

ORGANIZATION OF A.R.P.

"A MATTER OF FIRST URGENCY"

HOME OFFICE STATEMENT OF POLICY

The Home Office has addressed to all local authorities in England and Wales and Scotland a circular (A.R.P. Department Circular No. 9/1939, Stationery Office, 2d. net) on the organization of air raid general precautions, in the following terms:—

I am directed by the Lord Privy Seal, in the exercise of the powers of the Secretary of State to inform you that he has now completed a general review of the state of air raid general precautions for whose execution local authorities are responsible under the Air Raid Precautions Act, 1937, and in the light of the experience gained of the administration of the Act he can give some general indications of his policy, to which he wishes the immediate attention of local authorities.

LEGISLATION

2.—Sir John Anderson explained to the representatives of local authorities at a meeting on December 19 that he proposed to introduce further legislation on air raid precautions when Parliament assembled; this legislation, if approved by Parliament, will confer additional powers on local authorities and will make provision for air raid precaution measures in public utility undertakings and in industrial and commercial establishments. But, as at present advised, he has not in contemplation any substantial amendment to the present Act or the Regulations made under it which would affect the present duties of local authorities. Considerable progress has already been made by nearly all local authorities, and in his judgment what is required now is the completion of details on the lines already begun, and the intensification of the training and organization of the volunteers in all air raid precautions services. I am instructed to emphasize to local authorities the Lord Privy Seal's belief in the need for carrying these tasks through as a matter of first urgency. If war were to occur, and air raids developed over the country, the safety of the people would be largely dependent upon the thoroughness of the preparations that had been made by their local authorities.

3.—As part of the plans for expediting the progress of air raid general precautions, immediate steps are being taken for materially strengthening the regional staff of the Department. This will have the effect, amongst other things, of reducing the need for reference on various subjects in the Central, and in view of the Senior Inspectors will have authority to indicate approval, on behalf of the Department, of definite parts of local authority schemes.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE ACT

4.—The measures of air raid precautions prescribed by the Regulations affect all the main departments of a local authority, and the operation of the scheme in war would require the cooperation of all those departments. Each department must therefore fit itself in peace to undertake the duties which would be its concern. While it is proper that a general oversight of the work should be undertaken by a special Committee of the Council, it is important that air raid precautions should not be treated as a matter extraneous to the ordinary functions of local government. Every responsible officer of a local authority, e.g., Medical Officer of Health and Surveyor or Engineer, should be assigned his specific part in the work, and in view of its urgency should be given as much authority on matters of detail as is consistent with the

reference expenditure which falls within any general or special approval given under section 8 of the Act. The Privy Seal has also addressed a separate circular to county councils on the organization of air raid general precautions in rural areas.

ENROLMENT OF VOLUNTEERS

9.—Generally the enrolment of volunteers is proceeding satisfactorily. On the basis of the figures issued with the circular of January 4 the air raid general precautions establishment for the whole country should be of the order of 1,100,000—about 720,000 men and 380,000 women; this makes allowance for organization in reliefs and shifts, but not for reserves. The returns from local authorities indicate that up to the end of December the numbers enrolled for this purpose were about 1,150,000. In some areas the volunteers in certain services are above or nearly up to the establishment strength; in others, however, there are deficiencies, and some services are short in a considerable number of areas. The Lord Privy Seal confidently expects that the recruiting efforts in connexion with National Service, which are now being launched, will rapidly bring all services in all areas up to full strength, and will also provide a sufficient supply of reserves. As is being separately notified to scheme-making authorities, arrangements may now be made in certain areas for the enrolment of air raid precautions volunteers on the basis that in the event of war they would give whole-time service, for which they would be paid.

