
Duncan Campbell: "War Plan UK – The Truth about Civil Defence in Britain", 1982, pp.25-45.

Hard Rock 82

World background scenario

UK lead –in scenario

Start-of-exercise scenario

1-8 September 1982

1. Throughout 1981 and 1982, encouraged by the growing capacity of its military power, the Soviet Bloc systematically strove to advance its objectives to the detriment of NATO influence. On 1 September, the Soviet Union introduced a draft resolution at an international conference, urging delegates to take immediate action to dissolve military alliances. NATO nations dismissed this initiative as being aimed at misleading world public opinion and opposed the resolution. The Soviet Bloc immediately launched a major diplomatic offensive urging NATO to adopt the resolution and thereby remove a major source of international tension.
2. By 16 September, nations on the flank of the NATO alliance detected signs of Soviet mobilisation in the areas facing them which coincided with intensified Soviet pressure on them to adopt the resolution. Concerned with these moves, they requested the deployment of NATO forces to their respective countries, and this was approved on 17 September, when NATO issued a statement emphasising the defensive and non-provocative nature of these measures, appealing to the Soviet Bloc to refrain from any further steps that could increase tension and ending with an assurance that the NATO alliance would recall its reinforcements as soon as the Soviet Union ceased its course of action.
3. On 18 September, the Soviet Bloc Political Consultative Committee issued a communique condemning the NATO alliance in strong terms for increasing international tension by reverting to the discredited display of military force, demanding an immediate unconditional reversal of the NATO decision concerning the deployment of troops to those nations on the flanks of the alliance, and warning NATO nations of the possible grave complications of non-compliance. The same day, the NATO alliance met to further discuss the situation. Soviet actions, including the forward deployment of some ground forces and the extension of conscript periods of service, posed a growing military threat to the flanks, whilst Soviet activities were increasingly threatening vital sea-lines of communications. In the view of the alliance, these actions, if not countered, would inevitably lead to Soviet military domination of NATO members. The armed forces, the emergency services, the local authorities, public utilities and central government departments were instructed by HMG to review their emergency plans.

19 September 1982

NATO concluded that, whilst intensifying its efforts to defuse the crisis by negotiation with Soviet

Bloc leaders, it had no alternative but to undertake the general reinforcement of Europe.

General Situation: During September 1982, public awareness of the growing seriousness of the world situation resulted in (massive) support for Her Majesty's Government in its role as a voice calling for commonsense to prevail. The period was characterized by:

- a. Sabotage – a number of isolated and uncoordinated acts causing local disruption;
- b. Peaceful rallies, urging the government/NATO alliance to reach a negotiated solution, cause problems with traffic disruption. Some isolated demonstrations cause some law and order problems;
- c. Localised fuel and food shortages – some areas suffered from a series of runs of certain food items. Disputes between shoppers and stores, while not uncommon, were not of serious nature, There were some fires through the hoarding of petrol in private garage despite clear warning to the public of the danger involved;
- d. Population movement – a tendency of some urban families with connections in the West Country, Wales and Scotland to move to those areas manifest itself.

Late night news broadcast, 19 September

In a statement to Parliament today, the Prime Minister announced that it had been decided, as a result of a NATO decision, that the UK would help reinforce Europe and first contingent British troops are now leaving the UK. The Prime Minister added that efforts to seek a peaceful solution were being intensified but as the Soviet Union was increasing in military preparedness there was no alternative. The government has arranged to provide facilities for the reinforcement of Europe and has introduced emergency legislation to enable reinforcement to proceed smoothly.

In an evening broadcast to nation the Prime Minister urged country to remain calm and support the government in its efforts to persuade the Soviet Union to draw back from the point of no return. Public opinion polls continued to show a substantial majority of the population agreed with the firm line being taken by the government.

On the industrial front there is concern over industry's ability to face a prolonged crisis. In the aftermath of last month's heavy destocking and the loss of production caused by the holiday period, the country is not well placed to face the loss of essential imports.

There is also concern over the increase number of terrorist incidents. A number of incidents occurred in which explosives and detonators had been stolen from quarries. Postal bombs addressed to high ranking service officers have also been discovered,

Many service HQs and stations were target for subversive leaflets last night.

