August 29, 1984

THE NEW CASE FOR CIVIL DEFENSE

INTRODUCTION[1]

Civil defense long has been the almost completely neglected poor relation of American strategic policy. The idea of training Americans to head for bomb and fallout shelters or evacuate cities was never very popular with politicians. And for policy makers, the notion of protecting U.S. civilians from Soviet attack seemed like heresy. After all, the balance of terror required that the both the U.S. and Soviet populations be vulnerable to nuclear annihilation. It was this mutually assured ability to destroy each other, went the argument, that provided the backbone of nuclear deterrence. It did not seem to matter that, for the past decade, the USSR has given high priority to civil defense programs.

New developments in U.S. strategic technology, however, are casting a much different light on civil defense. Should the U.S. develop a strategic defense--weapons capable of shooting down incoming Soviet missiles--then civil defense could assume a major role in protecting America. As part of strategic defense, civil defense would reduce dramatically Americans' vulnerability to Soviet attack and would give the U.S. a defense that really defends.

Civil defense would become an essential part of an effective strategic defense system. While full-scale active defenses--ballistic missile defense (BMD) and air defense--would block most incoming Soviet warheads, 100 percent protection is not likely.

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[1] This is the second in a series of Heritage Backgrounders examining strategic defense. The first, "Strategic Defense: The Technology That Makes It Possible" (Heritage Backgrounder No. 375), appeared on August 23, 1984.

To be sure, active strategic defenses would reduce civilian casualties substantially; combined with a civil defense system, the population would be largely protected. Even with a limited strategic defense--or even without any active defenses--civil defense would limit casualties significantly and thus help deter the attack.

There are enormous potential disparities between U.S. and Soviet capabilities to limit damage and casualties in a nuclear war. This inequality is destabilizing, for it could persuade the Kremlin that it could strike out at the U.S. and survive the American counterattack. Parallel levels of U.S. and Soviet civil defense, on the other hand, would be stabilizing and make war less likely. And should war erupt, civil defense would save tens of millions of American lives.

The U.S. should proceed at the least with the civil defense program proposed by Ronald Reagan in 1982. It called for outlays of $4.2 billion over seven years and would develop evacuation plans for high-risk areas, build shelters, and pursue further measures to improve protection of population and economic assets. Such a program would provide a valuable basis for further improvements that could defend a large portion of U.S. population and economic assets. With strategic defense now so very promising, a persuasive new case can and must be made for civil defense.

CIVIL DEFENSE AND STRATEGIC DEFENSE

Strategic defense seeks to deter nuclear war by denying an enemy the likelihood of military success, thus removing the military incentive for the first use of nuclear weapons. Should this deterrent fail, strategic defense would destroy approaching Soviet warheads and hence limit the damage and casualties to the U.S. and its allies. Strategic defense reverses more than a generation of terrifying policy, for it does not seek to deter solely by the threat explicit in the mutual assured destruction policy--the deliberate destruction of Soviet civilians and economic assets in retaliation for an attack on the U.S. Rather, strategic defense is a basically benign, nonaggressive approach, which recognizes the real possibility of war and at the same time seeks to avoid it.

The prospects for successful civil defense depend on a coordinated effort involving active and passive measures. Active defenses--ballistic missile defense (BMD) and air defense against bombers and cruise missiles--are designed to reduce the number of bombs detonating on U.S. soil. Civil defenses are designed to mitigate and ameliorate the effects of those warheads that survive the active defenses.

Active and passive defenses are complementary. Active defenses reduce the number of explosions, ease the task of civil defense, and enhance the potential for saving lives. But because

perfect BMD and air defenses are unlikely, leakage of some warheads through the defense is probable. Civil defense relieves active defenses of the burden of perfection and allows lower levels of efficiency to be strategically effective.

