

Zeitschrift: Protar
Herausgeber: Schweizerische Luftschutz-Offiziersgesellschaft; Schweizerische Gesellschaft der Offiziere des Territorialdienstes
Band: 26 (1960)
Heft: 3-4

Artikel: Actual trends in civil defence policy
Autor: Biörklund, E.
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-363869>

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

Download PDF: 20.02.2026

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

Ein derartiges Vorgehen erscheint um so eher gerechtfertigt, als in den nächsten Jahren zweifellos mit einem weiteren Ansteigen der Löhne und der Materialkosten zu rechnen ist. Unter diesen Umständen wäre es denkbar, dass gewisse Materialien in einigen Jahren trotz Bundessubventionen mindestens zu gleich

hohen Ansätzen angeschafft werden müssen, wie sie heute ohne Subventionen erhältlich sind.

In Würdigung der vorstehenden Ausführungen empfiehlt es sich deshalb, für die Anschaffung einer ersten Materialquote einen Kredit von 240 000 Franken zu erteilen.»

Actual trends in civil defence policy

By Admiral E. Biörklund, Sweden

A series of studies in policy and grand strategy has given the author the firm impression that the interdependence of military and non-military defence is much more important than is generally apprehended. Especially the value of civil, economic and psychological defence for increasing the national power of resistance of a State is obvious. It has been said that a war cannot be won by those branches of defence, but a war can be lost if those branches are not solid enough: There are four good reasons, why a Government should not neglect to safeguard, as far as possible, the civil defence as a complement to military defence.

Firstly, the political leadership of a country must have the security of remaining intact and have the possibility to work efficiently without the interference of bomb- and missile explosions, of gas danger and the risk of internal riots and social disturbances.

Secondly, it is generally admitted that a certain percentage of attacking aircraft will always "come through" and will cause devastating damages with the new weapons.

Thirdly, the missile weapons will probably replace bomber aircraft during the later half of the 1960's and it is difficult to believe in efficient protection against intercontinental missiles (ICBM) with a rather perpendicular direction of attack. This is also the case pertaining to many intermediate missiles (IRBM). Consequently the absolute efficiency of defensive, military measures cannot be retained, which calls for an enlargement of passive defence.

And fourthly, the development of the IRBM as submarine missile weapons or from land bases increases danger of serious attacks not only on coastal districts and harbours but far into all countries vital centres.

The whole weapon development favours aggression and aggravates defence and therefore the offensive weapons must in all States be complemented by the civil defence which is the object of this article. An indisputable value of home guard organizations and voluntary defence societies of different kinds must be omitted here for considerations of space. And military organizations, naturally, are outside the scope of this article.

My experience shows that the clearest view of this very complex problem will be arrived at if we begin

with a very short study of conditions in general and local wars, then investigate the general situation of a Government in war and finally scrutinize the upper strata of civil defence. In this way the intimate interdependence of all means of a State will be seen in its true colour. The political and grand strategical importance of civil defence will clearly appear.

I. General and Local Wars

It is doubtful whether experiences from 1942-45 are of value with regard to a future general war between Great Powers. Due regard must be paid to the enormously increased destructive power of modern A-, H- and BCR-weapons (bacteriological, chemical, radiobiological weapons and nerve gases). If we presume that, say only 10% of attacking aircraft and the majority of great and medium missile weapons reach their great goals, the possibility of an efficient civil defence certainly seems difficult. And if we accept Professor Linus Pauling's appreciation that the USA actually has about 75 000 modern bombs and the Soviet about 35 000, it would follow that the USA can cover the East with about 7500 efficient bombs and the Soviet the West with about 3500 efficient bombs. To this the growing power of the missile weapons must be added. I think it is right to presume, as is done lately by a very representative American commission [1], that both sides must count with losses during the first period of a general war of, say 20-40 million of people. (Many uncertain conditions are the reason why it is difficult to give a more precise number on the Eastern and Western side.) But the enormous, grand strategical dimensions of losses naturally indicate the difficulties of civil defence in a general war, which we all hope to avoid.

These dimensions certainly show the unlikeliness, although not the impossibility, of a general war, and experiences from the 1950's have made clear that ten local wars have been fought without developing into a general war. In these wars civil defence has been able to cope with the situation and if we search for new means to prevent such wars developing into a world conflict and the Great Powers remain prudent not to threaten with a nuclear and missile war, the problem of civil defence can be mastered. But this

does not allow the Great Powers to neglect the were disastrous eventuality with due regard to the inefficiency of military air defence in each period of future development.

