accordingly, the Home Office determined that a blanket nationwide nuclear strike was unlikely and taking precautions against a limited strike or accident, as Just Defence argued, was sensible and prudent. The task fell to F6 to spin the optics and convince the population to think along the lines of the Home Office.

When providing a progress report on the revision in 1981, Roger Million of F6 added a handwritten note: “I hope it’s not too gloomy!”. A revision of Protect and Survive was said to be underway, this time intended strictly as a peacetime publication not to be distributed in a crisis. This draft was about twice the length of Protect and Survive, with similar information delivered in a textbook-style pedagogy. The revision draft carried over the previous advice of Protect and Survive, though it provided specific details on missile types, ionising radiation, and simple first aid. The emphasis on peacetime publication was not happenstance, but rather a fundamental component of the revision’s new marketing.⁴⁹

However, as Buttery warned a decade prior, Protect and Survive was never intended to be printed in peacetime. Being able to read the surge pedagogy of Protect and Survive at will allowed it to be easily taken out of context. This allowed opponents of the programme to deride some aspects (e.g. whitewash and mattresses) as though they were the best preparations the government had to offer. The Home Office was now working with a new strategy, namely that critics would continue to take the advice out of context. However, they would be less successful if Protect and Survive was only an annex to an overall emergency education strategy. Protect and Survive developed a negative reputation, which would be hard to correct, but the advice within

⁴⁹ TNA: HO 322/978, “Progress Report on Revision of Protect and Survive,” October 20, 1981.

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“remained valid” and any new text should be written while “drawing as necessary” from the programme.⁵⁰

Over time it became evident to the Home Office that the establishment of nuclear culture in Britain would maintain nuclear policy and stay-put would remain the norm. There was no to change in their approach to emergency education, aside from the public relations component. Protect and Survive was believed to be competent, available, and unlikely to change. Comprehensive revisions were simply not a Home Office priority. Evidence shows the Home Office never gave serious consideration to any substantial revision aside from the brief contemplation of limited evacuation. The Protect and Survive problem was not the technical information, but the manner in which it was taught, and thus, after lying low during the installation of Cruise, the Home Office spent enormous effort to reinvent civil defence pedagogy, not through content, but through marketing. The revision issue was ultimately solved by revising civil defence education into the less incendiary all-hazards policy.

After it was established that civil defence was not to be overhauled, professional marketing agencies were hired to correct the image of emergency education. The best proposals were the ones that suggested a stolid pedagogy where nuclear attack was only one of many disasters that could befall the nation. This was the path the Home Office embraced as they altered their didactic approach to public education to the textbook pedagogy still utilized in Great Britain. The PRB gained a greater presence in revision discussion in the mid-1980s as it became clear to the Home Office that their services would be required. As the PRB argued, “all sensible civilized societies plan for emergencies” and this was the route the Home Office should take going forward.⁵¹

⁵⁰ TNA: INF6/2490, “Civil Defence Information and Publicity Programme,” January 15, 1986.

⁵¹ TNA: HO 322/1024, “BL Mower, PRB, to J Thompson, F6 Re: Civil Defence Film,” January 9, 1985.

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Nuclear attack was one of many disasters and current civil defence plans gave the population the best hope of recovery. Civil defence was simply no longer credible to the public, particularly within the metropolitans. Any direct counter to the peace movements would simply drag the Home Office into debate with the CND, giving them validity and allowing them to contest the deterrent. All-hazards planning would be inarguable, and every member of the public would have a duty to help and a role to play. The PRB hoped to take away the nuclear drum that CND had been banging for thirty years.

The Home Office slowly realized they could not compete with the sensationalism of alliance protest media such as *Threads*, destruction was simply more captivating than safety. A rational debate could not be held against public fears and bogeymen, pushing counter information would be unproductive. The PRB recognized this when the Home Office did not, what was needed was a public relations campaign on a national scale.⁵²

It became clear that Protect and Survive had “presentational issues” which required correction. In 1985 the Home Office hired Market Behaviour Ltd to conduct a large survey which demonstrated that the British public were even more ignorant of civil defence than the Home Office had assumed. Most respondents were unable to distinguish between blast and fallout protection while many indicated a “strong desire for self-protection” supported by government provisions. Civil defence was strongly associated with defence from the initial destruction of nuclear attack, not reducing casualties and helping survivors. The Home Office

⁵² TNA: HO 322/1024, “Proposed Film on Civil Defence - County Emergency Planning Officers’ Society,” February 12, 1985.