U.S. DOCTRINE

U.S. attitudes toward civil defense and strategic defense in general have been determined largely by the nuclear doctrine that has dominated U.S. strategic thinking for the past twenty years--mutual assured destruction (MAD). According to this theory, nuclear aggression by any nation is deterred by the threat of overwhelming retaliation that will punish the aggressor with unacceptable damage and casualties. Defending against possible retaliation is thus seen as destabilizing, upsetting the "balance of terror" because it could limit the threat of damage from a retaliatory strike. It further is argued that defending population and economic assets would trigger an offensive arms race in which both sides strive to defeat the other's defenses. MAD theorists view the attempt to defend against attack as a sign of preparation for a nuclear first strike, because only those who would want to initiate a war presumably would be interested in reducing their vulnerability. In a crisis, MAD advocates maintain, nations would put their nuclear forces on a hair trigger, anxious to fire before their adversary's defensive preparations could be completed and while their own offensive forces would be most effective.

MAD completely dominated U.S. strategic force and civil defense planning throughout the 1960s and 1970s. In the 1972 SALT I treaty, for example, the U.S. and the Soviet Union agreed to limit deployment of anti-ballistic missile (ABM) launchers to two sites of 100 launchers each. This was reduced in 1974 to one site with 100 launchers. In SALT I, Washington abandoned the option of providing nationwide protection of the U.S. population. Although the treaty did not prohibit ABM research, U.S. spending for such research and development fell from $2.1 billion in 1971 to $100 million in 1976 (using constant 1977 dollars).[2] Only one ABM site was completed in the U.S., and it was deactivated in 1976. U.S. air defenses, meanwhile, were virtually dismantled, and the U.S. civil defense budget was slashed from a peak of $750 million in 1962 to less than $100 million[3] in the late 1970s, on the grounds that it made no sense to fund any kind of civil defense in the absence of effective active defense against Soviet missiles.

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2 John Collins, in U.S. Congress, Senate, United States and Soviet City Defense: Considerations for Congress, prepared by the Congressional Research Service, 94th Congress, Second Session (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1976), p. 11.

3 William Kincade, "Repeating History: The Civil Defense Debate Renewed," International Security, Winter 1978, p. 105.

THE U.S. CIVIL DEFENSE PROGRAM

In 1985, the United States will spend about 80 cents per person on civil defense. Official U.S. interest in civil defense has waxed and waned over the years with the development of Soviet nuclear weapons capabilities and changes in U.S. nuclear doctrine. During the 1950s, when Soviet long-range bombers constituted the only Soviet nuclear threat, the U.S. maintained a rudimentary civil defense program geared to evacuating cities upon warning of a Soviet bomber attack. This gave the U.S. about eight hours to prepare.

After the 1961 Berlin Crisis, the Kennedy Administration decided that steps had to be taken to limit damage to the U.S. in a nuclear conflict. Kennedy proposed a three-part shelter program to supplement evacuation plans. In 1962, the U.S. spent almost $750 million (1983 dollars) on civil defense. Nevertheless, "only half the spaces (in the shelter program) were marked or stocked with the simplest survival kits,"[4] and Congress failed to authorize funds for most of the Kennedy program. After the Cuban Missile Crisis in October 1962, interest in civil defense faded and spending was cut by 60 percent.[5] Throughout the rest of the 1960s and the early 1970s, civil defense spending steadily declined.

In the late 1970s, however, top U.S. military planners started becoming concerned about Soviet civil defense measures, especially in the context of Moscow's offensive and defensive weapons buildup. In 1978, President Carter signed Presidential Directive 41, declaring that civil defense was a substantial component in the strategic balance. It called for a seven-year civil defense program totalling $2 billion.[6] A 1980 amendment to the 1950 Civil Defense Act affirmed that civil defense enhances deterrence and crisis stability by contributing to a perception of U.S.-Soviet balance in capabilities.[7]

The Reagan Administration has sought to increase civil defense efforts still further. National Security Decision Directive 26 (NSDD-26),[8] signed in March 1982, sets four objectives for a $4.2 billion civil defense program:

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4 John Collins, op. cit., p. 89.

5 William Kincade, op. cit.

6 Richard Burt, "Carter Adopts a Program to Bolster Civil Defense in a Nuclear Attack," The New York Times, November 13, 1978, p. 1.

7 The Federal Civil Defense Act of 1950 as Amended Through February 1, 1981, Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives, February 1, 1981 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1981), Title V.