TRAINING

10.—It is imperative that adequate facilities should be provided by local authorities for the prompt training of volunteers in all air raid precautions services, and in particular for the completion of the training of the war establishments. Qualified instructors for some part of the training of wardens are now available throughout the country in sufficient numbers to permit local authorities to organize this training effectively. A revised and detailed syllabus of training for wardens has been prepared and will be issued to local authorities during the next few days. Further, the instruction courses at the Home Office Anti-Gas Schools at Falfeld and Easingwold—hereafter to be known as Air Raid Precautions Schools—have been extended to include teaching in methods of dealing with small incendiary bombs and in elementary methods of protection against high explosive; and special arrangements are under consideration for enabling those instructors who have already passed through the Anti-Gas Schools to take a course of training in the additional subjects. A separate circular on this subject, which will be addressed to local authorities shortly.

11.—The training of persons for the first aid services is behindhand in many areas. In view of the importance of this service Sir John Anderson requests all authorities to ensure that their Medical Officers of Health make arrangements for the training courses either through the help of the Voluntary Aid Organizations, or through other medical men.

12.—The general principles of training for rescue parties have already been indicated in A.R.P. Memorandum No. 2, and they are now being amplified. In addition a new memorandum on practical exercises and the combined training of all branches of the service has been prepared. For the efficiency of the air raid precautions services, and to ensure the continued keenness of the volunteers, the exercises are essential, and, as the complements of volunteers who have completed their individual training are increased, local authorities should pay particular attention to this aspect of training.

13.—Many authorities have already recognized the need for the provision of training centres where volunteers can assemble for training, and where the total number of persons in the war establishment in any sufficiently compact area is, say, 1,000 or over the authority should urgently consider this matter if provision has not been made. In some instances more than one centre may be necessary, and wherever possible the building chosen should have attached, or have access to, a small piece of open ground in which incendiary bomb training, trench construction, filling and laying sandbags, stretcher work, and in view of its urgency should be given as much authority on matters of detail as is consistent with the

district (or a burgh in Scotland) which is policed by the county police, but which is empowered to prepare a separate scheme under the Act, any cost incurred must be borne by the county borough, burgh (or burgh) or urban district.

EQUIPMENT

19.—Local authorities are no doubt aware that up to September last the Home Office was working on what may fairly be described as a long-term programme for the supply of equipment. The A.R.P. equipment available at the time of the recent crisis was generally in advance of the programme dates, but it was admittedly inadequate to meet the demands that the crisis produced. Since the crisis steps have been taken to accelerate the programme of supply, and equipment is now coming forward at rapidly increasing rates.

EXECUTION OF SHELTER POLICY

20.—A separate circular will shortly be issued to the authorities concerned on the measures necessary to put into execution the shelter policy announced by the Lord Privy Seal in Parliament on December 21, 1938. The Lord Privy Seal has considered that this summary of his programme in relation to the duties of local authorities under the Act would be useful at this stage. He is fully aware of the heavy work involved in these tasks both for members of the authorities and their officials, and an incentive is conveyed through his appreciation of the progress that has been made in the last three months. He is, however, bound to emphasize that much still remains to be done before the measures approved by Parliament for the protection of the civil population against the effects of air raids can be regarded as satisfactory, and he urges authorities, therefore, to take immediate action on any of the matters mentioned in this circular which require to be in hand in their area.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant, A. MAXWELL.

NEEDS OF RURAL AREAS

SCHEMES BASED ON THE COUNTRY TOWN

A further communication (A.R.P. Department Circular No. 10/1939, Stationery Office, 1d. net) has been addressed to county councils and rural district councils, dealing specially with the organization of air raid general precautions in rural areas. The circular states:—

1.—It is not possible to generalize too rigidly with regard to rural areas, because there are obvious differences between a rural area lying between London and the coast, which might be traversed by raiders at frequent intervals, and a rural area in the west over which no raid might pass throughout a war. Nevertheless, rural areas have certain general characteristics, whatever their geographical position, which differentiate their air raid precautions needs from those of a large town.

2.—The principal difference is that a rural area is not covered by targets likely to attract bombing, or, if there is such a target, it is seldom likely to be surrounded by houses. The main risk to the inhabitants of a rural area is therefore from bombs dropped at random, and the likelihood of a house being hit, or of casualties occurring, depends on the relative areas of occupied and unoccupied ground. Casualties should therefore be few, even if many bombs fall, and such as would occur would be more likely to be single casualties on roads or in fields, with the chance of a village being hit as a remote contingency.

