



An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

Reference Code:	2017/10/16
Creation Dates:	2 April 1987
Extent and medium:	8 pages
Creator(s):	Department of the Taoiseach
Accession Conditions:	Open
Copyright:	National Archives, Ireland. May only be reproduced with the written permission of the Director of the National Archives.

Seol aon fhreagra chun
(Reply to)

AN RÚNAI
(The Secretary)

faoim uimhir seo:
(Quoting)



AN ROINN COSANTA
(Department of Defence)

BRAINSE COSANTA SIBHIALTA
(Civil Defence Branch)

COLÁISTE CHAOIMHÍN
(Coláiste Chaoimhín)

BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH 9
(Dublin 9)

Teileafón: (01) 379911

2 April, 1987.

SECRET

For attention of R. Hinchy

*Mr M. Carthy,
For review of, in
particular on 1(1).
Recd 2/3/87*

The Secretary
Department of the Taoiseach

Memorandum for the Government on Wartime
Emergency Preparations in Civil Matters

I am directed by the Minister for Defence to refer to the recommendations of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Wartime Emergency Preparations regarding the proposed submission to the Government of revised basic Planning Assumptions for the purposes of such Preparations and to enclose for your observations a draft Memorandum for the Government in the matter.

Two Planning Assumptions previously adopted (Nos (5) and (6) in para 1 of the Memorandum) though not discussed by the full Committee are included, as it is considered by this Department that they should be retained.

It would be appreciated if your Department's observations were furnished by 16 April, 1987.

A. Walsh
A. WALSH

*to Hinchy Recd. 16/4
This approach by Defence
is at variance with the line
taken by Mr. Walsh in his minute
of 29 Jan '87. We
have received confirmation from
Defence that it is their view that
the planning arrangements at
1(a) & (b) are in place and
this is what Mr. Walsh envisaged
as the best procedure
B. Walsh 16/4/87*

OFFICE OF THE MINISTER FOR DEFENCE
MEMORANDUM FOR THE GOVERNMENT
WARTIME EMERGENCY PREPARATIONS IN CIVIL MATTERS
REVISED BASIC PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS

DECISION SOUGHT

1. The Minister for Defence recommends that the Government approve the adoption, for the purposes of Wartime Emergency Preparations in Civil Matters, -including Civil Defence - of the following revised basic Planning Assumptions, namely:
 - (1) Violence in Northern Ireland could, as heretofore, necessitate such civil measures in the State as:
 - (a) the reception of refugees on a large scale and
 - (b) medical and hospital treatment of casualties.
 - (2) In a major war Ireland would be neutral but might have to defend her neutrality.
 - (3) In the case of a major war Ireland might be:
 - (a) subjected to deliberate or accidental nuclear strikes
 - (b) subjected, in varying degrees, to radioactive fall-out
 - (c) affected by electromagnetic pulse from exo-atmospheric nuclear explosions
 - (d) affected by climatic and or ecological changes arising from the multiple detonation of nuclear weapons
 - (e) subjected to direct chemical and biological attacks, or be affected by such attacks on other countries

- (f) subjected to conventional aerial and/or naval bombardment accidental or deliberate
- (g) Subjected to subversion, espionage and sabotage, possibly supported and directed in varying degrees by external sources
- (h) subjected to blockade that interrupted trade
- (i) invaded by land, sea or air

(4) In the case of a major war a warning of two (2) weeks should be assumed.

(5) while it is impossible to predict how long external trade, production, public service etc. would be interrupted by a major war, for planning purposes a year's interruption should be assumed;

(6) this country's ability to survive and overcome the difficulties arising out of a major war will depend on the extent of the preparations made before the war.

BACKGROUND

2. Emergency planning in recent years has been based on a decision made by the Government on 24 October 1972 to approve the adoption of the Planning Assumptions listed in the Appendix to this Memorandum.

3. An Inter-Departmental Committee on Emergency Preparations was established by the Government on 7th January 1958, and was chaired by the Department of Defence, to co-ordinate the preparation of Departmental Wartime procedures and the preparation of a draft National Security Bill and a National Security Order to give broad, legal powers to deal with wartime emergencies. That Committee last met in 1972 by which time the Northern Ireland situation had become critical, forcing the Department of Defence to concentrate on that situation rather than on general wartime preparations.

