

“WAKE UP! SIGN UP! LOOK UP!.” ORGANIZING AND REDEFINING CIVIL
DEFENSE THROUGH THE GROUND OBSERVER CORPS, 1949-1959

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Dedication

For Baby Ike.

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Contents

List of Illustrations	vii
List of Notable Persons	viii
Glossary of Acronyms	x
Introduction.....	1
Chapter 1: A Study of Scholarship Regarding the Atomic Age	12
Chapter 2: The Ground Observer Corps, 1949-1959: “Radar’s Fast-Growing Little Brother”	33
Chapter 3: The GOC Comes Home: “You Who Stand and Watch Also Serve”	69
Conclusion	98
Bibliography	133
Curriculum Vitae	

List of Illustrations

- “10 Mile High Fence Full of Holes,” The Ground Observer Corps, Advertising Material, A public service campaign prepared for the Department of the Air Force and the Federal Civil Defense Administration by The Advertising Council, Inc., Box 5, Folder “GOC- General 1953 (2),” 15A6, James M. Lambie Jr. Records, Eisenhower Presidential Library (hereafter cited as EPL). 33
- “Don’t Let Smithfield Become a Second Pearl Harbor,” The Ground Observer Corps, Advertising Material, A public service campaign prepared for the Department of the Air Force and the Federal Civil Defense Administration by The Advertising Council, Inc., Box 5, Folder “GOC- General 1953 (2),” 15A6, James M. Lambie Jr. Records, EPL. 36
- Map, “One Call, the Ground Observer Corps,” U.S. Government Printing Office, 1954. 46
- Flow Chart, “Ground Observer Corps Public Education Campaign, Jun-July 1953,” Box 5, Folder “GOC—General 1953 (1),” 15A6, James M. Lambie Jr. Records, EPL. 52
- Map, “U.S. Air Force Ground Observer Corps System,” Box 5, Folder “GOC—General 1953 (1),” 15A6, James M. Lambie Jr. Records, EPL. 57
- “America Needs YOU in the Ground Observer Corps!,” The Ground Observer Corps, Advertising Material, A public service campaign prepared for the Department of the Air Force and the Federal Civil Defense Administration by The Advertising Council, Inc., Box 5, Folder “GOC- General 1953 (2),” 15A6, James M. Lambie Jr. Records, EPL. 61

List of Notable Persons

Francis R. Allen	Author of “Civil Defense and Regions: An Exploratory Study”
Hal Bergman	Member of the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy
Pamela Burr	GOC observer and author of “I Am a Sky Sentry”
Millard F. Caldwell	FCDA Administrator, 1950-1952
Justice M. Chambers	Executive Assistant Administrator of the FCDA
General Benjamin W. Childlaw	USAF Commanding General
Colonel Owen F. Clarke	USAF Ground Observer Corps Project Officer
Frederick T. Cretors	Superintendent of the Indiana State Police and State Director of Civil Defense, Successor to Arthur M. Thurston
S. Arthur Devan	National defense analyst and author of 1949 <i>Public Affairs Bulletin</i> for the Library of Congress
Lieutenant Colonel James T. Emott	GOC Coordinator for the State of Indiana
Jim Haan	Cairo GOC observer, co-architect of tower and interviewee
James M. Lambie Jr.	Special Assistant to President Eisenhower, 1953-1960
USAF Colonel Broun H. Mayall	Director of Civil Air Defense
Larry O’Connor	Cairo post organizer and supervisor, community leader, tower co-architect
General R.J. Olson	Civil defense representative for the state of Wisconsin

Hector Perrier	Account Executive, Ground Observer Corps Campaign, Advertising Council
Val Peterson	FCDA Administrator, 1953-1957
Spencer R. Quick	White House Liaison for the Advertising Council, Special Assistant to the Assistant to the President, 1952-1953
Lieutenant Colonel Forest R. Shafer	Commanding Officer of the South Bend GOC detachment
Arthur M. Thurston	Superintendent of the Indiana State Police and State Director of Civil Defense
General Hoyt S. Vandenberg	U.S. Air Force Chief of Staff
H. Lee White	Assistant Secretary of the Air Force

Glossary of Acronyms

ADC	Air Defense Command
ADDC	Air Defense Direction Center
AWS	Aircraft Warning Service
DEW	Distant Early Warning
EADF	Eastern Air Defense Force
FCDA	Federal Civil Defense Administration
GOC	Ground Observer Corps
SAGE	Semi-Automatic Ground Environment
SMOF	Staff Members and Office Files
USAF	United States Air Force

Introduction

President Dwight D. Eisenhower implored American citizens in a 1953 advertisement to “Wake Up! Sign Up! Look Up!” to Soviet airplanes potentially escorting an atomic bomb over the United States.¹ He encouraged Americans to contact their local Civil Defense Director about participating in the Ground Observer Corps, a civil defense program established by the United States Air Force (USAF) that involved civilian volunteers surveying the skies for enemy aircraft. These volunteers built watchtowers in their backyards and community centers, and occupied existing structures to survey the skies for Soviet aircraft. They telephoned their local filter centers, staffed by Air Force personnel, and if deemed a threat, Air Force staff instructed the Air Defense Direction Center (ADDC) to intercept or shoot down the threat.²

This thesis examines the 1950s response to the longstanding problem posed by the invention of any new weapon: how to adapt defensive technology to meet the potential threat. In the case of the early Cold War period, the GOC was the USAF’s best, albeit faulty, defense option against a weapon that did not discriminate between soldiers and citizens and rendered traditional ground troops useless. After the Korean War, Air Force officials promoted the GOC for its espousal of volunteerism and individualism. Encouraged to take ownership of the program, observers appropriated the GOC for their personal and community needs, comprised of social gatherings and policing activities, thus greatly expanding the USAF’s original objectives. This program, established during the tense early Cold War years, continued as the model for air defense. More profoundly, study of the GOC reveals ongoing unease about nuclear weapons and frustrations of military planners in securing air defense that originated in the early Cold War era.

GOC Operations and History

The GOC involved the participation of approximately 350,000 observers, who scanned the skies for Soviet aircraft transporting atomic bombs.³ Observers reported suspected threats to USAF personnel and other civilian volunteers at filter centers. According to the Air Force's official mission statement in its *Ground Observer Corps Policy Guide*, the GOC provided "low altitude visual surveillance" that would "function as a supplement to radar in the air defense system."⁴ In other words, participants facilitated national security by searching for and reporting suspect aircraft to filter centers that could evade radar by flying lower than 6,000 feet.⁵ Filter centers then alerted the ADDC to direct interceptor jets to shoot down enemy planes.⁶

Civilian volunteers briefly participated in the GOC in World War II, known then as the Aircraft Warning Service (AWS). USAF officials revived the program in 1949 and initiated a 24-hour observation program in 1952 known as Operation Skywatch. In a notably collaborative effort, participants included youth, prison guards, the elderly, the blind, families, and naval and USAF personnel. Observers utilized existing commercial structures and built observation towers outfitted with a telephone, binoculars, an observation manual, a log of duties and a clock. On January 31, 1959, the Secretary of the Air Force announced the termination of the program due to the improvement of detection radar and inability of civilians to detect increasingly technical Soviet missile systems.

Civil Defense

Civil defense of the 1950s, which traditionally refers to bomb shelters and evacuation drills, must be clearly defined in the study of the GOC. Laura McEnaney conceives of civil defense as "many things at once: a national security agency, a military

theory about survivability in a nuclear war, and a propaganda effort.”⁷ Monmouth University philosophy professor Guy Oakes describes civil defense simply as the “defense of the public by the public.”⁸ Civil defense served various functions. Some scholars theorize that in the atomic age the routinization of civil defense provided emotional control and fear management; some argue that it deterred Soviet aggression by demonstrating solidarity through preparation; other scholars asserted that civil defense informed citizens about the Cold War threat and garnered public buy-in of the war. In Chapter One I will explore how a combination of these functions may represent the purpose of civil defense conceptualized by the executive branch.

Prior to 1950, the Office of Civil Defense Planning (OCDP), an arm of the National Security Resources Board, promoted mobilization of the home front.⁹ Because the atomic bomb threatened the safety of U.S. citizens equally and subsequently reduced the value of ground troops, national security personnel increasingly turned their attention to civil defense. McEnaney reiterates this notion, stating that when the Soviets detonated an atomic bomb in September 1949, “civil defense planning went from low-key to frenetic.”¹⁰ The Soviet bomb, fall of China to communism and engagement in the Korean War prompted Congress to pass the Federal Civil Defense Act of 1950.¹¹ This act created an independent civil defense agency by converting the OCDP to the Federal Civil Defense Administration (FCDA), described by Andrew Grossman as a “stand-alone line agency of the federal government.”¹² The Federal Civil Defense Act established a three-year defense program, in which the states matched federal funds for shelters and program costs, and the federal government supervised warning systems and partially financed the cost of training.¹³ As the official civil defense agency, the FCDA served as a “mediating

institution,” connecting the federal government with research universities, media outlets and think tanks.¹⁴

The Aircraft Flash, published by the Air Force as the official GOC magazine, summarizes three categories of civil defense outlined by the Federal Civil Defense Act:

1) efforts to minimize the effects of an attack upon the civil population, 2) efforts to deal with conditions created by the attack and, 3) efforts to effect repairs (emergency) to vital facilities damaged or destroyed. Efforts to minimize includes activation of operational plans and supporting agreements with community organizations – recruiting, training of personnel, procurement and stockpiling of essential supplies. Additional measures include warning activities, shelter construction, non-military evacuation and establishment of monitory control points. Fire fighting, rescue, emergency medical and sanitation, traffic control, etc., are all part of the post-attack plan.¹⁵

While the GOC sought to deter attack, the program also contributed to the category outlined in the Act involving “efforts to minimize the effects of an attack upon the civil population.”¹⁶ One of the GOC's primary missions involved limiting follow-up attacks through observation, thereby safeguarding industrial bases that would allow the U.S. to retaliate.

The GOC represented a unique form of civil defense because the Air Force established the program to *prevent* atomic attack, rather than alert citizens to seek shelter from an attack or respond to its aftermath. *The Aircraft Flash* describes the differences in purpose, stating “Generally speaking then, GOC is concerned with spotting and stopping an enemy attack before it strikes. FCDA is concerned with handling the problems of the post-strike period.”¹⁷ Although the FCDA did not manage the GOC directly, the organization promoted GOC activities and coordinated with state civil defense agencies to signal air raid warnings based on ground observer reports.¹⁸ Additionally, the FCDA

instructed local civil defense officials, who often worked with the GOC at filter centers and observation posts.¹⁹

Despite Americans' fear of Soviet atomic capability, the FCDA experienced widespread apathy to civil defense, as FCDA administrator Val Peterson lamented, "The greatest problem of my organization is to create a complete understanding of the seriousness of the threat . . . and what must be done to meet it."²⁰ The GOC proved no exception, and USAF personnel continuously fought against the perception of civil defense as a futile response to the atomic threat and struggled to retain GOC members. Observers grew frustrated when they worked for hours without seeing a single aircraft; the USAF partially remedied this monotony by initiating mock attacks.

Ex-GOC members expressed apathetic attitudes to civil defense in an Ad Council report concerning membership, citing the following reasons for leaving: "lack of interest, no air activity over this area," "the fact that I was doing a relatively unimportant job and that which I did was of no use as far as the defense of our country is concerned," and "if the Air Force needs this service so badly, I think it could allot more of its manpower to supervise the recruiting and running of the post."²¹ Apathy increased significantly after the termination of the Korean War when "the American people perceived less of a threat of general war and their patriotic urge to support observation posts subsided."²² Despite this apathy, some citizens considered the GOC worthwhile, an attitude I will examine along with the efforts of USAF and the Ad Council to mobilize the public.

Significance

Examination of the little-studied Ground Observer Corps is significant for four principal reasons. First, the GOC represents a unique form of civil defense that diverged

from other civil defense programs: rather than respond to attacks, the GOC sought to prevent them. Second, with the exception of Professor Kenton Clymer, historians of national security and civil defense rarely reference the GOC and when they do, they simply cite the program as another form of civil defense. These historians have forfeited an opportunity to examine in greater detail the effect two major world wars had on the national psyche through study of the Ground Observer Corps.

Third, study of the GOC demonstrates how national security threats mobilize citizens, or fail to mobilize them in recent cases, and how this defense preparation impacts local communities. Opportunities are ripe for historians to compare why citizens of the early Cold War period prepared for an atomic threat with those citizens of the post-9/11 period, as Americans in the twenty-first century are still coming to terms with broad and vague security threats. While local terrorism primarily comprises these threats in the twenty-first century, both involve the struggle to identify threats that target civilians rather than military officials. As with the GOC, twenty-first century defense planners continue to emphasize the role of individuals and communities (as opposed to federal officials) in safeguarding their security. Homeland Security's suggestion to Americans "If you see something, say something," mirrors the FCDA's "Wake Up! Sign Up! Look Up!," both communicating that national security depends on citizens' vigilance.

Lastly, study of the GOC shows how political ideology played an important role in mobilizing citizens for civil defense. After passionate deliberation about the size of the program and who would have authority over it, congressmen opted for a private shelter program in order to save federal money and adhere to democratic principles of volunteerism and limited government, creating a "practical and ideological bulwark

against the garrison state.”²³ The resultant privatized program encouraged citizens to take civil defense into their own hands, continually adapting it to suit their specific communities’ needs, bringing together disparate groups of people for social, charitable, policing and observation activities. The Air Force routinely praised these efforts, evident in U.S. Air Force Chief of Staff General Hoyt S. Vandenberg’s evaluation of the program as successful primarily because it was conducted democratically.²⁴

Methodology and Organization

The following thesis is comprised of three chapters that analyze the Ground Observer Corps between August 1945 — when President Harry S. Truman authorized the use of the atomic bomb to end World War II — and 1959, the year that the GOC concluded. My study concentrates primarily on observer post volunteers, rather than filter center participants or ADDC personnel, allowing me to focus on those members of the general public the Air Force specifically sought to educate and recruit. While this thesis briefly examines factors contributing to the escalation of Cold War tension, it avoids broader study of the causes of the Cold War, on which outstanding scholarship already exists. Instead, I examine historical scholarship regarding civil defense and related topics, the organization of the GOC, and the implementation of the program at the local level.

In Chapter One I analyze scholarship of the following topics relevant to the Ground Observer Corps: domestic anticommunism, American life and politics in the early Cold War period, and atomic age civil defense. The scholarship I study regarding life in the post-atomic bomb period begins in the 1980s, when scholars could more effectively measure the long-term response of the American public to the use of the atomic bomb in World War II. I examine scholarly analysis of the attitudes of the general

public, social commentators, political figures and atomic scientists following the United States' employment of the nuclear bomb to end World War II. This analysis of civil defense scholarship demonstrates how historians in the 1980s reevaluated the subject from a social historical perspective and in doing so opened the study to non-white and non-urban populations, such as African Americans and farmers.

In Chapter Two, I explore the organizational history of the GOC including how the program operated, as well as the Air Force's conception of the viability of the program. I utilize a case study of the implementation and operation of the GOC in the State of Indiana to clarify the confusing relationship between USAF plans and state operations. The organizational history allows me to examine communication problems between the USAF and state officials that may have further confounded operations. In my study of the GOC in Indiana, I utilize the Papers of Governor Henry F. Schricker, 1949-1953, focusing on the following sources: Indiana Department of Civil Defense notes on planning conferences, the state civil defense bulletin *The Indiana Civil Defense Sentinel*, gubernatorial correspondence, newspaper articles, and reports about mock attacks. These sources illuminate the daunting process of not only developing, but also implementing a method to protect citizens from aerial attack.

I then compare Indiana's program with the plans and objectives of the Air Force by utilizing the Spencer R. Quick Files (Special Assistant to the Assistant to the President) at the Harry S. Truman Library and the James M. Lambie Jr. Records (Special Assistant in the White House) at the Dwight D. Eisenhower Library. Using this archival material, I studied Air Force Public Information Letters, maps and advertisements, proceedings of GOC conferences involving state and USAF officials, presidential

statements, USAF telegrams, the *Ground Observer Corps Policy Guide* and monthly reports about GOC participation by region. *The Aircraft Flash* is an invaluable source that sheds light on the Air Force's conception of the purpose of the GOC. Study of Air Force objectives and their implementation at the state level reveals that the GOC initially served as the best air defense option available, but not as a highly effective one.

Following a study of the Air Force's objectives and the GOC's organization, I examine the actual implementation of the program at the local level in Chapter Three. I analyze the ideology behind what Laura McEnaney terms "American-style civil defense," predicated on individualism, volunteerism and capitalism, and how this type of civil defense impacted communities through the GOC. By encouraging participants to adapt the program to suit local needs, this "American-style civil defense" ushered in the participation of disparate groups, such as World War II displaced persons, teenagers and monks. These groups interacted not only at observation posts and filter centers, but engaged in social, policing, and charitable activities as a result of the program.

To demonstrate the unique nature of these GOC activities, I utilize Civil Air Patrol annual reports to compare the GOC program with the CAP, a similar civil air defense program operating under the USAF. In comparison, the GOC was much more financially, socially and operationally accessible than the CAP. Because the GOC functioned differently depending on the region of operation, I study how the program affected communities in agricultural areas predicated on farming; metropolitan areas representative of American culture; and regions with observation posts already in existence for other purposes, typically along the northern border of the U.S. I primarily utilize excerpts from *The Aircraft Flash* and oral history interviews I conducted with the

Haan family in Cairo, Indiana to develop a sense of local operations because few observer accounts are widely available. I scanned both local and national newspaper articles and editorials, *The Aircraft Flash* and civil defense records of Governor Schricker's Papers and found only a handful of these accounts. More records may exist, and should be located by historians, but I confined my research to midwestern records.

Serendipitously, a colleague and I encountered the Haan family while driving through Cairo, Indiana. I stopped to ask about the GOC tower, and they told me how their family had helped build, man and commemorate it. Because of their generosity, I was able to obtain first-hand accounts of observation activities through oral history interviews, as well as several documents showing construction of the tower and efforts, spanning decades, to commemorate it. Had it not been for the Haans' willingness to share their memories I would have had to rely solely on scant newspaper articles and *The Aircraft Flash* to gain a sense of participating in the atomic age program.

To study how the program impacted non-agricultural communities, I studied *The Aircraft Flash*'s articles, editorials and "Flashes" section. Throughout my research I sought sources that would represent an array of participants, including program organizers, Air Force officials, and volunteers, including those who left the program.

Through study of the GOC, I discovered that the Air Force considered the GOC the best, although an ineffective, defense tool. In the post-Korean War period officials began to recognize the potential of the GOC to promote the principles of volunteerism and individualism. The GOC illustrates the importance of this civil defense ideology, as observers funded their own projects and organized their own posts. Because the USAF and FCDA encouraged volunteers to take ownership of the program, observers

appropriated the program to suit their individual and community's needs. This adaptation greatly expanded the USAF's original conception of the program from one of solely defensive value to one that benefited community welfare and improved "spiritual unity" through social, charitable and community policing activities.²⁵

Chapter 1: A Study of Scholarship Regarding the Atomic Age

An examination of historical scholarship regarding communism in the U.S. during the 1950s helps explain the link between ideology and American civil defense. Because victims of the anticommunist movement finally felt comfortable discussing their experiences, scholars in the 1970s increasingly criticized their persecutors. After the Cold War and with access to new Soviet sources, in the 1990s historians provided more nuanced accounts of domestic anticommunism and went beyond criticizing Senator Joseph McCarthy to analyzing the suspicious actions of American communists.²⁶ Post-9/11 examination of early Cold War anticommunism is generally more critical of the perpetrators for witch-hunting following a national security crisis.

David Caute's 1978 *The Great Fear: The Anti-Communist Purge Under Truman and Eisenhower* is one of the first works of scholarship to examine the victims of the communist witch hunts, rather than their pursuers.²⁷ Caute states that when he began research in the early 1970s the "ice cap which still froze the victims into postures of silence in the middle sixties had now lifted."²⁸ Contemporary historians consider his argument general knowledge, that the communist "purges" extensively affected victims, primarily through job loss and damaged reputations. However, *The Great Fear* was notable when published, as it served as one of the first scholarly works to publicize victims' experiences through oral history interviews, including an interview with Alger Hiss.²⁹ This opportunity may explain Caute's impassioned preface, in which he is deeply critical of the United States in the early Cold War era, stating that by 1945 "America's patriotic imperative had acquired a truly imperialistic and even messianic image of its own mission in the world."³⁰

Caute elucidates why and when the communist “purge,” generally the expulsion of teachers, military personnel and Hollywood actors from their jobs, materialized and dissipated. While Caute provides an extraordinary sampling of cases of political persecution, his work generally lacks a thesis. He does, however, contend that “These bureaucratic attempts to deprive radicals of the financial and welfare benefits to which all eligible citizens were entitled must rank among the meanest harassments of the purge.”³¹ Nevertheless, Caute’s examination of the impact of the communist “purge,” especially regarding labor, is foundational to later research.

Richard M. Fried explores how “populist anti-communism” operated and impacted Americans in the early Cold War period in his 1998 *The Russians are Coming! The Russians are Coming!: Pageantry and Patriotism in Cold-War America*.³² Rather than focus on how political elites like Senator McCarthy incited Americans to rally against communism, Fried studies how “Americans sought to nerve fellow-citizens for the long struggle against communism abroad and at home.”³³ Fried theorizes that Cold War activists tried to replicate the patriotism and pageantry that mobilized citizens on the home front during World War II in order to meet the Cold War domestic communist threat. He states that the mobilization of patriotism in World War II had an enduring effect, that the “patriotic practices now second nature to us,” such as playing “The Star-Spangled Banner” at public events, did not grow up “with the Republic, but they are of more recent vintage.”³⁴

Cold War patriots argued that softness on communism represented national disunity and that engaging in local patriotic activities like flag pageants “bespoke a concern over communism on one hand and, on the other, the broader malady of flaccid

citizenship.”³⁵ Fried concludes that while these local crusaders sought to relive the unity of World War II through pageantry, many Americans proved uninterested, citing an elementary school principal’s astonishment that only three students out of hundreds actually knew the national anthem. Fried concedes that only an illusion of mass patriotism existed in the 1950s, thereby greatly diminishing the degree of hysteria regarding the communist threat and the strength of Caute’s analysis.

Ellen Schrecker researched and penned her 1998 *Many Are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America* to discover why her sixth-grade chemistry teacher lost his job.³⁶ She explores the nuances of the evolution and operation of the anticommunist crusade in the 1940s and 1950s, investigating those citizens on the fringes of the anticommunism movement rather than focusing solely on McCarthy. She concludes that the anticommunist movement depended on a “collaborative effort,” comprised of a longstanding network of anticommunists that included labor leaders, bureaucrats, ex-communists, journalists and priests who had been working for decades to eradicate communism.³⁷ Schrecker ascribes some blame to American communists for their persecution, describing how the secrecy of their operations and the violence between factions within the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) made them a target of the anticommunist movement. According to her, the American Communist Party provided just enough examples of communist sabotage to legitimize a threat, but by no means to the degree feared by anticommunists, and that communist victims “certainly were not misidentified,” regardless of whether they should have been persecuted.³⁸

Perhaps most illuminating is her description of “anticommunist professionals,” those citizens who took it upon themselves to investigate potential domestic communists.

Schrecker utilizes the correspondence and papers of these professionals to examine their methods, citing Walter Steele, a “professional patriot” who amassed and catalogued the names of 40,000 suspected communists and published his own anticommunist newsletter.³⁹ She asserts that although there were only a few hundred of these citizen crusaders, their former ties to communism qualified them as experts, who were of considerable value to politicians who knew little about the Communist Party. Schrecker dismisses the notion that anticommunism gained footing because citizens in the 1950s were more apt to accept it based on hysteria induced by Cold War threats. Instead, she argues that collaborations between citizens, church officials, the FBI and politicians fueled the movement and that “it was the very diversity of the anticommunist network that made it so powerful” and caused “Americans at every level of society” to believe “that Communism endangered the nation.”⁴⁰ Schrecker states that as a result of this collaborative effort, and because the crusade touched nearly everyone, she utilized the widest variety of sources possible, including FBI files and communist memoirs, rather than gathered sources in depth for only one or two cases.

