

~~Leg:~~ A H Speech File
Washington, D. C.,
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Memo to file -

From Jack Flynn

I made 15 minute recording this after noon and used as text the attached statement which was taken from longer speech made by the Senator in the Senate on August 31, 1959.

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The nation's state of preparedness, or rather the frightening lack of it, to survive the devastation which a nuclear attack could wreak upon this country, is a matter of our gravest concern.

Estimates of civil defense officials at hearings conducted by the JointedCommittee on Atomic Energy which show that a limited to medium range attack on the United States would results in the deaths of 50 million Americans illustrates the appalling & nakedness of America's defenses against nuclear weapons.

Such a harrowing projection makes clear the urgent need for a fresh, critical appraisal of the Federal Government's civil defense program.

In after almost 10 years of civil defense planning, the Government's capability to protect the population of the United States is an éneffective as reports indicate, it is high time we face the problem of survival in the thermonuclear age squarely -- and do something about it.

A great amount of public attention has been focused on civil defense, radiation fallout, and the hazards of nuclear warfare in recent years. Extensive congressional hearings have been held, the administration has developed an elaborate long-range civil defense plan, nationwide civil def nse "exercises" have been conducted under hypothetical attacks, exhaustive research has been conducted on fallout shelters, mass evacuation, radiation detection and other programs, and hundreds of millions of pamphlets

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have been distributed throughout the country advising citizens of action to take before, during, and after nuclear attack.

However, despite these actions our actual defenses against massive nuclear attack today are largely in the "blueprint" stage. Incredible as it is, after 10 years of planning and study, there are still not even the beginnings of a shelter program which would protect millions of Americans beyond the blast area from a nuclear explosion, and which could assure that the Nation would be able to pick itself off its feet and restore at least vital services within a reasonable short time.

A broad national program has been drafted, commandcenters for emergency operation of the Government have been established, detailed "survival projects" have been developed and responsibilities for conduct of the Nation's civil defense have been assigned.

But the civilian survival program exists today only on the drafting boards. The basic foundations of such a program -- protection from radiation, rehabilitation of vital communications and emergency maintenance of the economy -- simply do not exist. As anyone who has inspected the Nation's civil defenses knows, not a major city in America could evacuate or shelter 10 percent of its population in the event of a nuclear strike, except in totally inadequate makeshift shelter areas, nor does adequate fallout shelter exist in communities or elsewhere throughout the country to protect the remainder of the population from the deadly effects of widespread radiation which would follow in the wake of an

atomic or hydrogen attack. Even if major cities could evacuate their populations in advance of an attack, as a few have on a token basis in carefully prearranged hypothetical exercises, neither rehabilitation or reception centers exist to protect them from fallout which in heavy concentrations is as lethal as the direct impact of a hydrogen bomb.

Senator Humphrey does not point out these facts in criticism of the OCDM, nor of civil defense officials or workers at any level. Nor does he have but the highest admiration for the hundreds of thousands of volunteer civil defense workers throughout the country who have contributed so much to the Nation's civil defense program since its inception in 1950. They have in the main given their best to building a strong civil defense, frequently, despite not only public apathy, but official apathy in high places.

Nor does Senator Humphrey overlook the fine efforts of the many mayors, Governors, State civil defense directors and local civil defense officials who have created active civil defense programs to augment the national programs.

The default in civil defense lies at much higher levels -- in the Congress, the White House, and in the Government's highest strategy councils.

To meet the dangers of nuclear warfare, we have staked everything on our ability to retaliate, coupled with an active defense system against bombers admittedly useless against missile attack.

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We cannot afford to continue to differentiate between "national" defense and "civilian" defense. Indeed, the very fact that we possessed an effective fallout shelter program would be an added deterrent to a nuclear attack -- an important consideration in further ~~discourage-~~
~~mark~~ discouraging any would-be attackers.

But while we may find it possible to deter a rational, logical enemy, we must also consider the grave dangers which will rise as more nations join the "nuclear club," and the serious possibility of a completely irresponsible attack. Furthermore, there is always the possibility of a disaster through which a nuclear weapon would be launched by some horrible mistake.