8 See Statement by Louis O. Guiffrida, Director, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Before the Subcommittee on Military Installations and Facilities, Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives, March 12, 1982.

1) enhance deterrence and stability;

2) reduce the possibility of coercion in time of crisis;

3) provide for survival of a substantial portion of the U.S. population and for continuity of government in the event of nuclear attack preceded by strategic warning; and

4) provide an improved ability to deal with natural disasters and large-scale domestic emergencies.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) civil defense programs rest on these objectives. FEMA's efforts include:

1) planning for population relocation in high risk areas (military targets, industrial centers, and cities with populations over 50,000);

2) selection, marking, stocking and supplying of fallout and blast shelters;

3) preparation and distribution of instructions for construction of "expedient" fallout shelters;

4) construction and modernization of some 3,000 Emergency Operating Centers (EOCs), equipped with fallout protection, emergency power, food, water, medical and sanitation supplies, and ventilation and radiological detection devices;

5) development of a telecommunications network protected against electromagnetic effects of nuclear weapons;

6) studies on the effectiveness of various blast shelter designs and of measures to protect industrial machinery and plant facilities.

Despite this ambitious program, its relatively modest price tag, and the 1980 congressional endorsement of civil defense, the Reagan civil defense program has been cut significantly.

	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
Original 1979 Carter Request for civil defense (millions $)[9]	146	180	243	283	293	393	375			
Original 1982 Reagan Request for civil defense (millions $)				252	310	355	400	440	1200	1200
Final Congressional Action	94.5	108	133	148	169	190				

[9] The Carter budget numbers are shown in Congressional Record, Senate, August 2, 1979, p. S11490.

SOVIET STRATEGIC DOCTRINE

Opponents of strategic defense have argued that the 1972 U.S.-Soviet arms accords demonstrate that the Kremlin shares the U.S. view that deterrence should be based on the ability of either nation to impose unacceptable damage on the other. Almost all the empirical evidence, however, reveals that the Soviets have never shared U.S. strategic conceptions.[10] While there is no doubt that the Soviets recognize that nuclear war would be catastrophic, there is also no doubt that Moscow is determined to fight, survive, and win a nuclear war if it erupts. Integral to this war-fighting/war-winning doctrine are measures to limit damage to the Soviet Union.

The Soviets have deployed huge numbers of missiles capable of striking such hardened U.S. military targets as Minuteman silos and command and control centers. This could be part of a disarming first strike to limit the U.S. ability to retaliate against the Soviet Union. Along with this, the Soviets have developed an extensive air defense system to defend against U.S. bombers. The Soviets also are attempting to develop and deploy anti-ballistic missile defenses to defend against American missiles that might survive a Soviet attack.[11] Complementing this is the impressive--and growing--Soviet civil defense system.

That civil defense is central to the Soviet war fighting strategy is a key point in a major 1970 Soviet study:

> Preserving the population...ensuring economic stability, and preserving the material and technical resources are matters of paramount importance during a war. Thus, under modern conditions, civil defense has become a factor of strategic importance. To a considerable degree, the success of civil defense measures predetermines the viability and stability of the country.[12]

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10 See Leon Goure, Foy D. Kohler, and Mose L. Harvey, The Role of Nuclear Forces in Current Soviet Strategy (Miami, Florida: University of Miami, 1974) and Joseph D. Doulass, Jr., and Amoretta M. Hoeber, Soviet Strategy for Nuclear War (Stanford, California: Hoover Institution Press, 1979).

11 The modernization of the Galosh ABM system around Moscow with the new ABM-X-3; the deployment of SA-10 and SA-12 surface-to-air missiles capable of destroying ballistic missile warheads; the construction of large phased array radars used for ballistic missile defense battle management; and extensive research and development in "exotic" BMD technologies--all support this conclusion. The Heritage Foundation will publish soon a study of Soviet strategic defense efforts.

12 P.T. Yegorov, I.A. Stidyakhov, and N.I. Alabin, Civil Defense (Moscow: Publishing House for Higher Education, 1970), p. 6. Translated by the U.S. Air Force; printed by U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. (no date).