Elaine Tyler May's 2011 “Security against Democracy: The Legacy of the Cold War at Home” studies how the postwar fear of communism resulted in the structuring of security, both personal and national, around the capitalist system, an analysis especially relevant to the GOC.⁴¹ May theorizes that in order to withstand the "harsh postwar climate and protect the American way of life" Americans relied on a "belief in individual freedom, unfettered capitalism, the sanctity of the home, and a suspicion of others."⁴² She theorizes that this individualism is evident in both the privatized national shelter system and citizens' increasing tendency to arm themselves. May asserts that the media

convinced citizens to meet the threat individually, to the detriment of “democratic practices” and “public good.” She cites advertisements from the 1950s that projected this rhetoric, such as an insurance company that targeted the “do-it-yourself American,” who “is creating his own security.”⁴³ She aptly references a 1953 speech of Elizabeth Gordon, editor-in-chief of *House Beautiful*, that emphasizes individualism and free enterprise and decries international style for its potential to encourage “collectivism and totalitarian control.”⁴⁴ More so than her predecessors, May analyzes the long-term effect of militarizing society through the emphasis of individual security in the early Cold War period, stating that modern America is more armed, but no safer. She cites reports about firearm ownership and perceived fear of crime.

Scholarship regarding atomic age politics and culture emerged primarily in the late 1980s and 1990s as the Cold War came to a close and scholars could more effectively measure the long-term response of the American public to the use of the atomic bomb in World War II. Some researchers attribute changes in early Cold War politics and culture to the responses of U.S. policy planners and politicians to the atomic and communist threat, while others correlate changes directly to the World War II use of the atomic bomb. Those scholars who attribute changes directly to the use of the bomb dispute the *period* in which the atomic bomb most impacted American life, the *degree* to which the bomb influenced it, and the *aspects* of American life the bomb affected, but all concur that the atomic bomb profoundly altered American life. Most scholars studying early Cold War politics and culture mention the existence of dualities in the period: consumerism and militarism, widespread dissent and consensus regarding U.S. reaction to international threats, and “soft” and “hard” responses to domestic communism.

In 1985 Paul Boyer published *By the Bomb's Early Light: American Thought and Culture at the Dawn of the Atomic Age* based on his recollection of growing up in the atomic era, as well as the heated 1980s debates about nuclear power.⁴⁵ Boyer was among the first historians to analyze how the use of the bomb influenced American culture and public perception regarding atomic energy. He focuses on the period between August 1945 and 1950 and concludes that while the dropping of the atomic bomb in World War II profoundly affected Americans (more than Lincoln's assassination), attitudes and societal changes varied. Boyer examines the Gallup poll and a 1946 report of the Social Science Research Council to illustrate that American attitudes regarding the atomic bomb varied with the period. He argues that while Americans may have felt anxiety one month, and optimism and apathy in the next few months, these results did not conflict, but represented continuously shifting attitudes. Boyer admits that surveys can fall short of representing the variety of attitudes that simultaneously existed during the period, but he contends that by 1950 widespread realization about potential destruction by the atomic bomb caused citizens to view defense as futile, resulting in mass public complacency.

Elaine Tyler May also studies the impact of the atomic age on American culture, but confines her analysis to families and married couples.⁴⁶ May argues in her 1988 *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* that Cold War ideology and domestic life similarly centered around the notion of security through containment. In the uncertain post-World War II atmosphere, families reverted to the home to seek shelter from and "contain" the threat of atomic war, social deviants, and uncertainty about the postwar economy. In order to understand the correlation between the atomic age and notions of domesticity, May studies popular culture through movies, periodicals and

newspapers, statements of public policy makers, and the Kelly Longitudinal Studies (KLS). May most heavily utilizes the KLS to determine why “white middle-class Americans adhered so strongly to a normative and quite specifically defined notion of family life at the time.”⁴⁷ She determines that these Americans “wanted secure jobs, secure homes, and secure marriages in a secure country. Security would enable them to take advantage of the fruits of prosperity and peace that were, at long last, available.”⁴⁸ May maintains that in an age where uncertainty reigned, intimate family structures provided “the best bulwark against the dangers of the cold war,” as well as reassurance that the human race could endure despite atomic threats.⁴⁹

Geoffrey Smith studies how high-ranking government officials in the early Cold War period influenced societal practices in an effort to bolster national security.⁵⁰ In his 1992 “National Security and Personal Isolation: Sex, Gender and Disease in the Cold-War United States,” Smith proposes to “make explicit the sexual subtext underlying attitudes toward national security, to the perceived Soviet menace, and the need to preserve and project US power generally.”⁵¹ He contends that in the tense post-World War II environment, the national security state — comprised of scientists, civilian bureaucrats, the National Security Council, Central Intelligence Agency and even clergy members— influenced public life by emphasizing that national security hinged on the espousal of traditional gender and familial roles. Smith argues further that the individuals and organizations comprising the national security state successfully convinced Americans that dissident groups such as homosexuals, much like Soviets and communists, could threaten the nation’s safety by being more naturally susceptible to communism.

The equation of social deviance with disease resulted in the suppression of individuals' sexuality. Smith utilizes sources such as President Dwight D. Eisenhower's Executive Order 10450, which banned homosexuals from federal employment, and the Senate's *Employment of Homosexuals and Other Sex Perverts in Government* to illustrate how some facets of the national security state reinforced traditional gender roles through the public chastisement and exclusion of the socially and sexually deviant. He then examines popular literature, including tabloids, a *New Yorker* cartoon, and *Newsweek* articles, to demonstrate how widely accepted the fear of the “gay threat” had become in Cold War America. Smith and May agree that Americans assumed traditional gender roles in the early Cold War period, but Smith postulates that this adherence resulted from the pressure of government officials seeking to safeguard national security, while May suggests that Americans voluntarily maintained these roles because of atomic age anxiety.

Allan M. Winkler studies how scientists, social commentators and government officials worked in “a series of intersecting circles” to influence the public’s response to the existence of the atomic bomb.⁵² In his 1993 *Life Under a Cloud: American Anxiety About the Atom* Winkler examines how reaction to atomic energy in the early Cold War period influenced modern attitudes about nuclear weapons. Winkler's work shares similarities with Boyer's examination of attitudes regarding the existence of atomic energy, but Winkler focuses less on public reaction and more on competing attempts of scientists, government officials and commentators to influence public perception. He observes the popularity of John Hershey’s *Hiroshima* to argue that social commentators first roused public concern about the destructive potential of the atomic bomb. He then

cites the unanticipated success of the Federation of Atomic Scientists' best-selling *One World or None* to illustrate that atomic scientists initially attracted public support for international control of nuclear weapons. Winkler concludes that ultimately "government officials rather than scientists or cultural critics seized the initiative in shaping the public agenda" and that the failure to embrace more creative solutions regarding the possession of atomic power explains why "deep-rooted and corrosive fears of nuclear destruction have failed in the past fifty years to bring atomic weaponry under effective control."⁵³

Tom Engelhardt claims in his 1995 *The End of Victory Culture: Cold War America and the Disillusioning of a Generation* that the "American war story," based on a history of total and just victory, vanished with the dropping of the atomic bomb at the conclusion of World War II.⁵⁴ He argues that horror quickly replaced celebration among the American public and that a duality between comforting consumerism and the national security state emerged in American society as a result of the use of the atomic bomb. Engelhardt recalls as a young boy sketching on the pages of his history textbook mushroom clouds over a map of U.S. missile supplies in the mid-Pacific. As a starting point he examines his own experiences growing up in the early Cold War to demonstrate that *how* Americans came "to terms with the slow-motion collapse of a heroic war ethos thereafter, are central themes underlying American popular culture from 1945 on."⁵⁵ Engelhardt claims that the United States lost its national identity at the end of World War II with newfound atomic power and the absence of an identifiable enemy. He believes that this loss of identity led to the end of the victory narrative *before* the 1960s. He analyzes popular culture, such as early Cold War comic books and films, to demonstrate that Americans struggled with this uncertainty. He points to *Life's* 1947 "How to Spot a

Communist,” comics like “By the Fright of the Silvery Moon,” and movies such as the *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* to illustrate that Americans developed a sense of insecurity based on suspicion of the existence of a foreign threat at home. Engelhardt argues that these sources represent the broader ongoing Cold War struggle to identify and adequately counteract foreign threats, a process contrary to the “American war story” of total and righteous victory.

With her 1997 *Dr. Strangelove's America: Society and Culture in the Atomic Age* Margot A. Henriksen, purports to be one of the first historians to link the development of the atomic bomb with revolutionary cultural change occurring prior to the 1980s. Henriksen primarily studies *film noir*, along with popular magazines of the late 1940s and 1950s, to demonstrate that the use of the bomb in World War II revolutionized “American values and expectations” as represented by cultural products. Henriksen posits that Boyer is mistaken in his assertion that American culture changed only sporadically in the years following the use of the atomic bomb and that by 1950 Americans demonstrated complacency regarding the atomic threat. She counters that technological change, primarily the development of nuclear weapons, directly inspired cultural change reflected in dark literature and movies and eventually the cultural dissent of the 1960s. According to Henriksen, *Dr. Strangelove or How I Stopped Worrying and Learned to Love the Bomb*, along with films such as *Sunset Boulevard* and *White Heat*, embody the cultural dissent of a generation disillusioned with the extreme violence of World War II and the unprecedented U.S. power accumulated in the post-World War period. Henriksen concludes by noting a dual existence of popular consensus and dissent regarding U.S. action in the Cold War period.

Lisle A. Rose contends in his 1999 *The Cold War Comes to Main Street: America in 1950* that the Cold War “came home” to Americans between the end of 1949 and the beginning of 1950.⁵⁶ Rose argues that despite the use of the atomic bomb in 1945, American attitudes “came home,” or largely shifted from “cautious optimism” about their future to suspicion and concern regarding the Soviet atomic threat in early 1950. Rose’s argument counteracts Boyer’s contention that by 1950 American hysteria about the bomb had dwindled, as Rose states that “when one compares what the national press was saying and reporting during Christmas week 1949 with what it said and reported a year later, it is clear that the enormous change in the American temperament, generally assumed to have taken place at the outset of the cold war in 1946-1947, actually occurred several years later.”⁵⁷

Rose represents the opinions of average Americans, rather than the politicians analyzed by Smith or the atomic scientists and policy-makers studied by Winkler. Additionally, Rose more carefully emphasizes than his predecessors that this change occurred as the result of three factors: the 1949 explosion of the Soviet atomic bomb, McCarthy’s persecution of State Department employees, and the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950. Rose demonstrates this shift in attitudes by citing man-on-the-street interviews, Gallup Polls and articles published in *The Economist* and *The New York Times* to show that Americans were not generally concerned about American security even in mid-1949. He compares these records with interviews, polls and editorials taken between late-1949 and 1953 to successfully demonstrate that “division and distrust replaced the sense . . . of shared values and purpose that had defined the nation since Franklin Roosevelt’s time.”⁵⁸

K.A. Cuordileone studied historian and cultural critic Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.'s 1949 *The Vital Center* to analyze the “nexus between cultural and political life in the 1940s and 1950s.”⁵⁹ In her 2000 “‘Politics in an Age of Anxiety’: Cold War Political Culture and the Crisis in American Masculinity, 1949-1960” Cuordileone concludes, through Schlesinger’s writings, that American politicians in the early Cold War internalized the lesson learned in World War II, made especially relevant in the volatile atomic age, that personal weakness and indecisiveness (e.g., “softness”) made one susceptible to totalitarianism or communism. She argues that this “dualism,” soft versus hard, “imprisoned the discourse of the era” and resulted in competition to assert one’s masculinity, the suppression of non-normative sexuality and reaffirmation of the traditional patriarchal family structure. In addition to examining *The Vital Center*, Cuordileone studies popular literature of the 1950s to demonstrate how male characters’ quest to prove their manhood and strengthen their sense of self illustrated an effort to ease anxiety in the atomic age through the assumption of traditional male identities. Like May and Smith, Cuordileone explores the early Cold War reversion to traditional gender roles, but Cuordileone focuses on politicians’ concern with their own behaviors, rather than the public’s concern, and how this self-regulation allowed politicians to maintain their careers during the Cold War.

Scholarship regarding the effect of the atomic bomb on American life demonstrates how the political and domestic realms intertwined as a result of the nuclear bomb, as policy-makers attempted to safeguard national security by influencing societal behavior. Scholarship beginning in the mid-1980s, broadly examines how the atomic bomb and the communist threat influenced the American public as a whole, but in later

years, studies focused more narrowly on families and dissenting groups like homosexuals. The majority of studies conclude that the atomic bomb fundamentally altered American life and politics, but researchers continue to dispute the duration and intensity of the bomb's impact.

Civil defense scholarship prior to the 1980s evaluated the costs of shelters, medical effects of radiation on the population and technical aspects of defense, while generally neglecting nuanced analysis of political and cultural factors impacting the design and implementation of civil defense. In the 1969 *Survival and the Bomb: Methods of Civil Defense*, editor and former member of the General Advisory Committee to the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission Eugene P. Wigner compiled a series of essays that he hoped would reverse the publication trend of erroneous books of “artistic value,” those that attempted to sway readers about the value of civil defense, and those that described only the rudimentary facts about civil defense.

However, in the 1980s scholars reevaluated civil defense from a social historical perspective, primarily examining cultural factors, rather than the strategic or economic ones that traditional historians emphasized. In the post-Cold War period, scholars merged cultural and political studies and favored the interpretation of the militarization of the home front as the result of civil defense. Few published works analyze the GOC as a form of civil defense, but much of the scholarly analysis is applicable to the program.

JoAnne Brown argues in her 1988 “‘A is for Atom, B is for Bomb’: Civil Defense in American Public Education, 1948-1963,” that “civil defense became a way of life in American schools, not by the concerted efforts of federal agents, but in piecemeal fashion, as each group incorporated the new demands of the atomic age into its traditional

preoccupations.”⁶⁰ Brown examines professional education journals from the 1950s to demonstrate that school administrators viewed civil defense as an opportunity to teach children the value of stoicism and resolve in the atomic age, which would counteract the panic that made the bomb a threat. Through routinizing drills, establishing bomb shelters as reading areas and turning civil defense into a game, school systems domesticated the bomb and the fear that accompanied it. Brown studies *Journal of Education* articles such as the 1954 “Prevention of Panic in Elementary School Children” and those published by the *Journal of the National Education Association* to illustrate that school officials believed the ritual of civil defense could keep communities safe, going so far as to equate a dog tag with a “talisman.”

Philosophy professor at Monmouth University Guy Oakes with his 1994 *The Imaginary War: Civil Defense and American Cold War Culture* approaches civil defense from a philosophical perspective and argues that citizens found civil defense therapeutic because by routinizing and repeating preparation activities, like those prescribed in the Federal Civil Defense Administration's 1953 *Home Protection Exercises*, Americans could take safety into their own hands.⁶¹ Like Brown, Oakes asserts that the objective of civil defense extended beyond the mere physical protection of citizens to the moral health of the community. However, Oakes expounds upon Brown's argument, asserting that not only did FCDA officials hope to manage fear through civil defense, but these officials also hoped to utilize civil defense as a form of propaganda that would gain public support of the deterrence policy.

Oakes states that these officials, working with the White House, reasoned that the “construction of an ethic that interpreted civil defense as a moral obligation of every

household . . . would produce the ultimate moral foundation of national security through nuclear deterrence.”⁶² Planners assigned gendered civil defense activities to the public to manage emotions and preempt defeatist attitudes regarding the Soviet Union's atomic arms. Oakes examines the personal papers and speeches of FCDA spokesperson Katherine Howard and National Security Resources Board (NSRB) memorandums to show how the gendered “care-taking” skills of women afforded them new professional activities through civil defense. Using FCDA records and those of the Truman Library, Oakes moves from the narrative of citizens as participants in civil defense to one of militarization of the home front, contending that “civil defense militarizes life by nonmilitary means, using techniques of emotion management in order to train Americans to manage themselves.”⁶³

Susan Stoudinger Northcutt, professor of government and international affairs at the University of South Florida, refers to and agrees with Oakes that women became integral to the 1950s civil defense effort.⁶⁴ In her 1999 “Women and the Bomb: Domestication of the Atomic Bomb in the United States” Stoudinger Northcutt evaluates the role of women in civil defense more extensively than Oakes, bemoaning the fact that scholarship largely neglects female discourse about nuclear weapons. She deliberately researches the involvement of women according to feminist inquiry. Stoudinger Northcutt contends that “during the 1950s and early 1960s the atomic bomb was largely feminized and domesticated by means of a government-sponsored program called 'civil defense.’”⁶⁵ She uses qualitative analysis to demonstrate how civil defense agencies like the FCDA, in addition to cultural institutions, promoted preparedness of the home with her comparison of the Office of Civil Defense (OCD) pamphlet *Personal Preparedness*

in the Nuclear Age, and a *Life* article, both published in 1961. She notes differences in semantics, photographs and font, but contends that both produced a message that by the early 1960s “women constituted an import segment of the audience, fulfilling requirements and responsibilities of domestic and national security.”⁶⁶ Stoudinger Northcutt places women at the center of the narrative of the militarization of the home front, contending that civil defense transferred “military power to the domestic world,” over which women presided.⁶⁷

In her 2000 *Civil Defense Begins at Home: Militarization Meets Everyday Life in the Fifties* Laura McEnaney focuses primarily on the political, rather than the cultural context of civil defense. McEnaney borrows from her predecessors, stating that her work “builds upon those who have already provided models of how to blend political and diplomatic and social and cultural history.”⁶⁸ She contends that the lack of consensus of national politicians resulted in the privatization of civil defense, which required drilling activities leading to the militarization of the home front.

Although McEnaney agrees with Oakes and Stoudinger Northcutt that privatized civil defense activities militarized the home front, she argues further that these activities resulted in civilians’ adoption of military perspectives still held in the first decade of the twenty-first century. McEnaney agrees with Oakes that civil defense afforded women new professional opportunities, but through examination of 1950s speeches of the General Federation of Women’s Clubs she contends that their participation *hinged* on these opportunities. McEnaney broadens scholarship of African Americans’ role in civil defense, using FCDA reports about Operation Scat to analyze how the FCDA tried to harness their support for civil defense. She also analyzes how these groups used civil

defense opportunities to promote civil rights and social agendas by looking at letters of the NAACP protesting Millard F. Caldwell's appointment as the director of the FCDA because of his racist statements.

Albion College political science professor Andrew D. Grossman in his 2001 *Neither Dead nor Red: Civilian Defense and American Political Development during the Early Cold War* examines the “social and political mechanisms” used by the federal government and the FCDA to mobilize civil defense, arguing that civil defense provided the social control necessary to maintain Truman’s national security objectives. Specifically, Grossman studies the participation of research universities, think tanks and major media organizations like the Ad Council in their promotion of federal defense objectives to show how long-term mobilization institutionalized Cold War policy and militarized civilian life. He concludes that the grassroots marketing approach to selling civil defense successfully motivated white suburbia (the FCDA could not keep up with local demand for programs), but in the process “mobilization conflated almost all domestic policy with overall national security policy, often limiting an expansive liberalism in favor of the more restrictive segregationist liberalism.”⁶⁹

Grossman furthers the study of African Americans’ involvement in civil defense, but focuses less on how African Americans utilized participation to negotiate civil rights. He instead concentrates on the Truman administration’s espousal of both political liberalism and segregation in civil defense and how this paradox influenced Congress and the FCDA to plan for evacuation and the post-atomic social structure along racial and sectional lines. He analyzes statistics, graphs and comparative charts to demonstrate that through research studies and grassroots marketing, governmental agencies like the FCDA

successfully mobilized white suburban communities. He compares the 1951 *Preliminary Report on Public Attitudes towards Civil Defense*, compiled by the Survey Research Center of the University of Michigan, with the FCDA's 1952 *Annual Report, Community Mobilization, State of New Jersey*, to show that research-related marketing campaigns can be linked to increased civil defense participation. Grossman's analysis of the role women played in civil defense contradicts many of his colleagues', as he refutes the notion that civil defense reinforced conventional gender roles, arguing instead that programs like the GOC and the FCDA's employment of women as firefighters challenged traditional gender roles.

In her 2006 analysis of 1950s civil defense, Jenny Barker-Devine focuses specifically on rural and farming communities in “‘Mightier than Missiles’: The Rhetoric of Civil Defense for Rural Families, 1950-1970.”⁷⁰ Through the study of FCDA and USDA campaign material, she concludes that “agriculture occupied a unique place in the rhetoric of civil defense whereby farmers not only provided material sustenance, but also a moral foundation for the entire country.”⁷¹ Like Grossman, she examines how Alert America and mass educational campaigns mobilized citizens, but does not believe that participation hinged on marketing. Using the Colorado *Douglas County News*, Barker-Devine demonstrates that rural citizens inquired about ways to participate by requesting Office of Civil Defense Mobilization (OCDM) publications. She cites a 1954 *Wallace's Farmer* poll to contend that “rural residents were curious about communism and nuclear war and that curiosity contributed to the rise of civil defense programs.”⁷²

Although Barker-Devine demonstrates that the federal government and affiliated civil defense agencies considered the participation of rural and farm populations in civil

defense activities essential to maintaining national morale during the early Cold War period, she concludes with a caveat, stating “historians need to consider, however, whether the rhetoric of rural civil defense actually matched the actions of agricultural leaders, farmers, and rural communities.”⁷³ She summarizes the article by describing Douglas County, Colorado civil defense director Morris Fleming’s doubt about whether or not he actually had any impact in rallying citizens to participate in defense.

David Krugler concentrates on the development of Cold War civil defense plans by the national government and military, rather than the implementation of the plans in state and local areas.⁷⁴ In his 2006 *This is Only a Test: How Washington, D.C., Prepared for Nuclear War*, Krugler examines the development of civil defense in Washington because it “was the national security state’s nerve center.”⁷⁵ Whereas Grossman posits that FCDA marketing worked too well, inspiring massive participation in local areas that could not be facilitated efficiently by the agency, Krugler argues that the root problem in executing civil defense stemmed from external factors that stymied FCDA planning and resulted in widespread public apathy to civil defense. He contends that Americans never wholeheartedly adopted civil defense because Washington officials could not agree on the most effective form of it and because “rapidly evolving weapons and delivery methods continually confounded Washington’s civil defense, dispersal, and continuity of government planners.”⁷⁶

Krugler asserts that this indecision and inconsistency led to public apathy towards civil defense, stating that local planners mused “How could Washington or any other city write a plan for defense against ICBMs when the FCDA wouldn’t share its own data.”⁷⁷ Krugler analyzes how planning inefficiencies adversely affected civil defense

participation by comparing the *Civil Defense for National Survival Hearings before the House Military Operations Subcommittee of the Committee on Government Operations* with the *Washington Daily News*' "We're Sitting Ducks," which exhibited public apathy to defense plans.

