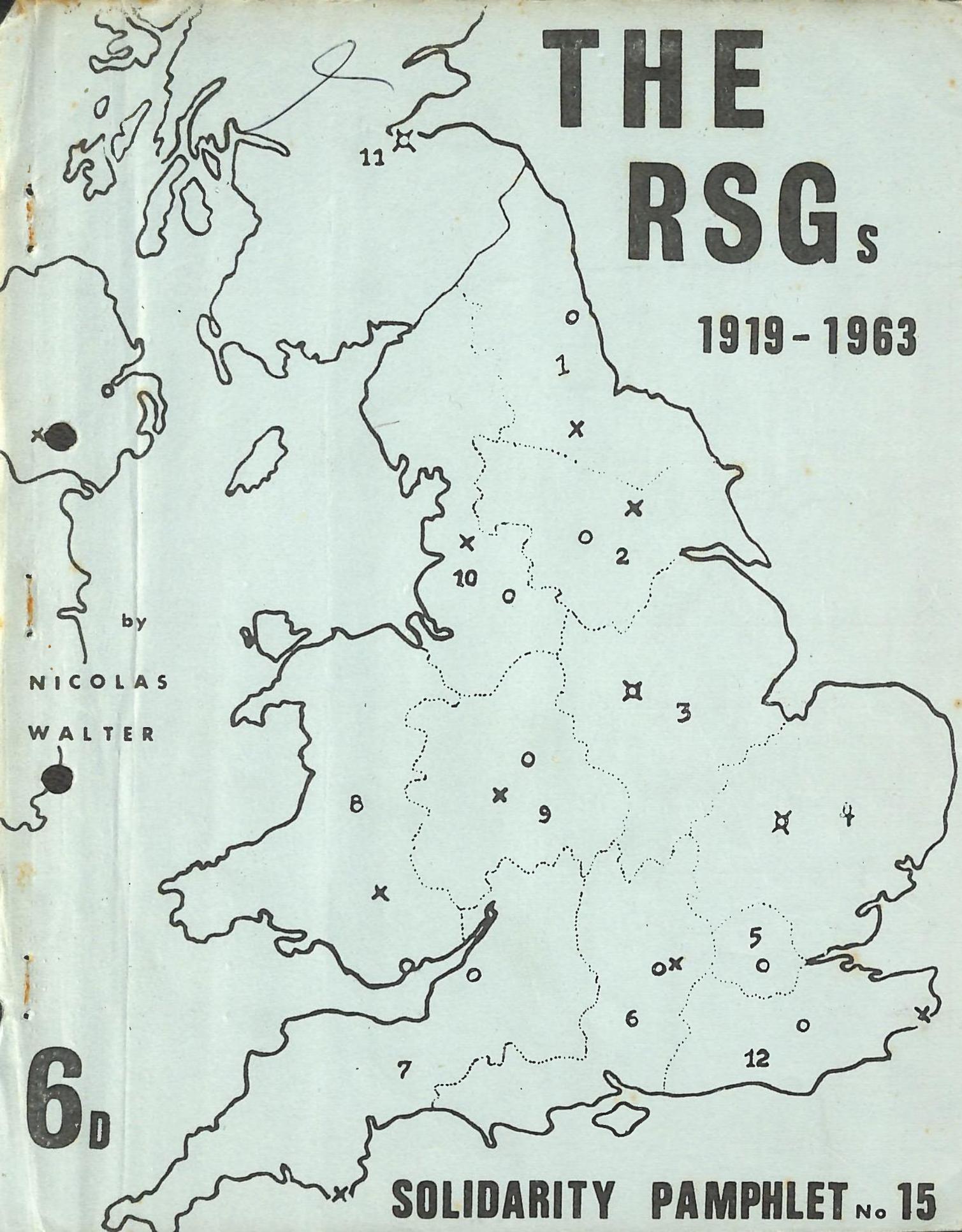


THE RSGs

1919 - 1963



by

NICOLAS
WALTER

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SOLIDARITY PAMPHLET No. 15

SOLIDARITY PAMPHLETS

THE 100 VERSUS THE STATE. September 1961, Wethersfield, the Trial of the Six -- the socialist implications of mass civil disobedience and direct action. Produced with the I.L.P. (8d).

RESISTANCE SHALL GROW. The "Spies for Peace" story. Aldermaston 1963 -- and after. Produced with the I.L.P., S.W.F., F.L.A., and supporters of the London Committee of 100. (8d).

CIVIL "DEFENCE" & DIRECT ACTION. The case of Andy Anderson. One man's struggle with the authorities. How to make the most of your council meetings. Produced by the Reading Solidarity Group. (8d).

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K E Y T O M A P

- o RSGs in World War II (according to Terence O'Brien, the author of the official history of Civil Defence).
- x RSGs in World War III (according to the "Spies for Peace", the authors of Danger! Official Secret: RSG-6)

THE WALTER REPORT

By now everyone should know what an RSG is. 'Spies' and satirists, policemen and politicians, Civil Defence sages and CND cynics, amused cartoonists and angry councillors, seditious philosophers and statesmanlike fornicators have all joined their efforts to give the word a really good start. And now even Henry Brooke has decided that "the public should be given more information" (Sunday Times, September 22nd). Hence this pamphlet. In November 1863 Abraham Lincoln spoke in his famous Gettysburg Address of "Government of the People, by the People, for the People." A hundred years later our rulers are coming on nicely with their plans for "Government of the People, by the Government, for the Government." For beneath the civil defence smoke-screen this is the real meaning of the RSGs.

In this pamphlet Nicolas Walter describes the birth, growth and ultimate collapse of this monstrous bureaucratic project. He shows how secret plans for semi-military regional government were first drawn up in the stormy period after World War I. They were devised as a means of maintaining "law and order" should civil administration break down under the pressure of those who didn't want that kind of law or that kind of order. Great working class struggles were fought in 1919. The movement was seldom again to reach such militancy or cohesion. The fright of the ruling class lasted a generation. And part of its response was to invent the RSGs.

Government succeeded Government. The RSG system was preserved, modified, extended, revised, hushed up, brought up to date, partly brought to light, covered with darkness again, and constantly adapted to the dual needs of the class war and "national" defence. It was the Government behind the Government, the face of violence behind the façade of democracy. And now it is the conspiracy of the few to maintain their position whatever the many say or do, even if the many are all dead. Nicolas Walter approaches this story as a journalist and a historian. He picks up stones by the wayside and finds peculiar creatures crawling about underneath them. He unearths important

facts about the RSGs during the General Strike. He reveals the interesting attitude of the Labour administration of 1924 to these plans for extra-parliamentary rule. He shows from official sources how the system worked during World War II. He puts some pertinent questions -- to which we await the answers -- about what happened after 1945. And he hazards some shrewd guesses about what is now going on behind our backs.... or rather beneath our feet.

The existence of the RSGs should be a matter of deep concern to the whole Labour and Trade Union movement. Recent civil defence advertisements proclaim that the RSGs are equipped with supplies of electricity, gas, oil, coal, transport, and so on. Knowing the background of the RSGs, can we doubt that our rulers would be prepared to use these facilities in industrial disputes? During the recent power-workers go-slow, some papers openly called for civil defence generating equipment to be used. We can be sure that there are detailed plans to smash any really effective transport dispute. Will a Labour administration dismantle these installations? Will it give an undertaking that they will never be used to break strikes? And if it preserves them for "civil defence" purposes, will it make public the names of those appointed to survive? Will the present Tory nominees retain their posts? Or will Labour "get things done" and change them? And if so, will Labour explain on what socialist egalitarian principles the new socialist survivors will be selected?

