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6th October, 1964SENIOR CIVIL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEESTANDING GROUP REPORT ON SOVIET AND SATELLITE
EMERGENCY AND CIVIL DEFENCE PLANNINGNote by the Secretary

In document SG 254/2(Final) of 19th August, 1964, the Standing Group presented its latest report on Soviet and Satellite Emergency and Civil Defence Planning. In a note SGLP 598/64 of 3rd September, 1964, addressed to the Secretariat, SGREP gave permission for reproduction of the document for the benefit of interested Civil Emergency Planning Committees. The document is accordingly reproduced at Annex for noting by the Senior Committee. The document is also being distributed to the Civil Defence Committee (AC/23(CD)D/474). A number of enclosures to the document, exclusively of Civil Defence interest, are not reproduced here, but will be found in the version distributed to the Civil Defence Committee.

2. It will be recalled that at its meeting in October 1961 (AC/98-R/9, paragraph 143(3)), the Senior Committee "requested the Standing Group to keep the International Staff fully informed of any further developments on civil emergency planning." This was in connection with document SG 254/1 of August 1961, which concerned Civil Defence preparations in Iron Curtain countries, and which the Senior Committee noted with great interest.

(Signed) H. WEST-BURNHAM

OTAN/NATO,
Paris, XVIe.

- (1) Note: The Standing Group has itself undertaken the translation into French of document SG 254/2(Final), and SGREP has notified the Secretariat (3rd September, 1964) that the French version will be available "in a few weeks' time."

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A REPORT BY THE STANDING GROUP

ON

SOVIET AND SATELLITE EMERGENCY AND
CIVIL DEFENCE PLANNING

GENERAL

1. Extensive Civil Defence and emergency planning policies have been in force for some years in the USSR and most of its European satellites. The Soviet model is followed fairly closely in the satellites, both in doctrine and in organization, though there are considerable differences between them in manner and degree of implementation. In this paper, therefore, only a general outline of the situation in the satellites is given, with special emphasis on points of difference from the Soviet model in doctrine, organization or achievement.

2. The view that general war would involve economic disruption and civilian casualties on a hitherto unprecedented scale is a basic element in Civil Defence thinking in the countries of the Soviet bloc, and the heightened importance of Civil Defence compared with past wars is emphasised both in the specialised Civil Defence press, and by military writers, the latter stressing in particular the contribution which Civil Defence can make to viability in the post-nuclear exchange period. It is felt that in addition to a requirement for skilled cadres larger than hitherto, survival of much of the population depends on the widespread dissemination of a number of simple techniques, which will reduce the dependence of the population of target areas on outside assistance and also facilitate organization of the population in adjacent areas into rescue groups under skilled cadres supervision. In conformity with this doctrine of "simplicity" increased emphasis on improvisation and self-help has been noted since the Soviet programme was subordinated directly to the Ministry of Defence in 1960.

3. All the Soviet bloc countries have accepted in principle the idea of a mass training programme. In Albania (included here for geographical reasons despite its apparent expulsion from the Soviet bloc) very little attention has in fact been paid to the subject. Limited progress has been made in Roumania, Poland has relied, with moderate success, on a system of voluntary recruitment through normal publicity, while in the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria and East Germany social and sometimes legal pressures have been employed to make the programmes compulsory in theory, though often not in fact.

4. No bloc country has attempted large-scale provision of deep shelters adequate to withstand "nearby" nuclear explosions; economic feasibility of such a programme is in any case doubtful. Provision of shelters to withstand blast, fire and fallout outside the total destruction zone is economically less onerous; apart from airtightness and provision for air-filtering equipment such shelters are not greatly different from World War II types, and may be installed in basements of buildings during construction. Such a policy was pursued in the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and Poland for some years, though it appears to have been given up at least in the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia since 1958. Some shelter construction has been carried out in the other satellites, but not on a comparable scale. In the Soviet Union, in particular, greater emphasis is now laid on improvisation of shelters, use of nearby basements or cellars, and pre-attack evacuation.

