

ACTION

London Transport will provide DOE with facts and figures to show roughly what it would cost to bring the system up to a standard acceptable for civil defence purposes.

DOE would then make a case to the relevant Government committee to consider whether additional and remedial work would be justified in the light of (a) expenditure involved, and (b) other considerations such as the relevance of a speedy return of the London Transport system to operational conditions in the event of nuclear warfare.

ACTION

Mr Jenkins
ITE

(later)
DPE/DOE

Mrs L LOUGH

ITE

23 June 1975

NOTE OF A MEETING HELD AT 55 Broadway on WEDNESDAY 19 JUNE 1975

PROTECTION AGAINST FLOODING IN THE LONDON UNDERGROUND SYSTEM

Present: G D Jenkins

A Shaw

D V Richards

F G Young

Lt Col McNaughton

F J Treynor

Mrs L Lough

} London Transport Executive

} Department of the Environment

CHAIRMAN

BACKGROUND

Briefly, floodgates were originally provided on the London underground system as a wartime measure. They were later supplemented to take account of nuclear warfare and then, by a number of additional devices, to provide reasonable protection for the underground against tidal flooding.

In 1969, when the Brixton extension of the Victoria Line was being built, the Government did not consider that they were justified in the expenditure of £225,000 to instal, for home defence purposes, floodgates at the Stockwell interchange of the Victoria Line. More recently, the first stage of the Fleet Line has also gone ahead without provision for floodgates. It follows, therefore, that most of the existing wartime flood protective measures are now incomplete. Additionally, work on tunnelling has been carried out for various reasons by the Post Office and others, as well as by London Transport themselves, in areas which would be affected by flooding from the Thames. All this has made the present system obsolete as a home defence measure.

In December 1972, GLC produced new tables of tidal flooding from the Thames, based on lower flood levels. With these figures, London Transport thought they were justified in carrying out limited protective works in the underground system against tidal flooding. These works should be complete by the end of 1975. In the meantime plans are going ahead for the provision of the Thames barrier and this, provided there are no further setbacks, is scheduled for completion in the early 1980s.

The Problem

1. Is there a case for the wartime home defence measures to be made good and supplemented, as necessary, to take account of the modifications and additions to London's underground system in the last few years?
2. If so, would the Government be likely to give approval in principle to the work being done?
3. If not, would the Government agree to the discontinuance of maintenance and inspection on the present obsolete system?