But deeper issues are involved. The existence of the RSGs shows the fantastic rift that has grown between the rulers and the ruled, and how far apart their interests now lie. People have a right to know what is being done in their name and at their expense but without their consent. The heavy veil of secrecy around these establishments must be lifted. We must wake up from their nightmare where it is a secret for ordinary people to know who is to administer their graves -- and from where -- should the deterrent fail to deter and just destroy.

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THE RSGs

1919-1963

INTRODUCTION

The two important things about the "Spies for Peace" pamphlet were its contents and its impact. Its impact was well described in the "Spies for Peace Story" (first printed in the pamphlet Resistance Shall Grow, and reprinted in Anarchy 29), but its contents have received less attention. The two important things in the contents of the "Spies for Peace" pamphlet were the regional government system and the 1962 military exercises. Exercises Parapluie and Fallex are still shrouded by official secrecy, despite the revelations in Der Spiegel and in the "Spies for Peace" pamphlet itself, but the RSGs are easier to investigate, and the object of this pamphlet is to describe their background as fully as possible.

The information here is not an Official Secret, though most of it was once, but it is little known because it is hard to extract from the various books and papers where it is to be found (for the most useful books, see the Appendix).

The text of the "Spies for Peace" pamphlet begins by saying that "the Government has secretly established a network of Regional Seats of Government covering the whole country." This is rather misleading. It would have been more accurate to say that the Government has secretly re-established this network. There is nothing new about the regional government system. As Mr Macmillan and several other people have pointed out, it was used during the last war. It is in fact 44 years old. But before tracing its history, we must examine its principles.

I. THE EMERGENCY COMMISSIONER

The regional government system depends on the figure of the Emergency Commissioner -- a special official in charge of a special area containing several counties. Most government departments and other public authorities have a system of local administration using about a dozen regions (and there have been proposals that the whole local government system should be changed so that all the counties and boroughs should be swallowed up in regions of this kind). The regional government system described by the "Spies for Peace" happens to use the thirteen regions of the Civil Defence Department of the Home Office -- ten in England, and one each in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The Emergency Commissioner is a unique figure in modern English politics. Local government in this country is normally carried out by two kinds of official -- officials directly responsible to a local council, and local officials of a central government department responsible to a Minister who is responsible to Parliament. The Emergency Commissioner is neither kind. He is the direct representative of the Crown (i.e. the Cabinet) in his area; he is responsible to no elected assembly, and in extremity he is really responsible to no one at all.

This isn't a new idea -- in fact it's a very old one. There are several existing local officials who once had the viceregal authority which now belongs to the Emergency Commissioner. The ceremonial High Sheriff used to be the Sheriff (= "shire-reeve" or royal "servant in a shire") who had civil supremacy in each county from the 10th to the 13th century. The ceremonial Lord Lieutenant used to be the Lieutenant (or royal "deputy") who had military supremacy in each county from the 16th to the 19th century. Each of these officials was the direct representative of the Crown in his county; each of them was responsible to no elected assembly, and in extremity each of them was really responsible to no one at all.

But at the time each of these two officials was part of the normal machinery of government in the county, and the county was (as it still is) the normal unit of local government. The Emergency Commissioner, on the contrary, is the arbitrary ruler of an arbitrary area. The closest analogy is not with the Sheriff or the Lieutenant but with the sort of local official set up by dictators such as Cromwell, Napoleon and Hitler. In 1655, for example, Oliver Cromwell divided England and Wales into eleven regions, each under a military governor with the rank of Major-General;

Scotland and Ireland already had a military governor each, so even the number of regions was the same as now! For three years, despite widespread disapproval, each Major-General was the direct representative of the Lord Protector in his region; each was responsible to no elected assembly, and in extremity he was really responsible to no one at all. In the same way, Napoleon Bonaparte divided France into about 80 Departements, each under a Prefet, and Adolf Hitler divided Germany into about 40 Gaue, each under a Gauleiter. Each of these officials was the direct representative of the First Consul or the Führer in his Departement or Gau; each of them was responsible to no elected assembly, and in extremity each was really responsible to no one at all. And the Major-General, the Prefet and the Gauleiter, like the Emergency Commissioner, were all arbitrary rulers of arbitrary areas (though the Prefet and his Departement happened to survive).

The Emergency Commissioner in this country has had two fields of action -- a national war, and the class war. This double function of the regional government system is shown quite clearly by its history. The present system derives from the system developed during the Thirties as part of the Government's plans for dealing with air raids or invasion from abroad; but that system derived from the system developed during the Twenties as part of the Government's plans for dealing with strikes or revolution at home. To trace this double development, we must go back to the beginning of the system, in 1919.

2. THE BEGINNING OF THE SYSTEM

World War I was followed by a period of acute internal crisis, with political and economic chaos, growing unemployment, rising prices, and many bitter strikes. Lloyd George's Coalition Government did its best to smash the strikers, and one of its measures was the establishment of an emergency supply and transport scheme which had been envisaged during the War by the Inspector-General of Transportation, Sir Eric Geddes (later the First Lord of the Admiralty who promised to squeeze Germany until the pips squeaked, and later still the wielder of the "Geddes Axe" against public expenditure). This measure marked the first appearance of the Emergency Commissioner, and is the model of the regional government system we have today.

At the beginning of 1919 the Government began to prepare for a major strike. A secret circular was sent to military commanders throughout the country warning them that troops

might be needed to break strikes. An Order was issued under the wartime Defence of the Realm Acts to give the Food Controller wide emergency powers. Finally, the country was divided into sixteen "Districts", each under a junior Government Minister with local emergency powers who was to have the title of "District Commissioner" (the District Commissioner is of course the chief local official in every British colony!). In January 1919 the Clyde workers tried to begin a general strike, but they were defeated by soldiers and the police. In the same month the miners nearly went on strike, but they were bought off by the Royal Commission headed by John Sankey (later Lord Sankey) -- whose Report in favour of nationalisation was later ignored by the Government. In August the police themselves went on strike, but the strikers were sacked. Then in September the railwaymen went on strike against the wage cuts proposed by the new Minister of Transport, none other than Sir Eric Geddes.

When the rail strike began on September 26th the Geddes supply and transport scheme came into operation. The Food Controller, George Roberts, declared a state of emergency and began requisitioning road vehicles. The supply and transport scheme was supervised by an Emergency Committee headed by Roberts and the Parliamentary Secretary for Food, Charles McCurdy, and it was run by civil servants mostly in the Ministry of Food. Local control of the scheme was in the hands of the District Commissioners. At the same time the Government called out troops and raised volunteer "Citizen Guards". But the strike ended on October 6th, and the scheme lapsed.