5. In addition to providing protection for a segment of the population, the programme also has a probable objective of providing a Civil Defence posture that will appear adequate to all. To this end emphasis has been laid on:

- (i) Maintenance of a well-organized "control" organization.
- (ii) Training all citizens in the "validity" of individual survival, while at the same time playing down the true capabilities of nuclear weapons. (This to some extent conflicts with the requirement to maximise deterrence by stressing the power of Soviet nuclear weapons, and has become progressively less important).

6. It is probable that protected alternate Government facilities exist in the Soviet Union. Existence of such facilities has been confirmed in several locations in the satellites.

7. The various aspects of the Civil Defence programme are examined in more detail below, and summed up in "Conclusions on Scope and Effectiveness of the Civil Defence Programme."

DETAILED EXAMINATION

8. The context in which the Soviet Civil Defence programme is set is one of an attack by the West with nuclear weapons delivered by ballistic missiles and aircraft either completely without warning or, felt to be more likely and implicit in the planning assumptions, after a period of crisis and gradually increasing tension, during which the scope of Civil Defence preparations would be increased by stages. The first

stage, bringing of the cadres organization to a state of readiness, is to take place early in the crisis. If further deterioration occurs a "State of Threat" is proclaimed by the Government, entailing complete mobilisation of the Civil Defence (G.O.) organization in all likely target areas, the immediate enforcement of blackout and anti-fire precautions, readying of all equipment, digging of simple shelters and partial urban evacuation, possibly including removal of some administrative headquarters to their alternate locations and of some Civil Defence units to peripheral areas, to be instituted. Surplus food stocks and water supplies are to be kept covered, and small emergency supplies kept handy. Radios are to be kept permanently switched on as they will be used for Civil Defence purposes. In the event of imminent attack the signal "Air Alarm" (Vozdushnaya Trevoga) is given. All Civil Defence personnel are to assemble at their designated posts. The public are, if time permits, to extinguish all heating appliances and go to shelter. Otherwise they are to take cover wherever possible. It is presumed in the directives that nuclear weapons will be used, though a special signal, the "Chemical Attack" (Khimicheskoye Napadeniye) is to be used to indicate actual use of ABC weapons. On hearing it, all those not in airtight shelters are to put on gasmasks or improvised protection for nose and mouth.

9. The directives for procedure after the "All Clear" show a change of emphasis from those of pre-1960. Though the pre-1960 regulations laid down that those in shelters threatened by fire or flooding should emerge forthwith, they laid most stress on the need for those in shelter to remain there until permitted to come out by the Civil Defence Authorities. Post-1960 directives, though still mentioning the need to obey the order of Civil Defence personnel place major emphasis on quick evacuation of damage areas and on self-extrication from damaged shelters. This appears to reflect a revised estimate of likely damage levels, as well as the increased stress on initiative and self-help already noted as a consequence of the takeover of Civil Defence by the Ministry of Defence from the Ministry of the Interior (MVD). After passing through decontamination stations survivors are at the disposal of the Civil Defence organization for rescue and clearance work. The post-attack phase is divided into two periods: the first (rescue, first aid and extinguishing fires) is of two or three days duration and comprises the urgent tasks. No time limits are given for the second, rehabilitation phase. Units from adjacent, undamaged, areas are to participate in both phases.

Organization

10. Prior to 1960 the Ministry of the Interior controlled the organization of Civil Defence through the "Staff of Local Anti-Air Defence of the Homeland" (Shtab MPVO Strany), while

training of the general public was controlled by the Ministry of Defence through the "Voluntary Society for Co-operation with Army, Aviation and Fleet" (DOSAAF). Since abolition of the Central Government MVD in 1960 both higher level organization and training have been under Ministry of Defence Control with control at Republic, Oblast and Rayon levels possibly being shared with MVD officials in some aspects of the many faceted Civil Defence programme. Actual control is believed to be invested in G.O. Strany with the new Ministry of Preservation of Public Order (MOOP), active in the middle and lower levels. The term "Local Anti-Air Defence" (MPVO) was replaced by "Civil Defence" (G.O.) in 1962, on the grounds that it could no longer be run on a localised basis and "had become a State-wide system." The active defences (Anti-Air and Anti-Missile Defence of the Homeland, PVO and PRO Strany) are closely integrated with the passive defences.