The Soviets thus integrate civil defense plans into military strategy. According to a 1978 study of Soviet civil defense by the Central Intelligence Agency,

> ...by developing an active and extensive civil defense program in conjunction with their other defensive and offensive strategic programs, they hope to convince any potential enemy that it cannot win a war with the USSR. The Soviets seek, through civil defense along with other means, to assure the survival of the USSR if war does occur and to come out of it in a stronger position than their adversaries.[13]

The Soviets view defense and deterrence as complementary rather than contradictory. The stronger the defense, in their view, the less likely it is that they will be attacked. U.S. and Soviet strategic doctrines thus diametrically oppose each other. U.S. doctrine posits that vulnerability is strategically desirable; the Soviets emphasize defense, both active and passive.

THE SOVIET CIVIL DEFENSE PROGRAM

The scope of the Soviet civil defense program reflects the central role of war survival in Soviet strategy. The program has three primary objectives:

1) to protect the Soviet leadership, essential Soviet workers, and the general population (in this order) from weapons of mass destruction;

2) to assure wartime protection and restore economic production after a nuclear attack; and

3) to sustain the population after a nuclear attack and ensure long-term national recovery.[14]

How close Moscow is to achieving these goals is a matter of debate. There is no doubt, however, that the program is well funded, costing between $2 and $3 billion annually.

The Soviets have constructed at least 15,000 blast and fallout shelters and developed detailed evacuation plans for the urban populations. More than 1,500 hardened and dispersed blast shelters are available for the 175,000 top Communist Party and government officials.[15] Other shelters are available for a large

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13 Director of Central Intelligence, Soviet Civil Defense, July 1978 (NI 78-10003), p. 7.

14 Ibid., pp. 1, 2.

15 Soviet Military Power, 1984, third edition (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1984), p. 41.

share of essential industrial workers, estimated at between 6 and 48 percent.[16] Many of the blast shelters are stocked with food, medicine, protective equipment, and communications equipment.[17] There are plans for nonessential personnel to be evacuated to established relocation sites. The bulk of these people will walk to the sites and utilize existing structures and available materials for the construction of so-called expedient fallout shelters.

Soviet civil defense literature devotes much attention to the defense of economic assets, such as factories and stockpiles, through dispersal and hardening, although the effectiveness and the extent of these efforts to date are not clear. Considerable educational effort is being devoted to post-attack recovery, such as decontamination, rescue, clearing access routes through rubble, food management, dissemination of attack information, protection of animal and plant resources, and other civil defense functions.

This civil defense program is planned and supervised by a separate branch of the Soviet Ministry of Defense. All told, about 100,000 Soviet civilian and military personnel work full-time on civil defense. Every Soviet school, farm, factory, and government administrative unit has its own civil defense group. Total civilian participation probably ranges between 15 and 30 million. At least 16 million Soviet children, moreover, annually receive civil defense training in the compulsory war games at youth summer camps, in addition to regular training during the school year. Adults, meanwhile, receive twenty hours of civil defense training.[18]

The Soviet civil defense program is consistent with Moscow's strategic doctrine and force structure. Civil defense has become a key component of the Soviet effort to reduce vulnerability to nuclear retaliation. Even in 1978, according to a CIA study, a large share of the Soviet command and control structure, with just minimal notice, could survive an attack by U.S. nuclear forces, which had been depleted by a Soviet first strike. With a week's or more preparation, Soviet casualties would fall to the low tens of millions.[19] Since 1978, of course, Moscow's active and civil defenses have improved.

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16 Director of Central Intelligence, Soviet Civil Defense, p. 2, shows estimates ranging from 12 percent to 48 percent; Harold Brown, Department of Defense Annual Report Fiscal Year 1981, pp. 78-79, estimates 6 percent to 12 percent.

17 See Yegorov, Stidyakov, and Alabin, op. cit., pp. 125-136; and Leon Goure, War Survival in Soviet Strategy (Miami, Florida: University of Miami, 1976), pp. 119-128, 151-160.

