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Civil defense: Both red and dead

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by Arthur Waskow

CIVIL DEFENSE

BOTH

RED

AND

DEAD

EDITOR'S NOTE

Arthur Waskow is the author of *The Limits of Defense*,* a critical study of the various policies of deterrence held in the Department of Defense. The book also proposes a form of disarmament which, in Waskow's words, "would advance liberty in the world" while providing a genuine security. Waskow, a free-lance writer and former congressional legislative assistant, is a graduate student in American history at the University of Wisconsin, now completing his dissertation on race riots. He is one of the authors in the American Friends Service Committee's study series, "Beyond Deterrence."

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In North Carolina on October 12, President Kennedy proposed as a guide to American policy the slogan "Neither Red nor dead." Yet the civil defense program he strongly supports is the one conceivable program that could result in America's being both dead and Red.

Most criticisms of the proposed civil defense program have not looked at it in terms of ultimate goals. The criticisms have focused on minor questions of technique and have frequently been contradictory. Critics have argued that the program is too small, that it should include blast shelters as well as fallout shelters, that it depends too much on home shelters and too little on community shelters, that it depends too much on community shelters and too little on home shelters, that it leaves too much power to the states, that it has granted too much power to the Defense Department, that it has stirred up such hysteria that some Americans are preparing to kill other Americans in the name of civil defense and that it has not stirred up enough excitement to banish the public's apathy and indifference to civil defense.

But none of these criticisms has gone to the real root of the trouble. The real trouble with civil defense is that it will not work by the standards the President set up. To use his slogan as a benchmark by which to judge the civil defense program, its terms might be defined this way: "dead" to mean that all Americans would be dead within one year from the date that a thermonuclear war began, and "Red" to mean that American free enterprise, free speech and free elections had been wiped out by an all-powerful central government.

If a civil defense program were to make Redness and deadness less likely fates for America, the program would be worthy of support; if civil defense were to make either of these fates less likely at the price of making the other more likely, the program would require the most serious, soul-searching re-examination, and if civil defense could be shown to make both Redness and deadness more likely fates for America, then civil defense ought certainly to be rejected out of hand.

To appraise civil defense intelligently therefore requires an examination of the effects a civil defense program would have upon the likelihood of thermonuclear war; upon the kind, size, and survivability of a thermonuclear war if it did come, and upon American free enterprise and political liberty.

Civil Defense as a Danger to Peace

Since 1958 there has been a struggle inside the Pentagon between two opposed views of what American military strategy should be. Growing logically out of the two military strategies are two opposed views concerning civil defense—one that civil defense is a necessary part of the American military posture, and the other that civil defense might endanger the stability of America's deterrent to Soviet attack. Let us examine these two strategies and their implications.

The first of these strategies is held mostly (though not exclusively) by officers of the Air Force. It is based on the belief that a controlled, "limited" thermonuclear war is possible. Its advocates are often called "counter-force" strategists, because they believe that any nation would use its H-bombs against its enemy's military forces rather than against enemy populations.

They believe that Russian missiles and bombers would be used mostly to attack American missile and bomber bases, rather than large American cities, and that America's atomic strength would be used in the same way against the Russians. Counter-force strategists believe that thermonuclear war would be very much like old-fashioned, nineteenth-century war, in which every nation deliberately left its enemy's government and the bulk of his population alone, in order to have a government with which to negotiate terms of peace and a going society from which to extract indemnities or territory. The counter-force view of war is thus that of two military forces duelling while the rest of both nations watch and wait.

Counter-force strategy necessarily assumes that military forces and the rest of the population are really separated from each other, so that an attack on forces will not badly damage the population. The enormous power of the H-bomb makes essential not only a physical and geographical separation between forces and populations, but protection of the civilian populations by means of civil defense. That is why counter-force strategists insist upon civil defense as a part of the American military posture.

But what kind of civil defense does this mean? Here supporters of counter-force strategy disagree, depending upon their idea of how a thermonuclear war is likely to begin. One view is that such a war would begin with a direct attack by the Soviet Union upon American bomber and missile bases. With whatever the United States had left, it would retaliate upon Soviet bases and so the war would go on, thrust and parry, until one side or the other had shown its superiority and could demand the enemy's submission. In the meantime, most of the American population would have been waiting out the war in areas not directly exposed to blast and fire. There would have been accidents and misfires, and some cities are so close to important bases that these cities would have been destroyed. But counter-force strategists calculate that perhaps no more than 30,000,000 Americans would have died from direct attack in this stage. For everyone else, the chief danger would be fallout, and therefore this school of counter-force strategists argues for the creation of ample fallout shelters for the whole American population.

The second school of counter-force strategists argues that thermonuclear war might well begin in another way. They suggest that the Communists might attack important American interests without attacking the United States itself. For example, the Soviet Union might take over West Berlin or might invade Western Europe, or China might invade Southeast Asia or the Chinese and Russians together might sponsor a Communist revolution in South America. In any of these cases, the United States might want to be able to threaten the Communists with punishment on their home ground. Thus the United States might be the first to use the H-bomb in this kind of war, first to knock out Soviet military bases that might otherwise retaliate, and then to strike perhaps one or two population centers as a minor punishment for a minor provocation or against a whole series of cities to punish such a major provocation as invasion of Western Europe.

