

NEWS RELEASE

NEW ZEALAND
**Planning
Council**

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GRIM FINDINGS OF NUCLEAR WAR STUDY RELEASED

Nuclear war would probably not result in immediate deaths in New Zealand but could lead to severe social chaos and breakdown, according to a Planning Council report released today.

The report, titled New Zealand After Nuclear War, is the result of a six-month study that investigated a range of sectors of New Zealand society to find out what effect a nuclear war would have.

And the results make grim reading. Principal researcher, Wren Green says a major problem would be that there would be no links with the northern hemisphere and no outside resources to call on. "This factor alone would mean a loss of virtually all medicines and medical supplies and would very soon begin to affect diabetics, asthmatics, people with heart disease and other chronic illnesses," he said.

As vaccines run out there would be an increase in infectious diseases such as diphtheria, tetanus, measles, polio and TB.

There would be less freedom of movement as diesel and aviation fuel ran out, and there would only be enough petrol to run a small proportion of the cars currently on the road. Gradually those cars would break down and it would become increasingly difficult to repair them as irreplaceable parts like batteries, spark plugs and tyres became worn out.

Manual telephone exchanges, typewriters and printing presses would replace import-dependent electronic telephones, typewriters, computers and presses.

Without any exporting, thousands of people would quickly lose their jobs - perhaps 40% of the population. "As happens now, the unemployed would lose their sense of purpose and identity only this would apply to hundreds of thousands of people," said Dr Green.

"And this confused and grief-stricken nation would be forced to carry on in the knowledge that millions of people in other countries were dead or dying and that little about the future was certain."

"Most of what we now take for granted would be lost or radically changed forever."

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