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TRADERS MUTUAL ASSISTANCE SCHEMES IN PREPARATION
AGAINST AIR RAIDS

The Board of Trade in a memorandum to the non-food sections of the retail trade setting out the official policy on shopping facilities after air raids urge traders to make plans to help each other. The memorandum emphasises that the Board's first responsibility is to see that there is an adequate supply of those goods and services which are necessary to maintain reasonable living conditions, but it is pointed out that in doing so they must be satisfied that the most efficient use is made of the nation's resources of labour and goods.

Both shop premises and goods are liable to be damaged or destroyed. No rebuilding or extensive repairs to shops can be done unless the work is of vital importance in the public interest. This restriction is necessary because building labour and materials must be directed first and foremost to work required for winning the war. The best use must therefore always be made of whatever alternative accommodation remains after the raid. Retail traders are asked to help the Government and each other by organising themselves in advance so that in an emergency they are prepared to share their premises either temporarily or for the period of the war.

Traders are also urged to make every effort to salvage what they can of damaged stocks and to join in the schemes prepared by the regional and the local salvage officers.

The Board of Trade will see that sufficient supplies of essential goods are sent to a bombed area to replace consumers' losses and to restore retail stocks in the area to a working level; but they cannot do more than this if it would mean that consumers in other parts of the country would have to go short. The goods available must be placed at the disposal of the public as rapidly and efficiently as possible and the allocation of supplies fairly among retailers in each trade, whether bombed or unbombed, is often a difficult matter, on which the Board hope traders will be ready to give them their advice and help.

Plans have already been made in many towns for mutual assistance among shopkeepers, both food traders and others. The Board of Trade is now issuing this nation-wide call to retailers to help themselves and the Government in solving air-raid problems in a co-operative manner.

BOARD OF TRADE