4. In 1982 the Inter-Departmental Committee on Emergency Preparations was re-established on a more formal footing. The Committee was chaired by the Taoiseach's Department and was responsible for ensuring that Departmental plans were prepared and co-ordinated, that policy differences were sorted out and that Wartime and Peacetime emergency planning arrangements generally were kept in a high state of readiness.

5. Following a review of the position in 1985, however, the Government decided, among other things, that
 - (1) planning for wartime and peacetime emergencies should be dealt with separately;
 - (2) in relation to wartime planning, the Minister for Defence should have prime responsibility, - possibly through the setting up of an Inter-Departmental Committee on Wartime Emergency Preparations;

This Government decision led to the setting up of a new Inter-Departmental Committee on Wartime Emergency Preparations, chaired by an Assistant Secretary from the Department of Defence with representatives at Principal Officer level from Departments concerned. This new Committee, following consideration of the existing Planning Assumptions has recommended the adoption of the Revised Planning Assumptions set out in Paragraph 1.

REASONS FOR REVISED PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS

- 6 The main differences between the proposed planning assumptions in Paragraph 1 and those approved by the Government in October 1972 (in Appendix) are as follows:

Revised assumption No. (1) varies from the existing assumption No. (5) in that reference to the security implications have been deleted at the request of the Department of the Taoiseach. That Department has indicated that planning in the security context should be done under the direction of the Cabinet Committee on National Security.

Revised assumption No. (2) emphasises the traditional policy of neutrality of the State.

Revised assumption No. (3) reflects previous thinking in this area in existing assumptions Nos (1) and (3) and includes the possibility of conventional bombardment, blockade and threats such as the "Nuclear Winter" and electromagnetic pulse.

5.

Revised assumption No. (4) (existing assumption No. (1)) assumes in accordance with current thinking a warning period of not more than two weeks in relation to a major war.

The assumptions as revised have also been somewhat simplified.

7. It is proposed, subject to the adoption of the revised Planning Assumptions, that each Department will consider the responses required of it in the planning context and will make comprehensive plans appropriate to its responsibilities.

CONSULTATION

8. All Departments concerned have been consulted and.....

APPENDIX

Planning Assumptions adopted by the
Government on 24 October, 1972.

- (1) any major war in the foreseeable future would begin with little or no advance warning,
 - (i) as an all-out nuclear war,
 - or
 - (ii) as a conventional war escalating to all-out nuclear war -in the event of (i) or (ii), biological or chemical warfare might develop;

- (2) in a major war, this country might be
 - (a) neutral, or
 - (b) a forced participant, or
 - (c) a willing belligerent;

- (3) in a major war,
 - (a) the most likely hazard for this country is that it is liable to be subjected, in varying degrees, to radioactive fall-out - particular account being taken of the probability of deliberate nuclear attack on targets in Britain and the Six Counties,
 - (b) this country may, either accidentally or by design,
 - (i) be hit by nuclear devices or conventional high explosive and/or incendiary bombs (even though nuclear devices of much higher yield than

APPENDIX CONTD)

1 megaton are available, devices ranging to 1 megaton in yield will be assumed for planning purposes) and

- (ii) be subjected to chemical or biological attack,
- (c) this country may be invaded and
- (d) subversive activities may develop in this country;

(4) while it is impossible to predict how long external trade, production, public services etc. will be interrupted by a major war, for planning purposes a year's interruption will be assumed;

(5) violence in the Six Counties could necessitate measures such as

- (a) reception of refugees on a large scale,
- (b) medical and hospital treatment of casualties,
- (c) internal security arrangements, e.g., protection of important installations and premises against sabotage, border patrols and setting up of special criminal courts and
- (d) measures to deal with other forms of reaction here (e.g., outbreaks of violence) as a result of events in the Six Counties; and

(6) this country's ability to survive and overcome the difficulties arising out of a major war will depend on the extent of the preparations made before the war.