Comment: The Hard Rock scenario has been re-written a number of times since defence planners originally drafted it. This version was prepared by the Home Office, and has been repeatedly 'sanitised' if unwelcome and embarrassing references; further 'santisation' was to take place before final versions were made available to local authorities. In the draft obtained by the author and

published here, some sanitisation had begun. References to emergency powers had been toned down, and qualified support for the British government became 'massive' and confirmed by opinion polls. Such soothing insertions were made because the Home Office had assumed that the Hard Rock documents would 'leak', and therefore removed rougher parts of the Home Defence plans first. Another deletion dealt with the beginning of the flight of refugees from the cities.

The references to terrorism and subversion emphasise that during the pre-nuclear attack ('pre-strike') phase, Home Defence is primarily concerned with an internal enemy.

20 September 1982

NATO nations requested direct negotiations between NATO and the Warsaw Pact in order to lower tension. However, a seemingly conciliatory attitude and positive response by the Soviet Bloc was not borne out by any evidence that the Soviet Union was preparing to reduce its military posture. On the contrary, there were reports that Soviet reservists were being mobilised in areas bordering the NATO alliance.

The Soviet Union intensified its campaign by calling for a debate in the UN Security Council on NATO's reinforcement action. The Soviet Union claimed that the buildup of NATO troops in Europe indicate NATO's warlike intention to which the Warsaw Pact was forced to respond in kind. Meanwhile North Sea oil and gas installations came under close Soviet surveillance and reports were received of increased numbers of Soviet naval vessels in the area. NATO shipowners' organisations requested guidance and protection for their shipping which was reporting harassment from Soviet vessels.

Late night news broadcast, 20 September

The day has been marked by a number of rallies throughout the country, reflecting support for and against the government's decision to reinforce Europe. In some cases, demonstrations were held; these passed off without incident. Some groups have called for NATO to agree to the UN Security Council debate suggested by the Soviet Union and to cease its reinforcement activity prior to that debate.

British holidaymakers abroad are facing severe delays in returning to the United Kingdom in response to the government's advice. Relatives at home are seeking information on when the holidaymakers will return.

There has been a run on tinned food, sugar and other storable items causing shortage in some areas. A spokesman representing the largest chain food stores said that this sort of panic buying was quite unnecessary. He admitted that fuel shortages were hindering resupply in some areas but that overall there was no shortage of stocks and the public should calm down and buy sensibly.

As a result of yesterday's announcement in Parliament that military mobilisation was to take place, orders calling out the Reserves were signed in the afternoon. Country-wide reports indicate that reporting-in by reservists is going well.

21 September 1982

There was widespread public concern throughout NATO concerning the military buildup by the Soviet Union and her satellites.

Opinion polls conducted throughout the NATO alliance nevertheless reported substantial public support for NATO actions. It was reported that large scale Soviet exercises and troop movements were taking place; mobilisation of reservists was reported to be occurring in the whole of the Soviet Union and observers spoke of large numbers of men moving towards the NATO/Warsaw Pact borders. Aircraft normally stationed well inside the Soviet Union were also said to have been seen flying near the border areas.

Soviet radio broadcasts claimed that these exercises were routine and that the NATO alliance was deliberately misinterpreting them. The Soviet Union declared maritime danger areas in the Atlantic and the North Sea and informed NATO that her shipping entered these areas at their peril.

Late night news broadcast, 21 September

Further rallies have been held throughout the country,

The emergency services, the local authorities, public utilities and central government departments (have been) instructed by Her Majesty's Government to start implementing their emergency plans.

Local authorities have been given the power to suspend certain peacetime functions and close educational establishments and to requisition premises and materials for civil defence purposes.

Radiac instruments are available for collection from Home Office stores. Chief Constables have been asked to ensure that the (Attack) Warning System is at full operational readiness and to recruit additional Special Constables.

22 September 1982

In the North Sea gas fields, Soviet warships circled gas platforms operating powerful sonars which caused scheduled diving operations to be abandoned, NATO merchant ships reported an increase in incidents involving Soviet naval shipping maneuvering closely and dangerously to them.

Late night news broadcast, 22 September

In response to parliamentary pressure, the Home Office 'Protect and Survive' guidance is to appear as four page inserts in tomorrow's newspapers. Guidance is expected to be broadcast on radio and TV throughout the coming week. The Home Offices emphasises that these steps in no way imply that a nuclear attack on the United Kingdom is regarded as likely, let alone imminent.

The plans for the return of servicemen's dependents to various ports and airfields are working well. However some individuals have been asked to provide assistance should this become necessary.

There have been meetings in major cities at which public anxiety over the international situation has been expressed. There have been some isolated acts of sabotage at military installations.

There are unconfirmed reports of mine-laying in home waters by the Soviets.