3.—Such a state of affairs does not justify the provision of organized and equipped parties on a scale which would provide them within easy reach of every village. The scattered numbers of equipped parties, applied to predominantly rural counties, will necessitate their being concentrated in the main centres of population, leaving considerable areas of purely rural countryside not closely covered. Further, it will be neither necessary nor practicable to provide, outside towns, any system of public air raid warnings. There is

THE STRENGTH OF BRITAIN

SIR S. HOARE ON A GREAT PEOPLE

REPLY TO PESSIMISTS

Sir Samuel Hoare, the Home Secretary, addressed a mass meeting at Brangwyn Hall, Swansea, last night on the strength of Great Britain and the Empire to withstand an emergency, and the value of that strength as a safeguard of peace. He condemned the spirit of defeatism that was current in some quarters.

"This is a moment," he said, "when we must seek for the maximum of unity and the minimum of division between our citizens. Let us then to-night pass beyond the controversies that play so prominent a part and occupy so much time and attention in the House of Commons, and let us begin by emphasizing the complete unity of the nation in its determination to be secure in the face of possible danger. It was indeed significant that on Tuesday night at the Albert Hall in London, the Labour leaders were on the platform with the members of the Government in their support of a great campaign upon National Service."

In these difficult days, he continued, the eyes of the world were fixed upon Great Britain and they were fixed in particular upon the British Prime Minister. If they took seriously the Opposition attacks upon the Government and the Prime Minister they would believe that British prestige had sunk to the lowest possible depth. That, Mr. Neville Chamberlain was either a guileless old man who was always to be seen by the cunning dictators, or a Fascist in disguise who was ready to sacrifice his interests for Fascist favour. There were some particularly foolish people in this country, who actually believed these preposterous charges. No one believed them in Europe.

"Go to any country of the Continent," Sir Samuel Hoare said, "and you will find men and women everywhere speaking of Great Britain as the chief safeguard of peace in Europe. Ask them what they think of the British Prime Minister. Will they tell you that he is an old feeble man, making futile journeys on the road to Canossa? They will tell you nothing of the kind. They will speak of him everywhere with respect and with something more than respect, with admiration and affection as the great peace-maker of Europe. They will say that never in our lifetime has the British Prime Minister made so deep an impression from one end of the Continent to the other. I am told that when the other day he was driving through the streets of Rome, the people, gathered together in their thousands, were saying, 'Chamberlain is Europe's lifeblood.' From one end of Italy to the other men and women came to the railway stations through which he passed to have a momentary glimpse of the man who is fighting so nobly for the cause of peace."

UNDUE SELF-DISPARAGEMENT

To say that the great peace-maker has lowered British prestige so manifestly false that we may well be tempted to ignore it. But in these difficult days there is a real danger in this nation's passion of ours for party criticism and self-disparagement. Our enemies have sometimes taken their value, and they have looked on us as having abandoned each other and have dragged out our own affairs and have come to the conclusion that we really are what we are and that there is no good among us. You and I must do our utmost to show any possibility of

itself felt. This doctrine of the knock-out blow sounded at first almost unwearable. Its effect was to paralyze the imagination by saying that the whole of the War only 270 tons of bombs were dropped upon this country. They then added up the total number of potential enemy machines and multiplied them by vastly extended bomb loads, and then drew the conclusion that the great cities would be razed to the ground and the will to resist destroyed.

MODERN AIR WARFARE

"Having spent many years of my life at the Air Ministry," Sir Samuel Hoare said, "I should be the last person to underrate the effect of modern air warfare, nor would I wish for a moment to appear complacent about the present strength of the Royal Air Force. I must, however, say that just as much harm can be done by underrating the effects of air warfare, so great harm can be done by overrating it. I do not believe that in any European war, any country could afford to send more than a part of its air force upon raiding expeditions, and my belief is founded upon the actual experiences of the Great War and subsequent fighting, in which it has always been found necessary to keep a considerable weight of air force with the Army and the Navy and local defence. It is not to be supposed that an enemy air force would be left free to attack these shores. The modern fighter is a very formidable instrument of defence as compared with the fighters in the Great War, and, apart from the actual defence, there is always to be taken into account the great effect of the counter-attack—a form of air warfare in which we have always excelled. Then there are the new anti-aircraft guns. There has been a great development of A.A. guns in recent years. In Spain they have, I am told, accounted for half the aircraft that were in Great Britain, and we have the most modern and effective types in the world, and they have now come forward in large numbers."

