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PREPARATION BY THE CIVIL AUTHORITIES FOR ACTION

IN THE EVENT OF A LANDING BY THE ENEMY IN BERWICKSHIRE

The Committee of Imperial Defence having drawn up certain arrangements for the conduct of the civil population in the event of belligerent operations in this country, regard it as most important there should be an organisation ready to ensure that the military orders will be readily communicated to, and carried out by, the civil population. With that object in view, the Lord Lieutenants of Counties on the east coast of Scotland were asked by the Secretary for Scotland to take the matter in hand, and to arrange for the formation of Local Emergency Committees within the area of their respective counties. A Central Organising Committee, and three District Emergency Committees, have been accordingly formed in this county, whose duties will be to co-operate with the Military Authorities and Police in making the arrangements for carrying out within the districts assigned to them such action as may be required. Instructions for the guidance of the civil population will be prepared and held in readiness for distribution, should the occasion arise, but in the meantime the Central Organising Committee, with the view of acquainting the public of what may be required of them, and preventing panic or alarm, deem it advisable to intimate that the arrangements to be made will, among other things, provide for the following, viz:--

- 1) The removal of the whole or any part of the inhabitants of any area within the County, as far as is practicable from the area of probable military operations.
- 2) The removal of all vehicles, including motor carts, carriages, carts, etc., boats, vessels, aircraft, transport animals, live stock, foodstuffs, fuel, tools and implements of whatever description from any area within the County to a place or places beyond the sphere of probable military operations.
- 3) The slaughter of all live stock in cases where it would be impossible to remove them, and the destruction of all food stores, such as flour and meal mills, granaries, etc.
- 4) The enrollment of working parties for carrying out entrenchments, clearing woods and hedges, blocking of roads by felling trees, and in any other way to assist the naval and military authorities.
- 5) The supply of vehicles, tools, pickaxes, etc., which might be required by the military authorities.
- 6) The enrollment of Special Constables and others for carrying out the instructions, controlling of traffic, keeping the main roads open for the military, and directing the public as to the roads, or routes through fields, selected for the removal of stock, etc.

It should be strongly borne in mind that it is of the utmost importance that in any case none of the preconcerted action involving the destruction of property must be taken without the express orders of a military authority given directly or transmitted through the police. It may be mentioned that the Government will give reasonable compensation for property destroyed by owners under instructions of the military authorities or of the police or special constables acting under the military authorities, but not otherwise.

The Central Organising Committee desires to strongly impress on all concerned that the arrangements above-mentioned are not contemplated owing to any immediate apprehension of an attempt to land a hostile force in this country. Such a contingency is no more likely to occur at the present time than in the earlier stages of the War, and extensive military preparations have already been made to safeguard the country against it. The measures to be taken by the civil population in the event of a hostile landing being imminent or actually occurring must therefore be regarded as purely precautionary and ancillary to the preparations of His Majesty's Forces.

CHAS HOPE

Chairman of the Central Organising Committee