

May 1988 (vol. 4, #4)

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SOVIET BUNKER NETWORK REVEALED

The vast Soviet network of shelters and command facilities, under construction for four decades, was recently described in detail by Secretary of Defense Frank Carlucci.

The shelters are designed to house the entire Politburo, the Central Committee, and the key leadership of the Ministry of Defense and the KGB. Some are located hundreds of yards beneath the surface, and are connected by secret subway lines, tunnels, and sophisticated communications systems.

"These facilities contradict in steel and concrete Soviet protestations that they share President Reagan's view that nuclear war can never be won and must never be fought," Carlucci said (Arizona Republic, April 3, 1988). "These facilities reveal that they are preparing themselves for just the opposite."

The shelters are also protected against chemical warfare agents, and stocked with sufficient supplies to allow the leadership to survive and wage war for months.

In contrast, the limited US shelter system begun in the 1950s has mostly been abandoned.

"To have something comparable, we'd have to have facilities where we could put every governor, mayor, every Cabinet official, and our whole command structure under-ground with subways running here and there," Carlucci said. "There's just no comparison between the two."

Soviet civil defense, which is celebrating its 56th anniversary, is more than just shelters, according to Sovietologist Leon Goure, who recently spoke at a seminar for young leaders sponsored by the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, DC. Soviet CD aims to protect the economy, in accord with Soviet doctrine that lack of preparedness in any area imperils the existence of the state. Goure noted that population protection is essential so that the people can supply the army. Soviet values dictate that citizens most valuable to the state are to be protected first.

At Chernobyl, all public services responded quickly. Within 24 hours, 1300 nurses and physicians, 240 ambulances, 250 firefighters, 2000 policeman, and 1100 buses were available. On the other hand, the experience demonstrated that the state of readiness was not as good as previously thought. In particular, civilians were not very well educated at operating radiation monitors. But rather than abandoning the whole idea, the Soviets are engaged in an upsurge of civil defense activities to repair the deficiencies, Goure said.

One contrast between Chernobyl and American nuclear power plants is the blast shelter from which plant workers managed the shutdown of the other reactors near the site. (The Nuclear Regulatory Commission does not require on site shelter for American power plant workers.)

For further information on Soviet civil and strategic defenses, consult the 1988 edition of Soviet Military Power, available on request from the Defense Publications Office, 202-697-5737.

ArMA NUCLEAR PREPAREDNESS PROGRAM

To implement the resolution favoring civil defense participation that passed at last year's House of Delegates meeting, nuclear preparedness is part of the Current Perspectives curriculum at the Arizona Medical Association meeting, Thursday, June 9, at Loew's Ventana Canyon Resort, Tucson. The program will be presented twice, morning and afternoon.

Dr. Orient will summarize weapons effects and protective measures, using slides prepared by the USSR Department of Civil Defense. Phoenix radiation oncologist Kenneth A. Lucas, MD, will present his review of the German data from the Hamburg fire, storm. This event, often cited as "proof" that shelters don't work, in actuality demonstrated the opposite. Arthur Robinson, PhD, will discuss fallout protection. Dr. Robinson has reviewed literally thousands of studies at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory, and has designed steel shelters that can be constructed at very low cost. Petr Beckmann, DrSc will speak on the subject "Chernobyl, Etc.: Nuclear Accidents and Terrorism." Dr. Beckmann publishes the newsletter Access to Energy, an important resource for all who are interested in environmental health hazards. (AtE readers learned about the indoor radon problem in 1979, long before the popular media caught on.) Dr. Beckmann was an enemy of public hysteria even before the AIDS epidemic. Eugene Zutell, emergency planner in the Arizona Division of Emergency Services, will emphasize long-term weapons effects such as "nuclear winter"

Continuing Medical Education credit is offered. There is no charge to ArMA members; the fee for nonmembers is \$50. Advance registration is required. Write to ArMA, 810 W. Bethany Home Rd., Phoenix, AZ 85013.