The Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn's Polytechnic Repoter devoted a full page to Civilian Defense measures more specifically, a New York area survey on fallout shelters.

"Shelters Are Ridiculous."

After spending the summer working on this inderstudies-sponsored survey, Sheldon Gordon, in his article, concludes "Fallout shelters are ridiculous."

This conclusion was drawn from several sources. The assumptions made by experts, the approximations used to calculating the effectiveness of protection, and the savior-shelter areas, and actual surveying experience. Gordon's job involved structural inspection of potential shelters and proposing modifications which would lower the percentage of penetrating radiation to one percent. Gordon relates parenthetically that the Army engineers who gave instructions to the man who oversaw the project claimed they would only have their families in a shelter with a blocking rating of less than 0.1 feet.

As one of the reasons for his conclusions, Gordon cites the difficulty of knowing when it falls. It will land on any moderately smooth surface, and will remain there until it is either washed away or loses its radioactivity. Apparently, someone conveniently happened either to forget or ignore the fact that snow has a tendency to drift and will usually end up on smooth-surfaced walls. Invariably, fallout shelters will be located behind these same-small walls. The result: a far greater concentration of radiation than was considered in the project computations.

Fallout Fallacy

He points to another fallacy concerning fallout. Much of the fallout will be of dual-particle size, or smaller, and consequently will pass through the filters of even the best ventilation systems. The only way to eliminate this problem, Gordon says, is to hermetically seal the shelter, but this will lead to the imminent danger of asphyxiation.

Other considerations include minimum space allowances for fumigators and also per capita costs. Gordon contends the space provided for one adult or one adult and a small child exposed per person is too restrictive and that the actual number of people who are much greater than Congress is allowing. He points out that just as the shelters have to be well stocked with food and water to be of any practical value, but if shelters in New York (and other metropolitan areas) are not to be immediately stocked of their provisions they must be kept locked. But what good is the "perfect" shelter if it is locked at the time of attack?

Under attack, also, are methods of testing "survival" in the shelters. The Army uses volunteers who are extremely well physical- and psychologically-fit for these tests. Many of these volunteers have to be carried out of the shelter before the end of the fallout test. How long, then, asks Gordon, will engineers be expected to live in these shelters? Will their physical and mental problems be able to survive in those shelters?

Official Cofcamisation

About the survey in general, Gordon says, "I have read fully documented accounts from government experts which were in complete contradiction to our official results.

He concludes, "As a result of these considerations, I think that fallout shelters are totally impractical, if not impossible, in any areas such as New York." In the same issue of the Polytechnic Repoter appeared the following account of an episode which happened last April, entitled: "To Fallout Shelter"

On their way to "Shuck" Station in the Sinea Capital Building last April, Policemen devoted would-be waiting upon a sign, "To Fallout Shelter." Pursuing their curiosity, they descended into the basement and followed arrows to a remote corner of the building. There they found a good-size room with map-lined walls, communications equipment, and a solitary man who was obviously in charge. A plaque proclaimed the shelter to be the Capital Center.

He greeted them heartily—"It was rare for him to have human company at this time in the evening (Boy scouts, etc., visit during the day.)"

"What's going on here?", they queried.

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