11. Little is known of the structure of Civil Defence at Republic or Oblast level, but it appears to be a smaller scale version of the "Shtab GO Strany."

12. Organization in large towns has been described in some detail in training literature, and a diagram is given at Enclosure I. The Head of the elected Local Authority (Chairman of the Town Executive Committee) is ex-officio head of Civil Defence, though actual planning is carried out by the "Town Civil Defence Staff" and similar Staffs in the urban sub-divisions (Rayons), under the guidance of the higher Civil Defence organs. Below these are the Town Civil Defence Services and the Industrial and Non-Industrial Civil Defence.

Town Civil Defence Services

13. These are basically the peacetime municipal services, performing specialist functions related to their peacetime work and forming cadre forces to handle the more difficult tasks and severe incidents, with the aid of members of the public trained to perform the more simple tasks under supervision. Thus the Fire Services form the nucleus of the Fire Defence and Terrain and Building Decontamination Services; the Building Enterprises are the nucleus of the Heavy Rescue Service, and Health Department, Hospital and Polyclinic staffs of the Medical Civil Defence and Personnel Decontamination Services. The Militia (Police), supplemented by Passive Defence teams are responsible, as in peacetime, for maintaining public order and safeguarding property.

Industrial Civil Defence

14. The more important industrial installations are allotted a "Civil Defence category," which probably determines their priority for training, equipment and shelter provision, and for

outside assistance in case of attack. They are directly subordinated to the Town Headquarters and have an internal organization, including permanent Civil Defence staff and specialised teams of workers, similar to that of the Town Services. Less important installations are subordinated to the Rayon Headquarters and their internal organization consists only of "general purpose" teams.

Non-Industrial Civil Defence

15. In residential areas and educational establishments the basic unit is the "Self-Defence Group", recruited from citizens of both sexes over the age of sixteen on a scale of one group to every 500-700 inhabitants. Groups vary in strength between forty-five and seventy-three persons. They consist of a leader, an Assistant for Political work, Runner and six Teams of 5-8 persons each plus two reserves - Preservation of Order and Observation, Fire, Gas Decontamination, Rescue, Medical, Shelters and (in rural areas) Veterinary. Educational establishments have an additional obligation to provide students aged over sixteen for the "Detachments for Finding and Bringing out Casualties" (ORVP), teams of five whose main duties are to act as stretcher bearers under supervision by a Medical Service Nurse controlling a number of teams. Many potential ORVP members receive general training in the mass training programmes, but there is little to suggest that ORVP teams train as such in peacetime.

Training

16. Little is known about training of permanent cadres, though a Civil Defence Staff College exists in Leningrad and courses there have been attended by Civil Defence officials from some satellite countries.

17. Civil Defence Training Schools have been identified in most Oblasts of the USSR. Their function is to train lower-level permanent staffs and some unpaid members of Civil Defence with leadership functions. Instructors for the mass training programme are also trained at these schools, run by DOSAAF.

18. Instructional materials for the mass training programme and the "Self-Defence Groups" is readily available. The programme is run by DOSAAF, whose subordination to the Ministry of Defence and country-wide facilities must have made it the obvious instrument for this purpose.

19. Until 1955 the Soviet public was told little or nothing of the true capabilities of nuclear weapons. Mass training in "nuclear age" Civil Defence began in that year with a ten-hour course which, it is claimed, was taken by 85.5 per cent of the

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adult population. Since then twenty-two-hour, fourteen-hour and eighteen-hour courses have been held, each laying more emphasis on practical work than its predecessor, and each revealing more of the true capabilities of nuclear weapons. A fifth programme of nineteen hours training, is in course of introduction. It largely covers the same ground as its predecessors, but lays more emphasis on improvisation, e.g., of anti-dust masks, and on first aid and "mutual aid." No national figures for completions have been issued for any course other than the first, but regional figures are freely quoted for all of them. Not unexpectedly they show that in the industrial areas (especially in Western USSR) from 75 to 100 per cent of the population have completed courses, with rural areas lagging far behind. The Soviet Press has complained in the past that some high completion figures covered poor training and even, in some cases, no training at all. Probably to circumvent this, the instructions for the new course provide that once a group has begun training it must complete that process within four months, or begin again. The effect of this will probably be to restrict the numbers training at any given time and thus spread the load more evenly among the available instructors.