There was more trouble in 1920. During the summer the Labour Party and the Trades Union Congress set up a "Council of Action" to organise strikes against British intervention in the Russian Civil War, and the TUC also decided to set up a "General Council" to organise joint action by its member unions. The real trouble came in the autumn. On October 16th the miners went on strike for wage rises, and for the first time since the War the "Triple Alliance" of mining, railway and transport unions (which had been formed in 1914) tried to bring the railwaymen and transport workers out in sympathy. Geddes, still Minister of Transport, tried to revive the supply and transport scheme, and the Overseas Trade Secretary, Francis Kellaway, was appointed Chief District Commissioner while the Government rushed the Emergency Powers Bill through Parliament. But the threatened rail strike was called off, and on October 28th the miners went back to work with temporary wage rises.

The Government was actually in a stronger position. On one hand the Triple Alliance had failed to carry out its

threat, and on the other hand the wartime Defence of the Realm Acts had been replaced by the peacetime Emergency Powers Act of 1920. This law -- which is still in force -- gives the Government authority to proclaim a "State of Emergency" if "any action has been taken or is immediately threatened by any person or body of persons of such a nature and on so extensive a scale as to be calculated....to deprive the community or any substantial part of the community of the essentials of life." Such a "Proclamation of Emergency" gives the Government authority to issue regulations and appoint officials "for the preservation of the peace....and for any other purposes essential to the public safety and the life of the community" (except that the Government may not ban strikes or pickets, or introduce military or industrial conscription).

Armed with this new law, the Government rejected Geddes's suggestion to make the supply and transport scheme permanent, but it might just as well have accepted it, for there was yet more trouble in 1921. The miners' wage rises were due to run out in March, and both sides prepared for another strike. The new Financial Secretary to the Admiralty, Leopold Amery, took the scheme over from Kellaway, and on March 31st the Government proclaimed a State of Emergency. The miners went on strike on April 1st, and the Triple Alliance again tried to bring the railwaymen and transport workers out in sympathy. The supply and transport scheme was supervised by another Emergency Committee headed by Geddes himself and was run by Christopher Roundell of the Ministry of Health (which was responsible for local government from 1919 to 1950 -- the Ministry of Food had been absorbed into the Board of Trade the previous year). Local control of the scheme was again in the hands of the District Commissioners, Amery being Chief District Commissioner. At the same time the Government called out troops again and raised a volunteer "Defence Force". But on April 15th -- "Black Friday" -- the Triple Alliance backed down and the threatened general strike was called off, though the miners struggled on until June.

After this both the Triple Alliance and the supply and transport scheme ran down, the former forever and the latter for a short time. On May 23rd, 1922, Circular 312 of the Ministry of Health told the local authorities that they would be responsible for maintaining supplies and transport in any future emergency. But three civil servants in the Ministry of Health still kept a skeleton scheme in existence, just in case it might be needed again. It soon was.

3. THE GENERAL STRIKE

In 1922 Lloyd George's Coalition Government was replaced by Bonar Law's undiluted Tory Government, and in 1923 Bonar Law was replaced by Baldwin. Baldwin immediately decided to revive the supply and transport scheme, and gave the job to his new Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, John Davidson (later Lord Davidson). Davidson set up an inter-departmental Committee headed by the Permanent Under-Secretary at the Home Office, Sir John Anderson (later Lord Waverley), to make the necessary arrangements. Anderson reported progress to the Cabinet in July 1923. The scheme was much the same as before, but there were to be eleven "Divisions" instead of sixteen Districts, each under a "Civil Commissioner" instead of a District Commissioner -- though the Scottish Division was still to be divided into five Districts, each under a District Commissioner (presumably Scotland still counted as a colony, even though Anderson was a Scot!). The whole scheme was to be rather less of a mere supply and transport system, and rather more of a regional government system.

In 1924 Ramsay MacDonald's first Labour Government held power for a few months. The newly revived regional system, far from being destroyed by the Party which led the Labour Movement, was preserved and even used by the Party which was so anxious to prove itself "fit to govern". The job went to Davidson's successor as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Josiah Wedgwood (later Lord Wedgwood), who remarked afterwards that "the Trades Union leaders disliked a job which might mean getting across with the Trades Unions." It might indeed, since MacDonald's industrial record was as bad as that of all his predecessors.

In January 1924, when the Labour Government took power, there was already an ASLEF rail strike, and the Government considered using the Emergency Powers Act against it. In February there was a dock strike, and the Government prepared to use the Emergency Powers Act against it. In March there was a London tram strike and the threat of an underground strike in sympathy, and this time the Government did use the Emergency Powers Act. A State of Emergency was proclaimed on March 31st, and Wedgwood was appointed Chief Civil Commissioner, but the strike was already over. The TUC General Council was said to have threatened a general strike if emergency regulations were used against strikers; but the unions soon had a much tougher opponent.

When Baldwin regained power at the end of 1924, he gave the job of looking after the regional system to his new Home

Secretary, Sir William Joynson-Hicks (known as "Jix", later Lord Brentford). Jix reported progress to the Cabinet in November 1924, but the system seems to have lapsed for a time. In the summer of 1925 the miners prepared to go on strike once more against wage cuts, and in the absence of the Triple Alliance the TUC General Council prepared to impose a national coal embargo and also to consider a general strike. But on July 31st -- "Red Friday" -- it was the owners who backed down, when the Government promised a nine-month coal subsidy to finance wages and another Royal Commission headed this time by Sir Herbert Samuel (later Lord Samuel).

The reason for this surrender was, as several Ministers admitted, that the Government simply wasn't ready. But it was determined to be ready next time. The more belligerent Ministers, such as Churchill, wanted Geddes to come back and revive the regional system openly. But Baldwin preferred to work secretly; and while the unofficial "Organisation for the Maintenance of Supplies" made a great noise, the official Emergency Committee met quietly under Anderson (who was of course directly responsible to Jix). The Emergency Committee quickly produced the "Civil Emergency Organisation", which was basically the old supply and transport scheme brought up to date on the lines of the revised version of 1923, with eleven Divisions under Civil Commissioners and Scotland under five District Commissioners.

On November 20th, 1925, Circular 636 of the Ministry of Health told the local authorities about the new regional system. This circular stated that the Commissioners were to be "empowered if necessary to give decisions on behalf of the Government," and it named the Division headquarters as Newcastle, Leeds, Nottingham, Cambridge, London, Reading, Bristol, Cardiff, Birmingham and Liverpool, and the Scottish District headquarters as Edinburgh, Dundee, Aberdeen, Inverness and Glasgow. The Commissioners and their staffs were appointed before the end of the year, and they were instructed to go to their posts and take up their duties when they received telegrams containing the single word "Action".

One interesting change was that the system was not in fact kept entirely secret. Jix was one of the more belligerent Ministers, and when he was asked about local authorities recruiting staff for the Civil Emergency Organisation, he said in Parliament on November 17th: "For several years there has been in existence under successive governments an organisation for maintaining essential services during a national emergency." Then he added: "When I came into office I found that this organisation had always been treated by previous governments, including the last one, as secret....I decided that it was only right that as soon as possible that

information should be given." But he never gave any more away -- the Government let very little information out, and the unions never realised quite what they were up against.

