

Critique --- June 21st, 1943 --- Second State Control Center Activation.

Kenneth R. Hammaker, protection chief, Ninth Regional Defense Office, San Francisco:

"I am going to use critique license and am going to depart from the routine. I not long ago attended a Nine Bay Area Region conference where the question was asked, "What will happen when bombs drop?"

"You so far surpassed what they have done, that they will be very startled. I can say without contradiction this is the best test ever conducted in the Ninth Region of the U.S. And along that line I want to say that this is really an historic event because after several months of talking about civilian defense and what it means and how it operates we have had the demonstration tonight and it worked.

"On Friday before leaving for Portland our director, Mr. Levison, came in and reported a conversation he had had with General DeWitt. We all wonder if this bombing will take place. There are people close to military events --- General DeWitt one of those. He says, 'I don't know, but think it will happen this summer. I think it will happen in the Northwest.'

"So this is an historic event and I believe that you people in Oregon are better prepared than anyone of the other states. And I am going to take back that message in regard to the performance you staged here. Other states should follow this pattern and it might be well worthwhile that such a control test be held with visiting people from each region control center taking part and from this demonstration we hope that the whole region will become as well prepared as you are.

"If the telephone service goes out completely how will you get the messages? Make request through H. P. Everest of Seattle for communications assistance.

"Now I am sure Major Hensel as head of the training section of the Northwest Sector will carry on."

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H. P. Everest, assistant director, Northwest Sector OCD, Seattle:

"Inasmuch as my chief has done all of the puffing, I will do some of the huffing.

"I think the set-up is all wrong. I am surprised that Jerry Owen, an old newspaper man, has the backs of all the men to him. With a little rearranging the people could be looking at you, Jerry.

"You have Jack Hayes up there doing three men's work. I don't think he can carry on.

"When the lights went out nobody rushed to Jack's aid. He might wear a miner's cap, a flashlight on his forehead.

"This whole test brings up a question --- a fundamental one --- 'what is the function of a state defense council?' Is it an operating function or a planning function. Has long been the idea that it is a planning function. Some states still feel that

a council's job is over when bombs begin to drop. This test demonstrates that this is not the case. This in no way operates local control centers but there are always problems arising over and above the problems of the local councils. This council should have demonstrated and did demonstrate where a state control center can fit into the picture. (Irving Smith says still a planning agency.)

"Mutual aid can only be supplied by the state control center. The information on roads is important.

"When you were giving out your orders, Jerry, you asked to see if the army can relay messages on short wave sets. Should see first if the state patrolmen can do it. Call on the army the last thing. They want us to handle all the way through. If we can't, then we will call in the army.

"If the control center operates smoothly you do not have a job to do, Jimmy?

"When you asked the army to relay a message to Astoria I think that emphasis is needed for supplementary radio service as the WERS.

"What caused the lights to go out? No mention of this in the reports. Messages correlated by numbers.

"Major Hensel will give the detailed critique."

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Col. M. Bramef, 104th Cavalry, Fair Grounds, Salem:

"Those land slides and road blocks were problems of our people and anything that the Highway Department can do to have them opened up promptly will be a help to all of us.

"I had a note on the telephone question. It would be a problem to you if the telephone should go out. Our army radio will not be available to you, I am sorry to say.

"I think Mr. Hayes needs two assistants."

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Major J. R. Dey, civilian defense officer, Northwestern Sector Western Defense Command, Fort Lewis:

"This is total war --- attacks on civilians to under-mine morale, as well as the destruction of the opposing army. The latter a job of the army. Yours is the passive defense job.

"I feel a great interest in this. We, of the army, want to know that passive defense is being taken care of. This means a great deal to us and we are glad to know you can do it. I am here to find out whether or not these things are working out properly. I am also here because when an emergency does happen probably the General will want me or some other officer at the scene of the incident.

And that officer might find it necessary to come here. This center controls the movements of various agencies. We then can coordinate that with the army's projected movements.

"From the army standpoint, we would appreciate having on this map not only the situation as it exists but would like to see the action you take. If you are rerouting, we would like to know the route and see it on the map in transmitting the information from your map to our headquarters."

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Major Joseph W. Hensel, civilian protection chief, Northwest Sector OCD, Seattle:

"These next words are considerations, rather than criticisms. The only way to find the answers is to work them out in drills such as this.

"It would be a fine idea to work in typewriters to take these messages. I have only seen one control center that uses typewriters --- that in Salinas, California.

"This is the worst state control center I have ever seen --- likewise, the best, because it is the only one.

"Original purpose was to receive information, evaluate that information, and make the necessary dispatch of equipment or supplies which, in your judgment may be necessary.

"You are here under quiet conditions. You are all people of mature judgment. But, even so, you will find out that Portland is being bombed, etc. It will affect you and you might do the wrong thing.

"Jerry, if you are going to read you ought to be up here on the platform. So you can look everyone in the eye. Can get their reactions much better.

"You have four checks on this information. You hear it read, see it plotted, read it, and see it on the board. Accuracy is the most essential, speed isn't. Jack needs a few assistants. One of them might be given the specific job of plotting, etc.

"Your department heads should make their own notes as the message is read if you want your own record, particularly as it applies to you.

"Communications: The state police radio is available at all times and plans should be made for alternate means of communication should telephones go out. If it is possible to develop WERS so that a person in this control center can communicate to other towns in this area it would be an excellent thing.

"With reference to the information that goes up on the board, these matters should be talked over by service heads in the control center and they will do this under normal operating conditions as it is very unlikely that messages will be received as rapidly as in the demonstration tonight. Mr. Owen should be free to discuss these decisions with service heads and share their responsibility in making same. An assistant at the Commander's desk would not be a bad idea.

"Don't figure on any help from the army. You may get it but should not take it into consideration in your calculations. Anything you get from the army will be gravy. The more civilians do the less that remains for the army--and that applies to the whole civilian defense program. At the same time the army wants to know what you are prepared to do and to what extent it may look to you for assistance.

"I can't find anything else to criticize. I will say this that this state of Oregon is leading the field in this activity as well as in several others. Your control center operation is not perfect and never will be probably but you are so far ahead that you have something here that will stick with you from now on. I am sure you can visualize a set up like this working in any disaster, whether in peacetime or war, where people representing all state departments are plotting together to meet a given situation.

"I wish to commend you officially and otherwise on your demonstration here tonight. and I hope that I may have the opportunity of coming back again."

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