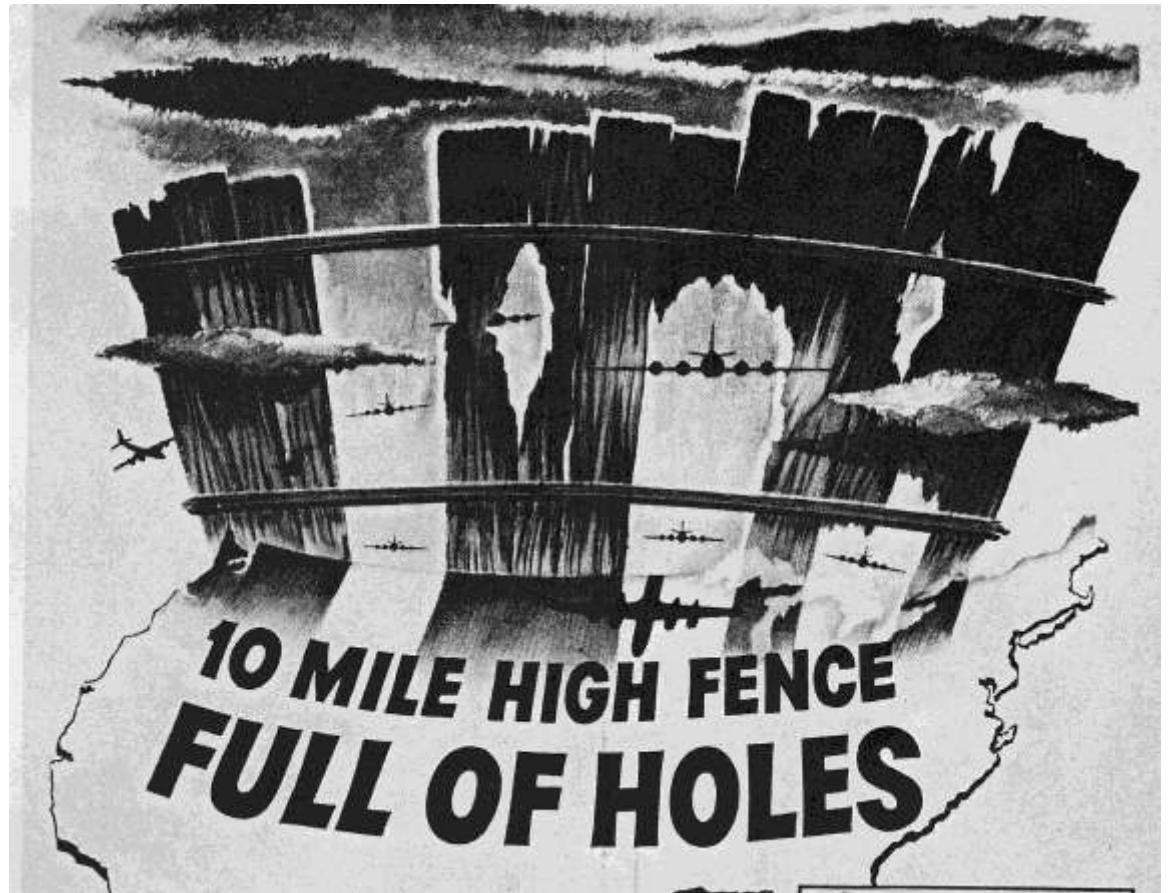
Andrew Falk's 2010 analysis of civil defense radically departs from former interpretations. In "Atomic Babble': Civil Defense and Citizen Opportunities, 1945-1964," he contends that citizens not only did not participate in civil defense, but that they dissented against civil defense messages.⁷⁸ Falk explores how the media and the "new medium" of television simultaneously disseminated the FCDA's message and provided a platform for dissenters to express their disapproval of civil defense messages. He therefore studies popular media sources to examine the failed attempt of the FCDA and the OCD to "preach the virtue of self-help" and the resistance of celebrities and "opinion-makers" to these messages.⁷⁹ Falk cites a 1958 film that claimed Portland citizens would be hailed as martyrs for defending an electric power grid through atomic bombing and then examines backlash against these messages by examining the Hollywood Democratic Committee Papers, in which actors and actresses utilized their status as public figures to spread dissent. He concludes his comparison of media-related sources by stating that "the one consistent characteristic of American civil defense policy was its confusion and inconsistency."⁸⁰

Scholarship beginning in the 1980s reevaluated civil defense from a social historical perspective and in doing so opened the study to rural and non-white populations, such as farmers and African Americans. As scholarship proceeded into the post-Cold War period, scholars merged cultural and political studies and favored the

interpretation of the militarization of the home front as the result of civil defense. In addition to analyzing the militarization of the home front, recent scholarship explores dissent against civil defense, a subject likely to generate additional analysis.

More specifically, Cold War scholarship is important to the study of the GOC because it establishes the social and political context that enabled Congress to develop and the USAF to encourage a privatized civil defense program. This scholarship also represents the diversity of opinions regarding fear of the atomic threat, including notable apathy, and denotes the organizational and morale problems that stymied civil defense.

Chapter 2: The Ground Observer Corps, 1949-1959: “Radar’s Fast-Growing Little Brother”



This 1953 Ad Council advertisement iterated the need for the Ground Observer Corps, as Soviet aircraft could evade faulty radar and penetrate the United States by flying at low altitudes. Air Force personnel sought to fortify the fence with vigilant GOC observers.

How does a nation mend a “10 mile high fence full of holes?” United States Air Force (USAF) personnel, with the support of federal officials, attempted in 1950 to answer this question by resurrecting the GOC, a program intended to aid in the detection of Soviet enemy aircraft. Civilian volunteers across the nation constructed observation

towers and reported to USAF staff and civilian volunteers at filter centers via telephones if they suspected a threat. This chapter seeks to answer the following questions about the GOC: What was the official purpose of the program? Did the USAF believe that the GOC could actually supplement and strengthen U.S. air defense? How did the Air Force interact with state governments to initiate and organize the program? This study uses the Indiana experience as a case study to examine the GOC from the perspectives of USAF personnel and elected and civil defense officials at the federal and state levels.

This analysis found that from 1949 to approximately 1954 USAF planners sought to strengthen air defense with the GOC because of limited defense options, but were realistic about the program's general inability to neutralize the majority of air threats or to strengthen U.S. defense. In the years following the termination of the Korean War in 1953, planners increasingly viewed the program as a tool to further the principles of preparation and volunteerism and to regenerate support for Cold War objectives that had waned with the end of the war in Korea.

American attitudes regarding the Soviet Union shifted drastically with the defeat of Hitler at the end of World War II. During the war, Americans emphasized similarities between themselves and the Soviets throughout their collaborative efforts, but upon the war's conclusion, they increasingly compared Soviet ideology to that of Nazi Germany, branding Soviet totalitarianism "Red Fascism."⁸¹ Soviet "imperialistic behavior" resulting in hegemony over Eastern Europe and the totalitarian prohibition of freedom of expression combined to form an ominous and familiar threat in the minds of Americans.⁸² Despite this perceived threat, even in 1949 Americans retained a sense of security based on the United States' atomic monopoly and scientists' estimation that the Soviets would

not develop a nuclear bomb until 1952.⁸³ However, in 1949 national defense analyst S. Arthur Devan described how the Soviets promptly upset this sense of security. In an article for the Library of Congress he stated, “Just as this paper was in the final stages of drafting, President Truman announced suddenly (September 23, 1949) that our Government had evidence that ‘within recent weeks an atomic explosion occurred in the U.S.S.R.’”⁸⁴

It was not until November 1949 that American citizens realized the gravity of the Soviet atomic bomb and recognized that the explosion represented “a major turning point in the brief postwar period.”⁸⁵ David F. Krugler states in *This is Only a Test: How Washington, D.C., Prepared for Nuclear War* that “the war had already proven the vulnerability of any home front; now, humankind’s ability to split atoms added a frightening dimension.”⁸⁶ The anxious American public represented a citizenry conditioned to world war and determined to avoid a repetition of Pearl Harbor. In a 1949 article for the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, Anne Wilson Marks dubbed the Soviet possession of the bomb the “new Pearl Harbor.” The Ad Council appealed to citizens’ fear of a second Pearl Harbor and initiation of World War III to recruit for the GOC.

**DON'T LET
SMITHFIELD
BECOME A SECOND
PEARL HARBOR**

RIGHT NOW, hostile aircraft could get through to Smithfield and launch a devastating air attack—ten times more powerful than the blow struck at Pearl Harbor.

And nothing could prevent such attack except timely warning to Air Force interceptors and Army Anti-Aircraft crews right now on 24-hour alert.

Such warning cannot be given by radar!

Radar alone cannot detect and warn against the approach of all possible hostile aircraft—especially long-range bombers flying low. In addition to radar we need human eyes and ears, like yours.

Our plans for national air defense are the most comprehensive in the world—but they cannot be made fully effective without a minimum of five hundred thousand civilian members in the Ground Observer Corps.

Thousands of patriotic Americans have already joined and are now being trained by U. S. Air Force personnel. Many thousands more are urgently needed now.

Will you be one of us... on the ramparts we watch!

U. S. AIR FORCE GROUND OBSERVER CORPS SYSTEM
Map by Air Force Dept. © 1953 U. S. Govt. Printing Office

THE RAMPARTS WE WATCH! This is the shaded area in the air defense perimeter of the continental United States. Any part of the United States is vulnerable right now to air attack, if hostile planes are not detected by people like yourself.

RADAR STANDS GUARD ceaselessly manned by the U. S. Air Force. But hostile planes could still swoop in through low-altitude loopholes between radar sectors. Total defense requires eyes and ears, too!

JOIN NOW!
 Contact nearest local Civil Defense Director or local Civil Defense phone and address or write to:
GROUND OBSERVER CORPS,
 U. S. Air Force, Washington 25, D. C.

Contributed as a public service by

SPONSOR'S NAME

This 1953 advertisement appealed to Americans' fear of an attack like that of the Japanese on Pearl Harbor that led to U.S. entry into World War II. Civil defense planners continually invoked the memory of Pearl Harbor to recruit GOC volunteers. This particular advertisement appealed to women to protect their churches and homes, and to do so fashionably.

In 1956, six years after the reestablishment of the GOC, U.S. Senator Dionisio Chavez reminded the President of the Senate, Richard Nixon, that “Hitler and his gang of paranoid desperadoes, used every weapon they could lay their hands on. The Japanese did not wait for a Declaration of War to destroy the main part of our fleet at Pearl Harbor, and I doubt very much if the men in the Kremlin . . . would hesitate for one minute to use the horrifying weapons they claim to be producing.”⁸⁷ The U.S. Army Center of Military History’s *History of Strategic Air and Ballistic Missile Defense* summarized the generalized concern stemming from the expectation of war and the Soviet bomb, stating “The Soviet pattern of action leading up to the atomic achievement appeared to many Americans as aggressive, sinister expansion.”⁸⁸

In February 1946 Americans reacted with concern to a speech delivered by Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin extoling increased industrialization that could supplement the Soviet Union’s armed strength.⁸⁹ This industrialization appeared particularly threatening that same year when a communist group in Greece threatened to overthrow the current government and potentially collaborate with the Soviet’s communist government.⁹⁰ Most American citizens perceived the resulting Greek civil war as a “Hitler-like fifth-column intrusion by the Russians,” when in reality Greeks primarily fought against a monarchy supported by Britain.⁹¹ The Soviet Union’s ability to strong-arm Czech president Eduard Benes into resignation in February 1948 resulted in a communist coup in Czechoslovakia.⁹² The Soviet blockade of West Berlin within Communist East Germany months later exacerbated concerns and caused many Americans to draw parallels between Hitler’s actions in Czechoslovakia in the 1930s with Soviet communist expansion of the 1940s.⁹³

Cold War historian Thomas G. Paterson argues that these parallels derived from the fact that “many Americans took the unhistorical and illogical view that Russia in the 1940s would behave as Germany had in the previous decade because of the supposedly immutable characteristics of totalitarians.”⁹⁴ Such comparisons enhanced the value of preparedness, ultimately in the form of civil defense and likely in the Ground Observer Corps.

The Soviet detonation of the bomb also legitimized fear of the domestic communist threat and validated for many President Harry S. Truman’s loyalty oaths of the late 1940s, designed to identify and eliminate communists thought to be working within the executive branch.⁹⁵ Journalist Drew Pearson stunned Americans when he correctly announced that an espionage network consisting of American spies in the U.S. during World War II learned how scientists constructed the atomic bomb and reported this information to Moscow.⁹⁶ These reports lent credence to Senator Joseph McCarthy’s radical claims about the epidemic of domestic communism.

McCarthy aggravated American concerns in February 1950 with his renowned speech to the Ohio County Women’s Republican Club in Wheeling, West Virginia, where he displayed a fictitious list of 205 communists supposedly working in the State Department.⁹⁷ Although the number and names of supposed communists changed throughout his speaking tour, journalists and the public initially believed McCarthy’s charges because his convictions seemed too strong to question. Historian David M. Oshinsky asserts that Americans quickly felt that “One form of totalitarianism had been replaced by another. At home, Communist conspirators were working to undermine everything that Americans held dear.”⁹⁸

The combined discovery of atomic espionage and the possible existence of the discernibly more destructive hydrogen bomb, caused the public to be, in the words of the president of the Radio Corporation of America David Sarnoff, ““very much worried over our relations with Russia and the possibility of a world-destroying war because the public has learned that Russia has already exploded an A-bomb or an H-bomb.””⁹⁹ According to a 1950 *Public Opinion Quarterly* public poll, 86 percent of Americans believed that the Soviet Union would employ a hydrogen bomb against the United States.¹⁰⁰ *Life* echoed these grim assumptions, concluding that citizens now lived in the ““age of obliteration”” because the ““enemy of the free world is implacably determined to destroy the free world.””¹⁰¹ In the mind of the public, diplomacy or international control of the bomb seemed improbable because ““there can be no compromise and no agreement with Soviet Communism.””¹⁰²

While citizens became increasingly concerned about the foreign communist threat and the domestic “wave of hysteria as a result of current spy trials and loyalty inquiries,” the USAF began to reevaluate air defense options.¹⁰³ As early as 1947, the USAF, at that time the Army Air Forces, developed an electronic radar warning detection system, but Congress’s decision not to support the program hindered its development and greatly reduced air defense options.¹⁰⁴ In 1948, to compensate for a limited defense budget and strengthen air defense, the USAF proposed reinstating the Ground Observer Corps.¹⁰⁵

The Ground Observer Corps activated a program of civilian volunteers at observation posts surveying the skies in search of enemy aircraft. Volunteers watched from commercial buildings or towers they constructed over schools, hospitals, stores, toll stations and any location that granted volunteers unrestricted access to the sky.

Volunteers ranged from children to the elderly, war veterans, and teenagers in search of social opportunities.

When observer post volunteers suspected a threat they telephoned the local filter center, where volunteers and Air Force personnel plotted and filtered (deemed whether or not an airplane was a threat) observer reports. When filter center personnel, and/or early warning radar confirmed the threat, the filter center informed the Air Defense Direction Center (ADDC), which then alerted and directed interceptor jets to shoot down the enemy plane.¹⁰⁶ ADDC also signaled the Army Antiaircraft command to unleash antiaircraft guns and guided missiles upon the threatening aircraft.¹⁰⁷ An Air Division Commander then alerted the Federal Civil Defense Administration (FCDA) to signal the air raid warning, signaling citizens to retreat from the threat.¹⁰⁸

Very little scholarship exists regarding the Ground Observer Corps, and much of it overlooks the program's purpose. Bruce Callander, Korean War veteran and contributing editor of *Air Force Magazine*, argues in his 2006 "The Ground Observer Corps" that while no efficient method exists to measure GOC success, the program is notable because of civil-military collaborations and the "feel-good element" of volunteerism.¹⁰⁹ Military historian and USAF Captain Kenneth Schaffel concludes in his 1991 *The Emerging Shield: The Air Force and the Evolution of Continental Air Defense, 1945-1960* that at the very least the GOC "allowed concerned citizens to become informed about, and actively participate in, home air defense operations."¹¹⁰ In her "Mightier than Missiles": The Rhetoric of Civil Defense for Rural American Families, 1950-1970," agricultural historian Jenny Barker-Devine contends that the GOC satisfied rural citizens' and farmers' desires to guard against communism.¹¹¹

Kenton Clymer provides the most recent and thorough analysis of the purpose of the GOC in his “The Ground Observer Corps: Public Relations and the Cold War in the 1950s.”¹¹² Clymer argues that although the GOC did not achieve its defense goals, the USAF supported the program because it “served the public relations interests of the Air Force, U.S. air defense, and, more generally, the Cold War policies of the United States.”¹¹³

In August of 1941, prior to the United States’ entrance into World War II, the War Department organized a ground observation system known as the Aircraft Warning Service (AWS), formally recognized as the Ground Observer Corps on July 15, 1942.¹¹⁴ The War Department modeled the GOC after the British Royal Observer Corps (ROC), in which civilian volunteers responded to air threats by manning observation posts and alerted filter centers staffed by civilian and military officials.¹¹⁵ Although American GOC personnel lacked the organizational experience necessary to detect the Japanese aircraft that destroyed Pearl Harbor, the program operated until the summer of 1943, when the War Department gradually phased it out due to the absence of other enemy attacks.¹¹⁶

Consideration of the Ground Observer Corps as a realistic form of defense derived in part from Britain’s successful World War II model, in which the combination of civilian observers and radar proved so successful that intercept aircraft could be utilized for other purposes until an actual attack.¹¹⁷ Additionally, the efforts of British observers and intercept aircraft reduced German air attacks and decreased daytime bombings.¹¹⁸ Chinese and Australians also coordinated successful air warning nets in World War II and contributed to the validity of observation as a defense method.¹¹⁹ The United States’ tradition of observation, couple with the successful history of foreign

observation in World War II, positioned the program as a familiar and favorable one to planners.

As the post-war threat emerged, four additional factors arose that necessitated novel air defense programs like the GOC. First, the atomic bomb altered the nature of war by subjecting arbitrarily all U.S. citizens to the threat of nuclear war. This threat reduced the utility of traditional armed forces and caused the Department of Defense to espouse alternative defense options.¹²⁰ In his 1949 article in the *Public Affairs Bulletin*, Devan warned congressmen that because the nuclear bomb enhanced the unpredictable nature of war the U.S. would not “as in the two World Wars, have a cushion of time provided for us by our allies.”¹²¹ Civil Defense Administrator Millard Caldwell seconded Devan’s concern in a speech that persuaded State Civil Defense Directors to espouse the adoption of 24-hour GOC operations known as Operation Skywatch. At a 1952 meeting of Civil Defense Directors at the Pentagon, Caldwell argued that “There was a time when wars were won and lost by the Army and the Navy and the Air Force. That is no more. From 1945 and henceforth wars are going to be lost by the people on Main Street.”¹²²

Second, the United States Air Force suffered from such a limited defense budget that it was forced to utilize World War II detection equipment, extremely inadequate to meet the Cold War threat.¹²³ In light of both limited congressional funding and defense options, the Ground Observer Corps provided an affordable defense enhancement for the USAF, as the Air Force could delegate administrative costs to state civil defense agencies. An Air Force Public Information Letter of 1952 states that the program developed because the Air Force lacked the funds to independently undertake observation, and that “Why the AF can’t do this job may be obvious to AF people— but

it is not to the public . . . and must be explained in our PI [Public Information] effort.”¹²⁴

While the GOC provided the USAF with a method of passing the buck, the GOC ultimately remained hampered by a Congress unwilling to match state funding.

Third, Colorado Civil Defense Director Lt. General Henry L. Larsen contended that one of the primary functions of civil defense should be to alert citizens to impending attack, providing them with enough time to take shelter. General Larsen asserted that “for that reason most of us in civil defense consider the GOC an essential part of CD [civil defense].”¹²⁵ In addition to alerting the ADDC to aerial threats, GOC efforts allowed the FCDA to alert civilians to the threat, so they could take cover immediately.

Fourth, scientists had yet to fully develop the radar necessary to detect and notify intercept aircraft to foreign threats, and therefore enemy aircraft flying at low altitudes could approach targets undetected.¹²⁶ The U.S. developed shared electronic radar warning systems along the Canadian border, including the Distant Early Warning Line (DEW) and the Mid-Canada Line, which could provide early warning to intercept aircraft to prevent enemy aircraft and missiles from penetrating the U.S.¹²⁷ Planners hoped that the observation network of the GOC would remedy radar gaps — caused by the inability to detect radar flying below 6,000 feet — and compensate for radar malfunctions with “the oldest method of detection: human eyes and ears.”¹²⁸

GOC officials continually cited the lack of fully developed radar as the principle reason for the program, and the GOC’s official mission as outlined in the USAF’s 1953 *Ground Observer Corps Policy Guide* stated that the GOC operated to provide “low altitude visual surveillance” in order to “function as a supplement to radar in the air defense system.”¹²⁹ While Air Force planners clearly stated GOC objectives, USAF

officials doubted the legitimacy of the GOC as a defense tool, citing that, at best, GOC activity and Air Force intercepts could effectively destroy only 30 percent of enemy aircraft.¹³⁰ Lt. Gen. Joseph H. Atkinson, Commander of the ADC, admitted that “It is not uncommon . . . for me to be asked the question: ‘In the event of enemy attack, could you stop all of the enemy bombers and missiles?’ In all honesty I have to answer no.”¹³¹

This reality, no matter how much USAF officials tried publicly to alter it, often persuaded members to leave the GOC, as ex-members cited the GOC as “useless against missiles or jets” and a “waste of my time.”¹³² Participating members also experienced these thoughts, as articulated by Pamela Burr, ground observer and author of the 1955 *Saturday Evening Post*’s “I Am a Sky Sentry.” Burr questioned the purpose of the program: “I ask myself: Why do I waste my time up here? Then it seems not only futile but downright silly to suppose that a phone call to Trenton could stop that jet or postpone that doom.”¹³³

USAF planners frequently cited the 30 percent figure, but continued to promote the GOC for air defense because few other options existed and planners could not throw their hands up and inform the public that virtually nothing could prevent an aerial attack. Schaffel’s *The Emerging Shield* reiterates this struggle. He states that even in 1948 USAF air defense planner General Gordon Saville “admitted that his interim plan was not intended to provide the United States with an invulnerable air defense system,” but the GOC could “afford the foundation for a stronger system that could be reinforced and improved.”¹³⁴ Schaffel summarizes Saville’s sentiment by concluding that ultimately the GOC proved the best option available and certainly “a great deal better than nothing.”¹³⁵

Although USAF planners remained aware that the GOC would be unlikely to prevent enemy jets from dropping bombs over the U.S., they cited two aspects of the program that could bolster national security. First, a 1952 article in *Pegasus* magazine explained that the value of the USAF program resided in its ability to minimize sustained attacks against “strategic bases and industry,” therefore ensuring the United States’ ability to retaliate.¹³⁶ Second, Assistant Secretary of the Air Force H. Lee White argued in 1953 that while observers located in central U.S. regions might not be able to detect threats as they first emerged, they could assist in tracking enemy planes, helping the USAF to neutralize the threat.¹³⁷

Scientists estimated that a Soviet air attack would emerge from the North, described by Devan as “the Polar Concept” because the shortest distance between Russia and the U.S. is across Alaska and Greenland.¹³⁸ USAF planners structured the GOC around the Polar Concept, strategically concentrating observer posts and filter centers in the northern two-thirds of the country, with the southern-most posts enveloping Chicago and Detroit to protect U.S. industrial centers.¹³⁹

ARE WE THE TARGET?

TODAY

The Soviet Union has polar bases from which their long-range bombers could fly to any part of the United States in a matter of hours. These bases are useful to the Red Air Force *only* for an attack against us!



**WE MUST HAVE WARNING
IF WE ARE TO SURVIVE**

This 1954 map of the geographical threat informs readers through simple graphics that the “Soviet Union has polar bases from which their long-range bombers could fly.” USAF planners organized the GOC around the theory that a Soviet attack would likely materialize over the U.S.-Canadian border, and initially established posts only in the northern two-thirds of the country.

The four factors affecting national security — that the nuclear war subjugated everyone to the threat, that the USAF used outdated radar technology, that the GOC could alert the FCDA which could warn citizens to take cover, and that radar coverage was deficient — coupled with the successful history of observation in World War II, situated the GOC as one of the few realistic defense options in the minds of USAF personnel. Convinced of the immediacy of the threat and the validity of an observation program based on prior success, the Continental Air Command commenced “Operation

Lookout” in the fall of 1949 to test the efficiency of ground observation.¹⁴⁰ The test proved so successful that the Secretary of Defense met with the governors of the northeastern states and their staffs, including Arthur M. Thurston, Superintendent of the Indiana State Police and the Director of Civil Defense for Indiana, to reestablish the observation program.¹⁴¹

As early as 1949, GOC participants recognized that miscommunication could significantly disrupt operations, as Thurston commented to Hal Bergman of the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy, “it would not be very good management to create a state organization that would have to be disbanded at a later date in the event it did not conform with Federal directives.”¹⁴² However, Thurston’s letter indicates that program officials understood from the beginning that the USAF would be responsible for overall GOC operations.¹⁴³ Thurston concluded his letter by indicating that Indiana would establish 349 observation posts in sixty counties in the northern area of the state.¹⁴⁴

Indiana’s GOC organization centered around the Civil Defense Act of 1949, which established the state’s Department of Civil Defense, controlled by the governor who constructed and executed a state civil defense plan and who was supported by a civil defense advisory council.¹⁴⁵ The act required the Governor to coordinate plans “to the fullest possible extent” with other states and with federal plans, but prescribed no specific method. This vagueness contributed to organizational problems, expressed in master’s candidate Edith Marie Caravatta’s 1955 thesis, in which she states “there is no overall coordination of the Ground Observer Corps program, either within the individual states or nationally.”¹⁴⁶ According to the act, the superintendent of state police (in the case of Indiana Arthur M. Thurston) operated as director of the department and “by virtue” all

state police employees were required to conduct civil defense duties.¹⁴⁷ On a micro level, the act appealed to each city mayor to establish a local civil defense organization and appoint a director to organize and administer the GOC and select post supervisors.¹⁴⁸

A preliminary conference of the Indiana Department of Civil Defense further situated the GOC within broader civil defense plans, as officials outlined eight functions of the state defense program, categorizing the GOC within the Administration function, among other functions such as Medical and Health Services and Civilian War Aid.¹⁴⁹ State agencies like the State Police, Attorney General and State Press Association and private agencies such as the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and labor associations supported the Administrative division.¹⁵⁰

Scientists' estimation that Soviet aircraft would emerge over the North Pole induced questions about Indiana's vulnerability. *The Indiana Civil Defense Sentinel*, published by the Indiana Department of Civil Defense, offered explanations similar to those of the *Pegasus* article and General White's remarks.¹⁵¹ According to the bulletin, Governor Henry F. Schricker warned that "Hoosiers should be alert to protect vital Indiana war industries if hostilities should break out."¹⁵² Thurston warned that Lake County, part of Chicago's urban industrial area, could be a site of an enemy attack.¹⁵³ Concerned Indiana citizen Thomas H. Roberts reiterated the need to protect Indiana, writing to Schricker that his family lived in "the highly industrialized Calumet area. I am sure you are aware that this area is a likely target for enemy attack."¹⁵⁴ These statements illustrate that the value of Indiana observation lay not in detecting an emerging threat, but in tracking it to preserve industrial areas and ensure the ability to retaliate.