The expected crisis came in the spring of 1926, when the miners rejected the Samuel Report (in March) and the coal subsidy ran out (in April). The result was the General Strike of May 1926. On April 30th the Government proclaimed a State of Emergency and issued Emergency Regulations, and Circular 699 of the Ministry of Health told local authorities that the Civil Emergency Organisation was about to come into operation and also gave the names of the Commissioners. The Chief Civil Commissioner was the Postmaster General, Sir William Mitchell-Thomson (later Lord Selsdon), and the other Civil Commissioners were mostly junior Government Ministers with military experience (for their names, see the Appendix). The "Action" telegrams went out on the night of May 2nd, and the Civil Emergency Organisation and the Organisation for the Maintenance of Supplies both went into operation the next day.

The General Strike began in confusion on May 4th and ended in confusion between May 12th and 14th, though the miners struggled on until November. During their ten days of office, the Commissioners ruled their Divisions and Districts under the control of the central Government, while Jix raised thousands of Special Constables. He also appointed a Special Civil Commissioner for the London Docks -- Lt. Col. John Moore-Brabazon (later Lord Brabazon of Tara). But the unions didn't want to take the strike seriously, so the Government didn't need to take it seriously either. The strikers didn't put the Strike Committees and the pickets to a real test, so the authorities didn't put the Commissioners and the troops to a real test either. Supplies never quite failed and transport never quite broke down, so the Organisation for the Maintenance was never fully stretched and the Civil Emergency Organisation was never forced to give decisions on behalf of the Government. On the whole the strike organisers shrank from becoming revolutionary leaders, so on the whole the strike breakers were saved from becoming counter-revolutionary dictators -- as they could have done at any time.

The general strike had been tried, and it had failed; it was never tried again. The regional government system had also been tried, and it had worked. It had been prepared for seven years and tested for two weeks. It would certainly be used again if there was another threat to normal government. There wasn't another general strike, but there was soon another kind of threat. The Emergency Commissioner had done his duty in the class war, and he was to do it again in a national war. This is a story which also begins in 1919, so we must go back to the beginning again.

4. BEFORE THE WAR

The Committee of Imperial Defence -- the important Cabinet Committee which had been absorbed into the War Council and then the War Cabinet during World War I -- was reconstituted in November 1919. One of its new tasks was to consider plans for dealing with air raids. In the past this country had been protected from foreign attack by the sea, but between 1915 and 1918 German airships and aeroplanes had made about a hundred air raids on towns in southern and eastern England, especially London. The distant danger of an invasion was now overshadowed by the close danger of an air attack.

When invasion had seemed possible in the autumn of 1914, the Government had appointed an Emergency Committee to consider plans for civil organisation in such an event. The chairman of this Committee was Herbert Samuel, the President of the Local Government Board, and the secretary was Maurice Hankey, the Secretary of the Committee of Imperial Defence. The Emergency Committee had looked back to the plans made for dealing with Napoleon's threatened invasion of 1803-05 (just as the Government then had looked back to the plans made for dealing with the Spanish Armada of 1588!), and it decided that these plans still applied -- that counties and towns cut off from the central Government would be ruled by the Lords Lieutenant and the Mayors and Provosts, invested with special emergency powers. But in 1919 the Committee of Imperial Defence realised that new plans must be made to deal with the new danger. Even so, these plans developed very slowly.

In November 1921 the Committee of Imperial Defence asked military experts about the probable scale and effect of air raids in a future war. After two alarming reports it decided to set up a special "Air Raid Precautions Sub-Committee". This was formed in January 1924 and met secretly under the Permanent Under-Secretary at the Home Office, our old friend Sir John Anderson. It wasn't very active during the Twenties. It took note of the Civil Emergency Organisation in 1925-26. Because London was so vulnerable to air raids from the Continent, it also took note of the idea of moving the central seat of Government away -- say to Birmingham or Liverpool -- in an emergency; but it decided that the advantages of preserving the continuity of the Government machine were outweighed by the disadvantages of damaging the morale of the public.

In April 1929 the ARP Sub-Committee became a full Cabinet Committee and was reconstituted as the "Air Raid Precautions (Organisation) Committee", still under Anderson. During the Thirties it became more active. In 1933, the year Hitler came to power, the ARP Committee appointed Major-General Harry

Pritchard as "Air Raids Commandant" of London, and it suggested that the rest of the country should be divided into regions each under a similar ARP official. In 1934 the Government first disclosed the existence of official Air Raid Precautions to the general public, and in 1935 the ARP Committee was again reconstituted as the "Air Raid Precautions Department" of the Home Office.

Pritchard resigned in 1935, the the ARP Department began using "Air Raid Precautions Inspectors" to maintain liaison with the local authorities. By 1936 there were six of these Inspectors, and the Department planned to station thirteen permanently outside London, each in charge of a region closely similar to the Divisions of the Civil Emergency Organisation. In June 1937 a special Sub-Committee of the Committee of Imperial Defence headed by the Permanent Secretary at the Treasury and Head of the Civil Service, Sir Warren Fisher, recommended among other things that the ARP Department's plan for a regional organisation should be put into effect because "a regional system of administration will be an essential element in the wartime organisation." This recommendation was followed when the Air Raid Precautions Act of 1937 compelled the local authorities to co-operate with the Department. During 1938 regional offices under ARP Inspectors were opened at Newcastle, Leeds, Nottingham, Cambridge, Reading, Bristol, Cardiff, Birmingham, Liverpool, Edinburgh and Glasgow -- all of which had been Division or District headquarters during the General Strike twelve years before. London and the Home Counties were administered from the Department's office in Westminster.

When Hitler occupied Austria in May 1938, Sir Warren Fisher and Sir Maurice Hankey (still Secretary of the Committee of Imperial Defence, now also Secretary of the Cabinet and Clerk of the Privy Council, and later Lord Hankey) recommended the immediate establishment of a regional government system with Divisions under "Divisional Commanders". In June a special "Committee for the Co-ordination and Control of Civil Authorities for Passive Defence Purposes in War" met under Fisher, and this direct successor of the Emergency Committees of the Twenties soon produced a direct successor of the Civil Emergency Organisation. By August it had worked out the Fisher-Hankey recommendations in detail under the name of "Civil Defence Emergency Scheme Y". The Divisions were to become "Regions" and the Civil Commissioners were to become "Regional Commissioners"; the Scottish Region was to keep its five Districts under District Commissioners. At the same time, a list of local figures who might be suitable candidates as Commissioners was prepared.

During the summer of 1938 the ARP Department worked out warning and black-out systems, chose gas-mask and stirrup-pump models, and made secret evacuation plans. But when Hitler

threatened to invade the Sudetenland in September, the first thought of the authorities was the maintenance of order and the continuity of government. Before the gas-masks and stirrup-pumps were distributed, trenches and first-aid posts prepared, or a Householder's Handbook at last issued to the general public, Scheme Y was secretly and clumsily put into operation. On September 26th the rapidly appointed Commissioners and their staffs went to their posts. The Commissioners were mostly High Sheriffs or Lords Lieutenant, chairmen of or clerks to local councils, businessmen or magistrates, headed by -- guess who! -- Sir John Anderson (back from governing Bengal and now a Tory MP). But they never had to take up their duties, because Chamberlain flew to Munich on September 28th and handed the Sudetenland over to Hitler without breaking the rules on the 29th. When he flew back to London on the 30th bearing peace with dishonour, the Commissioners left their posts.