Probably before taking an action like this the United States would issue an ultimatum to the Communists to withdraw their provocative act or suffer the consequences. But before issuing such an ultimatum or firing its thermo-

nuclear weapons, the United States would want to be able to protect its own population from reprisal. It would therefore be necessary for the government to order evacuation of American cities in order to prevent the Russians from threatening to retaliate for any attack by an attack on our large population centers. It would be necessary to protect the people being evacuated against direct H-bomb attack and therefore against fire and blast as well as fallout. The large numbers of people involved would make it necessary to build huge underground cities insulated from fire and blast and capable of accommodating large numbers of Americans. For these reasons, this second school of strategists urges that immediate attention be paid to building blast shelters and to making arrangements for "strategic evacuation," meaning evacuation more than one day in advance of the expected Soviet attack.

Thus, in the hope of freeing American military forces to fight a thermonuclear war more effectively, counter-force strategists call for a program of civil defense.

Many of the critics of counter-force strategy are officers in the Army and Navy. They argue that if any thermonuclear war comes, it cannot possibly be the "limited" and controlled kind of war that counter-force strategists expect. They insist that no nation can survive a thermonuclear war, and that therefore American military power must be so constructed as to deter any such war from beginning. They believe that a stable deterrent—one that prevents any nation from striking first—would allow the defense of American interests by limited-war forces on land and sea.

Stable-deterrent strategists argue that no thermonuclear war can possibly be controlled. They argue that once a thermonuclear war began, the hail of H-bombs directed against military targets would destroy communications, prevent assessment of one's own or the enemy's damage and almost certainly break down the command processes that preserve the nation-state itself. Once the possibility of control was lost, thermonuclear bombs on both sides would be falling without regard to distinctions between people and military targets.

Moreover, stable-deterrent strategists point out that the assumed geographical separation of people and forces is impossible to maintain. As missile bases become more and more numerous, dispersed, mobile, secret and "hardened" against direct blast (all in hopes of making them invulnerable to a first strike and able to mount a retaliatory strike), the Soviets will be raising the size and power of their weapons in an attempt to destroy these more and more invulnerable bases. As the attacking weapons would grow more and more powerful, they would threaten more and more damage to populations at some distance from Ground Zero. Thus the Atomic Energy Commission has calculated that a 100-megaton H-bomb would cause a great firestorm over an area larger than the state of Vermont.

The last criticism of counter-force strategy is the most serious. By aiming the attack at each side's atomic forces, it would place a great premium upon striking first. Whichever nation absorbed the first attack would have its ability to retaliate greatly impaired. Both nations will see and understand this, and in any period of intense political crisis each will be extremely fearful that the other might decide to strike first. If either nation concludes that the other is about to strike, the pressures to strike first instead will be enormous.

Thus stable-deterrent strategists fear that a counter-force strategy would be likely to bring about a preemptive war, and that once the war began it would mount inevitably into a war against populations as well as forces. Since they feel any thermonuclear war would destroy America, they have tried to work out ways to deter such a war instead of winning it. They feel it absolutely necessary that both the United States and the Soviet Union have every reason to avoid even the bare possibility of striking first with thermonuclear arms against the other and that the United States and the Soviet Union each know that the other feels this way. Advocates of a stable deterrent believe the system will be stable if both great powers have an extremely well protected ability to mount a *retaliatory* thermonuclear strike against the other (e.g., Polaris submarines) and if both powers at the same time have no protection for their populations, industries and governments. The theory is that in this state of affairs neither nation would be willing to use its striking force first, out of fear of overwhelming retaliation that would destroy its whole society. But, on the other hand, each nation would be willing to strike second since an attack upon it would so nearly destroy the country that nothing worse could be expected in return for mounting an attack upon the aggressor. Thus both nations would be guaranteed that the other would never intentionally strike first.

Logically, accepting this strategy would mean that the United States and the Soviet Union ought not to have any civil defense at all. Both nations would be publicly announcing their knowledge that thermonuclear war would mean total destruction for their own society. Both nations, by basing their strategies on this knowledge, would be offering their entire populations as hostages to prevent thermonuclear war.

There is a second element in stable-deterrent thinking that would work against having civil defense. Acceptance of the thermonuclear stalemate would make it necessary for the United States to strengthen its limited-war forces in order to defend its interests around the globe, since the threat of thermonuclear punishment could not be used. The necessary mobilization of money and men in sufficient amounts to make a limited-war force able to resist the greater numbers of the Soviet Empire would make it extremely difficult to build a civil defense system at the same time. For this reason, strategists who emphasize the need for a limited-war capability are dubious about the comparative usefulness of civil defense.

The two strategies would have important implications in foreign policy, outside the field of purely military affairs. Supporters of counter-force strategy say that civil defense would "stiffen the national will." By this they mean that if the United States had a civil defense system in operation, the American people and government would be more likely to go to the brink of total war rather than negotiate in political crises like that over Berlin. Even if civil defense would not actually prevent national destruction, the belief of large segments of the population and government that it would protect lives might force some future administration into a more belligerent stance.