Thurston described to Bergman, of the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy, that state plans were still in the “drafting” phase, but that he would be attending an Air Force conference at the Pentagon on January 19, 1950 to be briefed on the GOC prior to the official USAF initiation.¹⁵⁵ Thurston’s conference in Washington inspired a preliminary meeting in Schricker’s office with the Civilian Defense Council to prepare Indiana to join the AWS, the initial name of the Cold War GOC.¹⁵⁶ Meeting attendees assembled a staff of five people from various state departments to organize the program, which involved selecting leaders at city and county levels.¹⁵⁷ Schricker wrote in a letter to U.S. Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson that he hoped to implement the program thirty days from the planning meeting.¹⁵⁸

According to articles and letters sent to Schricker in 1950 from other governors, program planning advanced more quickly and decidedly in Indiana than in other participating states.¹⁵⁹ Unsure as to how to proceed after the Washington conference, Illinois Governor and future presidential candidate Adlai Stevenson appealed to Schricker for advice.¹⁶⁰ Schricker detailed Indiana’s planning process for Stevenson, stating that he would first contact every mayor, town board president and all “peace officers on every level throughout the state.”¹⁶¹ He then explained that these officials would utilize their positions of leadership to recruit volunteers for the AWS.¹⁶² After contacting the mayors and town board presidents, Schricker hosted a luncheon for them on March 9, which he described to Ohio Governor Frank Lausche “to be a very effective means of presenting the problem to a large group in a short period, and it was most effective in stimulating county organization in the state.”¹⁶³ Schricker’s briefing evidently initiated widespread

county participation in the program, as only eleven days after the meeting the Department of Civil Defense for Indiana compiled a list of observer posts for each county.¹⁶⁴

On March 16, 1950, a mock air attack over Indiana illustrated the shortcomings of radar, as B-26 bombers flown by members of the Air National Guard of Indiana, Missouri and Illinois proceeded “completely undetected” by radar at Fort Harrison, the state’s only warning facility.¹⁶⁵ *The Indiana Civil Defense Sentinel* stated that commercial and private aircraft jammed the radar and that the B-26 bombers evaded detection by flying at an altitude of 3,000 feet.¹⁶⁶ The bulletin concluded that the inability to detect successfully the aircraft resulted in the various observer posts being constructed throughout the state so as to “guard against this eventuality in war.”¹⁶⁷

Following the alarming mock air attack, municipal and county officials named Civil Defense Directors in 51 Indiana counties.¹⁶⁸ The Directors established observer posts in the northern two-thirds of Indiana, where volunteers gathered when solicited by USAF officials during actual or anticipated attacks.¹⁶⁹ Later, at the initiation of Operation Skywatch in 1952, observers continuously manned towers, rather than waiting to be called to them. In addition to mock attacks, observers and supervisors received training through the “Correspondence Course Method,” in which instructional booklets taught participants how to identify threatening aircraft.¹⁷⁰

USAF officials of the observation post section, an area located within filter centers, also trained observers and observer post personnel through Mobile Training Teams that traveled from post to post offering instruction.¹⁷¹ These teams assisted chief observers with recruiting, kept posts in continuous operation, and counteracted “to some extent the insularity of the individual county and town civil defense organizations.”¹⁷²

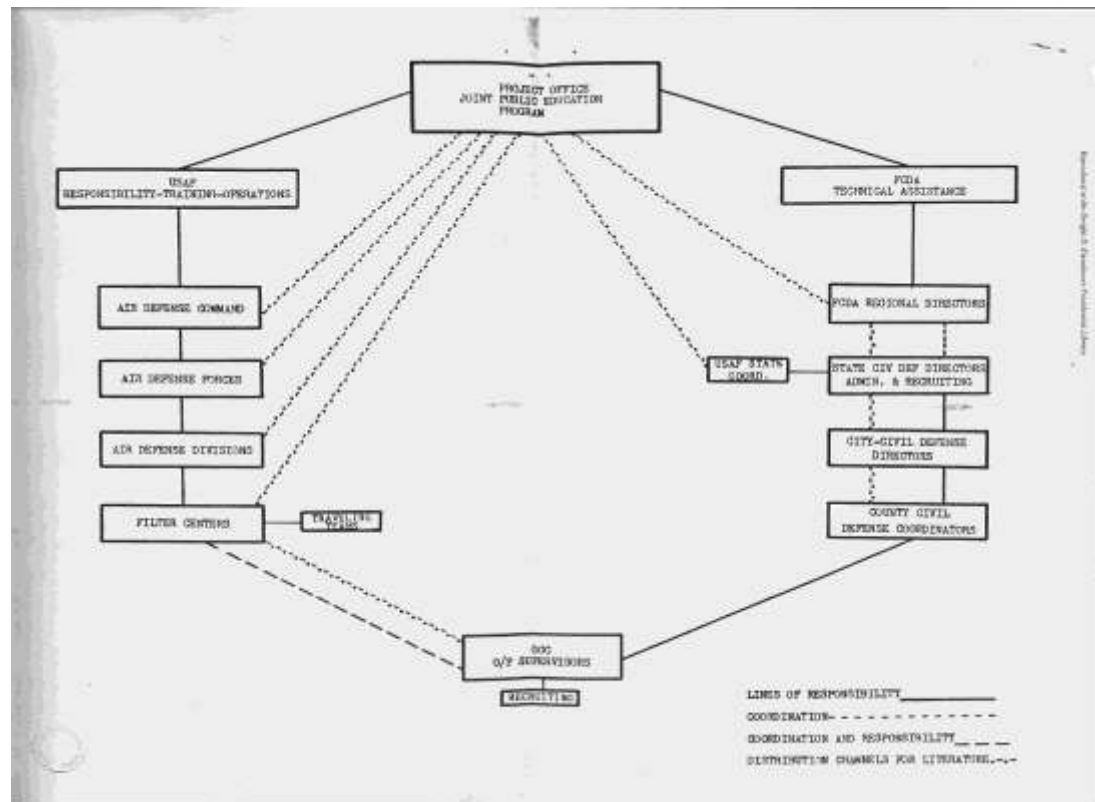
According to the 1950 *The Aircraft Warning Service of the U.S. Air Force*, the State Civil Defense Director (Thurston) appointed local observation post supervisors, who determined the location of individual observation posts in order to “provide uniform coverage of the air surveillance area.”¹⁷³ Supervisors designated posts approximately eight miles apart, based on clear visibility and telephone availability necessary for observers to make collect calls compensated by the federal government.¹⁷⁴ Local civil defense organizations often utilized extant structures for observation towers, and local merchants frequently donated materials to build new watchtowers.¹⁷⁵ Supervisors recruited volunteers and were supported by a chief observer, two deputy chief observers and roughly twenty observers.¹⁷⁶

USAF staff located filter centers in cities or communication centers and required 500 volunteers to staff each center.¹⁷⁷ Filter centers contained a plotting board, where 10 to 15 plotters displayed information relayed from observer reports to illustrate the path of the reported aircraft, and four to six filterers evaluated the plotted information and alerted ADDC when necessary.¹⁷⁸

Although state civil defense agencies recruited for and administered the program, USAF staff trained and assisted with operations at observer posts and filter centers.¹⁷⁹ USAF did not clearly define these roles, creating a problem aggravated by the Air Force’s failure to develop a definitive organizational policy. William R. Porretto argues that because of the lack of policy

not all civilian officials understood which functions fell to the responsibilities of the several states and which ones were to be handled by the Air Force; and there were areas wherein the Air Force that had been forced to assume responsibilities which the states could not or would not assume.¹⁸⁰

Another organizational problem emerged because the USAF did not include observer posts in its chain of command.¹⁸¹



The USAF was responsible for filter center operations, but county civil defense directors, under guidance of the FCDA, presided over observation posts. This divided responsibility caused communication and organizational problems in the GOC. The complex organization channels illustrated in this 1953 flow chart perplexed even USAF and local civil defense program participants.

USAF personnel coordinated with observers through training sessions and by attending promotional events, but ultimately state and county civil defense directors presided over observer posts. According to Caravatta, to make matters worse, occasionally local civil defense directors stopped attending to posts and the GOC in general after appointing the post supervisors and chief observers.¹⁸² To remedy these flaws the USAF appointed a Coordinator to each state to act as a liaison between the state and the USAF, but problems persisted.¹⁸³

Although the GOC was part of the United States Civil Defense Corps, questions regarding various responsibilities and funding continually plagued GOC personnel.¹⁸⁴ At the Ground Observer Corps Conference of January 1954, USAF officials met with Civil Defense Directors to discuss organizational issues affecting the program.¹⁸⁵ Proceedings of the meeting indicate the degree of friction between the two groups and even among the state officials.

During the conference, Civil Defense Representative for Wisconsin General R.J. Olson stated that because of the “differences of opinion and differences in laws between the several states, we cannot come up with a uniform policy.”¹⁸⁶ After heated discussions about the topic, Major F.G. Woodward of the Eastern Air Defense Force (EADF) concluded that obvious organizational complications existed and that the issues resulted from the bifurcated “division of responsibility.”¹⁸⁷ Woodward summarized that the division created “confusion in the minds of the public and even among public officials.”¹⁸⁸ GOC officials never wholly resolved these problems, despite joint meetings and public campaigns.

Support for the GOC increased when, to the alarm of USAF planners, North Korean forces invaded South Korea across the 38th parallel on June 25, 1950. The invasion caused U.S. Air Force Chief of Staff General Hoyt S. Vandenberg and the Joint Chiefs of Staff to assume that “the Communist attack on Korea could be the prelude to a Soviet-inspired general war.”¹⁸⁹ The invasion inspired a significant increase in defense and observation, as a “Soviet first strike could not be considered any more improbable or irrational than Japan’s attack on Pearl Harbor.”¹⁹⁰ According to Lisle Rose, this Korean War caused the American citizens, ranging from housewives to lawyers, teachers and

advertising men, to assume that “the Kremlin had unquestionably ordered the North Korean attack, and it was time to stand up to the Soviets.”¹⁹¹ This fear prompted Congress to allocate approximately \$40 million to defense and USAF programs, allowing the USAF to improve radar more quickly.¹⁹² Following the invasion, USAF officials determined that the GOC was woefully inefficient and planned to install 26 filter centers.¹⁹³ Furthermore, air tests demonstrated that participants lacked the training necessary for effective observation, alerting and tracking.¹⁹⁴

Announcement of the Korean conflict increased Indiana preparations and in December 1950 USAF Assistant Air Adjutant General Major Henry W. Spiller notified supervisors that “in the event of war, the Ground Observer Corps will operate 24 hours a day in all seasons of the year,” a prelude to the 24-hours operations to come.¹⁹⁵ By this time, the USAF had partially constructed a filter center in Indiana, located in the South Bend area.¹⁹⁶ Thurston’s invitations to the Governor’s Civil Defense Advisory Council of December referenced the international situation, as he stated “Unfavorable developments in the Korean war have increased the urgency of the Civil Defense program. Fast moving programs on the federal front requires [sic] certain action on our part.”¹⁹⁷

A *Progress Report* of the Indiana Department of Civil Defense from December 20, 1950 summarized the year’s events and celebrated the appointment of a civil defense director in every county.¹⁹⁸ The report recognized that a USAF exercise of November 4 and 5 resulted in 83 of 130 posts participating, with a total of 2096 calls made to the South Bend filter center.¹⁹⁹ The report also determined that although participating posts performed well, “the exercise demonstrated that a great deal of further stimulation, recruiting and training will be needed before all the observation posts in Indiana are in

effective operation.”²⁰⁰ The report continued that upon suggestion of the federal government and in light of the international situation, the Civil Defense Act of 1949 deserved revision.²⁰¹ Such proposed changes included allowing counties to allocate separate funds for civil defense activities.²⁰²

In 1952, two years after the official reestablishment of the GOC, USAF officials fought to overcome citizen apathy in what they considered an increasingly hostile international environment by placing the program on 24-hour operations, known as Operation Skywatch. The fact that observers, rather than radar, identified Soviet contrails near Nunivak Island, just off the southern coast of Alaska, confirmed the validity of the GOC.²⁰³

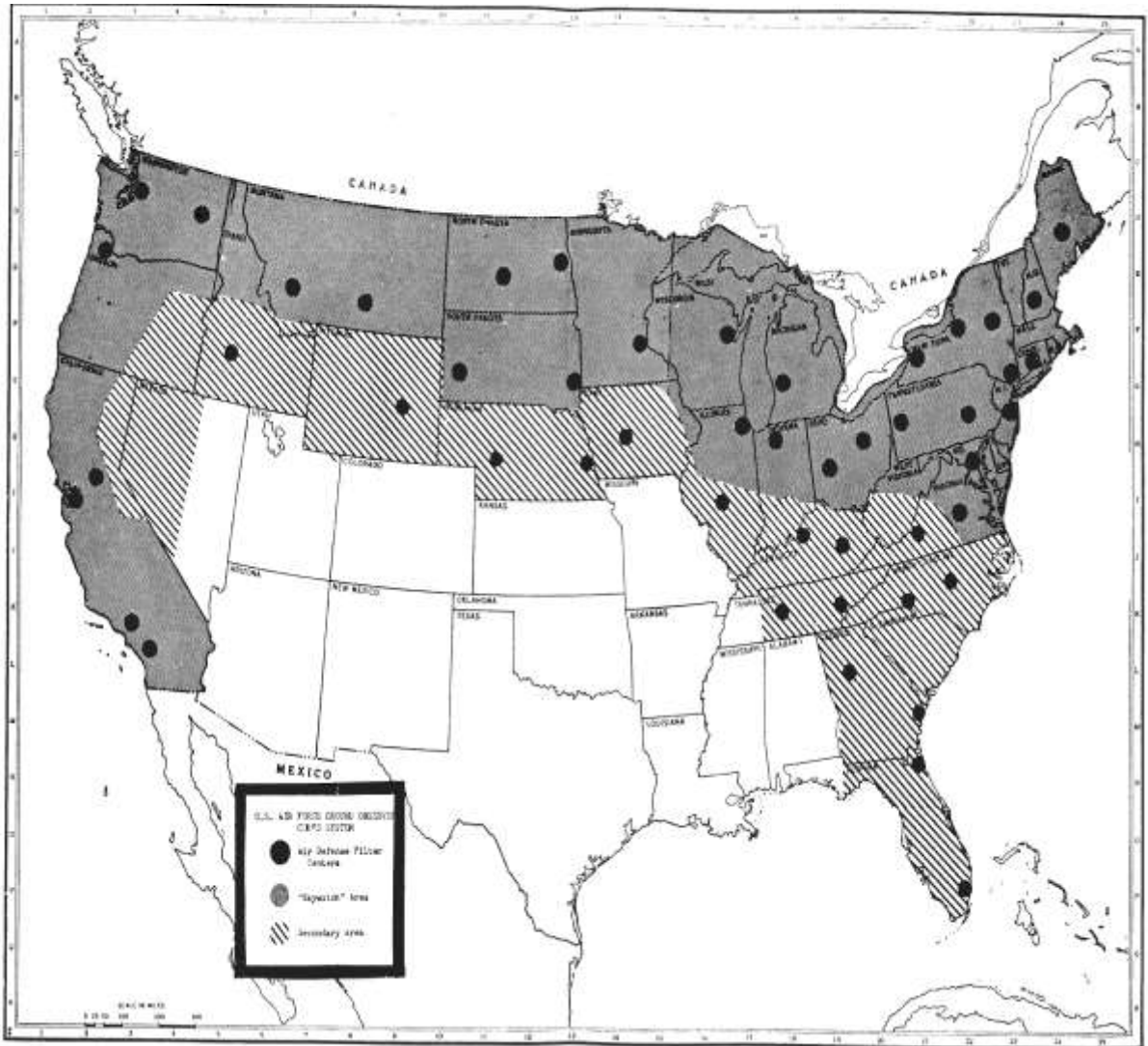
The arms race between the United States and Soviet Union intensified, as the Chinese intervened in the Korean War on the side of the North Koreans and peace negotiations stalled.²⁰⁴ In order to preclude a Soviet attack, American planners sought to demonstrate superior military strength by building additional atomic weapons. Cold War scholar Melvyn P. Leffler asserts that planners wanted to increase armaments “to the point where the Soviets would not dare to take an escalatory step.”²⁰⁵

The escalation of tension inspired further defense precautions. Without consulting state defense directors, U.S. Air Force Chief of Staff General Hoyt S. Vandenberg announced to the nation that Operation Skywatch would begin May 17, 1952, provoking backlash from state directors at the National Association of State Civil Defense Directors, who felt that the decision violated USAF’s authority.²⁰⁶

The controversy over Skywatch revealed that the Air Force needed to more fully inform the public and state directors of the purpose of increased observation.²⁰⁷ Although

an Air Force Public Information Letter assumed the state directors' protests derived from a lack of GOC volunteers, state directors cited a 1949 agreement with the USAF to only embark on 24-hour surveillance in case of war.²⁰⁸ State directors also resented the USAF's failure to inform them ahead of the increased observation because state and local agencies had to absorb the cost of implementing the expanded program.²⁰⁹

The protest led to postponement of Skywatch and the subsequent invitation to state directors to a conference at the Pentagon on June 17, 1952.²¹⁰ FCDA Speaker Millard Caldwell empathized with state directors, stating "The few people that you have been able to interest in civil defense, over great odds, you have to share with the Air Force." Further, he hoped that "this meeting will set a pattern of straight, across-the-board, discussion between you and the Defense Department on all of its problems."²¹¹ Caldwell's and USAF speakers' reiteration of the need for united efforts and consistent public information resulted in the directors voting for Skywatch to commence July 14.²¹² On Skywatch's inception, 27 of the 36 states within the GOC participated in 24-hour operations, including the northern area of Indiana.²¹³



This map reflects the Polar Concept by placing observation posts and filter centers in the northern part of the country, reinforcing the northern border by requiring volunteers to work around the clock in the Skywatch area.

Air Force representatives, FCDA officials, the Advertising Council, and Spencer Quick (White House Liaison for the Advertising Council) engaged in a Joint Public Education Program in preparation for Skywatch and to correct messages contradictory to those of the Air Force about defense preparations and that caused “the people of this country to have a false sense of security.”²¹⁴ The public campaign utilized Edward R. Murrow’s “See It Now” program to gain recognition for the GOC, as well as information

kits that included fact sheets, maps and official statements.²¹⁵ The campaign's theme became "The time for air defense is NOW" in order to emphasize inadequate air defense and enemy capability.²¹⁶ The joint campaign provided the USAF with an opportunity to strengthen communication with state and local directors with letters to state governors and defense directors both informing them of Skywatch activities and requesting their suggestions.²¹⁷

The stated purpose of the GOC continued to be the reinforcement of radar coverage, but planners also hoped that the volunteer force comprised of patriotic civilians could deter a Soviet attack simply by demonstrating their organization and preparation. This secondary purpose illustrates that planners had begun to recognize the ideological value of the GOC. Executive Assistant Administrator of the FCDA Justice M. Chambers insisted that a deterrent to Communist aggression "must consist of something more than a single, terrifying weapon." It required "a total defensive and offensive force so strong that the enemy will not dare to test it."²¹⁸

This emphasis on deterrence aligned with intensified rhetoric about Soviet communism among congressmen. Minnesota Senator Hubert Humphrey asserted in June that, "To the Kremlin pacifism is one of the greatest of all crimes. War is not only a legitimate instrument of policy . . . it is a requisite instrument of policy."²¹⁹ President Harry S. Truman reinforced the importance of a united volunteer defense force by publicly endorsing Skywatch two days prior to its commencement. He echoed the GOC's value as a deterrent by proclaiming "Our greatest hopes for peace lie in being so strong and so well prepared that our enemies will not dare attack."²²⁰ He asserted that GOC volunteers contributed to this aim by "helping prevent the war none of us wants to

happen.”²²¹ Eventually even television stars accepted this idea of deterrence, as Desi Arnaz suggested to Lucille Ball in a television spot ““Maybe they’ll think we’re too tough to tackle, and there won’t be any war.””²²²

While GOC purposes shifted slightly in 1952, USAF officials reevaluated and maintained original goals and remained aware of program deficiencies. As USAF Commanding General Benjamin W. Childlaw stated: “We do not harbor any delusions that our air defense system is an absolute stone wall which will prevent any enemy aircraft from dropping bombs on American soil.”²²³ According to Childlaw, by “detecting them [enemy aircraft] in sufficient time before they reach their targets, however, we can take effective steps to reduce the damage inflicted by a raid.”²²⁴

Although the continuous operations of Skywatch enhanced the perception of the GOC as a valid defense tool and garnered popularity among volunteers, communication issues persisted at an organizational level.²²⁵ In a telegram to the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, ADC personnel processing enrollments complained that they could not keep up with the high volume of citizens who wished to volunteer after hearing radio advertisements, describing it as a “recruitment” problem. The telegram reports that the ADC had “received several complaints concerning people desiring to volunteer after hearing radio plugs and having difficulty in actual recruitment.”²²⁶ Despite these problems, Operation Skywatch ultimately bolstered air defense, as ADC’s ability to detect aircraft improved to a ceiling of 4,000 feet.²²⁷

In 1953, as the Korean War came to a close, Air Force personnel continued to emphasize the need for the GOC.²²⁸ While the USAF continued to promote the GOC as a deterrent force and tool to minimize enemy attack, *The Aircraft Flash* increasingly

publicized stories about unconventional posts and alternative purposes such as weather and smoke spotting. As GOC activities diversified, planners continued to develop the NIKE guided missile, which allowed the USAF to more precisely target and destroy enemy aircraft before their pilots could unleash nuclear bombs.²²⁹

President Dwight D. Eisenhower released an endorsement of the program in 1953 (located below) that tried to retain GOC participants after the Korean War. The advertisement promoted increased communication between participating states and the Air Force, encouraging local civil defense agencies to tailor the message to their constituencies by inserting the local defense director's name and phone number.²³⁰ According to James M. Lambie, Special Assistant in the White House, Eisenhower's message "gave a big and much needed lift to the campaign, which has been going rather well considering everything."²³¹

AMERICA NEEDS YOU IN THE GROUND OBSERVER CORPS!



© 1953

HERE'S WHY:

The potential of modern military offense is such that a surprise raid against this country could cause tremendous casualties.

Our military defense is aware of this possibility. Air Force interceptor planes and Army anti-aircraft batteries are designed to repel such an attack.

But—if that attack ever comes—warning must come through in time! Citizen volunteer plane-spotters—

ground observers—play a vital role in providing the necessary warning.

Already some 300,000 civilian Americans are contributing to the job of guarding our ramparts. I salute these Ground Observers for their patience, their perseverance, their patriotism.

But the job calls for twice their number to man these vital posts. Will you serve your country for two hours a week?

Dwight D. Eisenhower
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

Keep your eye on the sky in the GROUND OBSERVER CORPS

JOIN TODAY—Write or phone—Name and address of Civil Defense Director—Telephone No.



Contributed on a public service by

(SPONSOR'S NAME GOES HERE)



Wake Up!
Sign Up!
Look Up!

GOC President Ad No. 3 (400 lines)
Newspapers—1953

Electronic reproduction made
by the Eisenhower Library for
preservation purposes

PUBLISHER

The President's approval of the use of his picture and statement in this advertisement carries the stipulation that it is not to be sponsored by a manufacturer or distributor of alcoholic beverages.



Please insert the phone number of your local civil defense director.

In 1953 the Ad Council hoped to attract volunteers with this advertisement in which President Eisenhower promoted the GOC. Mimicking the traditional Uncle Sam propaganda poster employed in World War I, Eisenhower appeals to individuals with his solemn gaze and “YOU.” The advertisement attempts to overcome organizational problems by requesting that local directors add their contact phone number in this nationally distributed advertisement.