Nuclear experts, civil defense authorities, and scientists who have conducted exhaustive research into nuclear weapons state that even under massive nuclear attack the Nation could sustain itself, the Government could continue to function and the great majority of the population could be saved if adequate measures to protect the United States are taken in advance.

These measures would include protection from radiation, rehabilitation of communities, restoration of the national economy, and maintenance of governmental functions.

There is little or no realistic defense against the direct impact of a multimegaton weapon. But the gravest danger to the United States from a nuclear attack, according to our foremost authorities on nuclear weapons, would not be from the blast effects of hydrogen explosions over targets, but from massive radiation which would blanket much of the country, would kill or incapacitate the majority of the people exposed to it, and which could seriously ~~cripple our national~~

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cripple our national capacity to recover.

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It is important to distinguish between a fallout shelter program and the enormously more expensive program to provide not only protection against radioactive fallout, but also against heat and blast. While even the fallout shelter program would require a major investment the return from such an investment would be so fantastically large -- perhaps 25 million American lives saved in the case of a medium-sized nuclear attack -- that it must be given the most serious consideration.

Senator Humphrey maintains that if the United States is to survive a potential nuclear attack, it is imperative that the Federal Government develop an aggressive, commonsense approach to radiation protection, either through direct Federal financing or matching financing with the States, which would provide maximum protection for the population, assure that the national economy would continue to function, and enable the Nation to swiftly recover from initial attack.

Whilerthere is a great deal the average American householder in the fallout zone can do to protect his family, even if he begins during the first 30 minutes after a nuclear explosion, it is sheer folly to further delay the bringing to bear of all the resources of the community, State and Federal levels of government in a comprehensive fallout shelter program, sparked and maintained by Federal example and Federal leadership.

We must have an active Federal program of direct or matching financial assistance to the States and local communities

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for the building of realistic protection against radioactive fallout, as well as a thoroughgoing program of fallout protection training.

Certainly the average American can hardly be expected to ~~stand~~ take a voluntary shelter program seriously when the Federal Government does not itself require that its own new public buildings or federally assisted construction be equipped with shelters. Yet, with proper leadership, our people would come to realize that literally tens of millions of Americans could be saved from death by radioactive fallout by an adequate fallout shelter program.

Senator Humphrey is aware of the advances civil defense authorities have made in communications, shelter research, radiological monitoring, maintenance of government in emergency, stockpiling, and many other areas.

But the ability to flash a warning in 30 seconds throughout the country or to report the amount of radiation existing or anticipated in a given locality when protection from fallout does not exist for either the victims of an attack or for civil defense workers, affords scant protection against the deadly effects of a nuclear missile. Likewise, air raid tests, civil defense exercises and extensive public information programs on the hazards of nuclear warfare, as important as they may be, will not protect the American people from the effects of a 20-megaton hydrogen bomb nor radiation fallout--unless adequate facilities to shelter people, rehabilitate communities and restore the economy exist.

In other words, the finest of long-range plans, survival projects and blueprints for civil defense without the resources, operational capability, and facilities to implement them on a moment's notice provide no more than a paper defense against the catastrophic dangers of nuclear warfare.

While the Senator agrees with the basic concept that civil defense is the joint responsibility of the Federal Government, State governments, and local communities, and that the full potential of all three levels of government must be mobilized to withstand the widespread destruction of nuclear weapons, nevertheless, the Federal Government must bear the primary responsibility for our nonmilitary defense, and demonstrate that it is prepared to discharge it.

What is required, and urgently required, is a complete recasting of Federal policy, a cold, calculating reassessment of the inadequacies of our present defenses against nuclear weapons and establishment of a Federal program which will ~~pp~~ provide ~~x~~ realistic defenses against them.

The cost may be great compared to present expenditures, but the cost of continued default by ~~xxxx~~ the Federal Government in this vital area of national security, could by comparison, be of incalculable consequence should be a nuclear strike against this country ever be made.



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