Thus counter-force strategy and civil defense go hand in hand with a brink-of-war foreign policy, while the stable deterrent would lead to a foreign policy more interested in negotiation and moderation. It would be pos-

sible from a stable-deterrent position to move in the direction of arms control or disarmament, but it would be impossible in the counter-force atmosphere of a constant arms build-up and impending preemptive war to discuss arms control or disarmament seriously.

Deciding for or against civil defense is crucial to choosing between war and peace, since there is involved the choice between counter-force strategy and the stable deterrent. Counter-force strategy leads toward thermonuclear war without in fact easing the impact of that war upon America. The stable deterrent, which requires that no civil defense be built, offers at least a short respite in the arms race and the chance of a period of negotiation. For these reasons, one major defect of civil defense is that it leads to war.

Civil Defense as a Danger to Life

Supporters of civil defense rest their case upon the belief that a civil defense program could save a number of American lives in case of thermonuclear war. In examining that belief, it is necessary to ask first whether civil defense would make a difference—whether it would in fact save any lives at all—and secondly whether civil defense might actually increase the number of deaths from a thermonuclear war. In making this analysis the key factors are what the war and its aftermath would be like and what the civil defense shelter system would be like. The interrelation of these two factors would determine how many would survive a thermonuclear war.

Even a thermonuclear war that begins with an attack upon military bases is practically sure to degenerate into a disordered, desperate attack against the whole nation. Communications would surely be one of the first casualties of a thermonuclear attack. It would be extremely difficult even to assess the damage to American forces caused by the first strike against us. Missilemen in one county would probably have no way of discovering whether the missile bases in the next county are still capable of firing. To get any clear picture of what damage we have done the enemy would be enormously more difficult. Assuming that an American government were still functioning after the first attack, it would have to try to give orders without knowing its own surviving defenses, the power left to its own striking arm or the enemy targets still requiring destruction.

In fact, such a government may have great difficulty in delivering its orders at all. Electric transmission lines, radio towers and telephone installations would all have been knocked out. Jamming devices would be used by the enemy to prevent orders to fire from reaching their destination. Thus small groups of atomically armed forces would be left to make their own decisions about how to attack the enemy. Meanwhile, some American cities would have been destroyed, either because they were too close to missile bases or because of inaccuracy in aiming and firing. Some field commanders would decide to take revenge by aiming their missiles at enemy cities. Others might believe from the local situation that the United States had been defeated and that there was no option but surrender. Still others, without orders and surrounded by chaos, might succumb to insane fear and hatred and end up firing H-bombs at everything in sight. The same process would be taking place on the enemy side, with the result that attacks would be deliberately mounted

against American population centers.

Some of the attacks, in order to pierce protected bases, would have been mounted with 50-megaton and 100-megaton bombs. The Vermont-sized firestorm predicted by the Atomic Energy Commission to result from such weapons would mean a huge, intense mass fire so hot that it would suck in oxygen from its entire perimeter in hurricane-velocity winds and would burn even materials that are not normally combustible, thus destroying practically all life within its reach. Cities that were miles away from such installations as Nike-Zeus bases which the enemy would try to destroy would be themselves wiped out as a byproduct. Highways and railroads would be destroyed or made useless, medical supplies would be destroyed and medical personnel would be killed or disabled. From multi-megaton bombs that were either accidentally or intentionally exploded in the air, millions of Americans up to several hundred miles away would have been blinded. Thus many of those who would be necessary to help the critically injured or to keep order, reestablish communications and direct rescue operations would themselves be helpless and requiring attention.

All this would have occurred within minutes of the first thermonuclear attack. Assuming a fallout shelter system had been constructed, millions of Americans would head for their nearest shelter. Many would never make it because of fire, immediate high radiation, choked streets, automobile accidents and so on. But millions would get to the door, and at this point the second factor—the nature of the shelter program—would come into effect.

Much has been written about the morality or immorality of preventing neighbors from entering one's own fallout shelter. The dilemma is starkly clear. Either unauthorized entrants will have to be turned away, or their presence will bring about their own deaths and those of the legitimate occupants. A shelter that has been prepared for a two-week stay for five people with the bare survival necessities of food, water, air and sanitation will simply not support six people for the stay necessary to avoid the fallout danger. But what has not generally been understood is that precisely this same dilemma applies to community shelters. A shelter prepared for 300 persons cannot accept more. It will be extremely difficult to keep extra people out of a shelter that has been built in a public place with public funds, but if extra people are allowed to enter they will bring death with them.

It is not easy to choose between the moralities. Nevertheless, in case of war the choice will have to be made on the spur of the moment by anyone who could establish himself as shelter leader. Whatever his choice, he will have enormous difficulty in persuading all occupants of the shelter that he is right, especially if he chooses exclusion and some of those excluded have family ties with those admitted. The result will be that from the first moment of the stay in the shelter the question of leadership is likely to be hotly and probably violently debated—and where this is so, the probability of survival through two weeks in a leaderless or divided shelter is low.

