

CIVIL DEFENSE

Some warnings and recommendations

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BECAUSE OF THE DISTURBED world situation, many people in the United States have felt that no time should be lost in adequate preparations for the passive defense of the country; however, at the national level it is only within recent months that consideration has been given, beyond mere planning, to this problem. States and local governmental jurisdictions have been ahead of the national administration in this regard.

Modern war is total in that it requires the whole effort of the nationals involved to continue its progress. The airplane has made it possible for one nation to successfully attack the civilian morale, homes and cities which lie behind the military defense of an enemy, and as a consequence the civilian has become an intimate part of the war machine of his country. Civil defense, in these modern times, must therefore take its place alongside the military defenses of the nation.

Civil Defense Objectives

The objectives of a civil defense program for a large, heavily populated industrial area can be stated as follows:

1. To save the greatest number of lives
2. To be prepared to render the greatest possible aid to the injured
3. To give the greatest possible protection to property
4. By every means at hand, to maintain the morale of the community at its highest level
5. To be prepared to go to the assistance of neighboring stricken communities

Civil defense must be integrated into and be an intimate part of the government structure. All volunteers will work under heads of existing units of government. A well-developed organization, capable of functioning in an emergency, will include: Administration, supply, recruitment and training of volunteers, public information, medical and welfare services, law and order, fire services, communications, transportation, and emergency types of engineering services, such as utilities, public works and sanitation.

Certain of these divisions, such as fire and police, will carry out their normal responsibilities, but with augmented volunteer forces; other divisions, like public

health will add new duties to their normal peacetime responsibilities; still other divisions will be peculiar to a civil defense organization and will have no comparable government group already established. However, city or county employees will head these emergency divisions, and will organize them within the Civil Defense structure.

It is also basic in civil defense planning to use the services of each citizen in the place where his ability, training and willingness to serve contribute most to the total effort; thus it is logical that citizens with scientific or engineering training will be given responsibilities which naturally grow out of their peacetime work.

Civil defense in the last war meant primarily protection of one's own block from blast and fire. Too many see civil defense in an atomic war as the same parochial task, with a Geiger counter added to the bucket of sand and the gas mask. To a certain extent this will still be the case; self-help in the early stages of a disaster is still stressed; but to a much greater degree than heretofore conceived, civil defense must be an organized effort of the civilian population as a whole to keep the country as a whole a going concern.

The Scientist's Responsibility

One can readily see that the engineer and scientist has a definite and particular responsibility in civil defense. To be specific, the following requirements can be suggested for consideration at this stage of planning:

1. Trained radiation monitors become the most important individuals after a low ground or underwater atomic explosion. At first they may assess the intensity and location of the radioactive contamination by penetrating as far as possible into the affected area, and thus determine the danger areas. They will accompany the rescue missions and direct the evacuation operations. Later the radiation monitors will recommend the decontamination and rehabilitation operations of an area.

2. While there is a tendency to emphasize the atomic bomb, civil defense preparation does not neglect the more conventional types of attack with incendiaries, chemicals and bacteria. Newer techniques in defense

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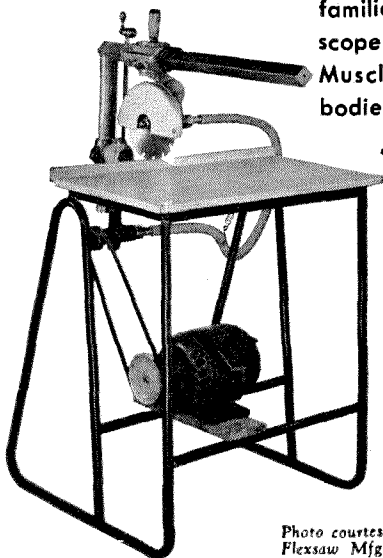
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against them will call for most intelligent planning. Only people of scientific background can be expected to assume leadership in these fields of detection, protection and decontamination.

Let the people know

3. Because of their education, scientists and engineers can interpret the facts of the atomic age to those less trained in these matters. They can help educate our people to the real hazards of modern war; and, on the other hand, to the great benefits to mankind which can develop from the atomic developments of the last decade. If the American people know the facts, rather than many of the lurid tales which pass for scientific knowledge, they should be more inclined to take in stride what lies ahead.

4. Because of their training, engineers should analyze each proposed civil defense measure, assess its effectiveness and assist in the development of plans for implementing it. Each proposal should be judged both for its correctness and effectiveness, and for its common sense as a contribution to the total defense program.

5. Because of their leadership in their respective communities, scientifically trained persons can help by taking a realistic view of this business of war and its implications. They should not be lulled into a false sense of security because of any temporary military success. We are dealing with an enemy that is too strong to be defeated easily.

Some general advice

As to general advice — do not spend money on gadgets, special drugs or expensive books, and discourage others from doing so. Get your information from official sources.

Discuss civil defense with your family, friends and associates, and be prepared to guide the thinking of less-informed people.

Think through a few simple rules you would follow in case of an attack. This business of preparation is largely common sense applied to a specific problem.

Be continuously conscious of the problem of sabotage. We recognize that there are people in our communities and industrial life whose loyalty is to be questioned. Without being part of a witch hunt, be intelligently alert to the many clues which will point out those who would destroy our way of life.

Prepare yourselves, and encourage your family to become better prepared for a war situation by taking all available training in first aid, home nursing and such allied subjects.

When called upon, identify yourself with a defense unit in the capacity where your training will best serve.