The Joint Publicity Program, endorsement of Eisenhower, and Skywatch activities injected energy into the GOC, reflected in the GOC reports of Director of Civil Air

Defense and USAF Colonel Broun H. Mayall in 1954. Mayall stated in March that based on the “increase in active and enrolled observation post volunteers that the state civil defense agencies are becoming more effective in their civil defense programs.”²³² In addition to improved state operations, the GOC as a whole “continues to show healthy growth,” which Mayall considered notable, as the “number of 24-hour posts remains nearly constant in the face of the hardship of this winter season.”²³³

In 1954, GOC personnel participated in activities not originally included in the GOC’s mission, such as tornado spotting and rescuing pilots and parachutists in distress. GOC observers in Albany, New York identified Lt. Frank Robins’ plane, which had veered off course, and formed a makeshift runway by creating two parallel lines with the lights of their cars, successfully guiding Lt. Robins to a safe landing in a field.²³⁴ In addition to distress missions, *The Aircraft Flash* reported that “severe weather reporting is as natural and essential for the GOC as the spotting and reporting of aircraft.”²³⁵ County GOC officials in Indiana undertook a tornado warning in 1954, but Thurston’s successor, Frederick T. Cretors, believed that this activity revealed communication problems because county officials issued a red warning about the impending tornado, a color reserved only for the highest security threats.²³⁶

Cretors not only directed weather reporting, but developed a unique and efficient alerting system using short-wave radios, by which all posts in the state could be operationally ready within 24 minutes.²³⁷ Cretors described that approximately 150 posts in the southern area of the state did not participate in Skywatch and of those that did participate, some operated only partially.²³⁸ GOC Coordinator for the State of Indiana, Lt. Col. James T. Emott reported that the Air Force requested all participating states to

develop a plan that could summon observers to posts in an emergency should telephone communication fail. Cretors thereby designed a system in which the USAF alerted all state police posts, who then notified local police, who alerted the local civil defense directors, who informed all observation post supervisors to organize volunteers.²³⁹ Emott's justification of the defense system again referenced the lessons of World War II, contending "this alerting system is a vital part of our defenses against another Pearl Harbor."²⁴⁰

In 1955, *The Aircraft Flash* asserted that the GOC "is no longer in the test stage" and a 1958 article recognized that by 1955 the program had "reached its maximum growth."²⁴¹ The magazine cited the development of two new Soviet jet bombers, which increased "the Soviet's capability to conduct an air attack against the United States," as one factor to increase vigilance.²⁴² New weapons and continued friction between the ideological systems of the Soviet Union and U.S. resulted in the development of CONELRAD, radar used to disorient enemy flight patterns, and the expansion of the GOC to all 48 states in July on the third anniversary of Skywatch.²⁴³ The expansion was consistent with *The Aircraft Flash's* belief that the GOC represented a "vast departure from the know-nothing, do-nothing school of critics."²⁴⁴

Hector Perrier, who worked closely with GOC planners in his work for the Ad Council, predicted that the expansion of the GOC to an additional 12 southern and southwestern states would be challenging in terms of recruitment of interested citizens because the states lacked local defense organizations.²⁴⁵ As predicted, USAF officials found the July 1955 expansion problematic due to lack of appropriate filter center sites and state coordinators.²⁴⁶ Communication problems like those in other states between the

USAF and local defense officials, plus a shortage of willing coordinators, and “technical difficulties” regarding the installation of filter centers added new challenges.²⁴⁷ These difficulties harkened back to the contentious 1954 meeting of USAF and civil defense directors, in which Wisconsin civil defense representative General R.J. Olson lamented that mobile filter center teams acted “without my knowledge and without my approval and began installing telephones in some of the Observation Posts at Air Force expense.”²⁴⁸

Regardless of the organizational setbacks, Perrier argued in September 1955 that “despite the general feeling that the Kremlin has adopted a less aggressive attitude toward the free world, recruitment in the GOC continues to increase steadily.”²⁴⁹ The participation of the Navy and the Marines in the GOC also strengthened the program by providing increased detection coverage with picket ships equipped with radar that extended the DEW line and contributed to a defense system that USAF planners hoped would one day operate without civilian volunteers.²⁵⁰

Four *Aircraft Flash* issues printed in 1955 include sections entitled “Radar and the GOC.” This sudden emphasis on radar development hinted at future capabilities of radar that planners hoped would liberate GOC volunteers.²⁵¹ In a letter to Secretary of Defense Charles Wilson, released one day prior to the third anniversary of Operation Skywatch, President Eisenhower asserted that the GOC was fulfilling the program’s secondary purpose, stating that GOC participants “have undoubtedly strengthened the capabilities of our continental defense system, and in so doing they have helped to deter aggression.”²⁵²

The consolidation of filter centers, intended to free some military personnel and streamline operations, made 1956 a transitional year.²⁵³ An article described an “element

of sadness in the situation, for these changes mean the breaking of ties of sentiment and respectful affection between the community, the volunteers and the military.”²⁵⁴ In addition to the consolidation, the Air Force put eight filter centers, including Terre Haute, on Ready Reserve status, meaning that they would no longer operate 24-hours per day and instead the USAF would call observers to posts only during an emergency like the situation in 1949-1952.²⁵⁵ Additionally, USAF personnel began referring to *all* GOC activities as Operation Skywatch in 1956.²⁵⁶

The proverbial writing on the wall materialized in April of 1957, when Director of Civil Air Defense and USAF Colonel Broun H. Mayall informed attendees at the Conference of the National Association of State Civil Defense Directors that while attendees previously considered the “development of our radar network as something still on the way,” he asserted “we are well on the job now.”²⁵⁷ Mayall informed the directors that officials had nearly completed the Mid-Canada line and the DEW line near the Arctic Circle and that Navy radar extended the detection line to the East. He insisted that although radar was not “one-hundred-percent” completed, it moved the “barriers of our air defense system farther and farther from our homeland.”²⁵⁸ Despite these radar improvements, Col. Owen F. Clarke, USAF Ground Observer Corps Project Officer, argued that ““continuation of educational and indoctrinational aspects of the GOC program should be maintained with fullest vigor and at all levels.””²⁵⁹ Clarke considered maintenance of the program necessary because ““no other group is better equipped and positioned at [the] community level to take an active hand in the enlightening of all citizens on the dangers confronting this nation in the atomic age.””²⁶⁰ Until this statement, published in *The Aircraft Flash*, planners had never so explicitly expressed that the GOC

served to garner ideological support for the Cold War and educate citizens about the Soviet threat.

As purposes changed, USAF officials decided to maintain 24-hour posts only in coastal and border areas, excluding all interior posts.²⁶¹ Mayall's briefing evinced USAF personnel's determination to avoid communication problems, as Mayall stated that USAF planners would *first* inform state defense directors of these changes and allow the directors to implement at their discretion these changes in their areas of jurisdiction.²⁶²

In a confidential report, Perrier of the Ad Council inferred that "While the decision to end the campaign is not yet final, I think we can assume that the job is done and we can stop everything with the exception of . . . GOC week."²⁶³ By November 1957, the USAF had definitively decided to place the *entire* country on "Ready Reserve," essentially but unofficially terminating the program.²⁶⁴ In a briefing to state Civil Defense directors, Colonel Owen F. Clarke of the GOC Project Office cited "technological advances in electronic air surveillance systems" and increased speeds of enemy jet bombers that negated the efficiency of "manual capabilities" as reasons for these program changes.²⁶⁵

Although planners terminated the program unofficially, Clarke argued that the GOC "Ready Reserve" should be maintained, to be summoned during emergencies and because of the GOC's ability to report severe weather, aid distressed airplanes, spot UFO's and educate citizens about the general communist threat.²⁶⁶ With altered purposes, the USAF published a series of *Aircraft Flash* articles in 1958 entitled "On Communism" to emphasize the ideological threat of communism, rather than its physical threat. The series generally neglected to mention Soviet defense threats and instead educated readers

about the history of communism and Marxist theory, informing observers that “Communists are not only atheistic but militantly opposed to any spiritual way of life.”²⁶⁷ Such articles indeed served to reinforce Cold War objectives, and other *Aircraft Flash* articles such as “Youth in the GOC” promoted the principles of democracy and volunteerism. Youth observer Bobbie Umberger wrote to the magazine that the GOC provided him with an opportunity to utilize his free time for productive, voluntary purposes:

Rather than reading obscene literature, we are studying textbooks on navigation, meteorology, map reading and radio; rather than ‘breaking and entering,’ we are gaining experience in leadership through recruiting and keeping post records; rather than loafing on the streets we have spent over 4,000 hours in our Ground Observer work.²⁶⁸

Few records exist about the termination of the GOC in Indiana, but *The Indiana Civil Defender*, the renamed bulletin of the Department of Civil Defense, revealed that the Secretary of the Air Force announced the official end of the GOC as of January 31, 1959.²⁶⁹ The bulletin almost wistfully states that the U.S “is geared to the substitution of machines for manpower . . . and we accept this theory of progress.”²⁷⁰ The *Defender* lamented the conclusion of the program, but congratulated its participants for successfully deterring attack, going so far as to claim the GOC may have been “the one final deterrent to an attack on the country by a calculating enemy.”²⁷¹ As with the USAF’s hopes, Indiana’s Department of Civil Defense tried to convert GOC participants into stewards of vigilance and democracy, identifying them as ideal candidates because “through past training, [they] have a knowledge and understanding of the ‘threat’ of nuclear attack,” and that therefore they should “continue patriotically to serve the nation in other phases of Civil Defense.”²⁷²

The final, January 1959 Dedicatory Edition of *The Aircraft Flash* celebrated the democratic components of the GOC — “patriotic loyalty, “spiritual unity,” “community responsibility,” “a people’s movement” — and encouraged participants to engage in similar programs.²⁷³ Perhaps President Eisenhower made the most striking statement about the GOC’s eventual value. He told GOC volunteers “I hope that you will continue to provide leadership in other fields of civil defense and by your example stimulate many other Americans to share in the task required to sustain our democratic way of life.”²⁷⁴

As the GOC came to a close, planners reiterated to participants that the Cold War persisted even if the program did not, appealing to them to act as conduits of information about the threat to the general population. While this purpose was more pronounced in the later years of the program, USAF planners’ early understanding of the limitations of the GOC, but continued maintenance of it, indicates they had already recognized the value of the program in providing civilian support for the Cold War. Ultimately, while USAF planners understood the limitations of the GOC, the few defense options available and Americans’ preoccupation with the resumption of world war motivated planners to promote the program’s defensive value. In the years following the Korean War and until the GOC’s termination in early 1959, officials increasingly realized the program’s utility as a vehicle to impress upon citizens the objectives of the Cold War, the Soviet communist threat, and traditional American values of volunteerism and individualism.

Chapter 3: The GOC Comes Home: “You Who Stand and Watch Also Serve”²⁷⁵

Although the Ground Observer Corps proved ineffective as an early warning defense tool, the rhetoric of the United States Air Force and Federal Civil Defense Administration indicates they believed that people *willingly* working together in the GOC could help deter the Soviet air threat. In other words, *how* citizens defended their country was as important as what they defended. This “American-style civil defense” espoused individualism, volunteerism and civic responsibility, touted as the antithesis of communist principles.²⁷⁶ These efforts strengthened communities in a period of “cold war” and exceeded Air Force objectives to strengthen air defense.

In order to demonstrate how the efforts of GOC volunteers uniquely impacted communities, I compare the GOC to a similar civil defense organization, the Civil Air Patrol (CAP). I also study three regions that participated in the GOC, predicated on regional industries or activities: rural areas comprised primarily of farmers, metropolitan areas, and areas with existing observation posts, chiefly along the northern border. While these three sectors participated in the program differently, the GOC strengthened communities in each and individual preparation ultimately benefited one's neighbors and community.

Examination of the type of civil defense crafted by Congress and executed by the FCDA in the 1950s explains the GOC's emphasis of volunteerism and individualism, which ultimately improved the safety and “spiritual unity” of American communities. Historian Laura McEnaney theorizes that a privatized or “self-help” civil defense system emerged in the early 1950s because of the World War I precedent of grassroots help, the federal government's financial inability to support a national defense program, and the

ideological battle occurring in Congress regarding the role of government in the early atomic era.²⁷⁷ She reports that the appointment of civilian leaders of the FCDA reflected the notion that “a military-run civil defense program was antidemocratic and antithetical to the ‘American way of life.’”²⁷⁸

Congress passed the 1951 Federal Civil Defense Act with the condition that states and municipalities bore the brunt of the responsibility for instituting civil defense.²⁷⁹ Passing this act was ideologically and politically safe because it prevented the emergence of a garrison state by putting the onus of civil defense on individuals. This “self-help” civil defense program resulted in a bomb shelter system that “was premised on suburbanization and home ownership, twin phenomena that included far more whites than nonwhites” and evacuation plans predicated on the private ownership of cars, “leaving poor people dependent upon inadequate public transportation or their own feet to flea [flee] cities.”²⁸⁰ Because only the financially secure living in the suburbs — generally white, middle-class Americans — could construct a bomb shelter beneath their houses or afford a car necessary to evacuate, GOC observation posts and filters centers represented one of the few truly communal resources in the realm of civil defense.

Guy Oakes and Andrew Grossman summarize the paradoxical nature of this “American-style civil defense” promoted by the FCDA and USAF. They assert that it “depended on traditional American values: on the one hand, rugged individualism — the private virtues of self-reliance, self-discipline, and do-it-yourself pragmatism; on the other hand, civic responsibility — the public virtues of neighborliness, mutual assistance, community spirit and local pride.”²⁸¹ In keeping with the battle of ideologies characterizing the Cold War, U.S. civil defense programs marketed the importance of

individual and voluntary efforts, contrasting them with the Soviet Union's observation program that employed mandatory participation.²⁸² When crafting the U.S. system of civil defense, FCDA officials and members of Congress made sure to avoid parallels with Soviet defense, avoiding and criticizing public shelters as “‘communistic’ while private sheltering was valorized as a uniquely ‘American-style’ militarization.”²⁸³

These officials frequently delineated the differences between the two civil defense systems in order to tie national security to political ideology, virtually equating the communist and atomic threats. A *Congressional Record* article shows this link by describing the GOC's possible participation in Loyalty Day through public demonstrations of observation. The article argues that Congress's potential recognition of Loyalty Day would “serve to deal a devastating but bloodless blow at the unthinking persons who would attempt to rally public opinion behind the false ideology of communism.”²⁸⁴

In a series of articles entitled “On Communism” printed in *The Aircraft Flash*, authors advised GOC readers that an understanding of Soviet ideology supplemented observation in safeguarding the nation, contending “Faith in the evolutionary democratic process toward justice, combined with a broader knowledge . . . of Communist evil, will justify and support the sacrifice and patience required of all free people to close this ugly phase of world history.”²⁸⁵ Similarly, a 1950 editorial in *The Indiana Civil Defense Sentinel* reflected a belief that practicing democracy was tantamount to national defense and observation.²⁸⁶ The editorial stated “There is one vital element of our strength that cannot be measured in physical terms. That is our democracy — our freedom . . . there

must be the deeper and more effective strength of a free people fully determined to preserve their freedom.”

Through this rhetoric, the civil defense establishment tied ideology to defense against the atomic threat. Grossman and Oakes assert that “demonstrations of public resolve were part of an effort to deter the Soviet Union from expanding its influence by means that would precipitate just such an event [nuclear attack].”²⁸⁷ Demonstrating one's understanding and abhorrence of communism became as important to national security as participating in “American-style civil defense.” McEnaney theorizes that “practicing national security meant *not* engaging in certain kinds of behaviors that could be judged suspicious or subversive.”²⁸⁸

GOC participants validated the program by defending their country in a way that represented democratic ideals. While participation numbers remained relatively low throughout the duration of the program, between 350,000 and 400,000 volunteers, U.S. Air Force Chief of Staff General Hoyt S. Vandenberg valued the program primarily because it facilitated the practice of democracy. He proclaimed “that the progress has been heartening for the reason that we have chosen to go about this job in the democratic way, counting upon the sense of civic duty which in the past has always prompted Americans to defend their freedom.”²⁸⁹

The USAF and FCDA not only employed traditional U.S. values in the practice of civil defense, but the organizations claimed civil defense could strengthen these values. McEnaney cites the Powner family who, as participants in Project Hideaway, voluntarily lived in a bomb shelter at Princeton University for two weeks, allowing a university psychology professor to study the effects of prolonged shelter life.²⁹⁰ The study

concluded that the family, who played games together and whose father spent rare time with his children, actually relished their stay, citing that the “enforced togetherness” resulted in a closer family.²⁹¹ The GOC promoted their civil defense program similarly, as an opportunity for families, neighbors and community members to spend quality time together through the shared objective of improving national security.

It is important to note that while the majority of Americans feared the atomic threat, they were discernibly apathetic to civil defense and the GOC. However, those citizens that participated in the program did so zealously. A civil defense director in Concord, New Hampshire, Rear Admiral Cornelius A. Brinkmann, expressed frustration with the unwillingness of residents to volunteer at their local GOC post, lamenting “They’ll make a money contribution to a good cause any time you ask them, or they’ll give you some time for a one-shot operation but it’s hard to get them to promise to give their time regularly.”²⁹²

Comparison with the CAP demonstrates the unique, inclusive nature of the GOC predicated on “American-style civil defense.” GOC volunteers represented nearly every demographic in the country with the exception of African Americans, and included the blind, centenarians, displaced persons from World War II, women, veterans, Native Americans, Boy and Girl Scouts, prisoners and monks. An *Aircraft Flash* article from April 1958 summarized the diverse community involvement, stating that at the Eunice, New Mexico post, “All components of the community are represented in the Eunice GOC — local government, social and professional clubs, the church, the school, business and industry, news media and the home” and that “the social and professional activities of Eunice volunteers have helped to knit close ties of unity and singleness of purpose.”²⁹³

The type of participants and activities related to the GOC demonstrate how the program connected diverse groups within communities, unlike other civic or civil defense groups of the period. Pamela Burr, author of “I Am a Sky Sentry,” colorfully recalls her participation at the observation post located on top of the Bryn Mawr Hospital in Pennsylvania.²⁹⁴ She describes participants as a “motley group” that included a thirteen-year-old boy, a housewife and an oil executive. Because the tower sat atop the hospital, various patients and staff interacted with GOC volunteers. Burr describes an incident that occurred among her seemingly incongruous group of volunteers, after a nurse wheeled out her patient — “a recumbent old lady waiting to die” — onto the roof of the hospital.²⁹⁵ Burr, along with the nurse, patient and a young male observer, suddenly heard an airplane. As she explains:

None of us could find it. I couldn't, of course! The nurse couldn't. . . . Even the small boy couldn't. Suddenly we heard a faint cry from the mummy form of the old lady wheeled into the sunshine. One partially transparent finger pointed to the southeast. And on the waxen face was the same expression I had seen on the boy's—the triumph of the hunter who first sights his quarry—for she who was about to die had spotted her plane.²⁹⁶

The GOC frequently united and even reunited citizens in spontaneous and often serendipitous ways like those described by Burr, as citizens labored together for a common defense cause. In Great Neck, New York two men who had fought “side by side” in France as part of the American Expeditionary Forces during World War I separated after the war and eventually reunited at the Great Neck Ground Observer Post years later.²⁹⁷ Similarly, two men in Pasadena, California who worked together on the Panama Canal reunited after 19 years when the Air Force assigned them to the Pasadena filter center.²⁹⁸

The unique, communal nature of the GOC becomes apparent when compared with similar civic and civil defense organizations of the period such as the Civil Air Patrol. As with the GOC, national security personnel recognized the need for a national defense organization in the tense atmosphere of 1941 and, with the support of a board of military officers, Director of Civil Defense Fiorello H. LaGuardia signed an order establishing CAP one week prior to the attack on Pearl Harbor.²⁹⁹ Like the GOC, CAP functioned as an unpaid, volunteer organization operating for the protection of American citizens under direction of the United States Air Force. Whereas the GOC focused on emergency prevention, the CAP responded to emergencies by dropping supplies and medicine, airlifting victims, and establishing communication centers in areas devastated by natural disasters.³⁰⁰ As with the GOC, Civil Air Patrol members worked with the FCDA to meet civil defense objectives and often flew over GOC posts to provide volunteers with observation practice.³⁰¹

Both organizations existed to bolster national security in the early Cold War period, but each developed slightly different objectives. The GOC sought to strengthen aerial defense with an observation network that would alert the USAF to suspected aerial threats, enabling the Air Defense Direction Center to meet these threats by dispatching interceptor pilots. The GOC mission omitted reference to citizenship or community service, focusing solely on strengthening air defense by supplementing radar through observation. The CAP mission, on the other hand, involved facilitating civil defense, creating a future pool of pilots for the USAF by educating teenage cadets about aviation, and explicitly teaching participants about serving their communities through missions like those involving search and rescue.³⁰²

The “Objects and Purposes” section of the CAP 1950 *Annual Report to Congress* reports that the CAP strove to “encourage and develop by example the voluntary contribution of private citizens to the public welfare.”³⁰³ Although USAF planners did not include this goal in the official mission of the GOC, nor does it appear in USAF records, the *Aircraft Flash* frequently noted the relationship between volunteer observation and healthy communities. Measuring the degree to which citizens themselves considered the GOC an asset to communities is difficult. *The Aircraft Flash* frequently represented participants’ perspectives, as GOC members sent in articles and photographs published by the magazine, and the USAF utilized individual publications of filter centers and observation post items in the “Flashes” section of the publication.³⁰⁴ Seattle’s filter center’s publication, *Air Tracks*, described how, through the GOC, participants could contribute to the health of American communities:

It seems to me that there's something vital and healthy about this country when citizens — thousands of them just in western Washington — join forces with the military to protect this country. For, actually, in this business, warning is the first element of protection. But the magnificent thing about this operation is that these civilian ground observers are not protecting themselves in their own communities. . . . These people are protecting their neighbors. A baby in St. Louis may live because a ground observer in Randle sends in an Aircraft Flash report.³⁰⁵

The statement suggests that the sacrifices required of GOC volunteers unified not only communities but also the nation, reminiscent of historian Richard Fried’s description of atomic age patriots’ belief that participation in national security activities bolstered “flaccid citizenship.”³⁰⁶

Both the GOC and CAP concentrated on the teenage demographic, claiming that organizational activities could reduce “juvenile delinquency.” In 1952, the CAP's Cadet Program trained as many as 48,276 boys and girls between the ages of 15 and 17 through

high school courses and summer encampments about aerial principles, life in the Air Force and the responsibility of U.S. citizens.³⁰⁷ Some CAP personnel hoped the program would give the “teen age groups a healthy and interesting outlet for inquisitive minds, in a period when juvenile delinquency is on the increase.”³⁰⁸ Additionally, the CAP held an annual international cadet exchange to European countries, with the objective of simultaneously teaching youth about aviation and foreign cultures. CAP Chairman General Carl Spaatz, USAF, expressed a profound belief in the importance of teenagers to national security, asserting that “If young men all over the world could only get to know each other as you are doing, there would be no future wars.”³⁰⁹

While the GOC did not originally court the support of teenagers, *The Aircraft Flash* published several stories about the ability of the GOC to minimize teenage “delinquency” and provide boys with opportunities to prove they are “worthy citizens.”³¹⁰ Teenagers did not attend official courses like CAP members, and instead initiated their own projects and clubs related to the GOC. In Delaware and Oklahoma, teenagers organized TAGO, or Teen Ager Ground Observers, a self-governing organization in which teenagers between the ages of 14 and 19 attended meetings, elected officers, visited military installations, adopted constitutions, and assisted at filter centers.³¹¹

GOC teenagers in Grand Rapids, Michigan produced their own promotional film entitled “Operation Teenager,” with the goal of increasing program participation.³¹² The script they developed reflected the notion that the GOC provided opportunities for teenagers to be productive citizens, by declaring that they were “not *spending*, but *using* their free time voluntarily in the Ground Observer Corps, playing a vital role in the defense of our nation.”³¹³ These projects, self-initiated rather than assigned, symbolized

the civic responsibility and self-sufficiency advocated by USAF and FCDA officials in the 1950s.