Despite these problems in making their way to and getting inside a fallout shelter, if the civil defense program had been sizable millions of Americans would probably find themselves inside, bedding down for a two-week stay until the fallout had settled to earth. At this point the problems of shelter

life would cause more deaths and casualties. All the evidence from catastrophe situations is that practically everybody searches for his family. Since almost all American families are separated during the day, a daylight attack would mean that millions of husbands, wives and children would have to decide whether to stay in their shelters, desperate without knowledge of their families, or to attempt to leave in the hope of seeking them out. But an attempt to leave might endanger not only those leaving but everyone else in the shelter because of the fallout outside, unless special and expensive arrangements were made for air-tight exits. Thus the shelter leadership might have to make a second major decision about permitting departure. A third major ethical problem would confront the leadership if occupants became violently insane, or woke others by screaming in their nightmares, or grew deliriously sick. Should such "anti-social" unfortunates be repeatedly drugged, or killed outright, if drugs were scarce or absent? Almost every such decision would involve moral choices so difficult and so basic that opposition would be aroused.

Wherever an opposition developed, leadership problems would multiply. Simply cleaning up the shelter from the results of mass diarrhea and nausea (always the first response to disaster) and then rationing space, food, water, medical supplies and access to toilet would require a brilliant leader, several trained lieutenants and complete cooperation. Previous knowledge of the necessary arrangements, the ability to command respect and a feel for dealing with overwhelming crisis would be absolutely essential in every shelter leader and in most of his lieutenants. Any shelter that found itself without such a leader would be unlikely to survive, and a shelter in which there were two such men might have difficulties if the two became leaders of opposing factions. Contending with such extreme difficulties, many shelters would undoubtedly succumb to apathy or to irrational violence. In many cases a social collapse would interrupt access to air, food, water and sanitation. It could only be expected that many who had gone into the shelters would never come out.

When they did come out, some might find the bombs still falling. It is interesting that proponents of civil defense assume a single thermonuclear attack followed by two weeks of quiet for the radioactive dust to settle, after which it would be safe to come out of the shelter. It is more likely that enemy missiles would be aimed and timed before the war to go off semi-automatically at staggered intervals. A government might well do this in order to be able to threaten further attacks (aimed at shelter-leaving populations on D-plus-14) if a surrender were not forthcoming. Any such possibility would make grim farce out of all civil defense possibilities.

Nevertheless, let us assume that for one reason or another the bombs have stopped when the food runs out and people leave their shelters. What would they come out to? The social fabric of America would be ripped to shreds. Even if food had been stored beforehand, a trip to the storage center would be necessary to get it. Highways would be blocked, gasoline would have burned or exploded and railroad tracks would have been torn up by blast; so it would literally be necessary to walk to get food. Water mains and dams would have broken and purification plants been abandoned, so that practically no artificial water systems would be working. Most of the available clothing

would have burned or been contaminated by fallout. If it had merely been contaminated, washing would make it usable, but without water, washing would be impossible. If people came out of their shelters into cold weather, some kind of heat and housing would be essential, but most of the housing would have been destroyed or contaminated, and fuels would have been destroyed or made inaccessible. Disease would be rampant, since sewage lines would have broken, water would have been polluted and controls over rats and insects would have broken down. Biological warfare would probably have added to these natural origins of disease.

What of the governmental structure necessary to restore the crucial services? Many officials would have died, and their replacements would be totally inexperienced. Martial law would nominally be in effect, but there would actually be few military or police organizations intact enough to enforce it. Nor would help be available from elsewhere. All of North America and Europe would be in dire straits, and most of the Northern Hemisphere would be struggling with a massive dose of fallout. Since American retaliation would have similarly crushed the Soviet Union, neither nation would even be able to ask for emergency relief from the other in the traditional pattern of the vanquished suing for the victor's help.

In other words, this catastrophe would differ from practically all in the past in that there would be no social cushion for the injured, the starving, the diseased, to fall back on. Always before, human beings in trouble could hope for help from other human beings who had not been hurt. But after a full-scale thermonuclear war, there would not be enough undamaged societies left to bring the necessary quick aid. The world's least touched populations would be those in the Southern Hemisphere; but these peoples, except for Australia and New Zealand, are also the world's poorest, least able to afford the ships, the food, the medical supplies and personnel, and the administrative capacity necessary to save American lives and society. As for Australia and New Zealand, they are simply too small in population and too far away to do the job in the necessary time. The result would be that most of those who did come out of the shelters would die in the next month for lack of the simple biological necessities and of the social system that could bring these necessities to them.

The failure and destruction would extend even beyond the social system to the very physical and biological environment in which North American man has lived. Dr. John N. Wolfe, chief of the Environmental Sciences Branch of the Atomic Energy Commission, has pointed this out: "Thermal and blast effects, and concomitant radiation, would create vast areas that would be useless to the survival of man. Add also fire, insect devastation and disease, and the picture in many areas becomes grim indeed. Fallout shelters in such areas seem only a means of delaying death." Another biologist, Dr. H. Bentley Glass of the Johns Hopkins University, has estimated that after a 7,000-megaton attack upon the United States the radioactive soil would be unable to produce edible food for five years. Although there are ways of decontaminating such soil, this in itself would require work on the land in areas so highly radioactive that the workers would themselves be killed. In fact, one scientist from the defense-oriented RAND Corporation told the Holifield

civil defense hearings that once all life is eliminated from an area, a point of no return is reached at which the land becomes too hostile for even artificial reconstruction.

Thus if one views the American people and the North American continent as a social and ecological *system*, in which all the elements are interrelated and a heavy blow at all of them makes the recovery of any of them unlikely, one must estimate that a thermonuclear war would leave no Americans alive to mourn on its first anniversary.

