

PART III.—CIVIL DEFENCE

The continuing threat of armed aggression, coupled with the increasing power of thermo-nuclear weapons, has forced upon Canada a constant development of new civil defence techniques and training methods. Civil defence planning is integrated with the over-all plan for national defence with the aim of survival in the event of direct attack. A further role is the provision of aid to the civil powers in times of natural disaster.

In October 1948, the Minister of National Defence appointed a Co-ordinator for Civil Defence whose duty it is to plan for civil defence. Assisting in this program are the Federal Civil Defence Planning Committee, an Interdepartmental Committee and a Federal-Provincial Advisory Committee composed of the federal Minister responsible for civil defence, as chairman, and the provincial Ministers responsible for civil defence within the provinces.

Since February 1951, when the administration of civil defence was transferred to the Department of National Health and Welfare, the Minister of that Department has been charged with the responsibility in matters of federal policy. After study of organizations in the United Kingdom, the United States and NATO countries, a plan for national survival was established, based on the evacuation of probable urban target areas. The Minister of National Health and Welfare announced the plan as government policy in the House of Commons on July 28, 1956, when he stated, "Our civil defence policy should now be based on the development and testing of plans for the orderly evacuation on short notice of the main target areas in Canada should the possibility of attack on such areas by nuclear weapons appear to be imminent".

On the basis of population density and industrial potential, Canada's probable target areas are: Victoria, Vancouver, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Windsor, Hamilton, Niagara Falls, Toronto, Ottawa-Hull, Montreal, Quebec City, Saint John and Halifax.

Canadian civil defence is organized at all levels of government—federal, provincial and municipal—each with its own sphere of responsibility. The provinces are self-contained units and are subdivided into areas or regions for the purpose of providing mutual support to any disaster region. Because of geographical location in relation to target centres, certain areas have been designated as mutual aid or reception areas. Administrative and organization responsibilities for each are: federal—planning, policy and financial assistance; provincial—organization and implementation; municipal—execution of plans and policy.

A Federal Civil Defence Headquarters is established in Ottawa and comprises the Civil Defence Co-ordinator and staff plus the following Services: Planning and Operations, Training and Education, Health, Welfare, Information, Communications and Transportation. Certain other government agencies are also involved, such as the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the Armed Services, the Departments of Agriculture and Transport, and the Defence Research Board.

Through direct liaison with the RCAF an early warning system has been established. In 1957, high-power sirens supplied by the Federal Government were installed and tested in vulnerable target areas. An extensive health supply stockpiling program was completed with the co-operation of the Departments of National Defence and Veterans Affairs.

Civil defence training courses, begun in 1951, have been continually expanded. More than 9,000 persons from across Canada have attended courses at the Canadian Civil Defence College at Arnprior, Ont., since its establishment in 1954. Thirteen basic courses are available dealing with such subjects as: health, welfare, communications, transportation, staff duties, casualty simulation, rescue, and radiation detection. In addition, special forums have been held for groups representing the press, clergy, mayors, police, fire fighters, national organizations such as the Canadian Red Cross Society, and industrial groups. Training is conducted under provincial auspices with British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and New Brunswick operating civil defence schools. On Mar. 31, 1957, the total enrolment of civil defence workers was 224,146.