In those four days it had become clear that Scheme Y was unsatisfactory, largely because of its secrecy. The regional government system for a national war had reached the stage that the regional government system for the class war had reached back in 1925, after Red Friday. Once again Anderson took charge. He became what Chamberlain called the "Minister of Civilian Defence" -- that is, he was to become Minister of Home Security when war began, and in the meantime he became Lord Privy Seal, taking over the ARP Department and using the Lord Privy Seal's small Department as a sort of civil general staff. The Government decided to disclose the evacuation plans at once and the regional government plans when they were complete. Scheme Y was knocked into shape by Sir Thomas Gardiner, the Director General of the Post Office, who was to become the Permanent Secretary of Home Security when war began. The Regional Commissioners were to become national rather than local figures, and they were to be appointed before rather than after a war crisis broke.

On February 2nd, 1939, Circular 20 of the ARP Department told the local authorities about the regional government system, and on February 7th Chamberlain answered questions about it in Parliament. On March 1st Anderson answered more questions, and insisted: "There is nothing sinister behind these plans. They are founded on nothing but plain common sense." Much of the press and the public remained unconvinced; there was nasty talk about Major-Generals and Prefets and even Gauleiters; some people asked why Parliament had never been consulted and whether it ever would be. They needn't have bothered.

A fortnight after Hitler occupied the rest of Czechoslovakia in March 1939, the Government appointed the first Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners (on April 1st, of all dates!). The

Deputy Commissioners were mostly local figures -- many of whom had been Commissioners during the Munich crisis -- and the new Commissioners were mostly politicians, civil servants, businessmen and retired military commanders (for their names, see the Appendix). When Anderson announced the appointments to Parliament on April 18th, it was clear that no one had been consulted and that -- as he admitted a few days later -- "no attention was paid to the elective principle." At the same time he announced the headquarters and boundaries of the Regions and Scottish Districts. These were the same as in Scheme Y and almost the same as in the Civil Emergency Organisation; but Manchester replaced Liverpool as the headquarters of the North-Western Region, and the most vulnerable Region was divided into two -- a Greater London Region, and a South-Eastern Region with headquarters at Tunbridge Wells. On April 20th Anderson announced the salaries of the Commissioners (up to £2,500) and the Deputy Commissioners (up to £1,000). The ARP Inspectors became "Regional Officers" with special responsibility for ARP in the Regions.

During the summer of 1939 events moved quickly towards war. Military conscription was re-introduced on April 26th, and during the next three months the regional government system was tested by secret military exercises (similar to Exercises Parapluie and Fallex of 1962). In July the Civil Defence Act of 1939 became law. On August 23rd the Nazi-Soviet Pact was signed. On August 24th the Emergency Powers (Defence) Bill was rushed through Parliament and Defence Regulations were issued. On August 25th the Regional Commissioners and their staffs went to their posts. On September 1st Hitler invaded Poland, and on the same day the Regional Commissioners Bill among others was rushed through Parliament.

The Regional Commissioners Act of 1939, which wasn't repealed until 1950, didn't establish or even confirm the regional government system, as some people have claimed. The central Government had (as it still has) quite enough authority to do this by the normal use of the royal prerogative, and the Regional Commissioners had been legally appointed by Royal Warrant several days before the new law was passed. This law simply gave formal parliamentary sanction for the payment of salaries and expenses to the Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners out of public funds, and removed the usual disqualification from any of them who happened to be members of either house of Parliament.

On September 2nd the rest of the Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners were appointed and went to their posts. On September 3rd Britain declared war on Germany, and the Emergency Commissioner took up his duties for more than five years.

5. DURING THE WAR

The Regional Commissioner had a double function during the last war. His ultimate emergency function was to act as the governor of his Region responsible to no one, if he were cut off from the central Government by air raids or invasion. But his immediate interim function was to act as the co-ordinator of civil defence in his Region responsible to the Minister of Home Security -- Anderson until October 1940, then Herbert Morrison (later Lord Morrison of Lambeth). In theory these two functions were separate, but in practice they overlapped and made his position rather ambiguous.

His immediate function was "diplomatic rather than executive", as the North-Eastern Regional Commissioner put it, and involved "a maximum of contact and a minimum of interference", as Anderson put it. But no one could forget that the man who ran civil defence as the regional subordinate of the central Government would run everything as the regional dictator if communications ever broke down, and that the regional civil defence headquarters, which had been moved from the regional office to an underground "War Room" at the beginning of the war, would then become a "Regional Seat of Government". This naturally gave the Regional Commissioner great moral authority whatever his legal authority might be -- and his legal authority was in fact considerable even before he might have to take over his Region, for it was backed by several Defence Regulations made under the Emergency Powers (Defence) Acts of 1939 and 1940 and by other Orders made under the Civil Defence Act of 1939 and the National Service Act of 1941.

But communications never did break down and, as Terence O'Brien, the official historian of civil defence, put it in 1955: "No Commissioner ever exercised his full powers." This is really the most important thing about the Emergency Commissioner in World War II. The Regional Commissioners never went beyond their immediate function, so their story is rather dull.

The Regional Commissioners' relations with the local authorities in their Regions varied. During the summer of 1939 large Regional and District Councils were set up to maintain liaison, but during the summer of 1940 these proved to be too clumsy, and even smaller Emergency and Defence Committees with the same purpose were rather unwieldy. The military authorities had a simple solution to this problem. In May 1940 the Chiefs of Staff recommended that the Regional Commissioners should take over the civil defence system and run it on military lines without any reference to local authorities. The Government didn't go that far, but it

increased the Commissioners' authority by Defence Regulations 16A and 29A of May 31st. In June the Chiefs of Staff again recommended that the Commissioners should have far more authority, and the Government again increased their authority by further Orders. But in general the Commissioners tried to work by persuasion rather than compulsion.

The Regional Commissioners' work during the war fell into three phases -- co-operation with the preparations for the expected German invasion of Britain in the summer of 1940, co-ordination of civil defence during the "Big Blitz" of 1940-41 and the "Little Blitz" of 1944, and co-operation with the preparations for the Allied invasion of France in the summer of 1944. Their function during invasion or counter-invasion preparations was simply to act as the civil arm of the military authorities. Their function during the blitz was to direct the intelligence services during the raids and the rescue and reconstruction services afterwards. Special measures were taken in special circumstances. When Plymouth suffered very heavy raids in April 1941, the Deputy Regional Commissioner set up a temporary headquarters at Tavistock to direct the restoration of normal life. Only one regional War Room was hit -- at Bristol in December 1940 -- and even then the Commissioner didn't have to abandon his post. By and large, the regional organisation of civil defence worked well, though a few details were altered from time to time. A Special Commissioner was sent to the Southern Region in April 1941 to deal with the "trekking" (nightly emigration) from Southampton during heavy raids, and a second Regional Commissioner was sent to the Welsh Region in January 1940; and London Region had a Senior Regional Commissioner and two Special Commissioners as well as two normal Regional Commissioners.

The problem of London Region leads to the problem of the central seat of Government. During the Thirties several Committees reconsidered the idea of moving it out of London, and in 1937 one of them worked out the "Rae Scheme". This had two objects -- to strengthen existing accommodation in central London, and to prepare new accommodation outside central London (both in the suburbs and in the provinces). By September 1939 the Office of Works had achieved both these objects, and had also made a plan for the evacuation from London of 60,000 Government officials. This was in two parts -- a preliminary "Yellow Move" which would evacuate 44,000 subordinate officials to 300 places outside London, and a final "Black Move" which would evacuate 16,000 senior officials and Government Ministers to a single place outside London.