The Prime Minister praised the way in which the country was going about the task of conducting the reinforcement arrangements.

Comment: The new powers given to local authorities imply (although the scenario doesn't state) that the enabling Defence Regulations under the Emergency Power Act (which was passed by Parliament on 19 September) have come into effect. Internment and other war measures now begin. The reports of demonstrations indicate that the police and army are engaged on 'public order' problems, but this is not spelled out. The Square Log scenario of two years earlier was more specific;

There has been continuous left and right wing political activity since the beginning of September. ... Pacifism as a front for subversion has been the main theme. Some demonstrations called for the use of troops in support of the police (Military Aid to the Civil Power). ..

In Hard Rock, the emphasis is on terrorism and sabotage – either by Soviet frogmen or otherwise orchestrated by the Soviet Union – to draw the Hard Rock local authority players' attention away from the real tasks of law and order being undertaken; simply, the suppression of dissent, and 'persuasion' of the public to stay put.

23 September 1982

The Soviet Union further intensified her propaganda campaign reiterating her claim that NATO's aggressive intentions were evident by her actions in reinforcing Europe. The Soviet Union stated that unless these actions were stopped, she and her allies would have to deploy troops in defensive positions in their own interests.

Late night news broadcast, 23 September

The situation at home is much as yesterday with public meetings continuing to make most of the news. There is growing evidence of anxiety among the civil population as they realise that hostilities between NATO and the Warsaw Pact may be inevitable. There is increased evidence of movement to holiday accommodation in the west.

Some government personnel and local authority staff are reported to have moved to secret wartime locations to get them ready for use should the international situation deteriorate further.

24 September 1982

Soviet forces were reported to be massing on NATO borders. North Sea oil installations were subjected to increasing harassment by Soviet naval forces.

Late night news broadcast, 24 September

The UK Offshore Operators Association has announce that all exploration rigs, crane barges and other mobile offshore installations are to be withdrawn from the North Sea. This is a direct result of the harassment experienced in the past week and marks the virtual end to further oil exploration in

the area.

There have been a number of reports of frogmen coming ashore who, it is suspected, may be Soviet saboteurs.

User of some ports on the east coast has been affected by the stranding of Soviet vessels. This is apparently a deliberate attempt to block reinforcement ports.

25 September 1982

There were increasing signs of general mobilisation in Soviet Bloc countries whose governments were now known to be activating civil defence procedures and other measures involving warning to their population.

Late night news broadcast, 25 September

Throughout the day various reports of sabotage have been received. They appear to be well planned and professional suggesting that Soviet-trained saboteurs are responsible.

The motoring organisations report that there is increased traffic out of London towards the west.

Ministerial television and radio broadcasts last night emphasised the disadvantage of leaving home.

Early this morning a major oil refinery in Wales was attacked. A number of simultaneous explosions resulted in the destruction of the majority of the fuel tanks in the refinery.

Comment: According to projections of refugee movements attached to the Hard Rock 92 scenario, 200,000 people have now fled from the cities, and London in particular. This fight continues to grow. Ten per cent of the population cannot get the food they want, and a run on building materials for 'Protect and Survive' precautions has started. Although public order aspects are suppressed from these scenarios, earlier exercises had troops confronting pacifist demonstrations by this stage, and every military unit was given extensive stocks of CS gas, as well as conventional ammunition.

26 September 1982

Soviet military preparation opposite the NATO flank nations had reached such a point of readiness that it was clear that an invasion of those NATO nations was capable of being launched within hours.

Late night news broadcast, 26 September

Further reports are being received of mines being observed near to UK coast. These reports indicate that the mines are not of a type kept by the NATO nations.

Petrol is in short supply in some parts of the country and today there are reports of shortage of food in some cities. In rural areas, the petrol shortage is causing difficulty over restocking stores.

Earlier this morning a senior Army officer was about to step into his car when there was an explosion seriously injuring the driver. The General escaped with only minor cuts and bruises.

Most newspapers carry (officially sponsored) features on elementary air raid precautions.

27 September 1982

The war starts.

At 0600 hours the Soviet Union launched air attacks against the United Kingdom. Targets were airfield and air defence radars; nuclear weapons were not used. In Europe, Soviet forces attacked NATO throughout the length of its borders. The attack, which was preceded by a twenty minute artillery bombardment, started at 0450 when main battle elements crossed the border on a broad front. At sea, the Soviet Navy conducted a coordinated air and submarine pre-emptive attack on NATO fleets. High level talks commenced in the UN Security Council in an effort to end the fighting but it quickly became clear that Soviet representatives were taking up an intransigent attitude and were demanding the recognition of permanent Soviet control over certain territories which were to be liberated.