So far this analysis has suggested that civil defense is in no way an asset to survival. But is there any way in which civil defense could act as a threat to life? There are several possibilities that should be explored before this paradoxical proposition can be assessed.

The most obvious of these is associated with the version of counter-force strategy that includes "strategic evacuation" to huge underground blast shelters. It would seem almost axiomatic that if the Soviet Union had attacked a major Western interest and had then been confronted with an American evacuation of civilians obviously portending an ultimatum, the Soviets would attack the United States at once. The streams of refugee civilians would themselves constitute the clearest notification of danger and invitation to attack. The attempt at civil defense would itself have signaled the Russians to begin a population-destroying war. At the same time, the helplessness of the civilians during the evacuation itself would make them more liable to die in the first moments of attack. Thus civil defense would have defeated its own purpose.

The second way in which civil defense might actually increase the dangers to Americans' lives can be explained by a quotation from the report of the Holifield Subcommittee on Military Operations. The Committee pointed out, "As we build more missiles and 'harder' sites to reduce vulnerability, the enemy must earmark bigger nuclear payloads for each target and contemplate a larger total attack. This increases the potential fallout and other hazards for the civilian population." From this formulation the Holifield Subcommittee somehow drew the conclusion that civil defense should be increased. Others may be pardoned for concluding that any such increase would merely suggest to the enemy that he further increase his attack level. Thus an attempt at civil defense would bring in response an enemy preparation for a larger attack. As we have just seen proved by the Russians, modern technology makes it easy to raise the power of thermonuclear weapons from the 10 or 20-megaton level to 50 or 100 megatons. It is much more difficult and expensive to increase the level of protection given to civilians. Thus civil defense would always be behind in this spiral, and every increase in civil defense would merely trigger an even larger increase in the attack capability. In this kind of race, people will always be losers, and the number of deaths will be increased.

Civil defense cannot be defended as a measure for protecting American lives. Thermonuclear war will be so devastating that at best civil defense will only prolong a few million lives for a few weeks or months. By the time the first anniversary of the war would roll around, those few million Americans would be just as dead as if they had no civil defense at all. At worst, some aspects of civil defense might actually increase the toll of early deaths in the

immediate hours and days after attack. In any case, Americans cannot depend on civil defense to prevent themselves or their country from dying.

Civil Defense as a Danger to a Free Economy

As the difficulties and inadequacies of civil defense are pointed out more clearly, proponents of civil defense react by urging larger and more expensive programs. It is therefore relevant to examine what a larger and larger civil defense would do to our economy. How would it affect the wealth and well-being of private individuals? What would it do to our over-all economic growth? What impact would civil defense have upon free enterprise as against centralized government control of the economy?

Estimates of the cost of civil defense naturally vary according to what kind of program is being advocated. The insistence of Administration and Congressional proponents of civil defense that present activities are merely a first step toward a much larger civil defense effort suggests that the sums to be spent will constantly increase. The Holifield Subcommittee estimated that fallout-only shelters would cost about \$100 per space and that a fallout program providing one space for each American would therefore cost about \$20 billion. The Defense Department, however, reports that estimates of the cost of construction of fallout shelters run from \$100 to \$300 per space, and that stocking of the shelter with minimal food and water supplies would run approximately another \$45 to \$65 per space. Neither of these estimates includes the cost of supportive measures such as food storage centers, construction of firebreaks, or pre-attack education of the population for civil defense. Nor does the \$20-billion estimate meet the cost of constructing more than one shelter space for each American, although the enormous daily mobility of Americans would suggest that two or three spaces in different parts of a metropolitan area would be necessary to meet attacks at different times of the day and night. If, as the Holifield Subcommittee suggests, the United States should begin to build blast shelters as well as fallout shelters, the costs would be enormously increased. There seems no doubt that a program of vast underground shelters suitable for strategic evacuation would cost in the range of at least several hundred billion dollars.

There has been talk that family fallout shelters might cost as little as \$150. But even a cursory examination of the kind of shelter that might be built for five people at that price shows that it could not be equipped either with oxygen or with a ventilating system capable of admitting air but screening out fallout; with fallout-proof walls, with protection against fire from a burning house immediately above, and with food, water, sanitation and medicine for two weeks. In short, plans for a cheap family shelter will probably fool not even the prospective builder for long. Although a family shelter might raise fewer psychological and sociological problems than a community shelter, its cost would rule it out for most American families—surely for the 50% of the population whose family income is under \$5500. Its very nature would rule out apartment-dwellers. And, of course, the family shelter, even if built, could protect the whole family only at night.

For all these reasons, most supporters of civil defense propose that the Federal government pay directly for the major expenses of public shelters

and for supportive arrangements like food storage and civil defense training, and that Federal tax incentives encourage the private building of family and business shelters. In one form or another, the money would come out of Federal tax revenues or, through deficit spending, out of inflation. If the money comes directly out of revenue, (not out of deficits), either some Federal program other than civil defense must be curtailed or taxes must be increased. If it comes from special tax reductions given as incentives, either other taxes must be increased or other incentives eliminated. It should be noted that the impact of the transfer of money to civil defense could not be spread over a long time. Even the minimal \$20 billion suggested by the Holifield Subcommittee is aimed at protection from current weapons. If a weapons revolution every five years is assumed (and that is conservative, considering history since 1945), the \$20-billion system will be obsolete by 1966. In other words, the \$20 billion would have to be spent in three or four years to have even one or two years' value, and then a new and more expensive civil defense would have to be started immediately.