20. Training of "Self-Defence Groups", while apparently independent of the mass programme, involves little or no additional skill, though a higher standard of performance can be expected. A "Self-Defence Group" already has a task and area allotted to it, whereas the participant in the mass programme is taught the same techniques to facilitate individual survival and ability to function as part of an Ad Hoc Group.

21. Medical aspects of Civil Defence are taught at various medical institutes. The purely medical aspects of the courses given do not differ greatly from those taught in the West. A textbook of one such course, published in 1959 showed much more awareness of the likely effects of nuclear weapons than would have been deduced solely from the rather sketchy treatment of the subject in the course for the general public being given at that time. In addition to basic nuclear physics, dosimetry, radiation sickness, chemical and biological agents it covered in detail the organization and tactical doctrine of the Civil Defence Medical Service.

22. Junior and middle school classes are given specially simplified and adapted courses. Senior pupils are covered by the normal adult course.

Shelters

23. As in most other countries, the Soviet Union has not attempted to provide heavy shelter accommodation for the general public. However, an attempt was made at widespread provision

of shelters capable of resisting fire, blast and fallout through the provision in new buildings erected between about 1949 and 1958 of reinforced basements with space for air-filtering equipment, airtight doors, sanitation and an emergency exit opening at a distance from the building approximately equal to its height. These shelters were included as standard practice in many areas of the USSR, Poland, Czechoslovakia and in some cases in other satellites as well. Reports of these shelters have been very infrequent since 1959, and it has been conclusively established that many post-1958 buildings have no basements of any kind. Some free-standing shelter has been seen, but it is clearly not being provided on a scale adequate to compensate for the abandoned basement shelter programme. There is in current Soviet Civil Defence literature an emphasis on using whatever may be available - Metro stations, ordinary basements and cellars, shelters, vegetable stores, or simple wood and earth shelters built in a crisis period, rather than an insistence on use of shelters as noted in earlier literature. Pre-attack evacuation of some of the urban population is also envisaged. This evidence seems to support the opinion expressed by some Soviet leaders that, in a general nuclear war, effective protection against bomb effects is a doubtful proposition and that therefore it would be unwise and uneconomic to build expensive anti-atomic shelters.

24. Despite the change in policy, Soviet shelter provision is still substantial, consisting of renovated WW II shelters, the large numbers of basement and free-standing shelters built prior to 1959, and the Metro systems of Moscow, Leningrad and Kiev (which the Soviet admit have a Civil Defence function, and whose design takes this into account). Much of it is not suitable for extended occupation, and little of it is likely to provide much protection against high-yield weapons. Nevertheless, it has been provided on a wider scale than in any major Western country, and would probably provide varying degrees of protection for one quarter to one third of the urban population. This proportion will decrease, as the urban population is increasing, while shelter space is not, except in the towns whose Metro systems are being extended (Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev).

Urban Planning

25. For new buildings the Soviet building regulations enforce fairly strict requirements on spacing and use of fireproof or fire-resistant materials. These vary according to district and materials used in adjacent buildings, but their effect is to localise fires and make blocking of roads by debris less likely. However, a substantial, though decreasing proportion of the urban housing stock consists of wooden buildings which constitute a serious fire hazard. Civil Defence

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need to approve new buildings was abolished in 1958, but there are indications that Civil Defence Authorities have some say over alignments of transport and other facilities, and possibly over siting of factories.

26. Dispersal of industry is taking place in the Soviet Union, but as a consequence of development of new areas, not through resiting of existing facilities. Recommendations of a CMEA Committee in the late 1950's that new factories should be sited away from urban areas and from residential areas of their labour force have not received general application, though the "Schwarze Pumpe" combine in East Germany has in fact been built on this principle.