He believed that any attempt to destroy our will to resist by air-attack would increase by a hundred-fold our determination to vanquish the aggressor. "Let the world ponder upon these things," he said, "and particularly let those ponder on them who say that we have grown weary with age and feeble in power. So they thought in 1914. They had a rude awakening. Yes, and let those also ponder on them who go about the world with white faces and trembling lips asking each other which day of the week and of the month the world war is going to begin. These timid panic-mongers are doing the greatest harm. They are creating a fatal feeling of the inevitability of war, when there is no such inevitability at all. Worst of all, they are showing cowardice in the face of a potential enemy."

It was not in the U.S.A., there is a class of people who sit listening in hysterical excitement to what is called 'hot music' and waiting for the final crash. Americans in their forcible language call them the 'Jitter-bugs.' There are many people in Europe to-day who are doing the same thing. They are sitting listening to all the hot music of the scares and alarms, waiting helplessly for the crash that, according to them, will destroy us all."

Speaking of preparedness, Sir Samuel Hoare said that in the past we had been unprepared, but that to-day our preparations had already progressed to formidable point. The national spirit behind these preparations was gathering force every day. It would, he was certain, show itself in the response to the appeal for national service on a voluntary basis. So strong was it that there were many who would have wished for a compulsory register and compulsory training to follow it. It was for the citizens of this country to prove that a democracy working spontaneously without dictation could organize its man power for a great national effort. This was the inner meaning of the appeal that had been launched this week. This was the inner meaning of Air Raid Precautions.

I have so great faith in my fellow-countrymen," Sir Samuel Hoare said in conclusion, "I have so deep admiration for their wisdom and their patriotism, that I am certain that this appeal will succeed. Its success will mean a great accession of strength to our defences. But its success will be something more than a purely material achievement. It will show to the world the strength of democracy, and it will show to Europe the spirit of Britain."

RAILWAY UNIONS' CLAIMS

COMPANIES' REPLY

TOTAL COST ESTIMATED AT £25,580,000

Mr. G. L. Darbyshire, for the railway companies, explained yesterday to the Railway Staff National Tribunal at Montagu House, Westminster, his statement that the claims of the three railway unions would ultimately cost the railway companies £25,580,000 a year.

The statement alleged that the claims on behalf of the railway staff under the jurisdiction of the tribunal would amount to £6,869,000. Applying the unions' proposals to staff to which similar or comparable concessions would be applicable, another £18,222,000 would be required, bringing the total up to £25,580,000, after an item of £110,000 (relating to a minimum payment for Sunday duty) was deducted.

Referring to the clerks' demand for a 40-hour week and the restriction of over-all hours to not more than nine a day for the salaried staff, Mr. DARBYSHIRE said that for those covered by the claim this would cost £1,819,000, but, if extended to other employees, it would cost a further £1,556,000. The extension of 50s. would cost £1,087,000, and the extension to other employees £1,479,000—a total of £2,566,000. The railway clerks' salaries claim would require £1,326,000 and its extension to others £231,000, a total of £1,557,000. The engineers and firemen's claim for improved pay for drivers would cost £787,000. The claims by the three unions for extended holidays with pay would cost £1,204,000, and the extension to other employees £432,000—a total of £1,636,000. Then, Mr. DARBYSHIRE said, the members of the tribunal would defer their questions on the statement until a later stage in the proceedings.

