ES. to **the NEWS**

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CIVIL DEFENSE

The Soviet Union is spending $2 billion a year on civil defense measures designed to protect its population against nuclear attack. However, it was front-page r.ews when the Carter Administration decided to ask Congress for the funds to spend $2 billion between now and 1986 to protect the American population against nuclear attack.

Despite the tremendous disparity in spending to save Russian lives as against spending to save American lives, the Carter Administration decision marks a significant step away from the prevailing MAD (Mutual Assured Destruction) strategy whi·ch requi·res that go o u„lati o n r e mai·n naked and defenseless against a nuclear attack
from any source, Russia, China, or Cuba.

In 1961 President John F. Kennedy proclaimed our national commitment to a major civil defense effort. But at an historic meeting in Hyannis Port in November 1961, his policy was undercut by his own appointees.

Ted Sorensen objected on the customary rationale of the peaceniks who, under the MAD strategy, want to keep our cities hostage to the Soviets; he charged that the program was "provocative." Kennedy's Science Adviser, Jerome Weisner, a leader of the disarmament elite, opposed Kennedy's plan on .the purported practical ground that fallout shelters would be obsolete within five years.

Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara took his usual pose: he favored merely studying and surveying the problem and then stopping before anything tangible was actually built. Attorney General Robert Kennedy arrived in the middle of the meeting, wet from a touch football game, and gave his opinion that the program should wait until the grassroots were organized for civil defense.

Althoug:1 President Kennedy tried to adhere to his original commitment, he was no match for those determined to bury any effective civil defense program. The

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Kennedy civil defense program fell between the cracks of other Administration priorities as his advisers masked their real objections with the mythology that Congress was to blame for blocking the program, and that the American people wouldn't accept it anyway.

Steuart L. Pittman, who was Assistant Secretary of Defense for Civil Defense under Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, recently stated that "our national failure to complete even the most obvious and noncontroversial civil defense measures has not been, and will not be, due to Congressional or public resistance, but rather to Executive Branch indecision." "Indecision," of course, translates into "do nothing. [11]

The work of Jiri Nehnevajsa of the University of Pittsburgh is one of many studies which prove that the American public believes that our government has already taken effective civil defense programs (which it hasn't) and approves of such measures (which don't exist). The American people are always willing to buy the Scout motto "Be prepared."

Many experts say that a billion-dollar-a-year program is the minimum necessity for our country today. Others more skilled in the labyrinths of the bureaucracy, believing it is impossible to move the Carter Administration that far, have worked steadily for the last year to win approval of a $200-million-a-year program. The Carter Administration apparently compromised at doubling the present $90-million-a year civil defense budget.

The disarmament advocates charge that the Carter proposal is [11]unnecessary.[11] They claim that visitors to Russia don't see any shelter signs or urban evacuation drills. Like the Bourbons of royal France, the disarmament crowd never seems to learn that the Soviets are quite capable of keeping their facilities underground until they are ready to surprise us.

With the billions of dollars being spend on devices to kill the enemy, it is about time that we directed some of our attention to the problem of saving the lives of our own people. Live Americans are surely more valuable than dead Russians.

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