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allotted over £300,000 to hire an advertising firm that would produce a film and shift the concept of civil defence to one of civil protection, free from political squabble.⁵³

From March 7-12 1986 the Home Office entertained proposals from three firms, with representatives from F6, the PRB, COI, and notable pro-civil defence personnel such as Eric Alley. Political, scientific, and military opinions were not required as this was to be a mission of marketing and the production of a documentary-length film to serve as revision of current civil defence media.

Ogilvy and Mather were the largest of the firms, though they were thought to have demonstrated the least effort. Ogilvy and Mather suggested civil defence should consist of specialized teams for normal emergencies, that would come together for abnormal emergencies. Rather than the broadest base, the Home Office should appeal to the “highest common factor of public intelligence”. Honesty and directness were needed, the effort should be on informing, not challenging attitudes. Alternatives to the term civil defence were “crisis control” or “safety net”. The firm pitched the futuristic concept of a network of “cellular communication”, though they had no suggestions for a film or booklet. Collett, Dickenson, Pearce then pitched a national advertising campaign that would change public apathy, facilitate discussion, and challenge accusations of Government suppression of information. They suggested a debate-style film that argued anything could happen so the nation must be prepared for anything. At £650,000 however, their estimate was twice the given budget.

Waldron, Allen, Henry, and Thompson suggested emphasizing the local level civil defence as being run by and for the people. A realistic, honest, and serious campaign over three years was the firm’s suggestion. Civil defence should not be pitched as something new, rather

⁵³ TNA: HO 322/1024, “Civil Defence: COI/ACA/Agency Brief,” January 15, 1986.

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the film would simply demonstrate the protection of local communities in war and peace, run by local professionals and trained volunteers without political intent. Civil defence would be rebranded as “emergency planning” or “civil protection”. The logo would be an orange circle, indicative of Protect and Survive, and a blue triangle, referencing Canadian and American civil defence emblems (Figure 45).⁵⁴ The film would “avoid Protect and Survive type detail” and be shown on a local level to planners, not the general public. There was to be little mention of the Home Office and none on the government of the day, to bring in an organic, non-cosmetic reimagining to emergency education.⁵⁵

Soon after, the committee voted in favour of WAHT as they had the most detailed, well-considered proposal for a rebranding film for civil defence and Protect and Survive. They agreed to the stated goal of replacing the “perceived role” of Protect and Survive, though not its substance. The firm could produce a film with “a good story” and shift civil defence to all-hazard emergency services, something that would be uncontroversial to the general public, not substituting “the ideal for the reality”.⁵⁶ Later that year the Chernobyl disaster brought nuclear

Figure 45 New Logo/Old Plan: The debut of the Home Office’s new civil protection contingencies from *Should Disaster Strike*, 1986.



⁵⁴ WAHT’s suggested logo and rebranding were featured prominently in *Should Disaster Strike: Civil Protection in Action* (The Home Office, 1987).

⁵⁵ TNA: HO 322/1024, “Civil Defence Information and Publicity Programme: Competing Agency Proposals,” March 11, 1986.

⁵⁶ TNA: HO 322/1024, “Strategy Recommendation for Civil Defence by Waldron, Allen, Henry & Thompson Ltd.,” May 1, 1986.

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emergencies to the forefront of public debate. Naturally, the Home Office did not want to appear to capitalize on a tragedy, so they carefully incorporated Chernobyl as the kind of disaster requiring a “more than just the normal emergency services” response. A catastrophic event that could be survived with a robust all-hazards civil protection system.⁵⁷

In 1987, the Home Office released the culmination of seven years’ worth of debate and research: the documentary film *Should Disaster Strike: Civil Protection in Action*. The film was an amalgamation of everything requested by the Home Office, it was entirely unpolitical, omitted any specific shelter advice, promoted volunteerism and local communities, and perhaps most importantly, morphed *civil defence* into *civil protection*. Stock footage was used from the Blitz, the Bomb, floods, fires, and Chernobyl, all serving to promote civil protection as common sense preparation for unpredictable disasters of all sorts.⁵⁸

The opening of the film featured host Julian Pettifer in front of Parliament and immediately disarmed the argument that the film was a partisan Protect and Survive reproduction. “No government,” began Julian, “whatever its political view,” could stop calamities. All disasters, small and big, benefited from sound planning. “The best defence of all,” continued Mr. Pettifer, “of course is prevention, that’s why every government since World War Two has relied on a policy of nuclear deterrence”. Beyond being bipartisan, *Should Disaster Strike* reinforced the nuclear consensus, reminding the viewer that both British Parties were responsible for the deterrent.