The Yellow Move was brought into operation as soon as the war began, and it went on for several months; but the Black

Move was delayed until London should be seriously threatened. Before this happened, the fall in public morale and administrative efficiency which followed the move of the French Government from Paris to Tours and then to Bordeaux in the summer of 1940 persuaded the British authorities to delay the Black Move until the last possible moment -- though the Yellow Move aroused occasional suspicions that the Government had already left London. In the meantime a "Black Area" was prepared in the West Midlands and the top brass used the shelters in London -- such as the War Rooms under Government offices, the "Annexe" by the Admiralty, the "Rotundas" in Monck Street, and so on (including the War Cabinet's "Paddock" near Hampstead, possibly on Primrose Hill).

An interesting sideline is the story of the deep shelters in London. The Government resisted the left-wing deep shelter campaign as long as it could, but the Big Blitz forced a change in policy. In October 1940 the Government decided to build ten deep shelters in London, and early in 1941 the London Passenger Transport Board began work on shelters underneath ten underground stations in three areas -- the northern part of the Northern Line (Belsize Park, Camden Town, Goodge Street), the southern part of the Northern Line (Oval, Stockwell, Clapham North, Clapham Common, Clapham South), and the central part of the Central Line (Chancery Lane, St. Pauls). Work was later abandoned at the Oval and St. Pauls, but the other eight shelters were completed during 1942. By this time the Big Blitz was over, and none of these deep shelters was ever used by the general public. The Government held them in reserve for a time, and later used them as shelters for civil servants and even as military headquarters.

When the Big Blitz was over the Regional Commissioners' function virtually lapsed, but because of the general law of bureaucratic inertia they did just as much work as before and even employed more staff. The South-Western Regional Commissioner complained that there was too much paper, and on June 11th, 1941, Kenneth Lindsay complained in Parliament: "The Regional Commissioner has become a no-man's land, and his functions are becoming completely vague. Let us do away with him if he is not necessary." Herbert Morrison met such criticism with the unanswerable argument that "the Regional Commissioner is a typically British institution," and added that one Regional Commissioner thought the beauty of his office was that "you can jolly well do as you like" ! On the next day Thomas Johnston, the Scottish Secretary (formerly the Scottish Regional Commissioner) claimed: "Here is something that has been superimposed upon the country, which works, and which -- and this is the great thing -- works by agreement." Anyway, the Regional Commissioners stayed in office.

By the end of 1944 even the authorities agreed that the Regional Commissioners' function had lapsed, and they began to resign at the beginning of 1945. Their legal powers were revoked on May 2nd, and by the end of June they had all gone. The wartime civil defence organisation was officially ended by the Civil Defence (Suspension of Powers) Act of 1945. But in August 1945 Hiroshima and Nagasaki were destroyed by atomic bombs. World War II was over, but the Cold War was beginning, and the regional system soon had to be revived.

3. THE PRESENT SYSTEM

With the end of World War II and the beginning of the Cold War we begin to approach the territory of official secrecy. As the RSGs pass from history into politics it becomes more and more difficult to find out the facts.

The Emergency Commissioner's two fields of action have continued to exist during the last eighteen years, but normal government has been less threatened by the class war and more threatened by a national war. Attlee's Labour Government took the traditional Labourist attitude to strikes -- it tried to break them. It had the Emergency Powers Act of 1920, and it also kept many Defence Regulations and other wartime Orders in force for several years after the end of the war -- by the Supplies & Services (Transitional Powers) Act of 1945, the Emergency Laws (Transitional Provisions) Act of 1946, the Supplies & Services (Extended Purposes) Act of 1947, and the Emergency Laws (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act of 1948. Order 1305, a wartime measure prohibiting strikes and lock-outs, was used by the Labour Government several times to prosecute employees who went on strike, but not employers who imposed lock-outs.

The Labour Government actually used the Emergency Powers Act twice, proclaiming a State of Emergency against a dock strike on June 29th, 1948, and against another dock strike on July 11th, 1949. In 1948 the Government called out troops, and the strike ended before any Emergency Regulations were issued. In 1949 the Government again called out troops, but the strike went on for a fortnight, so the Government also issued Emergency Regulations and set up an Emergency Committee headed by a former Permanent Under-Secretary at the Home Office, Sir Arthur Maxwell, to run the docks until the strike ended. There may have been a regional supply and transport system as well, but if so it was kept secret.

Eden's Tory Government used the Emergency Powers Act once, proclaiming a State of Emergency against an ASLEF rail strike

on May 31st, 1955. There was almost no rail traffic until the strike ended a fortnight later, and road transport was under the control of the eleven existing Regional Transport Commissioners on the staff of the Ministry of Transport. If the strike had spread or continued, there would no doubt have been full Regional Commissioners as well, but if there was ever any plan of this kind it too was kept secret.

There has been no threat of a really serious strike -- let alone a general strike -- since 1955, and there is no evidence that the Emergency Commissioner has been used against any strike since 1926. But since 1945 the threat of atomic or nuclear war has increased until it now overshadows every other threat to normal government and normal life in general. Soon after the end of World War II the authorities began to prepare for World War III, and the regional government system was revived as part of the official civil defence policy.

The Civil Defence Act of 1948 revived the wartime civil defence organisation, but it was some years before the regional government system re-appeared. In 1954 Sir Frank Newsam, the official historian of the Home Office, said of the wartime system that "the success of the organisation was so complete that its re-creation in war is now taken for granted." The Labour Party had already come to this conclusion. On August 1st, 1951, Lord Alexander of Hillsborough said in Parliament that the Labour Government was considering the "development of the network of control and communications at regional and lower levels." And on March 29th, 1955, the Labour Party Civil Defence Committee recommended that the Regional Commissioners "should be appointed now." In fact the regional government system was re-created during the middle Fifties by James Howard, an Assistant Secretary in the Civil Defence Department of the Home Office.

But the system had to be modified. The regional "War Rooms" would become Regional Seats of Government a few moments after war began, and the organisation at regional level had to take account of this. Moreover, the Region itself might be broken up, so an organisation below regional level had to be created as well. In October 1956 -- just after Suez -- Civil Defence Operational Memorandum 1 (CDP 16/12/4) told local authorities about a new "system of operational control within Sub-Regions" -- the "Sub-Regions" being industrial areas outside London in which emergency power would be in the hands of "Sub-Regional Controllers" who would be responsible to the Regional Commissioners (and whose headquarters would for obvious reasons be "sited on the outskirts of the Sub-Region"). In July 1957 -- just after the first British H-Bomb test -- Civil Defence Operational Memorandum 2 (CDP 16/31/2) told local authorities about a similar new "system of operational control within Groups" -- the "Groups" being rural areas in which emergency

power would be in the hands of "Group Controllers" who would also be responsible to the Regional Commissioners (and whose headquarters would present rather less of a problem). These two Operational Memoranda were "concerned with the operation of saving life" -- they were "not concerned with the question of reconstruction after a nuclear attack," for this remained in the hands of the Regional Commissioners. They were replaced by a new plan in July 1963; but a lot had happened in between.