DRIVERS' EARNINGS

Mr. Darbyshire said that the companies did not agree that the larger engines, such as the "Royal Scot," called for a greater efficiency on the part of the driver and the fireman. Only one in 100 of the total number of drivers was employed at one time on such engines, and drivers were called upon to drive them, on the average, four days out of nine. Their wages were paid on a mileage basis, a run of 140 miles being equal to a day's pay, and each 15 miles in excess of 140 being remunerated by an hour's additional pay. The rate of remuneration for such runs for a full week ranged from 4s. 10s. to 4s. 10s. for firemen, and from 13s. 12s. to 18s. for drivers. These figures, however, did not represent the actual earnings of many of the men, who did not work a full week on such runs.

One of the grounds on which the claim of the Railway Clerks' Association had been made was that there had been no general increase in salaries since 1919, but Mr. Darbyshire contended that there had been a real improvement owing to the fall in the cost of living.

POSITION OF SHAREHOLDERS

Referring to the suggestion that the present salaries did not enable the staff to maintain the standard of living to which they felt they were entitled, he said: "Consider the claim of the railway shareholder to a better return on the capital he has invested in the industry. His return is not—like the remuneration of

SERVANT AGENCY FRAUDS

PENAL SERVITUDE FOR PROPRIETOR

After a trial extending over three days before the Common Serjeant, Mr. Cecil Whiteley, K.C., at the Central Criminal Court, CAPTAIN FRED RUSSELL, 53, employment agency proprietor; MARY HANSON, 39, manageress, and KATHLEEN MARTIN, 28, manageress, were yesterday found *GUILTY* of conspiring to defraud persons in connexion with an employment agency. Russell and Hanson were also found *GUILTY* of obtaining money by false pretences with intent to defraud. The accused had been committed from Tunbridge Wells.

The case for the prosecution was that by means of advertisements and specious statements, persons were persuaded to pay premiums ranging from £45 to £100 on written assurances that they would be permanently employed. In not one of the cases did the victims get back as much as £25 of their money.

During the trial, Captain Russell had protested that he had been deprived of access to papers which were necessary for his defence. The hearing of the case on Wednesday was adjourned early in the day, the two women defendants being allowed bail so that they might get the documents required. Yesterday a prison officer said he overheard Russell say to the two women: "Do not bring any papers. If you do, I will find them in your face. Do not touch any papers of mine."

£3,600 RECEIVED

Inspector Hawkyard said that Russell, in 1936, was fined £20 at Brighton for unlawfully carrying on an employment agency without a licence, and in 1937 he was fined £1 for attempting to travel on the railway without paying his fare. For the past 10 years he had been interested in domestic service and had opened various employment agencies. The amount involved in the charges before the Court was £496.

The witness said that so far as he could ascertain Russell since 1929 had received as a result of his fraudulent schemes a total of over £3,600 from persons, mostly women, who could ill-afford to lose the money. Neither of the two women had been convicted previously. Russell, in the dock, launched a tirade against the Judge, the Press, the police, and county councils in general. Pointing to a barrister in court, he exclaimed, "He has poisoned the minds of the Brighton Corporation against me, and I say (sweeping his arm in the direction of some of the witnesses) the police have been poisoning the minds of these people here."

"I have placed 4,000,000 men and women on the industrial map by means of a trade union which, in my opinion, does not exist. Alone I have done it. It is as much a legal organization as your Law Society (indicating the Judge) and the transport workers and shop assistants unions."

"WINKING AT JURY

Pointing directly at the Common Serjeant Russell exclaimed, "I charge him with winking at the jury. He can send me to 20 years if he likes. One of his Majesty's Judges has condescended to wink at the jury. I say the Judge has not only spiked my guns but nicked my ammunition in the bargain. There was never a dirtier charge than this. To think we are fighting the Press, the police, and the county councils throughout this country."

Russell declared that the money concerned in the case had been spent in the business. Turning to the jury, he said, "I say he had no right to direct you. You have had no evidence except a one-sided affair." When the prisoner accused a woman juror of printing a male juror's name up and remarked to Common Serjeant, "On behalf of the jury, may I protest against this." Russell was sentenced to four years' penal servitude. Hanson was sentenced to 18 months' imprisonment, and Martin to 12 months' imprisonment.

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