The impacts of the various budget and revenue possibilities must be examined. If in order to encourage civil defense other tax incentives are eliminated, the thrust toward greater industrial efficiency and productivity will be considerably weakened. Spending for civil defense would not even have the by-product effect that military spending does in pouring new research and new products into the civilian economy. Thus, by endangering the incentives toward higher productivity in private enterprise, civil defense might bring about stagnation in the American economy in the face of vigorous competition from overseas.

While it is obviously impossible to say in advance what segments of the population would be hardest hit by a tax increase for civil defense or what segments of the budget would be hardest hit by a transfer of money to civil defense, certain results would be fairly likely. Any general tax increase would be certain to make more difficult the states' task of finding money for the support of education. Considering the precarious condition or position of education in the Federal budget, it is also likely that a transfer of money within the Federal budget would be likely to hurt the education appropriation. Since American education provides the basic motive power in economic growth and the myriad skills to keep free enterprise going, and since American education is already in difficulty, a shift of funds from education to civil defense would probably have serious long-run effects. If the money came from anti-depression safeguards such as unemployment insurance, the country's difficulties in breaking out of an economic down-slant could be multiplied. Indeed, it is difficult to see how large sums of money could be transferred over a short period from any productive area of American life to an unproductive use like civil defense without seriously damaging the stability and progress of our free-enterprise economy.

Quite separate from the danger of economic stagnation would be the danger of centralized governmental control over the economy. A program aimed at one fallout shelter space for every American would require Federal intervention in building regulations, in city planning and zoning, in allocation of scarce materials such as perishable drugs, in location of new industrial

centers away from possible military targets, in office and factory training procedures in order to insure the effectiveness of civil defense preparation and in a host of other ways through every nook and cranny of the American economy. In whipping civil defense into shape, it would not be possible to consult the economic interests or convenience of management, labor or consumers, since the over-riding criteria would be military. Strict Federal management would be essential in order to make sure that civil defense would exist in action, not merely on paper.

Let us look at what the Federal government might have to order a city to do. Merely to secure fallout shelter spaces, huge excavations throughout the business and industrial districts would have to be planned for quick and ready access, dug regardless of the necessary disturbance to normal business, and stocked with large, periodically renewed supplies of food, water, and medicines. If the civil defense program were serious enough to face the problem of firestorms, the city would have to be ordered to split itself into sections divided by huge empty swatches of concrete, intended to retard the progress of fire. (These areas could be used neither as parks nor as highways, since both trees and bushes and automotive gasoline would be highly flammable.) Wherever concentrations of population would make it difficult for enough shelter space to be easily accessible, businesses and residential areas would be forced to relocate. Where families built shelters, not merely the shelter but the distance between it and the home and the materials used in building the home would have to be Federally inspected and controlled, since a shelter too near a too flammable house would be no shelter at all. Apartment houses, both old and new, would be required to include adequate shelter space for their tenants. On a number of different days throughout the year and at different times of day, shelter-taking drills would be ordered without notice in order to test and train the population. Some drills might have to extend over several days in order to train people for living in the shelters as well as getting to them. While any single one of these Federal interventions might be worked into the pattern of business and industry without great difficulty, the combination of them will demand close Federal supervision of the economy to guard against total economic disruption. Business relocations, staggering of work hours, temporary shut-downs and commodity allocations would all be Federally enforced.

While it would subject all private business to intense Federal regulation and inspection, the process of building civil defense would preserve at least the forms of private enterprise. Those planners who expect some Americans to survive and recuperate from a thermonuclear war are looking toward the suspension or abolition of even the forms of free enterprise. Some economic studies of post-attack conditions suggest that government would be the only possible employer after the war. They argue that government would be the only institution able to offer food, clothing, shelter and other necessities in exchange for work, and they point out that the necessary work would be hasty construction of such large public needs as transport, communication and water and sewage systems.

Thus even if private enterprise somehow survived with enough resources to pay off its workers in real necessities, the government would have to insist

on suspension of private projects in order to speed up public reconstruction. For at least the period of post-attack emergency, the only employer would be the State and every citizen would be ordered to do its work. The history of even partial nationalization of industry suggests that it would be extremely difficult, after several years of total nationalization, to bring about a return to private enterprise. Thus, even on the most hopeful predictions of supporters of civil defense, after a thermonuclear war a large proportion of Americans would have been killed and the rest would be working in a quasi-Communist economy.

It may be questioned whether this nation could long endure half dead and half Red.

Civil Defense as a Danger to Political Freedom

Not only free enterprise in the American economy but the political liberties of America and of other nations would suffer constriction under the necessities of civil defense. Overseas, the constriction would come at second hand. Concentration on civil defense would make much more difficult the granting of American aid to young and struggling democracies, which need the aid in order to make economic progress without dictatorship. The first small step in this process has already been taken, with the assignment of certain food stocks to civil defense storage centers in the United States instead of to Food for Peace grants overseas. As the civil defense program gains momentum, it will become necessary to set aside more and more food, medicine, construction tools and development funds for building and stocking the shelters.

