

500-MAN SHELTER STARTED IN TEXAS

Fortress Could Serve U. S. as Capital in Atom War

DENTON, Tex., May 13 (AP) —A vast underground fortress, capable of accommodating 500 persons on an emergency basis for thirty days, is being built near the northern Texas college town. The fortress could serve as an alternate national capital in event of enemy attack.

The \$2,500,000 subterranean structure will house the headquarters of Region 5 of the Office of Civil Defense and Mobilization. In case of emergency it would be the control center for all Federal agencies in the Southwestern States and—if necessary—for the entire nation.

The fortress is to serve as a model for similar ones that the Federal Government hopes to have at the seven other regional headquarters of civil defense agency—Harvard, Mass.; Olney, Md.; Thomasville, Ga.; Battle Creek, Mich.; Denver; Santa Rosa, Calif.; and Everett, Wash.

The fortress, due to be completed in June, 1962, will be under five feet of earth but will be topped by a modernistic building on a twenty-acre site three miles east of Denton.

Offices Above Ground

Above ground will be offices, a public reception center and a snack bar. Although a permanent building by all conventional standards, its being destroyed in event of atomic attack would not hamper the operation of the underground fortress.

Hydraulically operated, blast-resistant doors of sixteen-inch-thick concrete will seal off the buried control center.

The underground center will be able to withstand the blast of a twenty-megaton hydrogen bomb only three miles away. All equipment will be shock-mounted and the entire structure will be able to move sideways one-half inch and vertically one and three-quarter inches without breaking up.

By comparison it was a 20-kiloton atomic bomb that hit Hiroshima.

With its own power plant, water well and other utilities, the two-story, 142-foot wide and 172-foot long center will be a self-sustaining buried city. In addition to accommodating 500 persons for thirty days, it could provide for 200 for a much more extended period.

Fresh filtered air will be assured by air intake and exhaust valves that will operate manually, automatically or by remote-controlled censoring devices to prevent blast pressure from entering the center.

Fall-out to Be Detected

Fall-out detection instruments on the outside will register the gamma radiation in the area to visual machines in the center. Decontamination rooms for those entering or leaving will prevent radiation contamination while sentry towers and its own specially trained personnel will provide security against sabotage.

On the upper level will be the air filter and decontamination rooms, offices, the communications center, decoding room, computer room, damage assessment room and the message center.

On the lower level will be the kitchen, refrigerator and freezer rooms, storage rooms, dining area, men's bunking area, women's bunking area, sick bay, power plant and maintenance rooms.

In the all-important communications center, teletype machines will be stacked in especially-designed cabinets to conserve floor space. Radio equipment, engineered with the special requirements in mind, features compactness.

The communications center will be the heart of the underground fortress and will be a key point in civil defense agency's vast telephone, telegraph, teletype, facsimile and radio networks.

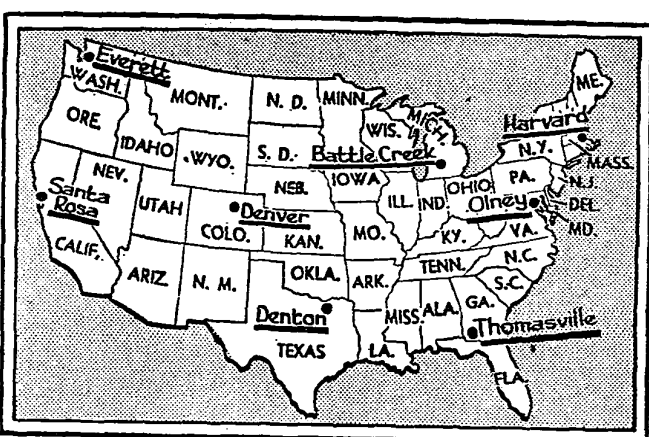
Communications Set Up

The primary communications network is the national communications system (NACOM I), a 22,000-mile-long private-lines telephone and teletype web linking the President's classified headquarters in Washington with the eight regional and all state civil defense headquarters.

Circuits selected for NACOM I by-pass all target areas with alternate circuits so that regardless where an enemy bomb might hit, the network will remain operational.

Backing up NACOM I is NACOM II, a new high-frequency radio network that will eventually link all regional and state civil defense headquarters. The Region 5 headquarters communications system, which is temporarily housed on the Campus of Texas Woman's University here, was one of the first regional offices to get NACOM II equipment. A sixty-acre antenna farm, already in operation here, will be linked with the new underground fortress.

NACOM III is a network of alternate telephone lines, which also bypass target areas, to supplement NACOM I in case of emergency.



The New York Times May 14, 1961
FORTRESS: Underground shelter being built at Denton, Tex., may be copied in seven other cities (underlined).