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Experts Warn On A-Blitz Consequences

By Nate Haseltine
Post Reporter

A special issue of The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists has appealed to the Government to give the American people the facts on atomic war dangers.

Its guest editors gave their own version of what those facts would show—a grim picture of a Nation almost totally unprepared for a sneak, mass attack by A-bomb-carrying enemy planes.

They purport to show that:

1. One hundred atomic bombs dropped on our 100 biggest cities likely would kill 19 million Americans.

2. With present and projected air defenses at least half of an enemy force would get through.

3. We have "an industrial glass jaw," in that two-fifths of the Nation's industrial capacity is concentrated in 15 prime target areas.

4. The Russians now have a capability of "bombing every major metropolitan industrial area in the United States."

5. An aerial blitz of United States probably would be staged across the North polar region.

6. Civil Defense experts feel that if United States is attacked it will be the sneak type, in tremendous force, and probably simultaneously on all the big cities.

7. Washington, though a non-industrial city, would be given a top priority in enemy attack plans because this city's devastation would give the enemy "tremendous psychological and propaganda advantages.

Writing the Bulletin's introductory editorial, Dr. Ralph Lapp, atomic physicist, noted that the special issue was prompted by (a) Malenkov's announcement that Russia has mastered production of the hydrogen bomb; (b) the Atomic Energy Commission's confirmation that Russia had exploded such a fusion-type bomb, and (c) the present condition of America's defenses.

Civil Defense Administrator Val Peterson pointed up the lack of military guarantee to detect and avert enemy bombings in this country. He said he could only "hope" that American scientists "can come up with devices which the American people can afford" to erect an Arctic radar net to warn of attacking forces.