Not only will such an interruption or reduction in aid damage the chances of democracy overseas, but the general implications of an American civil defense program might well arouse intense anger in the underdeveloped world. To uncommitted and underdeveloped nations, an American civil defense effort would look like a selfish attempt to save our own population from the effects of great-power folly in unleashing atomic war. Those parts of Asia, Africa, and Latin America that would be heavily affected by post-war fallout would see themselves as innocent victims of such a war, unable to afford the enormous efforts that would be necessary to protect their own people. For this reason, an American civil defense program might arouse the same kind of antagonism in the new nations that the testing of the H-bombs has aroused among them. Such antagonism would further hurt American chances of exercising political leadership among the new nations and would therefore damage the chances of political democracy in the uncommitted world.

At home in America, civil defense will have an even more direct and dangerous impact upon political liberties. In effect, not merely young men but all Americans would be made conscripts in an army under Pentagon control. A program that impinges upon every facet of social and personal life can scarcely do otherwise. Already one local political leader in the suburbs of Washington, D. C., has demanded that family shelters be made compulsory, on the ground that any family's failure to build a shelter would weaken the national military posture. As civil defense picks up steam, such comments are sure to be multiplied. With the whole Federal government

stoking the fire, the pressure would soon be put on "slackers" in much the fashion it was during World War I upon people who failed to purchase presumably "voluntary" Liberty Bonds.

Nor would this be all. Failure, because of apathy or objection, to take part in compulsory civil defense drills would be thought as dangerous to the community as failure to take part in vaccination programs (because for the drills to succeed, teamwork would be absolutely necessary). New York has already arrested and jailed non-participants. On a larger scale, there might be the danger that an entire state would decide civil defense was not worth disrupting its life and refuse to enact the necessary local laws and regulations. Would the United States Government permit such a dangerous gap in its preparations to continue? If not, how could the intimate details of civil defense be imposed without practically putting the state into political receivership?

Nor would overt action against civil defense be the only problem. Public criticism of civil defense would have the same deleterious effect that criticism from the ranks would have upon the morale of an army on the march. Attempting to argue against civil defense would probably be equated with encouraging a draft-dodger. In other words, the imperative necessity for universal effort if civil defense were even to seem practical might impel a government committed to civil defense to suppress both opposition to the program and failure to join in it.

Even supporters of civil defense would have some of their liberties reduced. In an attempt to protect many kinds of civil defense centers from sabotage or attack, the locations and purposes of such places as food storage depots, emergency government headquarters or factories producing goods crucial to the post-attack emergency would have to be kept secret. Travel near such places and press reporting about them would have to be carefully monitored by the Federal government. These strictures apply now, of course, to military installations, but the point is that civil defense installations would be far more numerous and far more widely scattered through the country, and restrictions would therefore be far more onerous.

There would be other pressures, more subtle but just as real, upon the fabric of American political liberty. Our liberty and in fact our national unity is built upon a web of assumptions about each other as citizens and people — assumptions we rarely notice because we practically never question them. But already the mere beginnings of civil defense have led to loud threats from Nevada to shoot down "invading" Californians, to unpublicized but uneasy questions about racial segregation or integration in fallout shelters, and to angry remarks about the expendability of city residents as against suburban or country folk. The question of survival, because it involves both the most intimate personal dispositions and the most pressing national conflicts, will inevitably divide Americans far more sharply than we have ever known. Making concrete decisions about civil defense will rub our old divisions to the raw.

Finally, it should be pointed out that many who believe some Americans can survive a thermonuclear war do not believe that democracy can survive the war. The most consistent and outspoken Congressional supporter of civil

defense, Congressman Chet Holifield, has stated that he recognized "there will be martial law almost inevitably." Congressman William Fitts Ryan has wondered whether, if any Americans survive, the United States would ever again be an important nation — or even whether it would be a single nation or split into component parts separated by wide areas of radioactivity. Thus even those who hope that civil defense might save lives have no illusions about the dismal outlook for political liberty after a thermonuclear war.

The Turtle and Man

Analyzing all the facets of civil defense shows that it would tend to make thermonuclear war more likely, could not reduce the toll of lives from such a war but might even increase the immediacy of death, would seriously slow down American economic growth and would gravely damage both political and economic liberty. Civil defense would increase the chances that America would in its last years become a "Red" society and would then die anyway under thermonuclear attack.

The dangers and inadequacy of civil defense should be no surprise. Human beings have always had before them the object lesson of the turtle, which adopted a civil defense policy millenia ago and has been unable to progress ever since. The price for the one-turtle blast shelter has been stagnation in an evolutionary backwater.

Man's ancestors took the other path. Stripping off every static defense against the other animals, man has competed with his wits and his flexibility. Man is soft and naked and the turtle has a hard protective shell, but mankind has made the turtle into a tasty dish. Freedom has its uses as well as its joys.

What then would be a "human" policy, a free man's policy, on civil defense? The first requirement should be frankness. The President should explain clearly to the American people that the nature of thermonuclear weapons makes the death of all Americans and all Russians highly probable if thermonuclear war should come. He should explain that civil defense is therefore useless. And he should publicly announce the abandonment of the civil defense program.