In addition to affording teenagers an opportunity to convert their free time to productive purposes, *The Aircraft Flash* claimed that the GOC could improve family relations, much like the Powner family in the bomb shelter in Project Hideaway. *The Aircraft Flash* boasted that family teams operating at the Cheektowaga, New York post illustrated how the GOC provided “an excellent opportunity for parents of teenagers to become closer to their children while working on a project of mutual interest.”³¹⁴ Family and mother-daughter teams also participated in the CAP, but annual reports do not elaborate on their activities or achievements.³¹⁵

Both the GOC and CAP encouraged the participation of families and teenagers, as well as that of women in a period in which many women considered their “central work” to be in the home.³¹⁶ Elaine Tyler May asserts that women sought refuge from this domestic realm through “volunteer or community work” such as the GOC.³¹⁷ Women comprised the majority of GOC volunteers and participated in the GOC at much higher rates than they did in the CAP, as 65% of GOC participants were female, compared with 17.3% of CAP members.³¹⁸ In World War II, women played a significant role in home front mobilization through various industrial jobs, inspiring them to search for new employment opportunities after the war.³¹⁹ While many of these opportunities ceased with the war’s conclusion, women could continue to utilize these technical skills through the GOC. The program aligned with the daily routines of women more than CAP, as the Civil Air Patrol diverted women from their household responsibilities to activities requiring intensive training and physical demands. Female members of CAP served as

operations and administration officers, radio operators and pilots, and often found themselves in the air, far from the domestic realm.³²⁰

The CAP's *Report to Congress for 1951* acknowledges that “women have just begun to find their niche in military aviation,” resulting in limited program participation.³²¹ The organization restricted women from certain activities, permitting in 1955 only “physically qualified” males to participate in the jet orientation course at Tyndall Air Force Base.³²² Female GOC members like Jess Irwin, day director at the Boise filter center, on the other hand, participated in the GOC School (used for intensive GOC training) at Tyndall Air Force Base.³²³

In contrast to the Civil Air Patrol, the GOC accommodated the lifestyles of women in the early 1950s, which required that they perform a “wide range of occupational roles — early childhood educator, counselor, cook, nurse, housekeeper, manager, and chauffeur — all within the home.”³²⁴ *The Aircraft Flash* recognized the compatibility of these roles with the GOC, stating “Basically, of course, women are interested and involved in the home, and more concerned with its preservation This may explain why they have used their great influence in the home, the community and the nation to promote the Ground Observer Corps.”³²⁵ This statement speaks to McEnaney's concept that

privatization brought civil defense to homes and neighborhoods, places where women supposedly presided full-time over the welfare of families and community members. Home protection made preparedness immediately a 'woman's concern,' for the skills and services required to prepare for and survive an attack were virtually the same as a housewife's domestic chores and community service.³²⁶

The GOC could effectively utilize women for GOC activities because, as McEnaney argues, housewives spent the majority of their time in their homes and

neighborhoods, so the “average housewife could therefore, in their words, be 'on duty' twenty-four hours a day.”³²⁷ A playground constructed at the observation post in Mechanic Falls, Maine serves as an example of how the program facilitated domestic responsibilities of mothers, while allowing them to participate in activities outside of the home.³²⁸ Community initiative also served the Warwick, Virginia post, as the Parkview Women's Club watched the children of mothers who wanted to volunteer at the post.³²⁹ Through the activities of female volunteers *The Aircraft Flash* tied ideological rhetoric to defense, asserting that women contributed to the creation of a program that “has more cohesion and stability than any which highly-regulated, dictator-governed nations have been able to develop.”³³⁰

While both organizations employed the help of teenagers, celebrated community involvement and shared similar missions, the activities of the GOC encouraged and facilitated the participation of all citizens to a greater degree than the Civil Air Patrol. The GOC demanded shorter time commitments, lower participating costs, less physically-demanding activities and less extensive training and education than the CAP, thereby ensuring that more citizens could participate in Cold War defense.

Financial requirements may also have barred participation in the CAP, as pilots flew their own aircraft on search missions and the USAF reimbursed them only for fuel and oil.³³¹ According to the *1954 Annual Report*, Congress did not subsidize the CAP, and the Air Force was constrained in the number of planes it could donate, making equipment difficult to procure for CAP missions.³³² This meant that the Civil Air Patrol depended on membership dues from adult members, which, according to the *Annual Report: Civil Air Patrol Auxiliary of the United States Air Force for 1952*, “continued to

affect the adult membership” and “resulted in a gradual weeding-out of those members who lacked the spirit and aggressiveness.”³³³ In order to obtain equipment, members matched Air Force funds 10 to one, members owned 90% of planes, and they paid the personal expenses necessary for missions and conferences.³³⁴ Members absorbed additional financial burdens by accepting “the pay loss that occurs when CAP duty calls us away from our jobs.”³³⁵

Volunteers in the GOC incurred nominal, if any, expenses, as business establishments within the community generally donated materials necessary to construct towers, or public sites made their buildings available as observation posts free of charge.³³⁶ The Air Force paid for telephone calls, training, and communications equipment, but required observers to construct posts.³³⁷ Observation required only binoculars, a clock and a log, minimizing the actual cost to volunteers.³³⁸

The very nature of Civil Air Patrol activities restricted participation primarily to the able-bodied, while local Ground Observer Corps posts encouraged the involvement of those restricted by physical handicaps. CAP missions involved physically- and emotionally-demanding tasks, such as dropping supplies and restoring communication to flooded areas, evacuating “marooned pilots,” transporting victims from a massive fire described as “literally a holoca[u]st,” and in Maryland searching for the murderer of a seven-year-old child.³³⁹ GOC participants often alerted Air Force personnel to devastating fires and downed aircraft, but seldom intervened in these activities themselves.³⁴⁰

CAP members frequently aided the handicapped through “mercy missions,” such as flying a polio victim from North Carolina to a New York hospital, but rarely received

help from the physically disabled.³⁴¹ Ulysses L. Adams' master's thesis, *A History of the Civil Air Patrol from 1941 to 1956*, states that CAP cadets underwent a physical examination and that "good physical condition is desired," but "physical disabilities will not necessarily preclude a youth from membership."³⁴² Thus, while the CAP accepted the disabled, they did not actively recruit them.

Handicapped citizens could be equally as helpful as their able-bodied counterparts to the Ground Observer Corps, and the United States Air Force consistently recognized them for their efforts. Assistant chief observer John Heldmyer III, due to polio confined to a wheelchair since the age of 15, recruited, scheduled and verified information for the GOC in addition to running an insurance business and dry cleaning service.³⁴³ The Air Force recognized blind observer Kenneth Schickel of Miami, Florida by awarding him wings for using his seeing-eye dog to locate the type, distance and direction of suspicious planes.³⁴⁴ William Swayze maintained 24-hour operations at the Lapeer, Michigan post, despite the loss of his legs in an industrial accident, by regularly making telephone calls to observers. For Swayze's work, Brigadier General Lester J. Maitland, Michigan's civil defense director, presented him with a Freedoms Foundation's George Washington Honor Medal.³⁴⁵

The Aircraft Flash argued that "people in this category [the handicapped] are so dedicated and give so much of themselves to the air defense of the nation is of utmost significance. For, by their very devotion to GOC duty, they reveal that they have shaken off the tendency to dwell on their own problems and are shouldering those that face all the people."³⁴⁶ Observation activities accessible to citizens with "infirmities" allowed all citizens to demonstrate self-sufficiency and civic responsibility.

Because of the risk involved in CAP assignments, cadets and members underwent extensive training in various subjects, such as fire fighting, which may have hampered widespread participation and led to continued emphasis on younger, able-bodied cadets.³⁴⁷ Ground Observer Corps volunteers, on the other hand, ranged in age and often included the elderly, many of whom had served in previous wars, such as the 109-year-old Confederate veteran who observed in Crestview, Florida.³⁴⁸ While the Civil Air Patrol required intensive training, the only training required for GOC volunteers involved studying the official Ground Observer Corps manual to identify threatening aircraft, and occasionally viewing a training film or working with mobile training teams for a few hours.³⁴⁹

The GOC also varied from the CAP because assignments encouraged the participation of socially deviant groups, like prisoners, who in Plymouth, Michigan earned points for early release based on skywatching.³⁵⁰ *The Aircraft Flash* praised a Michigan prison camp system, composed of four camps entitled Michigan Corrections-Conservation Camps, for “enabling the inmates to perform an important and honorable service for the society with which they once clashed.”³⁵¹ The magazine similarly described how GOC activities allowed the New Mexico School for Boys, a correctional institution of the state, to “surely help the boys in their up-hill climb to restored self respect and good citizenship.”³⁵² The use of existing structures, like those within prisons, enabled deviant groups to both bolster national security and prove they were “worthy citizens.”

The Aircraft Flash cited the Minnesota State Reformatory for Men, located in St. Cloud, Minnesota, as an example of how the GOC helped create self-sufficient and valuable citizens:

Not only have the spotting duties been carried out thoroughly and without the slightest incident, but they have also been a strong rehabilitary factor. Of the 35 young men who have left the institution after serving as ground observers, only two have ever returned. This is 50 per cent better than the average for other parolees.³⁵³

Whether or not prisoners felt an increased sense of self-respect or valued themselves as worthier citizens through GOC activities requires further research.

CAP missions generally required significant planning and preparation and typically took place outside of the home (with the exception of CAP radio stations), whereas GOC volunteers could undertake observation activities virtually anywhere with minimal preparation, as evinced by Pamela Burr's account.³⁵⁴ Some volunteers like a Butte High School superintendent and school principal observed from their homes in Sentinel Butte, North Dakota.³⁵⁵ Others transformed their businesses into observation hubs, such as the H.J. Heinz Company in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, which established a post at the gate of its cannery and encouraged employees to volunteer throughout the day.³⁵⁶ In Lawrence, Michigan, Bruce McDaniels designated his filling station as the local observation post and often manned it, while Larry O'Connor of Cairo, Indiana designated the local grocery store attached to his house as the community's initial observation site.³⁵⁷

Volunteers often discovered innovative ways to meet unique needs, like the Parkers, a couple from Lagoda, Indiana, who trained their collie puppy to listen for and alert them to approaching aircraft.³⁵⁸ Two teenage girls in Newark, Delaware rode ponies

a mile and a half from their home to their local observation post.³⁵⁹ Volunteer and U.S. forester Mackey B. Bryan invented a device to help new observers describe the location of an aircraft using a map, model airplane and buttons that lit up to represent the distance between the plane and post.³⁶⁰ These entrepreneurial and innovative endeavors, often predicated on private business, aligned with the FCDA's promotion of “self-preparedness and self-protection based on the traditional American values of individualism, privatism, and volunteerism.”³⁶¹ In contrast to other civil defense programs, some GOC volunteers observed during work hours or incorporated GOC duties into recreational activities, adapting their lives to meet program needs. The disorganization of the GOC and lack of protocol ultimately encouraged personal innovation and adaption of the program at the local level that benefited communities.

These GOC endeavors, representative of American “self-help” civil defense and predicated on private ownership and innovation, resulted in healthier communities. The value of the GOC extended beyond the USAF's original conceptualization of the program as a network to defend against nuclear attack. The program reinforced the welfare of local communities by assisting with natural disaster recovery and the prevention of crimes. GOC volunteers' involvement in reporting distressed and downed aircraft, spotting threatening weather patterns and alerting the Forest Service to fires made the organization essentially an auxiliary emergency group within communities. In fact, USAF Colonel Broun H. Mayall, Director of Civil Air Defense, ““established the theory that support of the air defense mission through the GOC was identical with public service,” and that the GOC was a “legitimate phase of community enterprise, with a right to expect and receive its share of the community’s energies and resources.”³⁶²

The unforeseen value of the GOC materialized during the implementation of the program at the local level. In Webster City, Iowa, county civil defense chairman Stewart Lund summoned GOC members to a one-block city fire and within ten minutes, 40 volunteers had arrived at the scene.³⁶³ They reported on wind conditions and, under direction of the police, directed crowds and traffic to safety, thereby minimizing panic and preventing injuries. An observer in Elyria, Ohio witnessed two men break into a drive-in, alerted police and monitored the get-away car to help police locate the robbers.³⁶⁴ GOC volunteers at the New Mexico Boys School state correctional institution untiringly provided recovery assistance at a train collision in Springer, New Mexico, where they comforted and fed victims at 4 a.m., validating the theory that the GOC could reinforce good citizenship.³⁶⁵ In south Texas, volunteers observed an airplane smuggling across the Mexican Border and reported the incident to the U.S. Border Patrol.³⁶⁶

In addition to enhancing community safety, the GOC reinforced a community's "spiritual unity" through activities related to the program.³⁶⁷ Volunteers interacted socially at towers and observation posts, as well as through promotional and recruitment activities. Life events took place at GOC filter centers and observation posts, such as marriage and death, including that of James E. Murphy, who was "fatally stricken" at an observation post in New York City.³⁶⁸

Illustrating that civil defense could strengthen communities, GOC volunteers at the Spokane, Washington filter center, along with eight Air Force sergeants and two lieutenants, established a blood bank for teenage observer and hemophiliac George W. Priebe.³⁶⁹ According to *The Aircraft Flash*, the actions of Dallas filter center participants illustrated "that the GOC is a community asset wherever it is located."³⁷⁰ When a fire

burned down Celeste High School in Texas and destroyed the library that provided primary “amusement and recreation” for the town of 729 people, Air Force Sergeant Viol Schumacher of the Dallas filter center initiated a drive to restore the library with a public information campaign using radio, television and newspapers that collected 3,000 books.³⁷¹

Promotional and recruiting activities also stimulated community interaction. Door-to-door volunteer drives were popular in California, where volunteers and airmen canvassed for volunteers for hours in Vernalis, then attended a Sonora-Oakdale football game and dinner-dance following the drive.³⁷² Using the support of volunteers, local businesses and Air Force personnel, the Canton, Ohio filter center held a fall rummage sale to raise money, bringing members of the community together.³⁷³ GOC participants held a barn dance at the “community meeting center” to raise money for the Scotts Valley, California observation post.³⁷⁴

In addition to altruistic events at posts and filter centers, volunteers participated in social exchanges as a result of their involvement in the program. Forty volunteers at the Baltimore filter center and observation post spent a weekend together on the beach at Ocean City, Maryland.³⁷⁵ *The Aircraft Flash* commented that “concern for the defense of the nation against air attack brought these people into the GOC. Now GOC provides a common ground for meeting and doing socially. . . . We hope that others in the GOC might be similarly inspired by the example.”³⁷⁶ GOC volunteers across the nation participated in social events, like the GOC Bowling League of Burlington, Vermont.³⁷⁷

Teenage observers considered observation towers social venues with the potential for romantic and sexual encounters, motivating Peter D. Baird to volunteer at the

observation post in Moscow, Idaho.³⁷⁸ Baird volunteered because he heard that the “fastest girl in the eighth grade” had signed up, “giving titillated Buffaloes [a Boy Scout troop] all manner of sexual double entendres to snicker about when discussing the observation shack.”³⁷⁹ Baird laments that “except for brief glimpses of her in a rakish Chevrolet driven by a high school boy with glistening black hair, we never saw the alluring eighth-grade girl anywhere that summer.”³⁸⁰ For others, like the oil executive described by Burr, author of “I am a Sky Sentry,” observation posts delivered this sexual promise, as Burr describes a “dizzy, blonde” patient, who came to the roof for fresh air. The patient inquired about the executive’s GOC duties and “observed that it would be cozier in that shack if he watched with a girl, and disappeared. Half an hour later she reappeared in a negligee and a cloud of perfume to offer her services to her country.”³⁸¹

The Aircraft Flash reported that social opportunities evolved into more profound commitments, frequently relaying stories about observers meeting and marrying as a result of GOC duties. Shirley Lash and Arnold Woolf met at the White Plains filter center in New York and eventually married on New Year’s Day, afterward reporting to three installations as a “husband-wife team,” while Wordna Brooks and W.R. Duke married at their local filter center in Shreveport, Louisiana.³⁸² Through the GOC, volunteers experienced life events, ranging from getting married to passing away, and communities became temporarily safer and more united as citizens spent time together.

The Ground Observer Corps affected communities differently depending on the composition of personnel participating. The first category of study includes areas consisting primarily of farmers, generally located in the Midwest. The second area of study includes major metropolitan centers, with concentrated populations that prospered

from tourism and entertainment, such as New York City and Miami. Finally, I examine areas with pre-existing observation posts, such as forest fire watchtowers and boats, primarily located along the northern border of the United States, and the Great Lakes area.

In his 1957 paper “Civil Defense and Regions: An Exploratory Study,” Francis R. Allen asserts that enemies would be unlikely to attack agricultural areas with atomic weapons, although these areas might be susceptible to germ attack and “would probably be used from the defensive standpoint as relief and rehabilitation areas.”³⁸³ Jenny Barker-Devine, writing in 2006, generally confirms Allen's contention and reiterates that “there was little need for rural residents to fear instant annihilation in the case of nuclear attack.”³⁸⁴ She argues that the FCDA solicited the participation of this region instead because “rural families also served as custodians of democracy and could prevent any type of socialism or communism from taking hold in local, state, and national governments.”³⁸⁵

While the FCDA envisioned civil defense as an impediment to the spread of communism, many rural participants discovered that intensive GOC efforts afforded small towns a degree of notoriety. Oakes describes that in Operation Alert the participation of “thousands of small towns across the country that did not intend to be left out of an event that appealed to the passions of patriotism as well as the interests of civic pride and the competitiveness of community spirit.”³⁸⁶

The GOC activities in Cairo, Indiana, a crossroads consisting of three homes, demonstrates this community pride. Larry O'Connor, World War II Navy veteran and owner of Cairo's only store, led the effort to establish a GOC observation post. Sources

are inconsistent as to why and how Cairo was selected as a site for a watchtower and why O'Connor organized the GOC volunteers. A *Lafayette Journal & Courier* article from July 11, 1976 reports that Governor Henry F. Schricker appointed O'Connor tower supervisor in 1950 and that the Air Force asked him to rally volunteers from the community.³⁸⁷ Cairo observer and tower co-architect Jim Haan stated in an interview with this author that the governor approached O'Connor to organize the post, but in a letter to the *Lafayette Journal & Courier* O'Connor claims that the "civilian head" of the GOC in Indianapolis commissioned him to organize the Cairo post.³⁸⁸

The Cairo post initially operated out of O'Connor's grocery store, and in 1950 and 1951 observers worked only on weekends, volunteering around-the-clock between 1951 and 1953.³⁸⁹ According to Haan, the post was necessary because of Cairo's location along a line of beacon lights that could guide the enemy to industrial centers in Chicago.³⁹⁰ In 1952 building began on the tower and the local Rural Electric Membership Cooperative (REMC) donated and set the tower poles, while local merchants from Lafayette and the town of Battle Ground donated materials, and residents in surrounding areas furnished labor.³⁹¹ Between 90 and 120 volunteers from surrounding areas volunteered at the Cairo tower.³⁹² Haan states that volunteers worked in two-hour shifts and that he and other farmers worked all day in the fields, while female family members manned the towers, and the men volunteered throughout the night.³⁹³

The Lafayette Journal and Courier, along with letters from participants, states that the tower was the first of its kind in several respects. The USAF commissioned the tower in 1952 and, according to O'Connor, it was "the first G.O. Post officially commissioned by the U.S.A.F. in the U.S.A."³⁹⁴ *Lafayette Journal & Courier* article

“Skywatch Tower in Cairo Stark Reminder of History” claims that the tower was one of the first freestanding towers constructed over the ground.³⁹⁵ Commanding Officer of the South Bend GOC detachment, Lieutenant Colonel Forest R. Shafer, mentioned in a letter to John M. Harris, former Director of the Tippecanoe County Historical Association, “I can verify that the tower constructed at Cairo, Indiana was the first of its kind within my jurisdiction but cannot confirm that it was the first in the United States. However, I am certain it was among the very first, at least.”³⁹⁶ Associate Director of the Tippecanoe County Historical Association Paula Woods elaborated about the tower “firsts,” declaring that “It’s really unique because this one was used for [as a] model for ones built all over the country. We had the prototype.”³⁹⁷

Regardless of whether these claims about tower “firsts” can be substantiated, participants’ beliefs that the Cairo tower was the first of its kind in the nation created a sense of pride in their community, evident in the commissioning ceremony that attracted 500 attendees to Cairo to observe flyovers of jets and speeches by public officials.³⁹⁸ At the ceremony, Lt. Governor John Watkins extolled residents for demonstrating “how rapidly the rural communities have moved forward” and that “the residents of a rural community have set an example for the nation.”³⁹⁹ In his letter to John M. Harris in 1976, Lt. Col. Shafer verified the uniqueness of this role, writing “I do remember that this tower received much acclaim at that time due to a superior effort by such a small group of patriotic citizens.”⁴⁰⁰ Haan illustrated in his interview with this author that the recognition of USAF personnel and public officials instilled in residents a sense of pride in their contributions, stating “We had some representatives down here and felt pretty good about it.”⁴⁰¹ He contends that the GOC tower made “a pretty important place out of it [Cairo].

There was a lot of business up there, a lot of people coming and going and working on the tower. And there was for days and days and days a lot of people up there.”⁴⁰²

The experience of Cairo volunteers continued to impact them, as they rallied for decades to commemorate the tower under the direction of Larry O’Connor. Residents held a dedication ceremony for the tower, attended by members of the state legislature “in the “Bicentennial Year – 1976.”⁴⁰³ In 1976, O’Connor also submitted a nomination of the tower to the National Register of Historic Places, which was eventually listed on the Register in 2003.⁴⁰⁴ In 1978, O’Connor appealed to the Tippecanoe County Park Board to establish a memorial and park near the tower, to be maintained by the Pleasant Grove Grange Lodge.⁴⁰⁵ In 1980, O’Connor with other Cairo residents received the limestone monument they had ordered to commemorate the volunteers with a sculpted image of a man, woman and child peering into the skies.⁴⁰⁶ While not all of these commemorative efforts were successful, they illustrate the importance of the tower to local residents.

The structure and operations of the Cairo post were similar to most midwestern and rural posts, where, with some exceptions, a local citizen and his family typically volunteered his home or small business as the community observation center. Similar to the Cairo post, the Skie family of Lennox, South Dakota operated a post from their farm's silo and kept the post in operation for 24-hours each day using a small group of community volunteers.⁴⁰⁷ For five years, Post Supervisor in Walnut, Illinois, Elton Conley, operated the local post from his farm, which eventually moved to a separate building like O’Connor’s Cairo post.⁴⁰⁸ In this rural sector, typically a patriotic local resident rallied the community to construct a post or volunteered, as did Francis Wright, Supervisor of the Whitewater post in Indiana, who “recruited practically all of

Whitewater's 125 residents into GOC duty.”⁴⁰⁹ The USAF specifically targeted farmers for participation in the GOC, appealing to their inherent work ethic.

According to Allen, author of “Civil Defense and Regions,” coastal and urban areas differed from those in the Midwest because “urban-industrial, high-income-level parts of the nation,” such as New York, “would undoubtedly stand a greater chance of being bombed in event of war.”⁴¹⁰ While the need for GOC volunteers was greatest in metropolitan areas because of the likelihood of attack, USAF officials often found recruitment in these regions very challenging due to their highly concentrated populations. Officials lamented that in urban areas “where next-door neighbors can remain total strangers for years, it is very difficult to acquaint even a small segment of the population with necessity for GOC.”⁴¹¹

The Aircraft Flash contends that observation in these areas “would not be operational without the able assistance of business and industry” and praised the “active cooperation” of Sears, Roebuck and Co. in Philadelphia, which provided a film projector to watch movies, parkas for observers and donated the use of its clock tower for improved observation.⁴¹² All employees of the Protection Department at an ALCOA plant in Massena, New York participated in observation. Charles DeLong of the department stated “Not only does the plant-sponsored activity aid in a vital defense program, it also substantially raises the morale of the entire Department.”⁴¹³ The Edgewater Beach Hotel in Chicago provided an example of the commingling of defense and social opportunities when it provided GOC participants with an observation post and a place for “social get-togethers” and banquets “highlighted by professional-type entertainment obtained by members of the post.”⁴¹⁴

The majority of volunteers in these regions observed from posts located on existing commercial structures, such as a brewery malt tower in Newark, New Jersey and Las Vegas's Hotel Fremont, the “swankiest address in the fabulous city of sun, sand and silver.”⁴¹⁵ *The Aircraft Flash* also noted the importance of community in urban areas, describing at Hotel Fremont “unprecedented cooperation between the GOC and private business to achieve the highest type of community support for the air defense of the nation.”⁴¹⁶ The voluntary participation of private industry in GOC operations exemplified the “American-style” civil defense and contrasted that of the Soviet Union.