The first official hint that the regional government system had been revived appeared in the Defence White Paper of 1961, which was published on February 15th. It mentioned "preparations for a scheme of emergency control," and added that "co-operation in exercises and planning between the services and civil authorities at all levels will be further developed." And on March 9th the Home Under-Secretary, David Renton, said in Parliament that "a new system of operational control has been introduced which provides for the establishment of chains of command from regional headquarters down to wardens' posts," and dropped a vague remark about "the provision of premises and communications for the operational chain of command."

In marked contrast to this official vagueness, the Daily Mail had already published what it called "the staggering story of Britain's plans for survival under nuclear attack" in three articles by its Defence Correspondent, Stevenson Pugh. In his first article on February 28th, Pugh described the "twelve little Governments which...have already been set up and staffed to ensure the survival of twelve states of Britain after an H-Bomb war," and he added that such a war "has been rehearsed in exercises many times." He had himself recently visited the central headquarters of the system "not 500 yards from Big Ben" (presumably in the Rotundas in Monck Street) and also one of the regional headquarters "Somewhere in Mercia" (presumably RSG-9 near Kidderminster) during such an exercise. He called the Regional Commissioners the "Big Leaders", said they were "national politicians who, given sufficient warning of the threat of war, would disperse from London to their redoubts," and added that "if, as could happen, they were cut off from each other or from the central Government in its own redoubt, each is empowered to act alone." Here, more than two years before the "Spies for Peace" pamphlet, was the essential truth about the regional government system -- though there are thirteen "little Governments", not twelve -- but no one seems to have taken it in.

Anyway the radical wing of the unilateralist movement soon found its own way to the truth. When the Committee of 100 organised six demonstrations on December 9th, 1961, one of them was at a mysterious structure in York, which happened to be RSG-2. At about the same time, members of the Committee of 100

in Cambridge found another mysterious structure in Brooklands Avenue, which happened to be RSG-4. The Committee people in both York and Cambridge had a pretty good idea of the sort of thing they were on to, and the authorities seem to have had some bad moments. Reports of the York demonstration were officially discouraged, and in February 1962 the Services Press & Broadcasting Committee issued a "D-Notice" covering the regional government system. In the same month the Defence White Paper of 1962 said that "the scheme of emergency control will be further developed," and added that "there have been a number of joint civil/military exercises in order to test plans for military aid to the civil power, and joint planning for this purpose is continuing."

During the summer of 1962 the Campaign Caravan picked up several unofficial hints about the system as it travelled up and down the country. And then the "Spies for Peace" sometime, somehow learnt the truth about the RSGs in general and about RSG-6 in particular. On April 11th, 1963, the pamphlet Danger! Official Secret: RSG-6 published what they knew about the regional government system and the military exercises which had tested it during 1962.

There is no need to repeat here the information contained in the "Spies for Peace" pamphlet, but there is room for a few comments. To begin with, the "Spies for Peace" were wrong to state that "RSG-5 and RSG-11 are still being built." RSG-11 is the Scottish RSG, which has certainly been built; and RSG-5 is the London RSG, which has presumably been built, but has possibly been used as the central headquarters of the system during the exercises. There are in fact thirteen RSGs, not fourteen as the "Spies for Peace" implied.

The organisation of the regional government system seems to be much the same as during World War II, but the new locations of many of the RSGs are interesting. In general, as we might expect, RSGs in highly-population places have moved away from their previous sites to less vulnerable ones. Thus RSG-1 has moved 40 miles from Newcastle to Catterick; RSG-2 has moved 20 miles from Leeds to York; RSG-3 has stayed in Nottingham; RSG-4 has stayed in Cambridge; RSG-5 has presumably had to stay in London, though it has probably moved from the Geological Museum in Exhibition Road; RSG-6 has moved 8 miles from Reading Gaol to Warren Row; RSG-7 has moved 100 miles from Bristol to near Kingsbridge; RSG-8 has moved 35 miles from Cardiff to near Brecon; RSG-9 has moved 15 miles from Birmingham to near Kidderminster; RSG-10 has moved 30 miles from Manchester to near Preston; RSG-11 has stayed in Edinburgh; RSG-12 has moved 45 miles from Tunbridge Wells to Dover Castle; and a new RSG has been built at Armagh.

The drastic move of RSG-7 is particularly interesting, for

it seems to bear on the old problem of the central seat of Government. All the "Spies for Peace" said about the central headquarters of the regional government system was that its telephone is on the ABBey exchange in Westminster. A site in Westminster was also clearly implied by Stevenson Pugh. The authorities certainly have a great many suitable sites in central London -- not only the shelters under Government buildings or the special shelters elsewhere, but also the huge shelter system built in the early Fifties under a two-mile long area stretching from Holborn to Victoria. This post-war system was mentioned in Peace News on July 12th, 1963, and part of it was described in the leaflet about the Furnival Street communications centre in May 1963. But more detailed accounts have appeared in newspapers as different as the Daily Worker and the Daily Express.

An article in the former by Frank Gullett and another in the latter by Chapman Pincher give a clear picture of the system. Gullett said on September 8th, 1951, that "some 2,000 building workers are engaged in burrowing an extensive network of atom-bomb proof tunnels under London," added that "stretching from Holborn to Westminster a mile away, these secret tunnels are designed not for London's population but for Cabinet Ministers, top civil servants, and defence chiefs," and described the various entrances to the system. Pincher said on January 21st, 1960, that "many hundreds of civil servants are working in deep underground tunnels built below London as atom-bomb shelters but now largely abandoned for this purpose as not being H-Bomb proof," and added that "the tunnels, below Whitehall, Holborn, Victoria and Leicester Square, have been secretly converted into offices to house special security staff and overflow from service Ministries, the Works Ministry, Post Office, and other staffs."

Gullett was writing before the system had begun, Pincher after it had been overtaken by events. The "Whitehall Moles" Pincher described were no longer the key staff, and at the end of his article he said that "in the event of emergency the key Moles would be evacuated to a much deeper underground Government headquarters being hollowed out far away from London." In fact, as we would expect, a new Black Move has been planned to take place when or if possible before a nuclear war begins, and a new Black Area is being prepared. This too has been described in the press -- once more in the Daily Express.

In an earlier article on December 28th, 1959, Pincher said: "A chain of underground fortresses from which the Government could control Britain and mount a counter-offensive in the event of an H-Bomb attack is being built far outside London. It replaces ten miles of reinforced tunnels built under London after the last war at enormous cost. These tunnels, which run below Whitehall, Leicester Square, Holborn and Victoria, are

not deep enough to withstand a near miss with an H-Bomb. The new forts, which have already cost more than £10,000,000, are excavated so deep in rock that they could withstand anything but a direct hit." He added that "they would enable many hundreds of key people to live for weeks below ground in the event of intense radioactive fall-out," and ended with the comforting news that "the forts are being equipped to house the nation's art treasures in the event of emergency, but they will not be available as shelters for the public" !