II. The Government and State Administration

A convenient security can only be created by disposing bomb-proof, underground establishments in the vicinity of usual Government buildings or far away in secret and well prepared places with all necessary communication lines. By short messages a Government should be able to increase readiness of and co-operation between military and non-military defence and decentralize usual current business in order to be able to concentrate on the most important problems. Parliamentary meetings ought to be held in secret places and at times unknown to the public but protected by civil defence means and security measures against foreign intelligence. This calls for co-operation with police forces, and control of dangerous elements. A Government which unites all democratic parties will have a far better possibility of national cohesion.

As the possibility of an enemy surprise attack cannot be neglected, all means should be used to guarantee that the leadership of the State and the State ganglions will not be crumbled. A necessary decentralization must be regionally and locally well prepared. The counties must have organization for all kinds of non-military defence and it is a great advantage if those branches can be placed together or very near one another. Experience shows that "bottlenecks" in production and non-military defence often arise and questions of priority must be decided by regional authorities or even of the Government itself. For this reason the Government ought to dispose of a certain statistical bureau, which follows development every day [2].

Every concentration of current business to the Government and especially its members in a smaller "War Cabinet" must be avoided to give its members time to meditate upon policy, grand strategy and conducting of war.

III. Trends of Organization of Civil Defence

The world literature is rich in works treating different sides of civil defence, but in this article only the problems will be treated which have connection to political and strategical problems. In Great Powers with great A- and H-weapons it is sometimes proposed to substitute an efficient civil defence by an increased offensive capacity of defeating an enemy's aggression. But for reasons mentioned in the beginning of this article this principle is not well founded. In medium and smaller States, which have no possibility of an offensive or very restricted means for that purpose, this way of thinking is naturally less

valuable. For all countries it is true that the military defence will lose its meeting if the home front collapses. The construction of each State calls for a national solution of the civil defence problem.

A great density of population and the percentage of people living in great towns or great, concentrated industrial areas or near the orbit of war operations or near the coast within reach of submarine missiles creates special problems. An extensive and expensive evacuation system becomes unavoidable. The psychological effect of starting evacuation is great and therefore must be very well planned, politically and socially, in order to avoid panic or mistrust. The risk of coast attacks (or of attacks over land frontiers) influences import facilities and the communication system.

Protection of transport lines, post offices, sea and air bases, power stations and military stocks of all kind are strategically necessary. Here the home guard organizations in most countries are of great value in co-operation with civil defence. War industrial personnel in State institutions are used for protecting State property. Labour employment after a mobilization is generally facilitated by national laws, which stipulate an obligation for all grown-up people to assist in some kind of service in time of war. Cicil industry needs its own protection.

Since many years there are good sources pertaining to civil defence conditions in Central Europe [3, 4], but we should observe that the missile development since 1956 has been revolutionary, which diminishes the value of fighter aircraft in the future. New radar chains of greater capacity can only give a warning of some minute and there are not great possibilities to construct anti-missile missiles which can stop an attack of a mass of missiles from different directions, on different height or lanced from short distances (submarines). The time for warning will not be sufficient or exact enough under those circumstances. year (actually only 0,2 % of the amount for military

The interesting publication of the Rand Corporation [1] emphasizes the political and high strategical importance of civil defence and suggests that this may save many tens of millions of men. It is argued that the Soviet civil defence and that of many European countries far exceeds the USA's measures. Even if the Soviet would lose over 20 million of men during a short total war, which represents what the Soviet lost during the period of 1942-46, this does not allow the USA to neglect evacuation problems. And this is true whether we consider a short war or a prolonged war.

In American political circles there is an increasing desire to strengthen the passive means. The aim must be to give the political leaders a better possibility to meet limited aggression with limited weapons and to make the Soviet leaders less disposed to take provocative action. This is certainly grand strategy: There is no idea that civil defence should carry

such high costs that the USA's strategic offensive or air defence means should be weakened, but the recent years civil defence expenses of 50-100 mill. dollar a purposes) has been recommended to reach 200-300 million dollar, which problem will be treated in Congress.

An important point is this: A power which intends to "strike first" can prepare this by an evacuation which gives much lower efficiency of the retaliatory counter-blow of the attacked country. Should the Soviet use that method it would be a great disadvantage to the USA. Although repeated "Alerte-exercises" are made, the strengthening of USA's civil defence organization seems unavoidable.