The push to volunteerism, civic duty, and Local Authority responsibility were also featured prominently in the docu-film. A narration over Blitz footage stated: “the British have a

⁵⁷ TNA: INF6/2490, “Central Office of Information Memo from Geoffrey Bond to Chief Publicity Officer Ralph Windsor Re: Civil Defence,” June 23, 1986.

⁵⁸ Long-time civil defence stalwart Eric Alley appears in support of civil protection. From: *Should Disaster Strike*.

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tradition of doing everything they can to protect their own communities. In the last War...”. The Home Office had returned to the communal spirit of the War, something they had attempted to downplay for years. The volunteer based UKWMO and ROC were now the frontline of an emergency action network, led by a County Emergency Planning Officer. The old sub-regional system was adapted into “an emergency planning network [that had] been set up across the country as an insurance policy against disaster”.⁵⁹ Some months later the Berlin Wall came down. By 1990, authorities found securing the formerly secretive and clandestine SRHQ bunkers to be a burdensome chore, one they were quick to pass back to the Home Office. The following year the ROC was abandoned, much the same way the Civil Defence Corps had been thirty years prior. Protect and Survive was not revised so much as it was transformed for a different purpose, as much the world did with the end of the Cold War.⁶⁰

The story of Protect and Survive is a story of failure. It failed in its goal to instil confidence in civil defence and it failed to provide Labour a tool to promote unilateralism. Thankfully, it was never put to the test to see if it would have failed to provide shelter. The static nature of British politics and tradition instilled a desire for some combination of communal effort, individual responsibility, and government oversight.

This thesis has demonstrated that Protect and Survive was reasonable advice that would have given the nation a fighting chance at recovery, but as Buttery warned, it could not stand

⁵⁹ Quotes and image from: *Should Disaster Strike: Civil Protection in Action*, 1985. Note the governmental oversight that delegates responsibilities downward to the community level.

⁶⁰ TNA: HO 322/995, “Cheshire Constabulary to F6 Re: Regional Government Headquarters (RGHQ) 10.2 at Hack Green,” January 18, 1990.

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against the awesome forces of satire and context. There were some traditions and institutions that the British public could not relinquish. Protect and Survive may have taken a step too far into neo-liberalism while Labour’s calls for unilateralism fell on deaf ears. Britons wanted the deterrent, they wanted Britain to maintain global influence, a noble defence force, and resistance to conventional aerial attack. Protect and Survive called for a little too much individualism and not enough assistance from the State.

Historians still distort the influence of Protect and Survive on British culture, arguing that the relentless satire from the people, represented by the CND, humiliated the Government into action to revise the programme. While the protest media of the alliance successfully undermined the public legitimacy of the programme, the Home Office always believed that the advice that was taken out of context and ridiculed relentlessly, still had merit. No protest convinced the Government that the public wanted to disarm, instead they repackaged the same advice and obscured it from attention under a surge of all-hazards emergency planning.

Social and political interaction were complex constructions in Britain in the 1980s. People had ostensibly changed while the Government remained constant. A mood of distrust, cynicism, and apathy had taken root amongst the British public. Some believed they should be left to their own devices, to create better protections than the State could provide. Others felt betrayed the Government was failing to provide worthy security. As far back as *The War Game*, a fear was building of institutional collapse in Britain. For some it was the greatest fear. The undercurrent of civil defence was to have hope, to know measures would be in place from which to rebuild.

This message failed to reach the nation. The loss of British civilization was too great to risk on civil defence. It had to be prevented and most Britons believed the deterrent was the

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answer, not unilateralism. Britain had already lost so much financially and politically; the nation did not want to be de-fanged simply hoping the Soviet Union never decide to hurl the world into a mutually assured abyss. The Home Office tinkered with revisions, attempted to incorporate more of the public’s concerns, though they knew there was little cause for concern. While the aligned forces of the Left may have made a mockery of Protect and Survive, it only served to drive Britons away from the perceived haplessness of unilateralism.