Advisory councils typically served large cities, where USAF located most filter centers requiring hundreds of volunteers. These councils, described as an “organized group of representatives of . . . community organizations,” coordinated the needs of Air Force personnel and the community.⁴¹⁷ Because the Air Force could not know the unique needs of each city and because local government ultimately carried out GOC activities, a moderating body was necessary. Specifically, the councils provided guidance for filter centers, promoted the Ground Observer Corps and assisted with recruiting campaigns. These councils were comprised of representatives of community organizations, such as the Rotary Club and the American Federation of Labor, who worked together to identify unique community needs and helped mobilize support for the Ground Observer Corps based on these specific needs.⁴¹⁸ The councils represented a belief in the value of the individual to the group, as *The Aircraft Flash* contended that these councils did “much to impart a sense of participation to the ordinary citizen,” but also that “the very preservation of our democratic way of life points up the importance of groups in forming opinions”⁴¹⁹

Recruiting for the GOC in urban regions stimulated community interaction, but typically word-of-mouth and intimate meetings led to recruitment in rural regions, whereas metropolitan areas hosted extravagant entertainment events. At the Miami filter center male volunteers dressed in drag entertained 900 at a fried chicken picnic.⁴²⁰ Publicity and entertainment techniques flourished in California because, according to *The Aircraft Flash*, it was the “land of parades, beauty contests and publicity schemes of all sorts” and “one of the 'promotinest' GOC units in one of the 'promotinest' states of the Union.”⁴²¹ Beauty shows and parades achieved exceptional results in urban areas because “the theory behind such activity would seem to be that if beauty can be related to an idea, event or thing, that idea, event or thing, itself, will become attractive.”⁴²²

The third major GOC sector I analyze comprises observation posts in the Great Lakes area, Alaska, and the states along the Canadian border. The USAF considered these posts, particularly those in Alaska, important because of their proximity to the Soviet threat. As with metropolitan areas, posts along the northwestern border relied on the participation of private businesses like Minnesota & Ontario Paper Co. (MANDO). These border posts incorporated skywatching into existing structures and activities, such as forest fire towers and boats. Navy reservists and naval ships carrying radar extended detection coverage along the northern border, lengthening the DEW line.⁴²³

Few observation posts along the northern border had access to electricity and therefore experienced communication problems. Ground Observer Corps members developed innovative methods to relay aircraft reports. The Ground Observer Corps in Arden, Washington, a village of 50 citizens, most of whom watched from their houses, first employed a “primitive” signaling system “with the observer either pounding on a

cross-cut saw or ringing a cowbell when they sighted a plane. Later, an electrical buzzer system was installed.”⁴²⁴ Crews struggled with transmitting observation reports and eventually sent them to shore stations that re-transmitted the ships' calls to filter centers.⁴²⁵

Observers from 1300 existing towers, used to search for forest fires, assisted the GOC with skywatching, and according to *The Aircraft Flash* these activities broke up the monotony of forestry-related observation.⁴²⁶ The USAF credits the U.S. Forestry Service for soliciting considerable participation in northern areas, such as Spokane, Washington.⁴²⁷ *The Aircraft Flash* extolled the aid of private industrial firms, citing the MANDO as “a sterling example of industrial cooperation” for encouraging their American and Canadian employees to participate in the GOC.⁴²⁸

American and Canadian shipping crews in freighters, ferries and fishing boats began aiding the GOC in 1954.⁴²⁹ The Air Force noted that natural obstacles to observation posed by the 95,000 square miles making up the Great Lakes “have been bridged through determination — sometimes ingenuity — that results from cooperation and teamwork among citizens when they realize their country's in need.”⁴³⁰ This assertion aligns with the USAF and FCDA's concept that voluntary collaborations could overcome security obstacles and even natural impediments. This teamwork included collaborations between the United States Air Force and the Canadian Air Defence Command working together to defend their territories against a common defense threat.⁴³¹

The Aircraft Flash published several articles showcasing GOC volunteers in Alaska, emphasizing that they participated heavily in the program, despite communication problems and frigid weather.⁴³² The Air Force recognized that Alaska

would be the first line of defense in detecting the atomic air threat and when Alaskan observers detected contrails over Nunivak Island in 1952 the Air Force intensified observation efforts and reconfirmed the value of the GOC.⁴³³ Alaskan fishermen, trappers, teachers, Eskimos and missionaries volunteered with the GOC, and in the village of Nulato all 230 residents volunteered, reporting to the Jesuit missionary Reverend S.J. Baud.⁴³⁴ Here, too, the program strengthened traditional values, as boys of St. Mary's Mission of Andreafski, Alaska fished and caught “up on aircraft recognition” in an “effort at self-improvement,” resulting in one of the most efficient and united observation posts in the community⁴³⁵

The rhetoric used to describe the Ground Observer Corps conveys the FCDA’s and USAF’s beliefs that the way Americans participated in the GOC, and civil defense in general, was as important to air defense as the ability to detect and retaliate against an atomic attack. The implementation of this “American-style civil defense” brought observers together socially, encouraged families to cooperate, afforded women opportunities to serve outside of the home and generally strengthened the welfare of communities through supplementary observation activities. While Air Force officials never achieved desired participation numbers, the citizens who did participate demonstrated innovative and entrepreneurial skills like creative fundraising activities and novel observation tools, representative of Cold War ideology. Ultimately GOC volunteers demonstrated that those “who stand and watch also serve.”

Conclusion

The GOC is now long forgotten, as demonstrated by the Cairo tower, once so revered by the community for decades through ceremonies and a historical marker, but now in decay. As with many civil defense programs of the 1950s the GOC has been deemed a quirky, superfluous program, constructed by an overly-paranoid people. However, the GOC established a model of national defense that solicited the participation of the general public. Amanda J. Dory's "American Civil Security: The U.S. Public and Homeland Security" explains how the strategy behind 1950s defense programs still sheds light on modern civil defense.⁴³⁶ Dory asserts that "a historical precedent for educating and involving the U.S. public directly in homeland defense efforts can be found in civil defense measures taken during the Cold War."⁴³⁷ A comparison of GOC Advisory Councils and the Citizens Corps, a twenty-first century program described by Dory that was developed to encourage local volunteers to prepare and respond to community disasters, reveals similarities that imposed organization on local residents, rather than on national defense officials.⁴³⁸ Dory's work supports McEnaney's assertion that the FCDA "was the only postwar national security agency to solicit mass citizen participation in its planning and implementation."⁴³⁹

Dory touches on the differences between atomic age and twenty-first century civil defense programs, stating that the post-9/11 United States has failed to develop a "comprehensive and updated effort comparable to that employed by the United States in the face of the Soviet threat."⁴⁴⁰ This Cold War civil defense, Dory argues, succeeded by linking patriotism to "a larger sense of community and civic duty," similar to my argument in Chapter Three that local assumption of GOC activities endeared the program

to the volunteers and gave them a sense of pride.⁴⁴¹ This community initiative differs from post-9/11 defense, as Dory quotes Tom Ridge, former Secretary of Homeland Security, who implored Homeland Security to “empower citizens to play a more direct role” in their own defense.⁴⁴²

Dory’s comparison of 2000s defense and that of the 1950s reveals the GOC to be unique in mobilizing a vast and diverse segment of the population to participate in their own defense. Study of scholarship regarding domestic anticommunism, life and politics after the bomb, and atomic age civil defense illuminates some of the political and social factors that motivated civilians to steel themselves against the Cold War atomic threat.

In my examination of historical scholarship regarding the response to communism in the U.S., I discovered that due to temporal distance scholars in the 1970s dedicated more research to victims’ experiences and increasingly criticized their persecutors. After the Cold War, and with access to new Soviet sources, historians provided more nuanced accounts of domestic communism, studying not only Senator Joseph McCarthy, but also the actions of the American Communist Party that made members susceptible to persecution. Post-9/11 examination of early Cold War domestic communism generally criticizes the persecutors for establishing political witch-hunting in response to national security crises. A combined fear of domestic communism and Soviet use of the atomic bomb energized some citizens to meet these threats through the Ground Observer Corps.

An examination of life and politics in the early atomic era reveals how political messages and individual fears caused citizens to retreat to the home and generally adhere to traditional gender roles. However, through the GOC women could both attend to domestic duties and utilize their technical skills, as this emphasis on the home facilitated

observation activities. Scholarship reveals that the actions and opinions of the general public, policy-makers, social commentators and political figures influenced one another. This resulted in the consensus that traditional gender roles could generate a feeling of security, as many citizens and political figures assumed that homosexuals and the sexually deviant were naturally sympathetic to the communist cause. Additionally, the majority of studies about the early atomic age conclude that the atomic bomb fundamentally altered American life and politics, but researchers continue to dispute the duration and intensity of the bomb's impact.

Scholars of civil defense merged cultural and political studies and favored the interpretation of the militarization of the home front as the result of civil defense. More recent scholarship explores dissent against civil defense. Much of this scholarship explains the ideology, aptly described by McEnaney and Oakes, behind civil defense that resulted in the privatization of the GOC. While civil defense scholarship rarely analyzes the Ground Observer Corps, many of the contentions made by these scholars are applicable to the program. This applicability is especially true of agricultural historian Jenny Barker-Devine, who focuses on how the FCDA hoped to convince rural and farming communities that they could reinforce the moral backbone of the nation in the early Cold War through civil defense and agricultural activities.

Most scholars conclude that the advent of atomic weapons upset citizens' understanding of personal safety, but these citizens sought security primarily through the domestic realm — that provided a sense of security through familial relationships — rather than civil defense. Even then, the success of civil defense programs like the GOC depended on the routines and parameters of one's household and neighborhood.

Despite generalized apathy, limited radar coverage in the early Cold War period necessitated a program geared towards the detection of air threats. This faulty radar and a nominal defense budget resulted in the Air Force's establishment of the GOC, considered by USAF planners as an inefficient but inexpensive method. In my examination of the program's organization and Air Force objectives I have demonstrated that at the GOC's inception in 1949 until approximately 1953 Air Force officials hoped that the GOC could bolster air defense through enhanced detection. After the Korean War and until the termination of the program in 1959, I have shown that the Air Force realized that the program could not effectively strengthen air defense and officials instead harnessed the GOC to gain support for the principles of preparation and volunteerism.

After much disagreement about the size of a civil defense program and who would organize it, members of Congress passed the Federal Civil Defense Act of 1950 that left organization up to individuals, rather than federal officials, and promoted individualism, volunteerism and self-initiation.⁴⁴³ This democratic ideology encouraged participants to take ownership of the program. GOC volunteers adapted the program to suit local needs by inventing new detection methods, like using a cross-cut saw to alert observers to a threat, and creating makeshift posts.

The program's structure, with duties split between the USAF and local defense agencies, hindered effectiveness and confused both local defense directors and volunteers. Analysis of the establishment of the GOC in the State of Indiana confirms the difficulties in organizing and recruiting a bifurcated and, at times, largely unsupervised program. Correspondence from Governor Adlai Stevenson to Governor Henry F. Schricker speaks to this confounding organization as Governor Stevenson admits his

confusion about how to proceed with its development.⁴⁴⁴ Obstacles such as these demonstrate the challenge inherent in mobilizing an entire nation against such a vague threat.

Poor program organization and privatized civil defense encouraged citizens to adapt the GOC to their community's needs, which would have been improbable with a rigid command structure. Because county defense officials often neglected overseeing program operations, participants at many posts redefined their purpose to include weather spotting, charitable and social activities. These activities included a blood drive for a sick observer, a wedding at a filter center, a GOC bowling league and tornado watching.

Study of the Ground Observer Corps illuminates Cold War defense struggles, the historical context surrounding the Cold War and the effect two major world wars had on the national psyche. Contemporary study of the GOC and the context in which it operated is particularly timely, given the continuing threat of atomic weapons and the emergence of new security threats, like terrorism, in the twenty-first century. Study of the GOC demonstrates how a national security threat mobilized citizens and affected local communities.

Despite examination of the involvement of volunteers, the Ad Council, FCDA leaders, USAF personnel, state and local elected and appointed officials, much about the program and the era remains to be researched and analyzed. Women's historians could examine how the GOC provided opportunities for women to work outside of the home in an era when citizens sought security within it. *The Aircraft Flash* noted women's contributions, but few women's accounts exist, despite the fact that they comprised the majority of volunteers. Additionally, military and national security historians will

discover that study of the GOC enriches the history of national defense and debates about standing armies, universal military training, and the military industrial complex. Other studies should include the history of volunteerism and civilian participation in civil defense, perhaps in comparison to that of the twenty-first century. Additional participants' accounts should be located or recorded and historians ought to inquire about how participants viewed the program both in retrospect and in comparison to modern security threats. Researchers should also ask volunteers if they felt they made a perceptible impact on their communities and whether they continued to meet socially after the termination of the program.

It is easy to belittle such a rudimentary system of defense and ridicule the notion that civilian volunteers, without direct supervision or coordinated operations, could safeguard the nation from the weapon that obliterated Hiroshima and Nagasaki. However, given the conservative defense budget and limited radar efficiency of the 1950s, this program served as the best form of protection against the atomic threat. The GOC represents the United States' first attempt to come to terms with the atomic bomb and the ongoing struggle to mend the "fence full of holes."

Notes

¹ The Ground Observer Corps, Advertising Material, A public service campaign prepared for the Department of the Air Force and the Federal Civil Defense Administration by The Advertising Council, Inc., Box 5, Folder "GOC- General 1953 (2)," 15A6, James M. Lambie Jr. Records, Eisenhower Presidential Library (hereafter cited as EPL), Abilene, Kansas. Lambie was Special Assistant in the White House, 1953-1960 (Eisenhower Presidential Library and Museum finding aids, http://www.eisenhower.archives.gov/research/finding_aids/1.html).

² *The Aircraft Flash* 2, no. 2 (September 1953): 3.; William G. Kay, "Air Defense of the United States," *Pegasus* (November 1952): 5, Box 7, Folder "Ground Observer Corps-General [1 of 2]," Staff Members and Office Files (SMOF): Spencer R. Quick Files, Papers of Harry S. Truman, Harry S. Truman Library (hereafter cited as HSTL), Independence, Missouri. *Pegasus* publicized military endeavors, although it is difficult to surmise whether or not it was actually affiliated with the military. Quick was the White House Liaison for the Advertising Council. His official title was Special Assistant to the Assistant to the President, Dr. John Steelman, 1951-1953 (Harry S. Truman Library and Museum collection guide, <http://www.trumanlibrary.org/hstpape/quickhst.htm>).

³ For the number of GOC volunteers see *The Aircraft Flash* 7, no. 3 (January 1959): 19.

⁴ Ground Observer Corps Project Office. "Defense: Responsibilities and Policy Regarding the Ground Observer Corps," Air Force Regulation No.355-5, Ground Observer Corps Policy Guide (December 1953): 13A, Box 13, Folder "Ground Observer Corps- Policy Guide 1954," 15A6, James M. Lambie Jr. Records, EPL.

⁵ For radar flaws below 6,000 feet see The Federal Civil Defense Administration, Advance Release no. 258 "Address by Justice M. Chambers, Executive Assistant Administrator, Federal Civil Defense Administration, at Annual Conference, Legionnaires of District Five, American Legion, Mayflower Hotel, Jacksonville, Florida, Sunday, June 29, 1952, 1 p.m.," 2, Box 7, Folder "Ground Observer Corps- General [2 of 2], Papers of Harry S. Truman, SMOF: Spencer R. Quick Files, HSTL.

⁶ *The Aircraft Flash* 2, no. 2 (September 1953): 3.

⁷ Laura McEnaney, *Civil Defense Begins at Home: Militarization Meets Everyday Life in the Fifties* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000): 5.

⁸ Guy Oakes, *The Imaginary War: Civil Defense and American Cold War Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994): 6.

⁹ Andrew D. Grossman, *Neither Dead Nor Red: Civilian Defense and American*

Political Development During the Early Cold War (New York: Routledge, 2001): 2.

¹⁰ Ibid., 14.

¹¹ Ibid., 15.

¹² Grossman, *Neither Dead Nor Red*, 2.

¹³ David F. Krugler, *This is Only a Test: How Washington, D.C., Prepared for Nuclear War* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2006): 56.

¹⁴ Grossman, *Neither Dead Nor Red*, 2.

¹⁵ *The Aircraft Flash* 3, no. 12 (July 1955): 4.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid., 4-5.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ For quotation see *ibid.*, 5.

²¹ Ross Federal Research Corporation, "Report to the Advertising Council Concerning Factors Influencing Membership in the Ground Observer Corps," (January 1955): 29, Box 21, Folder "Ground Observer Corps- General 1955," 15A6, James M. Lambie Jr. Records, EPL.

²² Kenneth Schaffel, *The Emerging Shield: The Air Force and the Evolution of Continental Air Defense, 1945-1960* (Washington, D.C.: Office of Air Force History, 1991): 156.

²³ McEnaney, 20-25.

²⁴ Department of Defense, Office of Public Information, Future Release No. 39-53, "Remarks by General Hoyt S. Vandenberg, Chief of Staff, U.S. Air Force before the Board of Directors of the Advertising Council at the Hotel Pierre, New York City," (January 15, 1953): [1], Box 5, Folder "General (1) (2)- 1953," 15A6, James M. Lambie Jr. Records, EPL.

²⁵ For quotation about "spiritual unity" see *The Aircraft Flash: Dedicatory Edition* 7, no. 3 (January 1959): 5.

²⁶ For a description of Senator McCarthy's actions see page 42 of this thesis.

²⁷ David Cauter, *The Great Fear: The Anti-Communist Purge Under Truman and Eisenhower* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1978).

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 13.

²⁹ Alger Hiss was an employee of the State Department and a member of the 1944 Yalta Conference. The writer Whittaker Chambers accused Hiss of espionage for the Soviet Union in 1948 and on December 3 he presented the House Committee on Un-American activities with State Department documents allegedly compiled by Hiss. In 1950, despite disputable evidence linking Hiss to the papers, a jury sentenced him to five years in the Lewisburg Federal Prison (Cauter, 58-62). Ellen Schrecker, author of *Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America*, contends that Hiss "personified the Communists-in-government issue," ratcheting up anxiety about domestic communism (Ellen Schrecker, *Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1998): 131).

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 21.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 184.

³² Richard M. Fried, *The Russians are Coming! The Russians are Coming!: Pageantry and Patriotism in Cold-War America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), http://web.ebscohost.com.proxy2.ulib.iupui.edu/ehost/ebookviewer/ebook/nlebk_151373_AN?sid=1952dbae-396e-4dab-864e-6fc261498a4d@sessionmgr198&vid=1&format=EB&lpid=lp_vii.

³³ *Ibid.*, ix.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, xi.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 28.

³⁶ Schrecker, *Many are the Crimes*.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 42-43.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, xii.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 43.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, See page 85 for the quotation about "the very diversity" and page 154 for

the quotation regarding “Americans at every level.”

⁴¹ Elaine Tyler May, “Security against Democracy: The Legacy of the Cold War at Home,” *Journal of American History* 97, no. 4 (March 2011): 939-957.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 940.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 943.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ Paul Boyer, *By the Bomb’s Early Light: American Thought and Culture at the Dawn of the Atomic Age* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1985, rev. ed., 1994).

⁴⁶ Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* rev. ed. (1988; repr., Basic Books, 1999).

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, xxii.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, xxiv.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, xviii.

⁵⁰ Geoffrey S. Smith, “National Security and Personal Isolation: Sex, Gender, and Disease in the Cold-War United States,” *The International History Review* 14, no. 2 (May 1992): 307-337.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 336.

⁵² Allan M. Winkler, *Life under a Cloud: American Anxiety about the Atom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993): 7.

⁵³ *Ibid.* For quotation about “government officials rather than scientists” see page 7. For “deep-rooted and corrosive fears” see page 4.

⁵⁴ Tom Engelhardt, *The End of Victory Culture: Cold War America and the Disillusioning of a Generation* (BasicBooks, 1995).

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 10.

⁵⁶ Lisle A. Rose, *The Cold War Comes to Main Street: America in 1950* (Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 1999).

⁵⁷ Ibid., 4.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 314.

⁵⁹ K.A. Cuordileone, “‘Politics in an Age of Anxiety’: Cold War Political Culture and the Crisis in American Masculinity, 1949-1960,” *Journal of American History* 87, no. 2 (September 2000): 516.

⁶⁰ JoAnne Brown, “‘A Is for Atom, B Is for Bomb’: Civil Defense in American Public Education, 1948-1963,” *Journal of American History* 75, no.1 (June 1988): 90.

⁶¹ Oakes, *The Imaginary War*.

⁶² Ibid., 8.

⁶³ Ibid., 77.

⁶⁴ Susan Stoudinger Northcutt, “Women and the Bomb: Domestication of the Atomic Bomb in the United States,” *International Social Science Review* 74, no. 3/4 (1999): 129-140.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 129.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 136-137.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 137.

⁶⁸ McEnaney, 158.

⁶⁹ Grossman, *Neither Dead Nor Red*, 92.

⁷⁰ Jenny Barker-Devine, “‘Mightier than Missiles’: The Rhetoric of Civil Defense for Rural American Families, 1950-1970,” *Agricultural History* 80, no. 4 (Autumn 2006): 415-435.

⁷¹ Ibid., 432.

⁷² Ibid., 418.

⁷³ Ibid., 432.

⁷⁴ David F. Krugler, *This is Only a Test: How Washington, D.C., Prepared for Nuclear War*.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 21.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 9.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 135.

⁷⁸ Andrew Falk, "Atomic Babble: Civil Defense and Citizen Opportunities, 1945-1964," *New England Journal of History* 66, no. 2 (March 2010): 31-53.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 40.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 34.

⁸¹ Thomas G. Paterson, *Meeting the Communist Threat: Truman to Reagan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988): 3-8.; See page 3 for the term "Red Facism."

⁸² Ibid, 5-15. See page 5 for the phrase "imperialistic behavior."

⁸³ S. Arthur Devan, "Planning National Defense, 1950-1970," in *Public Affairs Bulletin* no.75, *Legislative Reference Service* (Washington, D.C., 1949): 41. Devan published his article in the *Public Affairs Bulletin*, which is part of the Legislative Reference Service (LRS), an office within the Library of Congress. The LRS is a nonpartisan service where employees research and publish reports about selected topics to be used by Members of Congress in order to make informed decisions.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 41-42.

⁸⁵ Rose, 72.

⁸⁶ Krugler, 21.

⁸⁷ Quote from 102 Cong. Rec. S3011 (February 21, 1956).

⁸⁸ U.S. Army Center of Military History, *History of Strategic Air and Ballistic Missile Defense*, vol. 1 (Government Printing Office, 2009): 10, <http://www.history.army.mil/html/books/bmd/BMDV1.pdf>. The U.S. Army Center of Military History commissioned the two-volume study to examine the post-World War II arms competition between the Soviet Union and United States and to evaluate both Soviet and American civil defense and air capability. This source is very objective in its evaluation of the two systems.

⁸⁹ Michael S. Sherry, *In the Shadow of War: The United States Since the 1930s* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995): 126.

⁹⁰ Howard Jones, *A New Kind of War: America's Global Strategy and the Truman Doctrine in Greece* (Cary, NC: Oxford University Press, 1997): 17-18, <http://site.ebrary.com.proxy2.ulib.iupui.edu/lib/iupui/docDetail.action?docID=10142376>.

⁹¹ Paterson, 10.

⁹² Krugler, 25.

⁹³ Sherry, 127-134.; For Hitler's actions in Czechoslovakia, see David Clay Large, *Between Two Fires: Europe's Path in the 1930s* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1991): 355. Large states that after absorbing Austria, Hitler sought to incorporate Czechoslovakia into Germany in 1938. France and Britain recognized the danger in this consolidation, but in order to avoid another war with Germany they negotiated with Hitler, allowing Germany to absorb Czechoslovakia's Sudetenland. The attempt to "buy off" Hitler failed, and when he invaded Poland in 1939, the Allied Powers entered the war they tried to prevent.

⁹⁴ Paterson, 5.

⁹⁵ David M. Oshinsky, *A Conspiracy So Immense: The World of Joe McCarthy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press): 97. Oshinsky is a history professor at the University of Texas at Austin.

⁹⁶ Campbell Craig and Fredrik Logevall, *America's Cold War: The Politics of Insecurity* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2009): 67.

⁹⁷ Schrecker, 241-243.

⁹⁸ Oshinsky, 97.

⁹⁹ Rose, 110.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 112.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 111.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

¹⁰³ Quotation from *Anthony Leviero*, "Truman Declares Hysteria Over Reds Sweeps the Nation," *The New York Times*, June 17, 1949 (accessed February 10, 2012 through ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The New York Times); For reevaluation, see U.S. Army Center of Military History, *History of Strategic Air and Ballistic Missile Defense, Volume I, 1945-1955.*; Also note that The Department of Defense designated the USAF as the organization responsible for national air defense. The USAF then

delegated the responsibility of training, operations and planning the GOC to the Air Defense Command (ADC), an agency of the USAF (Ground Observer Corps Project Office, Headquarters, United States Air Force, “Responsibilities for the Ground Observer Corps,” Ground Observer Corps Policy Guide [December 1953]: 2, 15A6, Folder “Ground Observer Corps- Policy Guide 1954,” Box 13, James M. Lambie Jr. Records, ESL).

¹⁰⁴ U.S. Army Center of Military History, *History of Strategic Air and Ballistic Missile Defense, Volume I, 1945-1955*, 9.

¹⁰⁵ William R. Porretto, “History of the Ground Observer Corps in the North Central and Southeastern United States” (master’s thesis, Claremont Graduate School, 1954): 35-36.