Scope and Effectiveness of the Civil Defence Programme

27. This is difficult to assess. Information on equipment stockpiles is almost entirely lacking, although the programmes imply sufficiency of equipment, a relatively small stock suffices for training purposes, and there have been complaints that even the equipment requirements of the training programme have not been met in all places. The current increased emphasis on improvisation may point to a lack of adequate stockpiles, or to a lack of any intention to build up such stockpiles. Food reserves are another area of inadequate information, though present Soviet grain purchases may suggest that the normal peacetime reserves are smaller than was previously thought.

28. Effectiveness of the training programme is also uncertain. Soviet figures cannot be accepted at their face value, as the Soviets themselves have complained of widespread falsification, as well as of instruction so poor as to be valueless. Rough estimates can only be made by applying substantial arbitrary discounts to published Soviet figures, and by taking into account defector experience and remarks by Soviet leaders. On this basis it appears that about 80-90 million adults have attended some course between 1955 and 1963, of which 20-25 million (slightly better than one adult in seven) attended a course in the period 1960-63 and therefore can be said to have a good basic grounding in modern Civil Defence techniques. In addition to these is an unknown number of permanent Civil Defence cadre personnel. Though there is no firm evidence that Civil Defence troops exist in the USSR, their existence has been established in some of the satellites and Soviet military writings have hinted at the possibility of use of troops on Civil Defence tasks.

29. The Soviet Civil Defence organization cannot be said to be "Ready for War," but has made more progress in terms of shelter and training provided than any likely antagonist. The

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current campaign for improvement in Civil Defence has been accompanied by a number of statements by Civil Defence and military figures which emphasise the importance of Civil Defence as a contribution to viability in war and do not indicate that the Soviets regard it as a contribution to deterrence, or a possible component of "nuclear blackmail."

30. Progress in the Satellites was much less significant up to 1960-61. Where basement shelters were built (Czechoslovakia, Poland, Bulgaria and to some extent, Hungary), the relatively small size of the housing programmes meant that only modest numbers of shelters were provided. In 1960-61 an increase in activity was observed in all the satellites, with renovation of WW II shelters and some increases in new construction. However, shelter building was officially abandoned in Hungary in mid-1961, apparently against the wishes of the Civil Defence organization, which publicly re-emphasised the importance of shelters and issued a series of articles describing how to convert an existing basement into a shelter. Shelter building was given up in Czechoslovakia in 1958, but appears to have been resumed, though probably on a more limited scale. In Poland (where it is declared policy to provide shelters in all new buildings) the construction of shelters does not appear to have been given up. Shelter building is also going on in East Germany and Roumania, though its scale cannot be assessed. There has been a small amount of shelter provision in Albania.

31. Considerable progress in mass training has been noted in all the satellites except Albania since 1960-61. In Roumania little was done before 1959 and the effort since, though much increased, is still small compared with the programmes instituted elsewhere in the bloc. In Czechoslovakia it is claimed that 5.7 million people were trained between 1959 and 1962, and 4 million were to be instructed under the second stage "24-hour course" in 1962-63. It is not clear whether these were to be additional to those already given training. No nation-wide figures are available for East Germany, but the programmes for specialised groups (e.g. students and industrial workers) which began in 1958-59 have gradually broadened their scope into a national programme. A high level of training is claimed in Bulgaria, but there is little evidence to support it, though training is carried out on a nation-wide scale, and most of the population of Sofia was given a course during December 1961. Compulsory training for all between the ages of twelve and seventy of both sexes, was instituted in Hungary during 1961-62 and most of the population of Budapest has attended a course. A further national course for most of the population is to be held between 15th November, 1963 and 1st March, 1964. No compulsory

mass course has yet been held in Poland, though compulsory training for, e.g. medical personnel and industrial workers have been held for some years. Policy publicity tends to emphasise the Civil Defence usefulness of bodies such as the Polish Red Cross, Association of Voluntary Firefighters, Boy Scouts etc., which suggest that substantial members of such organizations undergo specifically Civil Defence training.

32. Elaborate and, as far as can be judged, reasonably efficient Civil Defence planning organizations exist in Czechoslovakia, East Germany and Poland. Those in the other satellites appear at present to be of a somewhat lower standard.