Late night news broadcast, 27 September

At 6 o'clock this morning the Soviet Union launched air attacks against the United Kingdom, Details of damage have not been disclosed yet, but the government has issued a statement in the effect that only military installations have been hit. Although civilian casualties have been reported the civilian population as such is not being subjected to deliberate attacks.

Every effort is being made to located saboteurs. Many service installations have come under attack and the situation is made more difficult owing to the conventional bombing attack by Soviet aircraft. There are reports of (large numbers of) people moving away from urban area.

The Prime Minister has formally announced in Parliament and on radio and TV that a state of war exists between the United Kingdom and its allies and the Soviet Union,

Air Raid on civil targets, 27 September¹

<i>Time</i>	<i>Target</i>	<i>Number of bombers</i>	
		<i>Attacking</i>	<i>Shot down</i>
7:22 am	St Fergus	6	-
7:24 am	Peterhead	3	-

Comment: Ironically, the Hard Rock scenario makes it clear that the government statement about attack on military targets only would have been untrue. St Fergus (North Sea gas terminal) and Peterhead (a port) are, of course, civil targets.

28 September 1982

The exact depth of Soviet penetration (in Europe) remains hazy. It was known however that heavy fighting was continuing on all fronts with significant losses to both sides. Late that night the Soviet

¹ Times of raids on military targets are not given (see map for targets).

Union rejected NATO's response to her demands. It was strongly believed that the Soviet Union was deliberately dragging out the talk to enable her forces to advance as far as possible before the war was brought to an end on her terms, namely recognised control of all territory take in the war.

Late night news broadcast, 28 September

The bombing raids on the United Kingdom have continued during the past twenty-four hours. Yesterday, Soviet forces attack RAF stations. The raids lasted for half an hour. This morning Soviet aircraft attack again. In a short space of time Soviet raiders attacked nearly fifty targets including RAF stations and naval ports. Details of damage are not yet known but it is understood that Rosyth Naval Base was attacked and Forth Main Channel and the Cromarty Firth were mined from the air during the raids. A number of incidents throughout the country demonstrated that sabotage attacks continue. In the early hours of the morning, a major port on the south coast was attacked. A series of small but very discriminate explosions seriously disrupted port activity.

At a rally in support of HMG peace moves this morning, there was strong opposition to Soviet objectives, but a call was made to NATO to redouble in efforts to seek peace for fear of an escalation to nuclear war.

Traffic leaving the cities is still causing difficulties. In addition to the sheer volume of traffic on the roads, the situation is being exacerbated by vehicles running out of fuel.

Air Raids on civil target, 28 September

<i>Time</i>	<i>Target</i>	<i>Number of bombers</i>	
		<i>Attacking</i>	<i>Shot down</i>
6:30 am	Felixstowe	8	1
	Greenock	4	
	Huntingdon	1	
6:34 am	Manchester	1	
	Liverpool	4	1
6:35 am	Chester	1	
6:40 am	Oxford	1	
6:46 am	Swindon	2	
6:30 pm	Ruislip	2	
	Luton	2	
	Thurleigh	2	1
	Salisbury	1	
11:30 pm	Felixstowe	10	2
	Harwich	10	3
	Canvey Island	10	1

29 September 1982

In response to the failure of the talks, the Warsaw Pact stepped up the severity of its attacks against NATO naval units and against land forces in Europe. Heavy fighting continued on all fronts.

Late night news broadcast, 29 September

The United Kingdom continues to be a target for Soviet bombing. Yesterday afternoon, several RAF stations and the Army headquarters at Wilton were bombed. Again, shortly before midnight heavy conventional air attack were directed against Portsmouth naval dockyard and naval installations in the area suffered some damage. At the same time, Canvey Island came under heavy air attack, as did the ports of Avonmouth, Felixstowe, and Harwich. The third raid in twenty-four hours came at first light this morning. RAF stations and naval ports were bombed and the London airport area has also come under attack.

Some twenty-five sabotage attacks have been reported during the past twenty-four hours, not all of them successful. Some sections of the population continue to move to the countryside. (There is) late news of further conventional air attacks.

Air Raids on civil target, 29 September

Time	Target	Number of bombers	
		Attacking	Shot down
6:30 am	Avonmouth	3	1
	Bristol*	1	
6:45 am	Amesbury	1	
7:00 am	Bude	1	
6:30 pm	Hull	2	
	Humber Bridge	1	
	Doncaster	3	
	Middlesbrough	4	
6:34 pm	Lincoln	2	
	Doncaster	4	
	Swindon	2	

*: Bombers could not reach assigned target of Bristol.