Having got rid of one major aspect of the counter-force strategy, he should then scrap all American weapons and plans tailored to a counter-force or first-strike strategy. He should point out to the Russians, while doing so, that this act would give any Russian civil defense program a provocative appearance. He should also explain that civil defense is as unrealistic in terms of physical survival in Russia as in the United States.*

And he should publicly acknowledge that in scrapping its first-strike capability while still possessing its retaliatory weapons, the United States was

* There is a vigorous debate over whether the Soviet Union now has a serious civil defense program. The evidence indicates that while the Soviets have trained their population in many civil-defense techniques, the necessary physical preparations have not been made. For example, no fallout shelters exist in Soviet apartment houses. References to subways as shelters ignores not only the absence of food and medical stock, bunks and mass toilet facilities, but the likelihood that the H-bomb fireball would vaporize the subways or roast the people in them. Russian directives for emergency private gathering of food and water and even emergency shelter-digging are keyed to the warning time of slow bombers, not of modern missiles.

left with the retaliation implications of those weapons and that the United States would thus be assuming, in effect if not in intent, a stable deterrent strategy.

The President should further explain that the stable deterrent, whether merely implied or officially adopted, would be useful in the long run only as a bridge toward disarmament, since technological progress will sooner or later "destabilize" the situation by giving thermonuclear weapons to more nations and by breaking through the invulnerability of second-strike weapons like Polaris.

The President should then tell the Soviet Union that we would never be the first to use the H-bomb. The sincerity of this statement would have been demonstrated in the repudiation of civil defense and the scrapping of first-strike weapons, a safe beginning for and a catalyst to a disarmament process. As for the "stable" deterrent strategy which would be at this point assumed from American weapon capability, it would not be necessary or advisable for the President to comment—yet. Nor would it be reasonable for the President to repeat old threats of retaliation, since the threats are implied in the weapons themselves and since he should be attempting to improve the climate for disarmament negotiation.

Having explained the modern facts of death to both nations, the President should urge the Soviet Union to follow suit in abolishing civil defense and repudiating counter-force strategy, backing up its repudiation with a scrapping of first-strike weapons.

In any case the United States would abolish its own civil defense as a futile expense likely to force stagnation and coercion upon us.

Our initiatives in abandoning counter-force strategy and abolishing civil defense would greatly improve the atmosphere for negotiation toward disarmament under inspection and control. But our lack of scientific knowledge about the prerequisites for disarmament and our constitutional limits on presidential power in achieving disarmament would make it necessary for Congress to understand and act upon the new situation.

To begin with, Congress could transfer the useless funds at present in the civil defense budget to the new Arms Control and Disarmament Agency—\$300 million to use for such research in the social and natural sciences as would apply to negotiating, achieving and preserving disarmament. A massive injection of research funds, as Americans have found in the fields of military defense, medicine and agricultural productivity, is likely to pay amazing dividends; we should try it in the field of disarmament. The money now being wasted in civil defense provides an obvious and appropriate source of funds, since in the long run the only effective civil defense is likely to be the elimination of the H-bomb.

Finally, one of the most appealing elements of civil defense should be made applicable to more worthwhile and practical means of defending liberty. Civil defense would give every citizen the feeling that he himself, as an individual, is taking action against the threats of tyranny and extinction. That the method being used is unworkable does not mean that the feeling of personal participation is valueless. The President and Congress should ask those Americans who had considered putting time and effort and money into

building a family shelter to put that same time, effort and money into the active defense of liberty. The Peace Corps is a short step in this direction, but the idea could be put to use in other less drastic ways. These are the kinds of programs that are needed:

A major Presidential campaign (like that recently devoted to civil defense) encouraging the giving of such person-to-person economic and technical aid as a CARE package of farm tools.

Free postage for individual mailings to Asians and Africans of controversial and stimulating American used books and magazines.

Federally financed teaching to American tourists of the spoken language of one major Communist or uncommitted nation they were planning to visit.

Tax deductions for private contributions to the United Nations (and perhaps to other international organizations such as NATO and the Organization of American States).

Partial government support for family one-year "adoptions" of children from overseas, especially from Communist and uncommitted states.

Federal provision of important Russian, Chinese and other foreign-language publications to private citizens qualified and willing to translate them for use by scholars, scientists and foreign policy experts.

All these substitutes for civil defense would quicken and diversify, rather than slow down and centralize, the American economy. All of them would encourage rather than suppress American individualism and the true volunteer spirit of free men. All of them would make less likely, not more, the onset of thermonuclear war. They would be worthy and effective *human* weapons—based on intelligence and flexibility—rather than the heavy, hampering defense sought by the turtle.

Politically, a reversal of present Administration policy on civil defense might be impractical. Powerful groups within the Pentagon and major political figures outside the Administration are demanding a stronger civil defense and would certainly fight an abandonment of it. But if the will to reverse policy exists, a political way can be found. Congressman Ryan has proposed that a special congressional committee, not committed to supporting civil defense, reexamine the whole policy from top to bottom. Such a reevaluation might provide the public understanding on which an intelligent decision about civil defense could be based. So might a public explanation by the President of the long-range implications of the Soviet 50-megaton bomb. Other ways might be found.

But somehow, before it is too late, the American people must learn this: There are no frontiers—old or new—underground. In the thermonuclear age, there are no defenses underground, either.

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