18 Good descriptions of the Soviet civil defense system can be found in Leon Goure, op. cit., and C.N. Donnelly, "Civil Defense in the Soviet Union," International Defense Review, August 1977, pp. 635-641.

19 Director of Central Intelligence, op. cit., p. 4.

U.S. CIVIL DEFENSE

Civil defense has been questioned in the U.S. on the grounds of technical feasibility. Critics rightly point to weaknesses in Soviet and U.S. civil defense efforts. Among them: lack of realistic civil defense training and exercises; evacuation transportation problems; food production and distribution problems; massive destruction of economic assets; loss of central leadership; and the sheer magnitude of the disaster. Critics argue that these problems ensure that civil defense cannot be effective.[20]

This assessment, though possibly valid at one time, is now flawed. It ignored the critical contribution that active defenses could make. The bottom line on civil defense becomes dramatically more positive when civil defense is coupled with the new generation of defensive technologies that promises the means of destroying a large share of incoming Soviet warheads.

Critics of the Reagan anti-missile strategic defense policy routinely point out that, if only 5 percent of Soviet warheads penetrated U.S. defenses, tens of millions of Americans would die. The critics may be right--but only if the U.S. takes no steps to improve its civil defense. If 5 percent of the Soviet Union's 5,000 warheads do penetrate the U.S. anti-missile shield and if each hits one of the 250 largest American cities (a very unlikely assumption), then U.S. civilian casualties would be unacceptably high. Much more plausible is the assumption that U.S. anti-missile weapons will spare most cities from Soviet attack. In the cities that are hit, civil defense evacuation and shelter programs would save great numbers of lives.

Such a "bolt from the blue" attack on U.S. cities, however, is the least plausible of all scenarios for a Soviet attack. The rising international tensions that would precipitate an attack also would provide days, and even weeks, for orderly evacuation and dispersal. Furthermore, Soviet doctrine emphasizes attacking U.S. military sites and damage limitation for the Soviet homeland, rather than the deliberate destruction of U.S. cities and killing of U.S. citizens.

There are a wide range of contingencies, less severe and more plausible than full-scale nuclear warfare, in which civil defense would save millions of lives, particularly in conjunction with effective active defenses.[21] If there is, for example, a

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20 Criticisms can be found in Jennifer Leaning and Langley Keys (eds.), The Counterfeit Ark (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Ballinger Publishing Co., 1984); and Edward Zuckerman, The Day After World War III (New York: Viking Press, 1984).

21 See Francis P. Hoeber, "Civil Emergency Preparedness If Deterrence Fails," Comparative Strategy, Vol. 1, No. 3, 1979, for a good discussion.

limited nuclear exchange or if Moscow does not target many large population centers, then U.S. fallout shelters, evacuations, stockpiling of essential resources, and other civil defense measures would save lives and ensure national recovery.

The U.S. has the communications and transportation networks necessary for implementing the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) civil defense plans. The U.S. is also productive enough to stockpile critical assets, such as food and fuel, and to construct the necessary shelters.[22] These measures would be endorsed by the public. Polls consistently reveal public approval of civil defense planning and that Americans would follow government instructions in an emergency.

A 1982 Gallup pole, for example, showed that two-thirds of those surveyed want a U.S. civil defense relocation plan; 71 percent were likely to follow such a plan if so instructed by local civil defense officials.[23] A 1982 poll by ABC showed that a clear majority of the American public favors increased civil defense spending. Other polls by Gallup and NBC confirmed these findings, and clearly indicate that Americans want and expect their government to further develop civil defense plans.[24]

CIVIL DEFENSE AND DETERRENCE

Civil defense (and strategic defense in general) does not directly threaten any nation. Rather it attempts to limit damage and reduce casualties in the event of war. Civil defense thus "threatens" only the Soviet ability to retaliate against populations by reducing the vulnerability that the mutual assured destruction policy posits as necessity.

The Soviets, however, do not accept the U.S. conception of MAD. These assymmetries in doctrine have led the Soviets to emphasize and the U.S. to renounce strategic defenses. This in turn has led to assymetries in the ability to limit damage. The U.S. is essentially naked to a Soviet attack, whereas the Soviets are developing the ability to limit the damage and casualties resulting from U.S. nuclear retaliation.