The alliance against Protect and Survive argued the programme would have failed to protect the public, and even if it helped, it would only serve to prolong suffering. This was the view of the unilateralist, though the British majority believed prolonged suffering was still prolonged life. If Britain did descend into “medieval barbarism”, it certainly would not be expedited by Protect and Survive, which provided the only established foundation for recovery. Britain was made of its institutions, losing them would equal the end of British civilization, and that was a chance too large to take. This was the factor still unconsidered, despite the cultural protests and debates, Britons never departed nuclear culture. They remained opposed to unilateralism and voted accordingly.⁶¹

The failure of Protect and Survive is one of the most representative examples of British nuclear culture. There was a reality, firmly established in Britain, that nuclear weapons would never be forfeited. The Home Office recognized this reality and concluded that it had a duty to do something to defend the nation from attack. Abandoning the deterrent was never a possibility. Before Labour’s breakaway from the nuclear consensus, both parties believed in the prominent role of the deterrent in British defence policy. While the protesters helped popularize Protect and Survive, they did little to dispel the fear of the end of British society from a bolt out of the blue.

⁶¹ Preston, “The Strange Death of UK Civil Defence Education in the 1980s,” 230.

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For decades, Protect and Survive has existed under a fog of misconceptions that the historiography is only now beginning to correct. The assumptions of malice that predominated opinions of the programme are now without merit as humanitarian pragmatism has been evidenced conclusively. The existence of a nuclear consensus in Britain has been documented in this study, a consensus that highly politicized civil defence, while dictating its maintenance within substantial limitations. As a neo-liberal paragon, the programme can still be described a product of its time, even as this study demonstrated that it was created by 1970s civil servants under a Labour government. Thus, even with overwhelmingly negative depictions in culture and politics, Protect and Survive never turned the public against the Conservatives or rewarded Labour for leaving the consensus.

It has been evidenced that Protect and Survive ingrained itself into British memory of the Cold War through popular culture, academia, protest groups, political organizations, the scientific community, and even primary schools. Millions of Britons recall the haunting images of Protect and Survive as it formed an indelible part of their memories of the 1980s. British comedian Rikki Brown provided what might be the finest example of the effect Protect and Survive had on growing up in Britain in the 1980s:

It was full of handy hints on how to survive the nuclear Armageddon. Basically, take a door off its hinges, lay it against a wall, pile furniture against it, and hide behind the door with a radio, a torch and a bucket for a toilet. I suppose the government had to do something, so Protect and Survive was the something they did. Seems they realized that a more honest and truthful publication called “You’re F’d” might have induced panic.⁶²

⁶² Rikki Brown, *Frankie Vaughan Ate My Hamster: Growing up in the East End* (London, UK: Black & White Publishing, 2013), 3.