In an article on the "Spies for Peace" pamphlet on April 15th, 1963, Pincher said that "there is a bomb-proof underground citadel for the central Government," and added this time that it is "somewhere in the West". The new Black Area is clearly not the same as the old one in the West Midlands (which may have been connected with the present RSG near Kidderminster), and the RSG-7 move reinforces the rumours which would place the new one in North Somerset. It wouldn't be surprising if the "Spies for Peace" have turned their suspicious eyes to the Mendip Hills. The omission of any information about the central seat of Government from their pamphlet was disappointing.

Another disappointing omission from the "Spies for Peace" pamphlet was the names of the Regional Commissioners. This suggests that they haven't actually been appointed yet, or else that they haven't been taking part in the exercises. Perhaps the Principal Officers have been standing in for them. Anyway, the regional government system is still far from complete. The Home Secretary, Henry Brooke, has stated that less than a quarter of the estimated cost of £1,600,000 has yet been spent. And the system is still being modified in the light of the 1962 exercises (and possibly in the light of the "Spies for Peace" pamphlet as well).

In July 1963 Civil Defence Circular 17/63 told local authorities about a new system of operational control below regional level to replace the system described in the two Operational Memoranda of 1956-57. The Sub-Regions and Groups have been replaced by new Sub-Regions, and the Sub-Regional and Group Controllers have been replaced by more powerful "Sub-Regional Commissioners" whose "responsibilities will not be limited to the control of life-saving operations but will extend to the co-ordination and control (subject to the Regional Commissioner) of all the services necessary to survival." So now even the Regions are too big, and -- like the country of which they are divisions -- they must be broken up into sub-divisions small enough to be run by a single headquarters after a nuclear attack. But are even these areas small enough? Are there enough emergency dictators to go round? What will their next crazy plans be?

Whatever it is, we may be told more of the truth than before. On September 17th, 1963, an official "Report on the State of Civil Defence Today" gave as the first of "ten vital points in the civil defence plans for Britain" the fact that "wartime regional headquarters have been provided and equipped in England and Wales, and similar centres in Scotland" (for the five Zones which have replaced the Districts). And the Report specifically mentioned "headquarters from which Regional Commissioners would operate in a war emergency." The regional government system for World War III has now reached the stage that the regional government system for World War II reached back in 1938, after Munich, and the authorities are trying to restore public confidence by pretending to disclose new information. But "none of the information has been deliberately declassified," as the Sunday Times said on September 22nd. "Most of it has been available piecemeal through Parliamentary answers, Home Office booklets, or by courtesy of Spies for Peace" ! We shall never be told the whole truth. The Report still tried to hide the real purpose of the regional government system. It repeated the old story that "the emergency chain of control...is an essentially civilian organisation," but it failed to explain why there are so many servicemen in the RSGs; and it invented a new story that "Parliament has made provision over the years for these preparations," but it failed to explain why there were so few MPs who knew about them.

The conclusion is simple. For 44 years our rulers have been making plans to stay as our rulers even if we can't stay to be ruled. These plans have always been secret. The officials in charge of them have often kept them from most of the Government as well as from Parliament, the press, and the rest of the population. They have never been discussed in public or even disclosed to the public until they have been completed, if then. The "Spies for Peace" changed all this. They released a secret and our rulers never caught it. Now our rulers can't be sure it won't happen again. They can't trust one another any more, let alone the rest of us. They can't fool all of the people all of the time. One day, perhaps, they won't fool any of the people any of the time. We must make sure it does happen again, and soon. "There may be more revelations to come," concluded the Sunday Times. There may indeed. Our best chance against our known and unknown rulers alike is that there are plenty more 'spies' for peace. After all, there are plenty more secrets to release. It is time that we destroyed not just the regional government system, but the whole emergency organisation which helps to make nuclear war more bearable, and so more probable. "Catch-22 says they have a right to do anything we can't stop them from doing," wrote Joseph Heller. Who says we can't stop them? We know that during the last year resistance has grown. Let us make sure that resistance shall grow.

APPENDIX

I. THE CIVIL COMMISSIONERS IN THE GENERAL STRIKE

- | | | |
|----|---------------|---|
| 1 | Northern | Sir Kingsley Wood, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Health. |
| 2 | North-Eastern | Capt. Douglas Hacking, Home Under-Secretary. |
| 3 | North Midland | Capt. Douglas King, Financial Secretary to the War Office. |
| 4 | Eastern | Maj. Sir Philip Sassoon, Air Under-Secretary. |
| 5 | London | Maj. William Cope, Lord Commissioner of the Treasury. |
| 6 | South Midland | Maj. Lord Winterton, India Under-Secretary. |
| 7 | South-Western | Lord Stanhope, Civil Lord of the Admiralty. |
| 8 | South Wales | Lord Clarendon, Dominion Under-Secretary. |
| 9 | Midland | Lt. Col. George Stanley, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Pensions. |
| 10 | North-Western | Maj. George Hennessy, Vice-Chamberlain (later Lord Windlesham). |
| 11 | Scotland | William Watson, Lord Advocate (later Lord Thankerton). |

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II. THE REGIONAL COMMISSIONERS IN WORLD WAR II

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|------------|---------------------------|--|
| 1 | 1939-45 | Sir Arthur Lambert, former Lord Mayor of Newcastle. |
| 2 | 1939-41 | Lord Harlech, former Tory Colonial Secretary. |
| | 1941-45 | Gen. Sir William Bartholomew, former GOC Northern Command. |
| 3 | 1939-45 | Lord Trent, boss of Boots. |
| 4 | 1939-45 | Sir Will Spens, former Secretary of the Foreign Trade Department of the Foreign Office, Master of Clare College and Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University. |
| 5 Senior | 1940-41 | Capt. Euan Wallace, MP, former Tory Civil Lord of the Admiralty and Home Under-Secretary. |
| | 1941-45 | Sir Ernest Gowers (see below). |
| 5 Junior A | 1939-41 | Sir Ernest Gowers, former Permanent Under-Secretary for Mines, Chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue, and Chairman of the Coal Commission. |
| | 1941-45 | Charles Key, MP, later Minister of Works in the Labour Government. |
| B | 1939-45 | Adm. Sir Edward Evans, former naval hero -- "Evans of the Broke" -- and C-in-C the Nore (later Lord Mountevans). |
| 6 | 1939-42 | Harold Butler, former Tory Minister of Labour and Director of the ILO. |
| | 1942-45 | Sir Harry Haig (see below). |
| 7 | 1939-40
and
1940-45 | Gen. Sir Hugh Elles, former Director of Military Training and Master General of Ordnance at the War Office. |
| | 1940 | Sir Geoffrey Peto, former Tory PPS to the Board of Trade and Chairman of the Food Council. |

III. BOOKS CONTAINING USEFUL INFORMATION

- George Glasgow: General Strikes & Road Transport (1926) *
- W. H. Crook: The General Strike (1931)
- Allen Hutt: The Post-War History of the British Working Class (1937)
- G. M. Young: Stanley Baldwin (1952)
- Leopold Amery: My Political Life, Vol. 2 (1953)
- Frank Newsam: The Home Office (1954)
- Terence O'Brien: Civil Defence (1955) **
- C. L. Mowat: Britain between the Wars (1955)
- Richard Lyman: The First Labour Government of 1924 (1957)
- Julian Symons: The General Strike (1957)
- V. L. Allen: Trade Unions & Government (1960)

* the source for the General Strike Commissioners

** the source for the World War II Commissioners, and for the Map

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