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22 In spite all of these considerations, a school of thought has arisen that argues that virtually all nuclear exchanges will mean the inevitable end of life on earth because of a resulting "nuclear winter." Nuclear winter theories are on very dubious scientific ground; to deny the viability of civil defense on the basis of unproved and probably incorrect theory is unreasonable, unreasoning, or both.

23 FEMA News, release #82-64, July 21, 1982, pp. 2, 3.

24 FEMA News, release #82-88, October 18, 1982; and FEMA News, release #82-100, December 28, 1982.

Since Soviet doctrine focuses on fighting and winning a nuclear war and limiting damage to the Soviet homeland, Moscow is more likely to be deterred from reckless action if Soviet leaders are convinced that the U.S. is at least as able to limit damage as they are. The U.S. threat to retaliate loses credibility if the Soviets can limit damage to an acceptable level. Indeed, if the Soviets potentially can destroy substantially more U.S. population and economic assets than the U.S. can destroy in the Soviet Union, after a Soviet first strike, then Washington may be deterred from retaliating at all.

The credibility of U.S. deterrence requires a willingness to retaliate. Prudent American civil defense preparations would reinforce Soviet perceptions that the U.S. would be willing to retaliate. Such preparations would also reduce any potential assymetries in damage-limiting capabilities. Deterrence would thus be reinforced.

The strategic significance of the Soviet civil defense program also must be viewed in light of Soviet values. The assumption of MAD is that the deaths of some number of Soviet citizens and the destruction of enough economic assets will deter the Soviet leadership from ever using nuclear weapons. The Soviet Union, however, lost 20 million dead in World War II and 10 to 50 million more during the purges and famines of the Stalin era. The leaders of a nation suffering these losses surely perceives the world and the concept of "acceptable losses" differently than do U.S. leaders. In extraordinary circumstances and in the absence of comparable U.S. damage-limiting capabilities, the Kremlin may deem the loss of some millions of Russians an acceptable price for achieving a decisive superiority. The goal of American strategy should be to avoid a situation in which Soviet leaders believed that they could gain some advantage over the U.S. following a nuclear strike.

In essence, the U.S. can try to deter a Soviet attack in one of two ways. The first is that the U.S. can make sure that, despite all Soviet efforts, the U.S. can kill enough Soviet citizens to deter nuclear aggression.[25] Yet there is something morally repugnant in a policy that requires killing millions of Russians to ensure U.S. safety. The other way for the U.S. to deter an attack is morally much more acceptable. It is to pursue U.S. strategic defense programs that aim at saving lives and limiting damage to levels comparable to or below those that would be sustained by the Soviet Union.

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[25] Retargeting Soviet evacuation areas has been suggested by retired Admiral Noel Gayler, who at one time helped select strategic targets for the U.S. He currently is the Chairman of the General Nuclear Settlement Project of the American Committee on East-West Accord, and is on the board of directors of the Arms Control Association. "New Civil Defense Aim: Empty Major Cities," U.S. News and World Report, April 12, 1982, p. 46; and apparently by Harold Brown, former Secretary of Defense, in "The Shelter Fraud" (editorial), The New York Times, April 3, 1982.

CIVIL DEFENSE AND WAR FIGHTING

Many civil defense critics fear that nuclear war will become more likely because they equate the development of active defense and civil defense preparations with the desire to fight and win a nuclear war. There is, however, a vast difference between prudent preparation and a desire to fight a nuclear war. These preparations are based not on a desire for war but on a healthy recognition that wars sometimes happen in spite of great efforts to prevent them. Should war occur, saving lives and survival as a nation are desirable goals.

CIVIL DEFENSE AND STABILITY

Arguments that civil defense is destabilizing and makes war more likely focus too narrowly on rigid models of deterrence based on mutual assured destruction. The peculiar idea that the Soviets would put their strategic forces on a hair trigger or actually strike preemptively before U.S. civil defense preparations could be completed also ignores Soviet strategic preferences--the destruction of U.S. weapons and the limitation of damage to the Soviet Union as opposed to the mass killing of American civilians--and the fundamentally nonthreatening nature of U.S. civil defense.

