

THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
WASHINGTON

27 March 1948

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY  
THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY  
THE SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE  
THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF  
CHAIRMAN, MUNITIONS BOARD  
CHAIRMAN, RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD  
THE MILITARY LIAISON COMMITTEE  
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF CIVIL DEFENSE PLANNING

Subject: Office of Civil Defense Planning.

1. In order (a) to provide for the development of detailed plans for, and the establishment of, an integrated national program of civil defense; (b) to secure proper coordination and direction of all civil defense matters affecting the National Military Establishment; and (c) to provide an effective means of liaison between the National Military Establishment and other governmental and private agencies on questions of civil defense, an Office of Civil Defense Planning is hereby established in the Office of the Secretary of Defense. This Office will be headed by a Director who will, at the same time, also serve as personal advisor and deputy to the Secretary of Defense on civil defense matters.

2. The Office of Civil Defense Planning will have the following functions:

(a) To prepare, and to submit to the Secretary of Defense, a program of civil defense for the United States, including a plan for a permanent federal civil defense agency which, in conjunction with the several states and their subdivisions, can undertake those peacetime preparations which are necessary to assure an adequate civil defense system in the event of a war;

(b) Within the National Military Establishment, to coordinate all current activities in the field of civil defense;

(c) On matters of civil defense, to provide liaison between the National Military Establishment and other governmental and private agencies;

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(d) To the extent which is possible and desirable before the actual adoption of the permanent program of civil defense referred to in (a) above, and consistent with the probable character of any such program:

(1) To initiate interim measures which may seem necessary or appropriate in furtherance of an adequate system of civil defense;

(2) To provide the several states and their subdivisions with guidance and assistance in civil defense matters; and

(3) To furnish necessary information and assistance on civil defense matters to the departments and agencies of the National Military Establishment, to other agencies of the federal Government, and to private individuals or organizations concerned with civil defense matters.

(e) To draft any legislation required to implement the civil defense program developed under (a) above.

3. In formulating plans for a civil defense program and in preparing implementing legislation therefor, the following factors are to be taken into account:

(a) The various situations which might be created in communities of the United States as a result of an enemy attack;

(b) The tasks to be performed in order adequately to handle the various situations developed under (a) above;

(c) The extent to which each of the tasks developed under (b) above could and should be performed by a civil defense organization, and the extent to which they should be performed by military forces (both regular and reserve);

(d) The extent to which those tasks which should be performed by a civil defense organization (as developed under (c) above) should be carried out, supervised or controlled by the federal Government, and the extent to which they should be undertaken by states or their subdivisions;

(e) From the standpoint of assuring the coordinated and adequate performance by all groups of the tasks developed under (b) above, the most effective forms of organizational and working relationships:

(1) Between a civil defense organization (at the national, state and local levels) and the military forces (both regular and reserve);

(2) Between a federal civil defense agency and any civil defense groups established in the several states and their subdivisions;

(3) Between a federal civil defense agency and other agencies of the federal Government which may be concerned with, or affected by, civil defense activities; and

(4) Between a civil defense organization and non-governmental organizations which may be concerned with, or affected by, civil defense activities.

(f) The extent to which the adequate performance of civil defense tasks in wartime depends upon advance peacetime preparations therefor, the character of such advance preparations, and the most appropriate assignment of responsibilities therefor;

(g) The kind of peacetime civil defense organization which is best adapted (1) to undertake those civil defense preparations which must be undertaken in advance of any war (as developed in (f) above), and (2) to be converted, in the event of a war, into an organization capable of performing wartime civil defense tasks (as developed in (c) above);

(h) Peacetime and wartime requirements for personnel for a civil defense organization, and methods for obtaining and training such personnel;

(i) The inter-relation of internal security problems and problems of civil defense, and the extent to which, if any, such problems could and should be handled through, or in conjunction with, a civil defense organization.

4. The Office of Civil Defense Planning is authorized, in the performance of the functions herein described, to consult with such persons within the National Military Establishment as it may wish, to call upon any agency of the National Military Establishment for information and assistance which it may require, and to solicit the help of other individuals or agencies, both governmental and private, wherever it deems this to be appropriate. In addition, it is authorized to establish such advisory committees as may be necessary to carry out its duties.

5. In order to provide for the effective coordination of civil defense planning activities with other activities of the National Military Establishment--

(a) The Office of Civil Defense Planning will:

(1) Keep all agencies of the National Military Establishment generally apprised of its plans and activities;

(2) Advise the Joint Chiefs of Staff with respect to the possible effect of civil defense problems, or plans for civil defense, on matters coming within the cognizance of the Joint Chiefs of Staff;

(3) Inform the Munitions Board from time to time of the requirements for materials and manpower in the conduct of a civil defense program in time of war;

(4) Advise the Research and Development Board of any problems relating to civil defense in which research and development programs should be undertaken.

(b) The Joint Chiefs of Staff will provide the Office of Civil Defense Planning with general guidance on the probable character of any future war as it might affect the formulation of a program for civil defense, including (1) its views as to those tasks which could and should be performed by a civil defense organization and those for which military forces would be required, (2) its appraisal of the probable extent and character of damage as a result of enemy action, and of those areas or activities which would be the most likely targets thereof, and (3) its views concerning the relation of a civil defense program to the military defense of the United States;

(c) The Research and Development Board will keep the Office of Civil Defense Planning apprised of any progress in the field of research and development which may affect the preparation of plans for a civil defense program;

(d) The Munitions Board will advise the Office of Civil Defense Planning of any anticipated shortages in materials and manpower which might affect the formulation of a civil defense program;

(e) The Military Liaison Committee to the Atomic Energy Commission will provide the Office of Civil Defense Planning

with any information concerning atomic energy matters which may be necessary in the development of a program of civil defense.

7. For purposes of this memorandum the following definitions will obtain:

(a) The term "United States" includes continental United States and its territories and possessions;

(b) The term "civil defense" is generally used to denote the organized activities of the civilian population (1) to minimize the effects of any enemy action directed against the United States and (2) to maintain or restore those facilities and services which are essential to civil life and which are affected by such enemy action. It does not in general include internal security or active defense measures, such as aircraft warning, which, although they may utilize civilian volunteers, are a responsibility of the Armed Forces. However, the extent to which, if any, and the manner in which, a civil defense program should in fact cover any such matters, or be related thereto, are questions which the Office of Civil Defense Planning, in conjunction with other appropriate agencies, should consider in the preparation of its program. Similarly, the term "civil defense" does not in general include matters having to do with the strategic relocation of industries, services, government, and economic activities in anticipation of any future emergency (a responsibility of the National Security Resources Board under subsection 103(c)(6) of the National Security Act of 1947), but the Office of Civil Defense Planning will advise the National Security Resources Board of the relation of such matters to a civil defense program, and will, to the extent requested, work closely with such Board (1) in the development of policies and the solution of problems having to do with strategic relocation, and (2) in the implementation, where appropriate and when requested by the Board, of any such policies which may be directly related to a civil defense program;

(c) The terms "civil defense program", and "civil defense organization", except when specifically modified, respectively have reference to an overall program and to an overall organization for the civil defense of the United States, and not merely to the federal aspects thereof.



James Forrestal