Great Britain's organization is described in an American book, just published [5], which also gives systematical information on ten European countries, the Soviet included. The essence of the British experiences is that much could be learned from the V 1- and V 2-attacks on England, that the British civil defence system has begun to treat even the greater problems of today, but that the representatives of civil defence would like a much greater interest from the public opinion.

Belgium and Holland actually speed up the construction of shelters, while Italy has just only created the basic laws for building up a civil defence, difficult to organize well because of the small geographical depth of the country. In France a law on "Service National" includes both military and civil defence, and will combine civil defence with resistant measures against revolutionary movements [6]. In Western Germany a considerable effort is now made and German literature of this kind is of great interest [7, 8]. Sometimes it is criticized that NATO does not make enough in civil defence [9], but the periodical "NATO Civil Defence Bulletin" [10] describes many efforts of importance.

In the Scandinavian countries and in Switzerland the organization is well arranged with moderate budgetary means, while in Finland the first steps are just taken. Finland has the disadvantage that peace treaties with the Soviet prevents the organization of useful home-guards ("protection corps").

The Soviet civil defence is considerably developed and the hard Party discipline, the systematical interior propaganda and the utilization of very great, voluntary defence associations are of value for this purpose. Each individual is obliged (as is the case in many countries) to assist in civil defence, trained mostly by the half-military organization DOSAAF. In stead of civil mobile corps for catastrophe purposes the Russian army has pioneer units to assist local civil defence. Over 3000 "civil defence brigades" are set up and the program includes reinforcement of shelter basements and education in different branches by courses each year. Instruction is also given pertaining to poison gas danger and biological warfare, which

harmonizes with the Government's declaration that in a future war such means will be used.

In 1957-58 the Soviet made a great revision of plans concerning "atomic warfare," the evacuation of large cities is planned and arrangement made for large numbers of persons made homeless by bombing. All this evidently gives the people the impression that the "imperialists" threaten the Soviet, which is part of the propaganda. Under the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD) the civil defence is practically militarized with officer staffs and trained civilians in large cities and in the communities. It would perhaps be right to call it a para-military organization. In Moscow there are subways for about 1/5 of the population. Public, Russian instructions in civil defence would certainly be of interest to the civil defence specialists.

IV. Special Problems of Importance

Some problems which concern international law, the armament of civil defence forces, consequences of radioactive outfall, the strategical necessity of evacuation of population and to some degree of industry, some question of priority and the mobilization of civil defence must finally be treated with the greatest brevity.

As the 4th Geneva Convention of 1949 is out of date, although not substituted by a new convention, there are different ideas about the problem whether the civil defence, and especially its mobile corps, ought to be weaponized which may result in the risk of becoming prisoners of war. Some States hesitate on this point, while England, Canada as well as the Soviet and many countries give light weapons to the personnel of mobile corps.

The danger of radioactive poisoning will increase enormously in a modern general war and even countries outside the war will suffer. Gas-proof shelters therefore must be increased in number and efficiency, if not for the whole population at least for say 30-50%, which admits to use the shelters several times and diminishes highly the poisonous effect. Modern instruments allow to decide the necessary gas-free hours a day and food in freeze buildings remains intact. However, the influence of gas poisoning on growing crops is dangerous and may call for an increased import of grain in countries which believe to be self-sufficient.

The evacuation problem is the reason for serious difficulties, especially in countries without more devastated areas far from the probable fronts. But to save great amounts of life must be the duty of a Government. Evacuation of personnel from great towns, other much populated areas, danger zones coast and boundary districts near the enemy is impossible to neglect but could be made in stages. On the other hand a great evacuation of industry is extremely difficult and expensive and must need much time. Would it not be better to arrange, if this is

possible, bomb-proof underground establishments for some important fabrics and let their personnel stay in mostly evacuated towns or industry areas?

With regard to priority it seems strategically sound to give preference in civil defence to Government and State institutions of importance in war time, to the different military forces and their stocks and war production, means of evacuation and transports as well as the supply of provisions for the population. Next in total importance may come the organization for taking care of injured, the saving of trapped people and the mobile, catastrophe corps, while other civil defence goals should be fulfilled as far as the actual conditions allow. But the organization must be set up to dimensions for all the planned aims because even the civil defence itself will certainly suffer from war damages of personal and material kind.