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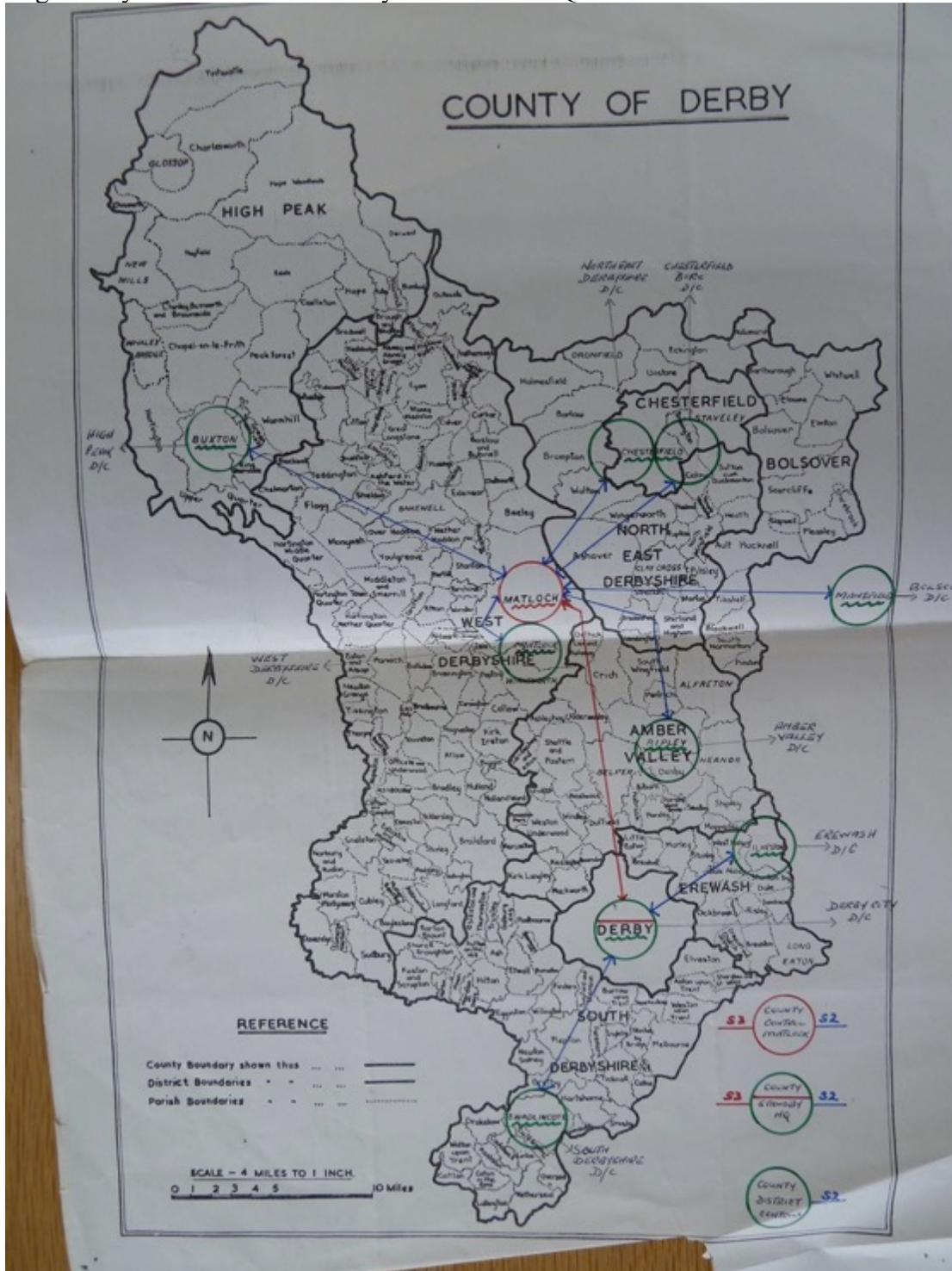
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TNA: CAB 129.	TNA: HO 322.	TNA: MAF 250/35.
TNA: CAB 130.	TNA: HO 377.	TNA: PREM 11/4147.
TNA: CAB 134.	TNA: INF6/2294.	TNA: PREM 13/26.
TNA: CAB 148.	TNA: INF6/2490.	TNA: Treasury T331/850.
TNA: CAB 189.	TNA: INF6/2502.	

Bunkers

Kelvedon Hatch. Brentwood, Essex. England
Hack Green. Nantwich, Cheshire. England
Anstruther. Anstruther, Fife. Scotland