¹⁰⁶ For a description of the air defense system, including Air Defense Direction Centers see “GOC Program,” Box 8, Folder “Ground Observer Corps- Program,” SMOF: Spencer R. Quick Files, Papers of Harry S. Truman, HSTL.

¹⁰⁷ *The Aircraft Flash* 2, no. 5 (December 1953): 4. The USAF published *The Aircraft Flash* and distributed the magazine to GOC personnel to inform them of GOC activities and keep them interested in the program. “GOC Program,” Section H, 2.

¹⁰⁸ Edith Marie Caravatta, “Organization Study of the Ground Observer Corps: United States Air Force” (master’s thesis, Syracuse University, 1955): 32.; Note that the FCDA coordinated with all state civil defense agencies in the United States to prepare for a “post strike period” and to signal air raid warning drills when alerted by the GOC (*The Aircraft Flash* 3, no. 12 (July 1955): 4). Although the FCDA was not responsible for the GOC, the organization promoted the GOC.

¹⁰⁹ Teenage observer Frank Sutter described the ““feel-good element”” of the GOC (Bruce Callander, “The Ground Observer Corps,” *Air Force Magazine* 89, no. 2 [February 2006]: 83).

¹¹⁰ Schaffel, 223.

¹¹¹ Barker-Devine, 419-420.

¹¹² Kenton Clymer, “The Ground Observer Corps: Public Relations and the Cold War in the 1950s,” *Journal of Cold War Studies* 15, no. 1 (Winter 2013): 34-52.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 34.

¹¹⁴ Poretto, 15-21.

¹¹⁵ Callander, 81.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 82.

¹¹⁷ Porretto, 26.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 27-31.

¹²⁰ U.S. Army Center of Military History, *History of Strategic Air and Ballistic Missile Defense, Volume I, 1945-1955*, 8.

¹²¹ Devan, 92.

¹²² Department of Defense, Office of Public Information, "Remarks by Millard Caldwell, Civil Defense Administrator before the Meeting of Civil Defense Directors at the Pentagon, Washington, D.C. Monday, June 16, 1952 (June 17, 1952)," GOC Program, Section B, 1, Box 8, Folder "Ground Observer Corps- Program," SMOF: Spencer R. Quick Files, Papers of Harry S. Truman, HSTL.

¹²³ U.S. Army Center of Military History, *History of Strategic Air and Ballistic Missile Defense, Volume I, 1945-1955*, 9.

¹²⁴ Department of the Air Force, Office of Public Information, Air Force Public Information Letter, For Commanders and Public Information Officers 6, no. 12 (June 27, 1952): [2], Box 7, Folder "Ground Observer Corps- General [2 of 2]," SMOF: Spencer R. Quick Files, Papers of Harry S. Truman, HSTL.

¹²⁵ Continental Air Defense Command, "Report of Presentations, Third Annual GOC Community Leadership Seminar, Colorado College, Colorado Springs, Colorado, 18-23 June 1956," 52, Box 29, Folder "Ground Observer Corps- Misc. Printed 1956," 15A6, James M. Lambie Jr. Records, EPL.

¹²⁶ Wadsworth Likely, "Air Defense Plans," *The Science News-Letter* 61, no. 3 (January 1952): 42-43.

¹²⁷ Caravatta, 8-10.; The DEW line was a series of radar transmitters installed in an east-west line that stretched from close to the Arctic Circle to Northern Canada that detected aircraft through radio waves. The Mid-Canada line was located below the DEW line and consisted of radar installed horizontally across Canada (*The Aircraft Flash* 4, no. 2 (September 1955): 7.)

¹²⁸ *The Aircraft Flash* 2, no. 8 (March 1954): 5. For radar gaps see "Address by

Justice M. Chambers, Executive Assistant Administrator, Federal Civil Defense Administration, at Annual Conference, Legionnaires of District Five, American Legion,” 2.

¹²⁹ “Defense: Responsibilities and Policy Regarding the Ground Observer Corps,” Ground Observer Corps Policy Guide, 2.

¹³⁰ Air Force Public Information Letter, For Commanders and Public Information Officers, [2].

¹³¹ *The Aircraft Flash* 5, no. 9 (April 1957): 2.

¹³² “Report to the Advertising Council Concerning Factors Influencing Membership in the Ground Observer Corps,” 29.

¹³³ Pamela Burr, “I Am a Sky Sentry,” *The Saturday Evening Post*, July 9, 1955.

¹³⁴ Schaffel, 92.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*

¹³⁶ *Pegasus* (November 1952), 1.

¹³⁷ Department of Defense, Office of Public Information, Future Release No.921-53, “Remarks by Assistant Secretary of the Air Force H. Lee White at a Meeting of State Civil Defense Directors at the Sheraton Park Hotel, Washinton, D.C., Wednesday September 30, 1953,” 2, Box 5, Folder “GOC—General 1953 (1),” 15A6, James M. Lambie Jr. Records, EPL.

¹³⁸ Devan, 21.

¹³⁹ For areas of industrial might see Devan, 21.

¹⁴⁰ *The Aircraft Flash: Dedicatory Edition* 7, no. 3 (January 1959): 19. The article does not describe how the Continental Air Command tested the efficiency of observation, but it is likely that officials conducted mock air attacks, as they did throughout the program to test the abilities of various observation posts. Due to a limited defense budget, the USAF created the Continental Air Command as a major command that supported air defense planning and testing (Schaffel, 95-96).

¹⁴¹ For the 1949 meeting to reestablish the GOC see *The Aircraft Flash: Dedicatory Edition* 7, no. 3 (January 1959): 19. It is likely that Thurston attended this meeting, although *The Aircraft Flash* states that it took place in the fall of 1949 and Thurston states in a letter that he attended in December. However, both were hosted for

the same purpose by the Secretary of Defense for northern governors and officials. For Thurston's role as superintendent of state police and Director of Indiana's Department of Civil Defense, see letter, Arthur M. Thurston, Superintendent [of State Police and State Civil Defense Director] to Hal Berman, Joint Committee on Atomic Energy (December 14, 1949): 1, Drawer 160, Box E, Folder "Civil Defense," Papers of Governor Henry F. Schricker, 1949-1953, Indiana State Archives (hereafter cited as ISA).

¹⁴² Thurston to Bergman, 1. Little USAF documentation exists regarding the 1949 resurrection of the GOC, other than articles from later issues of *The Aircraft Flash*. This continued to be the case until 1952 when Operation Skywatch commenced. Additionally, Indiana Governor Schricker maintained far more extensive GOC records than Governor Craig.

¹⁴³ Thurston to Bergman, 2.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 1-2.

¹⁴⁵ Indiana Department of Civil Defense, Civilian War Aid Division, Acts of 1949 Chapter 275, Senate Enrolled Act No. 244, "Preliminary [Planning] Conference, October 30, 1950," 1-2, Manuscripts and Rare Books, Indiana State Library (hereafter cited as ISL).

¹⁴⁶ Caravatta, 84.

¹⁴⁷ "Preliminary [Planning] Conference," Acts of 1949 Chapter 275, 2.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 4-5.

¹⁴⁹ Indiana Department of Civil Defense, Civilian War Aid Division, "Suggestions for the Expansion of the Civil Defense Program in Indiana," Preliminary [Planning] Conference, October 30, 1950, 2.

¹⁵⁰ Indiana Department of Civil Defense, Civilian War Aid Division, "Administrative Division," Preliminary [Planning] Conference, October 30, 1950, 1, Manuscripts and Rare Books, ISL.

¹⁵¹ Department of Civil Defense, State of Indiana, *The Indiana Civil Defense Sentinel* no.1 (April 1, 1950): Drawer 160, Box E, Folder "Civil Defense," Papers of Governor Henry F. Schricker, 1949-1953, ISA.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*

¹⁵³ "Warn Mayors Enemy Could Strike State," *Logansport Pharos-Tribune*, September 21, 1950, 2.

¹⁵⁴ Letter, Thomas H. Roberts to Gov. Henry F. Schricker, (February 7, 1951): 1, Drawer 164, Box B, Papers of Governor Henry F. Schricker, 1949-1953, ISA.

¹⁵⁵ Thurston to Bergman, 2.

¹⁵⁶ Letter, Governor Schricker to Louis Johnson [U.S. Secretary of Defense] (February 2, 1950): 1, Drawer 160, Box E, Folder "Civil Defense," Papers of Governor Henry F. Schricker, 1949-1953, ISA.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ For Indiana's progression, see "Warn Mayors Enemy Could Strike State."

¹⁶⁰ Letter, Adlai E. Stevenson [Governor of Illinois] to Henry F. Schricker (February 1, 1950): Drawer 160, Box E, Folder "Civil Defense," Papers of Governor Henry F. Schricker, 1949-1953, ISA.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Letter, Henry F. Schricker to Honorable Frank J. Lausche, Governor of State of Ohio (May 19, 1950): 2, Drawer 160, Box E, Folder "Civil Defense," Papers of Governor Henry F. Schricker, 1949-1953, ISA.

¹⁶⁴ Department of Civil Defense, State of Indiana, "List of Ground Observation Posts by Counties," *Bulletin* no. 4 (March 20, 1950): Papers of Governor Henry F. Schricker, 1949-1953, Drawer 160, Box E, Folder "Civil Defense."

¹⁶⁵ Department of Civil Defense, State of Indiana, *The Indiana Civil Defense Sentinel* 1, no. 2, (May 1, 1950): 1, Drawer 160, Box E, Folder "Civil Defense," Papers of Governor Henry F. Schricker, 1949-1953, ISA.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 3.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 1.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., 4.

¹⁷¹ Caravatta, 26.

¹⁷² Ibid., 69.

¹⁷³ Office of the Secretary of Defense, Civil Defense Liaison, *The Aircraft Warning Service of the U.S. Air Force* (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1950): 1-2.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ Caravatta, 67.

¹⁷⁶ *The Aircraft Warning Service of the U.S. Air Force*, 2.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹⁷⁸ Caravatta, 40.; *The Aircraft Flash* 2, no. 2 (September 1953): 3.

¹⁷⁹ GOC Program, "Fact Sheet on GOC," Section F [1953]: 2.

¹⁸⁰ Porretto, 200-201.

¹⁸¹ Caravatta, 30.

¹⁸² Ibid., 31.

¹⁸³ Ibid., 19.

¹⁸⁴ For the GOC's incorporation in the U.S. Civil Defense Corps see GOC Program, "Fact Sheet on GOC," Section F, 2.

¹⁸⁵ "Proceedings, Civil Defense-Ground Observer Corps Conference, January 7-8, 1954, Ent Air Force Base, Colorado," Box 13, Folder "Proceedings- Civil Defense-Ground Observer Corps Conference 1954," 15A6, James M. Lambie Jr. Records, EPL.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., 45.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., 49.; Note that the Air Defense Command directed three subordinate Air Defense Forces responsible for the Ground Observer Corps, including the Central Air Defense Force, Western Air Defense Force, and Eastern Air Defense Force, the last of which presided over Indiana's GOC (*Pegasus*, 2).

¹⁸⁸ "Proceedings, Civil Defense-Ground Observer Corps Conference January 7-8,

1954,” 49.

¹⁸⁹ For the beginning of the Korean War see Schaffel, 127. For the “Communist attack on Korea” see Schaffel, 129.; The Joint Chiefs of Staff is a body of leaders from each of the armed forces that advises the President and National Security staff on national security matters. The Joint Chiefs of Staff was created in World War II to improve coordination with British security personnel and was permanently established after World War II through the National Security Act of 1947 (“Origins of Joint Concepts,” Joint Chiefs of Staff, <http://www.jcs.mil/page.aspx?id=12>).

¹⁹⁰ Schaffel, 131.

¹⁹¹ Rose, 192.

¹⁹² Ibid., 137.

¹⁹³ Ibid., 138.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., 139.

¹⁹⁵ Letter, Henry W. Spiller, Major, USAF, Asst. Air Adjutant General to Supervisor [of OP posts], December 18, 1950: Drawer 160, Box E, Folder “E, Civil Defense,” Papers of Governor Henry F. Schricker, 1949-1953, ISA.

¹⁹⁶ Press Release, State of Indiana, Department of Civil Defense, “For Immediate Release,” July 27, 1950, 2, Drawer 160, Box E, Folder “E, Civil Defense,” Papers of Governor Henry F. Schricker, 1949-1953, ISA.

¹⁹⁷ Letter, Thurston to Arthur Campbell, Governor’s Office, December 6, 1950, Drawer 160, Box E, Folder “E, Civil Defense,” Papers of Governor Henry F. Schricker, 1949-1953, ISA.

¹⁹⁸ Indiana Department of Civil Defense, “Progress Report” (handwritten note says “Thurston Report”), December 20, 1950, 1, Drawer 160, Box E, Folder “E, Civil Defense,” Papers of Governor Henry F. Schricker, 1949-1953, ISA.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid., 1.

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

²⁰¹ Ibid., 4-5.

²⁰² “Thurston Report,” 5.

²⁰³ Porretto, 83-85.; Contrails are visible vapor trails that emanate from aircraft jets.

²⁰⁴ Melvyn P. Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992): 485-487.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 487. Quote from 488.

²⁰⁶ Porretto, 87-89.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 96-98.

²⁰⁸ For lack of volunteers see Department of the Air Force, Office of Public Information, Air Force Public Information Letter 6, no. 12, June 27, 1952, [1], Box 7, Folder "Ground Observer Corps- General [2 of 2]," Papers of Harry S. Truman, SMOF: Spencer R. Quick, HSTL.; For state director's opinion see Porretto, 90.

²⁰⁹ Porretto, 90.

²¹⁰ Robert P. Keim, Lt. Colonel, USAF Project Officer, GOC Program, Prepared for Director of Public Information, Office of the Secretary of the Air Force, "Report on Ground Observer Corps: Joint Education Campaign [1952]," 3-4, Box 8, Folder "Ground Observer Corps Joint Education Campaign," Papers of Harry S. Truman, SMOF: Spencer R. Quick, HSTL.

²¹¹ "Remarks by Millard Caldwell, Civil Defense Administrator before the Meeting of Civil Defense Directors at the Pentagon (June 16, 1953)," *GOC Program*, Section B, 4.

²¹² "Report on Ground Observer Corps: Joint Education Campaign," 4.

²¹³ Air Force Public Information Letter, June 27, 1952, 3.

²¹⁴ For Skywatch preparation see "Address by Justice M. Chambers," 1. For "false sense of security" quotation see 4.; For those involved in the campaign see "Report on Ground Observer Corps: Joint Education Campaign," 5.

²¹⁵ Air Force Public Information Letter, [3].; Murrow was a popular newscaster in the 1950s, who brought public awareness to McCarthy's fraudulent claims on his various newscasts (Oshinsky, 397-399).

²¹⁶ Air Force Public Information Letter, [3]. Underline in original.

²¹⁷ Letter, Spencer R. Quick to Ed Lyman, Office of Public Affairs, Federal Civil

Defense Administration, September 5, 1952, Box 7, Folder "Ground Observer Corps- Correspondence [1 of 2], Papers of Harry S. Truman, SMOF: Spencer R. Quick Files, HSTL.

²¹⁸ "Address by Justice M. Chambers," 2.

²¹⁹ 98 Cong Rec. S8561 (June 30, 1952).

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²⁵² 688 Cong. Rec. 154 (July 13, 1955).

²⁵³ *The Aircraft Flash* 5, no. 1 (August 1956): 2.

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

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²⁶⁹ Indiana Department of Civil Defense, “Ground Observer Corps is Inactivated,” *The Indiana Civil Defender* 2, no. 6 (December 1958): 1, Manuscripts and Rare Books, ISL.

²⁷⁰ Ibid., 3.

²⁷¹ Ibid.

²⁷² Ibid.

²⁷³ *The Aircraft Flash: Dedicatory Edition* 7, no. 3 (January 1959): 5.

²⁷⁴ Ibid., 2.

²⁷⁵ This phrase was likely coined by Congressman Charles A. Halleck in a speech at the commissioning of the Cairo tower in 1952 (“First Commissioning of a Ground Observer Post in the U.S.A. by the U.S.A.F. at Cairo, Indiana, August 16, 1952,” 5,

Marker File 79.1995.1, "Cairo Skywatch Tower," IHB).

²⁷⁶ For the phrase "American-style civil defense" see McEnaney, 86.

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 23-25.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 16.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 22-25.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 123.

²⁸¹ Guy Oakes and Andrew Grossman, "Managing Nuclear Terror: The Genesis of American Civil Defense Strategy," *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society* 5, no. 3 (Spring 1992): 395.

²⁸² U.S. Army Center of Military History, *History of Strategic Air and Ballistic Missile Defense, Volume I, 1945-1955*, 4.

²⁸³ McEnaney, 7.

²⁸⁴ 101 Cong. Rec. S3482 (March 23, 1955).

²⁸⁵ *The Aircraft Flash* 7, no. 1 (August 1958): 9.

²⁸⁶ *The Indiana Civil Defense Sentinel*, no. 1 (April 1, 1950): 2-5.

²⁸⁷ Oakes and Grossman, "Managing Nuclear Terror," 361.

²⁸⁸ McEnaney, 79.

²⁸⁹ For the number of volunteers enrolled in the program see *The Aircraft Flash* 7, no. 3 (January 1959): 3.; For the quotation "the progress has been heartening" see "Remarks by General Hoyt S. Vandenberg, Chief of Staff, U.S. Air Force before the Board of Directors of the Advertising Council at the Hotel Pierre, New York City," (January 15, 1953): [1].

²⁹⁰ McEnaney, 68, 80.

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 80.

²⁹² Sidney Shalett. "They Hope They're Wasting Their Time." *Saturday Evening Post* 226, no. 13: 132.

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²⁹⁴ Burr, "I am a Sky Sentry."

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³⁰⁶ Fried, 28.

³⁰⁷ Civil Air Patrol, *Annual Report, Auxiliary of the United States Air Force, for*

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³⁰⁹ Civil Air Patrol, *Report to Congress for 1951*, 15.

³¹⁰ *The Aircraft Flash* 6, no. 6 (June 1958): 4-6, 16.

³¹¹ *The Aircraft Flash* 5, no. 1 (Aug 1956): 4-5.

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³¹³ *Ibid.*, Italicizes theirs.

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³¹⁵ Civil Air Patrol, *Report to Congress for 1951*, 16.

³¹⁶ May, *Homeward Bound*, 165.

³¹⁷ *Ibid.*

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³¹⁹ McEnaney, 90.

³²⁰ Civil Air Patrol, *Annual Report, Auxiliary of the United States Air Force, for 1952*, 18.

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³²² Ulysses L. Adams, "A History of the Civil Air Patrol from 1941 to 1956" (master's thesis, University of Louisville, 1956): 21-22.

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³²⁴ May, *Homeward Bound*, 165.

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- ³²⁶ McEnaney, 89.
- ³²⁷ McEnaney, 108.
- ³²⁸ *The Aircraft Flash* 5, no. 3 (October 1956): 9.
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- ³⁴¹ Civil Air Patrol, *Annual Conference* (1949): 14.

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³⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 416.

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³⁸⁷ "Cairo Skywatch Tower Memorial Planned," *Lafayette Journal & Courier*.

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³⁹⁴ Lawrence W. O'Connor to Editor, *Lafayette Journal and Courier*.

³⁹⁵ Byron O. Parvis, "Skywatch Tower in Cairo Stark Reminder of History," *Lafayette Journal & Courier*, May 12, 1973, Marker File 79.1995.1, "Cairo Skywatch Tower," IHB.

³⁹⁶ Lt. Col. Forest R. Shafer to John M. Harris, Tippecanoe County Historical Association, October 4, 1976, Marker File 79.1995.1, "Cairo Skywatch Tower," IHB.

³⁹⁷ Kathy Matter, "Those who Watch the Skies: Operation Skywatch

Commemorated,” *Lafayette Journal & Courier*, September 22, 1996, given to the author by Tim Batta, copied from the Tippecanoe County Historical Association.

³⁹⁸ “Cairo Program Attracts 500: Air Force Commissions Its 40-Foot Skywatch Tower and Honors 90,” *Lafayette Journal & Courier*, August 18, 1952, ISL microfilm.; I have been unable to substantiate the various “firsts” regarding the Cairo tower, but have thoroughly searched *The Aircraft Flash*, Governor Schricker’s Papers, James M. Lambie Papers, Spencer Quick Papers, the Indiana Historical Bureau marker file and various documents given to me by the Haan family and Cairo resident Tim Batta. Because state civil defense and United States Air Force officials were less thorough in recording the early towers it is likely that this cannot be verified. Neither *The Aircraft Flash* nor the records at the Eisenhower Presidential Library and Harry S. Truman Library include documents about the GOC prior to 1952, the year Operation Skywatch began.

³⁹⁹ James (Jim) Haan, interview by Nicole Poletika.

⁴⁰⁰ Lt. Col. Forest R. Shafer to John M. Harris.

⁴⁰¹ James (Jim) Haan, interview by Nicole Poletika.

⁴⁰² James (Jim) Haan, interview by Nicole Poletika.

⁴⁰³ “Formal Dedication Ceremonies of “Operation Skywatch” Memorial In the Bicentennial Year – 1976, Honoring the Men, Women and Youth Who Were Civil Defense Volunteers Serving in The Ground Observer Corps of the United States Air Force During ‘Operation Skywatch’ in the 1950s – Korean War Days,” given to the author by Jim Haan.

⁴⁰⁴ Submitted by Fern Martin, “Cairo Skywatch Tower Application Submitted, For Immediate Release,” October 27, 1976, given to the author by Tim Batta, copied from the Tippecanoe County Historical Association.

⁴⁰⁵ Bill Oakes, “Park Board Peers at Skywatch Park,” *The Lafayette Journal and Courier*, August 16, 1978, given to the author by Tim Batta.

⁴⁰⁶ Thomas A. Russell, “Monument on its Way to Cairo,” *The Lafayette Journal and Courier*, May 10, 1980, ISL microfilm.

⁴⁰⁷ *The Aircraft Flash* 2, no. 3 (October 1953): 6.

⁴⁰⁸ *The Aircraft Flash* 6, no. 2 (September 1957): 8.

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⁴¹⁰ Allen, 245.

⁴¹¹ *The Aircraft Flash* 4, no. 6 (January 1956): 4.

⁴¹² *Ibid.*, 4, 9.

⁴¹³ *Ibid.*, 9.

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⁴¹⁵ For a description of the brewery malt tower in New Jersey see *The Aircraft Flash* 5, no. 7 (February 1957): 8.; For a description of the Hotel Fremont in Las Vegas refer to *The Aircraft Flash* 5, no. 1 (August 1956): 3.

⁴¹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴¹⁷ *The Aircraft Flash* 5, no. 8 (March 1957): 5.

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⁴¹⁹ *Ibid.*, See page 5 for the “much to impart” quotation. See page 4 for “the very preservation” quotation.

⁴²⁰ *The Aircraft Flash* 2, no. 1 (August 1953): 6.

⁴²¹ *The Aircraft Flash* 4, no. 3 (October 1955): 8.

⁴²² *Ibid.*

⁴²³ *The Aircraft Flash* 4, no. 1 (August 1955): 4-7.

⁴²⁴ *The Aircraft Flash* 2, no. 6 (January 1954): n.p.

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⁴²⁷ *Ibid.*

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⁴²⁹ *Ibid.*, 4-6.

⁴³⁰ Ibid., 4.

⁴³¹ Ibid.

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⁴³⁷ Ibid., 40.

⁴³⁸ Ibid., 49.

⁴³⁹ McEnaney, 5.

⁴⁴⁰ Dory., 41.

⁴⁴¹ Ibid., 40.

⁴⁴² Ibid.

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⁴⁴³ Grossman, 15.

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Education

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Bachelor of Arts in History and Fashion Merchandising, Ball State University, 2009

Minors in Spanish and Marketing

Professional Experience

Indiana Historical Society, Collections Assistant, 2013

Project Archivist, Summer 2012

Manuscript and Visual Collections Intern, August 2011-May 2012

Teaching Assistant, Introduction to U.S. History, Indiana University-Purdue University, Indianapolis, August 2012-May 2013

Indiana Historical Bureau, Intern, Summer 2011, 2012, 2013

Santayana Edition, Institute of American Thought, Intern, Spring 2011

Indiana State Museum Collections Intern, Fall 2010

Beeman Historic Costume Collection, Ball State University, Intern and Assistant, August 2008-May 2009

Educational Awards and Achievements

Graduated Cum Laude, Ball State University, 2009

Dean’s List: Spring and Fall Semesters 2006-2009

Departmental Student History Award: 2005, 2009

Marshall Plan paper won “Best Undergraduate” at Ball State University Student History Conference, 2008

Volunteer

Conner Prairie Interactive History Park, Education, Spring 2009

Publications

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