A mobilizing of civil defence cannot neglect the economic side of the problem and it is natural to save the most expensive measures to a later stage.

Taking into account the usual conditions in all countries it seems necessary to plan civil defence without counting on material from abroad at a period of tension. Everybody needs his own material, even gas masks and shelter materials: The possession of own, modern weapons may induce an aggressive State to hesitate and abstain from a political threat.

A first step would logically be to organize such key personnel which could facilitate a later mobilization, to open necessary credits, to complement important stocks and to make a preliminary evacuation of people who do not earn their living. To use war

rooms for Government and authorities, better sooner than too late should be a rule. After this a second step could be to set up civil defence totally, before general, national mobilization is decided, in order to safeguard the execution of an evacuation which could diminish the tempting for an enemy to start an aggression. The construction of new shelters and hospitals as well as the organization of transports and labour resources seems to be here included.

The most extensive measures must probably be removed to a period when the national mobilization is mainly executed.

Appendix Recommended Sources

- [1] The Rand Corporation: "Report on a Study of Non-Military Defense," USA 1958.
- [2] Winston Churchill: "Secret Session Speeches," London 1945.
- [3] Erich Hampe: «Strategie der zivilen Verteidigung», Frankfurt am Main 1956.
- [4] «Im Spannungsfeld der Luftmächte», Köln 1956.
- [5] US Government Printing Office: "Civil Defence in Europe and the Soviet Union," Washington 1959; interesting.
- [6] P. Besson: «Armée et Protection Civile», Revue Militaire Générale, Paris, November 1959.
- [7] «Ziviler Luftschutz», Heft 6, 1959.
- [8] «Zivilverteidigung», Nrn. 43—54, 1959.
- [9] Bernard K. Gordon: "NATO's Missing Shield," Bulletin of Atomic Scientists, June 1959.
- [10] "NATO Civil Defence Bulletin," March and June 1959. Besides these sources Russian manuals in civil defence are of a more technical interest.

Vorratshaltung in Spitätern

a. Den von den kriegswirtschaftlichen Behörden verlangten Notvorräten für einen Mindestbedarf von 1—2 Monaten in jeder privaten Haushaltung müssen naturgemäß auch Vorratshaltungen in Kollektivbetrieben entsprechen. Es handelt sich dabei nicht nur um Lebensmittel, sondern auch um gewisse Grund- und Betriebsstoffe. Neuerdings sind die Spitalverwaltungen aufgefordert worden, ständige Kriegsvorräte zu schaffen und zu unterhalten, und zwar für einen noch bedeutend längeren Zeitraum und über die örtlichen Zivilschutzzorräte hinaus.

In den Spitätern müssen besonders Arznei- und Sanitätsmittel bevorratet sein. Dazu kommen Betriebs- und Reinigungsmittel, wie Brennstoffe, Seife und Waschmittel, Treibstoffe und Spitalwäsche. Darüber hinaus sind Vorräte an Nahrungsmitteln nötig, nämlich: Zucker, Reis, Fett, Oel, Mehl, Griess, Mais, Hafer, Gerste, Hülsenfrüchte, Teigwaren, Milch- und Fruchtkonserven, Rohkaffee und Tee.

Diese Vorratshaltung gilt sowohl für den Kriegsfall als auch für den Fall des Unterbruchs der Zufuhren aus dem Ausland. Im Vordergrund stehen natürlich die Kriegsvorräte, weil wegen der in einem solchen Fall zu erwartenden zahlreichen Opfer und Schäden einerseits eine geregelte Verteilung erschwert und andererseits ein wesentlich grösserer Bedarf offensichtlich wäre. Das erforderliche Ausmass dieser Vorräte dürfte teilweise die eigene Leistungsfähigkeit der Spitäler übersteigen.

Zur Lösung der daraus entstehenden Finanzierungsprobleme muss hauptsächlich auf die Hilfe der die Spitalbetriebe mittragenden Gemeinwesen und Korporationen abgestellt werden. Die Bundesbehörden können zwar keine Entschädigungen ausrichten, sind aber bereit, durch den Abschluss von Pflichtlagerverträgen den Spitätern Bankkredite zu niedrigem Zinsfuss und unter Bundesgarantie zu verschaffen. Außerdem kann die Lagerkontrolle durch das Bureau des Delegierten für wirtschaftliche Kriegsvorsorge kostenlos durchgeführt werden.