Appendix A

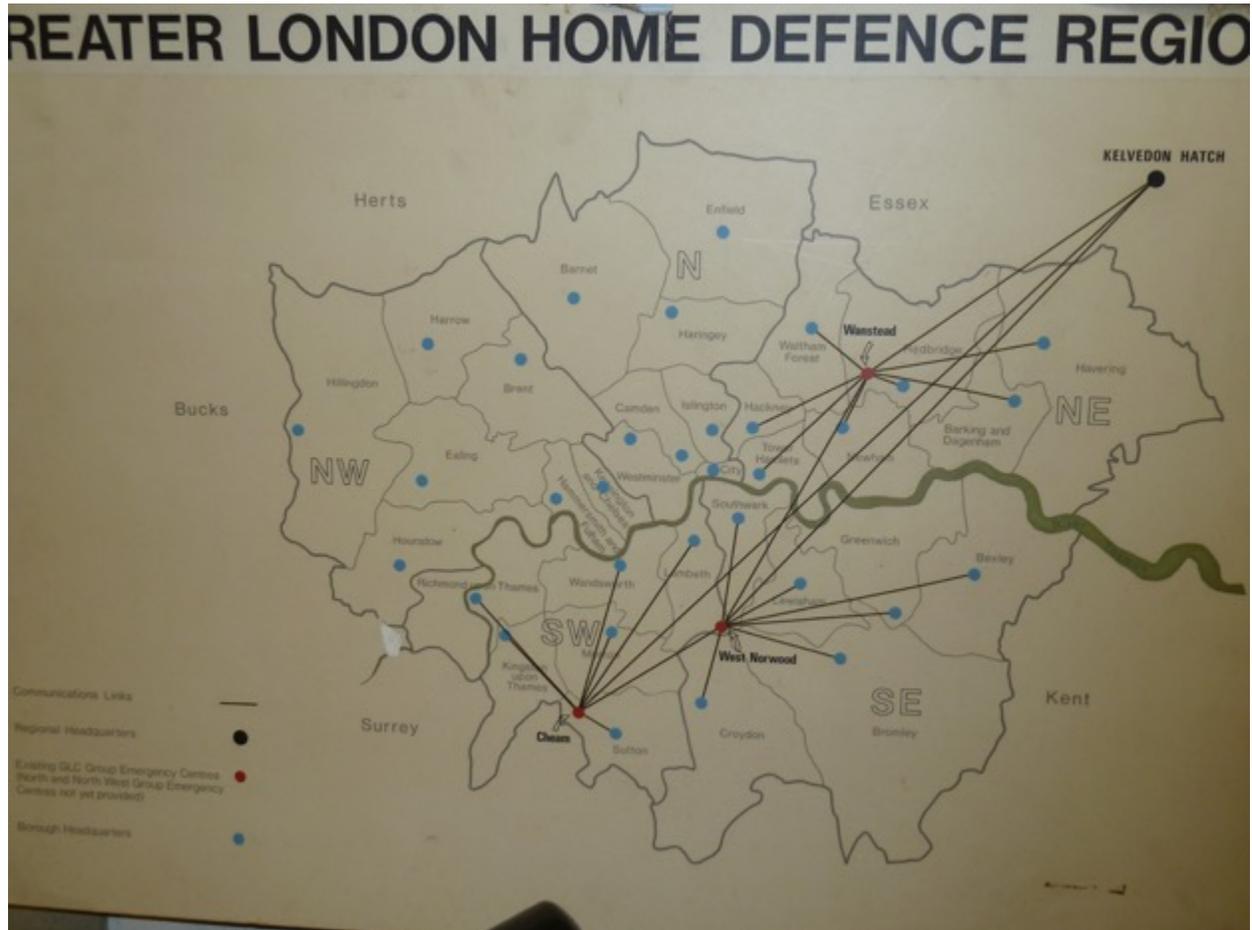
Regional system focused to County and District HQs.



¹ TNA: HO 322/917, "Letter from Derbyshire CC," May 1, 1979.

Appendix

London Civil Defence Region with SHRQ and Local Authority HQs.

