

500,000 Irish to fight in World War III

Pact with UK in nuke battle

Secret contingency for World War III declared more than half a million Irish people would be fit for military service. Classified files disclose arguments by Ireland's intelligence services for a "Friendly" pact with the UK in the event of a threatened nuclear holocaust.

The four page document, from February 23, 1981, states the North would be "essential" to Britain's security in such a global conflict but access to the rest of Ireland would "significantly enhance" its chances.

Stamped SECRET and titled The Strategic Importance Of Ireland To The UK In The Times Of War, it was drawn up in preparation for a feared outbreak of atomic war between the Soviets and the Western World.

Despite the official neutrality, the report warns Ireland may not have been spared a nuclear strike, with Shannon and Bantry Bay pinpointed as likely targets. It outlines potential help to Nato member Britain "bearing in mind that one of the guiding principals of nuclear warfare is the dispersal of forces and facilities so as to present as small a target as possible to the enemy".

In a pact, Ireland would offer "over 500,000 of its citizens fit for military service". Sites for missiles, 20 airfields, six major and 38 minor ports, a potential supply of (will?) and a staging point for (misinformation?) from North America, the report suggests.

Setting radar sites along the west and the south coasts could help direct an imminent nuclear strike on the UK and (???????) it to be intercepted further out in the Atlantic.

Furthermore, the use of ports in the Republic would improve the protection with Europe. While bombing supply routes for military reinforcements, food and fuel. Such help would allow the UK to "Face East in the confidence that the West flank is (????) secure.

The report added all the benefits of Ireland acting as a British ally would also apply to the rest of Western Europe. Under such a scenario, European governments (????) by a Soviet invasion and "Free Forces" could take refuge in Ireland and continue their struggle, under the plan.

The intelligence services, based at Army headquarters, writes the UK has long been seriously concerned that Ireland's warning system was "very unreliable". It stated: "There is little doubt but that one of the most immediate effects of (????) kind of agreement between the two countries[Ireland and Britain] would be a review of the existing situation, which could only be to Britain's advantage.

The report reveals that the UK's nuclear Warning and Monitoring Organisation did not accept there would not be any direct strikes to Ireland in the event of a war. It concluded Ireland's strategic importance to Britain had increased because of the short time scale of a nuke attack.

Early warning systems on Irish territory "could mean the difference between success and failure of any reaction to our defence against such an attack".



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Pact with UK in nuke battle

BY **MICHAEL MUTTON**
Special Correspondent

SECRET contingency plans for World War III declared more than half a million Irish people would be fit for military service.

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help to Nato member Britain "bearing in mind that one of the guiding principles of nuclear warfare is the dispersal of forces and facilities so as to present as small a target as possible to the enemy".

In a pact, Ireland could offer "over 500,000 of its citizens fit for military service", sites for missiles, 36 airfields, six major and 38 minor ports, a potential supply of oil and a staging post for reinforcements from North America, the report suggests.

Siting radar sites along the west and south coasts could help detect an imminent nuclear strike on the UK and allow it to be intercepted further out in the Atlantic.

Furthermore, the use of parts in the Republic would improve the protection of the English Channel and communication with Europe, while boosting supply routes for military reinforcements, food and fuel.

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TARGETS

Bantry Bay and Shannon could have been pinpointed by the Soviets as part of a nuclear attack.

REFUGE

European governments and their forces could have taken refuge in Ireland if they had been allied.