Arguments that civil defense is destabilizing also ignore a key tenet of deterrence. Faced with an aggressive and expansionist Soviet Union, a prudent U.S. deterrent posture should be based, at a minimum, on roughly equivalent capabilities. The entire Soviet strategic defense program, including civil defense, thus is the dangerously destabilizing factor, unless it is matched by a comparable U.S. program. A serious U.S. civil defense program would reduce the appearance of Soviet advantage and thus actually stabilize the strategic balance.

PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

The strategic and humanitarian rationales for an expanded civil defense program are compelling. Adequately funding the 1982 Reagan Administration program for the Federal Emergency Management Agency is a necessary first step. This will provide relocation plans and fallout shelters for a substantial portion of the U.S. population. It also will take the first steps to ensure national recovery after a nuclear attack.

This is a sound interim approach to dealing with a variety of "better-than-worst-case" war scenarios. The Reagan program, however, also wants the nation prepared for other contingencies. It proposes funding for studies on blast shelters and protection of economic assets to reduce damage.

Some further steps could be taken very quickly. A corrugated steel blast shelter, for example, already has been designed and developed for mass production. It has been tested successfully to withstand 50 pounds per square inch of pressure (an unreinforced brick house collapses when hit with a shock wave of only five pounds per square inch of pressure). These could be constructed at a cost of about $200 per protected person and would be used to protect such key personnel as doctors, firemen, and policemen.[26] Food also could be stockpiled quickly; the U.S. government could sell less grain to the Soviets and purchase enough grain to ensure adequate short-term food supplies for its own citizens.

Congress, however, has been less than honest in dealing with civil defense. First Congress endorses civil defense in principle, and then it defeats the civil defense budget proposals.[27] Administration leadership is needed to press Congress to fund civil defense. The public must question Congress's poor civil defense record.

CONCLUSION

In the oddball world of assured destruction, self-defense is bad and killing others to avenge an attack is good. The moral bankruptcy of this doctrine is revealed when assured destruction advocates respond to the reality of Soviet civil defense efforts with the advice that the U.S. should seek efficient ways of penetrating Soviet defenses to kill Soviet citizens.

To be sure, in the short run, the U.S. has no choice but to continue relying on offensive weapons to deter attack. So long as it is necessary, the U.S. must (1) make the threat of their use in retaliation for an attack more credible (and therefore less likely ever to be used) and (2) reduce U.S. vulnerability in the terrible event that such weapons are ever used. Civil defense can make a significant contribution, at modest cost, toward achieving those goals.

In the longer run, the moral and far more practical approach is to develop a "triad" of strategic defenses: ballistic missile defenses that shoot down Soviet warheads, air defenses that destroy Soviet bombers, and civil defense. In the imperfectly understood dynamics of deterrence and stability, a policy of

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26 Gregory Fossedal and Daniel O. Graham, A Defense That Defends (Old Greenwich, Connecticut: Devin Adair, 1983), pp. 63-64.

27 Most recently, on May 30, 1984, a resolution introduced by Rep. Richard Ottinger (D-NY), to prohibit the use of any FEMA funds for "civil defense programs to prepare for, or respond to, nuclear war." The resolution was defeated by the House of Representatives, 301 to 87. Congressional Record, House, May 30, 1984, pp. H4949-H4953.

assured survival based on this triad will be at least as successful in keeping the peace as is assured destruction. The chances are that it will be more successful, and should war erupt, the assured survival triad guarantees that Americans no longer will be waiting naked and helpless for a Soviet attack.

Notes peace activist and physicist Freeman Dyson "...civil defense is in its nature the most gentle and humanitarian of all forms of defense." It threatens no one. It saves lives. And it could be critical for U.S. survival.

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* The author would like to thank Robert Stone, a former research assistant at The Heritage Foundation, and Dr. Robert Foelber, a former Heritage policy analyst currently at the Congressional Research Service, for their research and helpful suggestions.