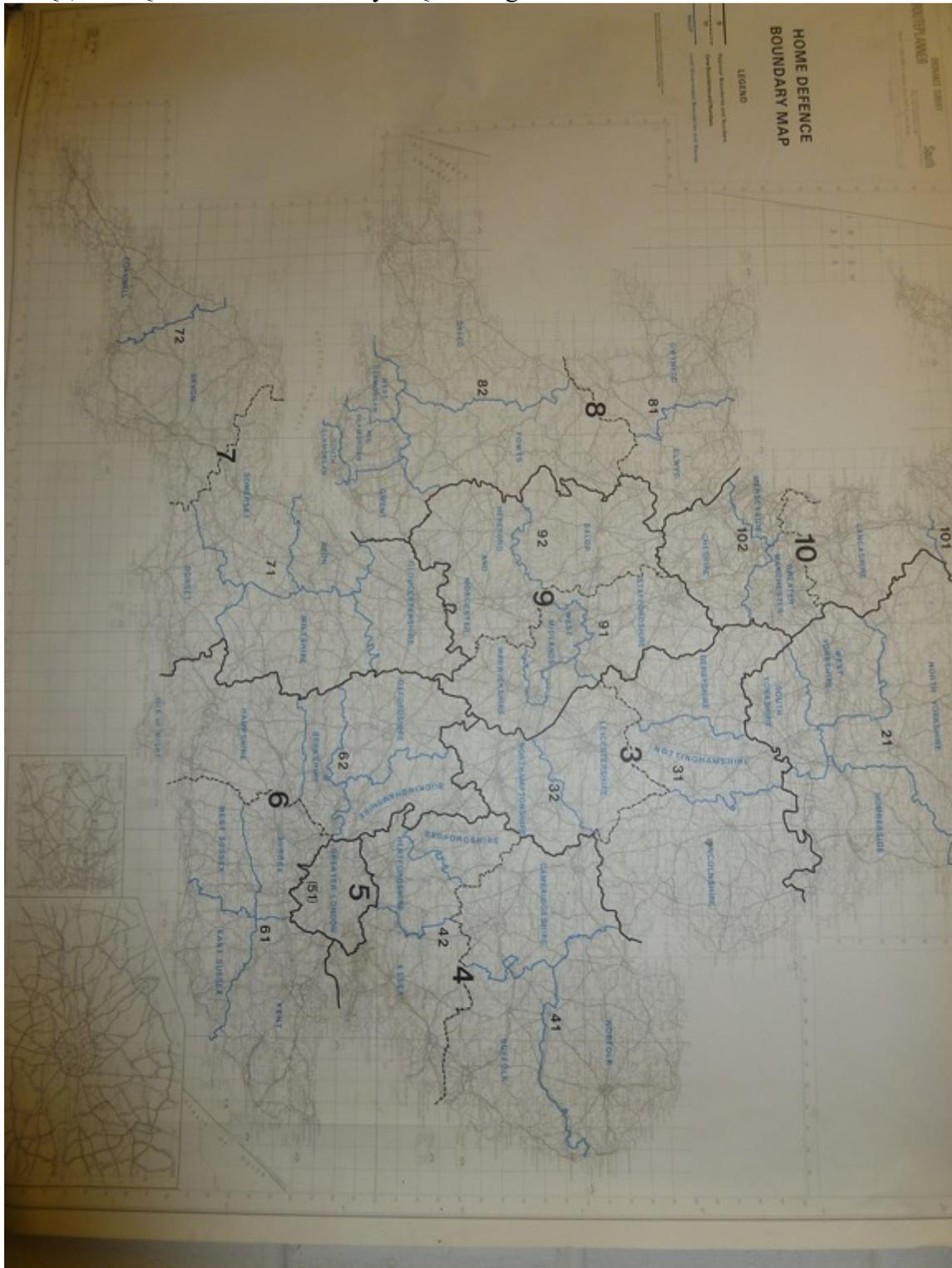


2

² Kelvedon Hatch Bunker, 2012. Photograph by Joseph Buscemi.

Appendix

RHQs, SRHQs and Local Authority HQs of England and Wales



³ Hack Green Bunker, 2012. Photograph by Joseph Buscemi.

Appendix

UKWMO Regional and Sub-Regional Sections.



⁴ London Metropolitan Archives (LMA): GLC/RA/COOS/02/024/002, "UKWMO Sector & Group Boundaries," 1983.

Appendix

Appendix B



Appendix C

ART OF  .COM

 **ZTAS 3**



some of us still believe that, without freedom, human beings cannot become fully human and that freedom is therefore supremely valuable. Perhaps the forces that now menace freedom are too strong to be resisted for very long. It is still our duty to do whatever we can to resist them

AMERICA	RUSSIA
land-based ballistic missiles	
1,052	1,398
submarine-launched ballistic missiles	
520	950
strategic bombers	
316	150
nuclear warheads	
9,300	7,300
TOTAL EXPLOSIVE POWER 3,000 MEGATONS	TOTAL EXPLOSIVE POWER 5,000 MEGATONS

frankie goes to war
1. TWO TRIBES:
sung by holly johnson
and paul rutherford

frankie goes to play
2. (diseased musos meet
little charmers)
ONE FEBRUARY FRIDAY:
played by peter gill,
brian nash
and mark o'toole

planned in Liverpool, 1982-83
built in London, March 1984
produced by trevor horn –
assisted by his building theam
photograph of V.I. Lenin:
anton corbijn, May 1983
art direction: XLZTT

THIS IS WITH 12 ZTAS 3
NUMBER THREE IN ZANG
TUMB TUUM'S
THREATENING ACTION
SERIES. "ALL THINGS THAT
LIVE ARE SUBJECT TO
CONSTRAINT". On 12 ZTAS 3
you can witness annihilation,
surrender and War. Frenetic
Frankie Fanatics can contact
Holly, Paul, Peter, Brian, and
Mark or join the Hollywood
Club through P.O. Box Number
160, Liverpool, L6G 8BT.
Enclose s.a.e.

Meanwhile there is still
freedom left in the world. Many
young people, it is true, do not
seem to value freedom. But