Comment: The exercise starts with the opening up of war HQs and briefing of 'players'.

30 September 1982

The exercise 'play' starts at 9 am with a review of the overall home defence situation.

General Situation Report

Morale: There is deep concern amongst the population that the war may escalate from conventional to nuclear.

Voluntary services: The number of people volunteering their services grows. There are some areas with many volunteers and few tasks and vice versa. In addition to numerous offers of help from individual citizens, established welfare and civil defence organisations are eager to become fully involved.

Armed forces: Reinforcement of Europe is almost complete. Delays to completing some movement is being caused by aerial mining of ports. Troops at home are fully committed to guarding tasks. Reserves have (not) been deployed. Some personnel have moved wartime locations (but command and control continues to be exercised through peacetime locations).

Emergency powers: Parliament has given the government sufficient powers to conduct the defence of the country. The emergency services, local authorities, public utilities and central government departments are in the process of completing their plans to go on a war footing and (are) urgently engaged on completing their mobilisation tasks. Country Controllers have been given requisitioning powers for premises and goods.

Wartime locations: All designated staff have gone to their Sub-Regional Headquarters. They have no operational role for the time being. Local government headquarters are similarly manned.

Self-evacuation: This is still limited in the main to those with somewhere specific to go, e.g. relatives or holiday homes in the west.

Absenteeism: Absenteeism is almost entirely due to difficulties in getting to work through shortage of fuel or disruption of public transport, although some people are remaining at home to prepare fallout rooms and shelters. Those working for large organisations are reporting to branches in their home areas.

Food: Foodstuff continue to be moved from ports. Some fat refineries and compounding facilities have been destroyed. Deliveries of animal feeding stuff have been disrupted following damage to mills at ports. An overall assessment of food stocks indicates that there are (eight to ten) weeks supply in the pipeline including intervention stocks. Buffer depots have been doubled and there are now some 250 spread throughout the UK. Manufacturers have increased production of basic items, e.g. flour, sugar, powdered and canned milk for babies. The most serious problem centres on panic buying and hoarding which is on the increase. Government announcements through the media have not yet had any marked effect. Most shopkeepers have initiated a form of rationing. There is some profiteering.

'Protect and Survive' materials: Advice is being given on the provision of suitable materials. In some areas there are shortages which have led to self-provision (e.g. removing fences) and the emergence of a few black marketers.

Petrol, oil and lubricants: The main problem has been a rush on petrol. Garages have impose various form of rationing such as limiting sales, supplying regular customers only or cash limits. However the trend is for re-supply not to keep up with demand and motoring to the station or to work is impossible in many places. Priority users are required to determine minimum requirements for

essential operational use.

Communications: Prior to the first Soviet attacks on the United Kingdom, there were no difficulties in telecommunications (telephones, teleprinters, and telex lines). However, after the air attacks on 27 September, loss of communications of the order of five per cent experienced in attacked area because of damage to the system. Further degradation was experienced on the police and fire services or government departments who are receiving priority attention for the repair of their lines but private telephone subscribers are experiencing difficulties. Arrangements are being made by official sources to assist relatives who are unable to contact families in bombed areas.

Broadcasting: Television and radio entertainment is continuing – interspersed with public guidance delivered as frequent intervals.

Policing: Throughout the country the police are responding to a wide range of activities and incidents and individual calls for assistance as well as pursuing such specific war functions as the protection of important installations, UKWMO (UK Warning and Monitoring Organisation) liaison, and completing force mobilisation. In effect, most police forces are engaged at the ‘major incident’ level with major calls being made on their resources for traffic arrangements and the investigation of reports of saboteurs.

Fire services: The absence of some armed forces fire brigades who have gone to Europe has placed considerable extra demands on the local fire brigades in coping with fire arising on military establishments subjected to direct attack. RAF airfields still have fire brigades stationed there. The brigades are also prominently engaged in measures to rescue trapped civilians and to restore disrupted water supplies in civilian areas. There are difficulties in obtaining fresh stocks of foam, etc. In addition, brigades continue their war mobilisation measures.

Health: In the areas attacked, NHS staff are fully stretched. Difficulties are encountered discharging long-stay patients for care in the community and (in) restricting admissions. There is an incipient outbreak of flu.

Social Security: Many local DHSS offices are being inundated with requests for ‘special needs’ allowances to enable householders to obtain their ‘Protect and Survive’ materials.

Cash and credit: are in demand generally and banks, Post Offices and building societies report widespread withdrawals from accounts.

Transport: The rail and road network have not been severely affected by bombing raids although some local damage has been sustained. There is severe congestion on some roads to the west; a problem made worse by vehicles running out of fuel and being left abandoned. Despite some bombing damage, trains are running virtually at normal capacity although normal schedules have been disrupted.

Prisons: Most inmates have been released on parole. The exceptions are those with a substantial term of imprisonment still to serve whose immediate parole would be likely to put the public at serious risk. They number (one thousand) and are to be held in not more than five high security establishments.

Saboteurs: There now exists a very low level of un-attributable sabotage.

Air Raids on civil target, 30 September

<i>Time</i>	<i>Target</i>	<i>Number of bombers</i>	
		<i>Attacking</i>	<i>Shot down</i>
7:00 am	Oxford	4	
7:30 am	Carlisle	5	
	Birmingham	5	
	Wolverhampton	5	
	Kingsbury	1	
7:33 am	Manchester	5	
	Peterborough	5	
7:36 am	Liverpool	5	1
8:00 am	Dover	5	2
	Chatham	3	
	Plymouth	4	1
	Folkestone	2	

2 October 1982, 2 pm: Before the nuclear attack

In Europe heavy fighting continues on all fronts and there has been a sharp increase in the number of casualties on both sides. The extent of present Soviet penetration is not clear but second echelon forces have been committed and NATO forces are under extreme pressure. (All the NATO front forces have also suffered heavy attack.) Intense diplomatic pressure to end the fighting continues but efforts are persistently thwarted by Soviet prevarication and the refusal to retreat from territory she has 'liberated'.

In the United Kingdom conventional air attacks on military airfields, communication centres and headquarters have continued. Large numbers of casualties have been suffered in these areas and widespread damage caused in areas adjacent to these target. Localised disruption of transport and fuel supplies has brought about some shortage of food. Public reaction to the continued failure of peace initiatives is muted, but fear of an escalation to the possible use of nuclear weapons is now uppermost in everyone's minds. As a result the population fears that nuclear attacks are imminent. All remaining home defence measures have been implemented and, where applicable, remaining staff of government departments and military headquarters have been deployed to their post-strike positions.

Comment: In this standard and much-rehearsed NATO scenario, the next moves are clear. NATO forces are giving way across the central front in Germany and falling back on the Rhine. Reserves will not survive long. NATO has no policy of 'no first use' of nuclear weapons; on the contrary, NATO policy is to use tactical nuclear weapons in precisely such a situation, to destroy and repel attacking

conventional forces. Even though the Red Army has, in this scenario, now overrun large parts of West Germany, SACEUR (Supreme Allied Commander Europe) will now have sought and obtained reluctant permission from the NATO Council and the United States President for 'release' of nuclear weapons, H-hour, from which time NATO military commanders are empowered to begin nuclear fire, is late this afternoon. If they do not get release, soon the nuclear missile and artillery units will themselves be overrun.

Strike aircraft, howitzers and Pershing missiles fire concentrated 'packages' of tactical nuclear weapons – from thirty to one hundred weapons at one time – to destroy the Soviet advance. Soviet scenarios are clear on the response at this point; a retaliatory salvo will not be limited. Successive Chiefs of the British Defence Staff have explained that no 'limited' NATO nuclear war exercise has ever stopped short of all out exchange – Armageddon in Europe and the northern hemisphere.

In the rear, and in Britain in particular, longer range, more devastating nuclear weapons are readied. Ten flights, each of sixteen Cruise Missiles, are dispersed throughout Britain, and dozens of airfields are choc-c-bloc with US bombers and fighters which have arrived as part of NATO's reinforcement measures. Soviet Bloc rocket and air forces in Poland, Czechoslovakia and the western republics of the USSR, in the Baltic and the Atlantic are at high state of readiness.

There are only a few hours left.

2 October 1982, 7:55 pm (comment)

Across the darkening face of Britain, seven thousand power sirens come to life, emitting the powerful banshee wails last heard more than a generation before. But no vivid white pencils of searchlights cross the sky now; they have been replaced by the silent watch of the ballistic missiles early warning radar station at Fylingdales, Yorkshire. Three missile trajectories have appeared on the Fylingdales tracking consoles; trajectories heading towards London, the south coast, and Yorkshire. There are six minutes left.