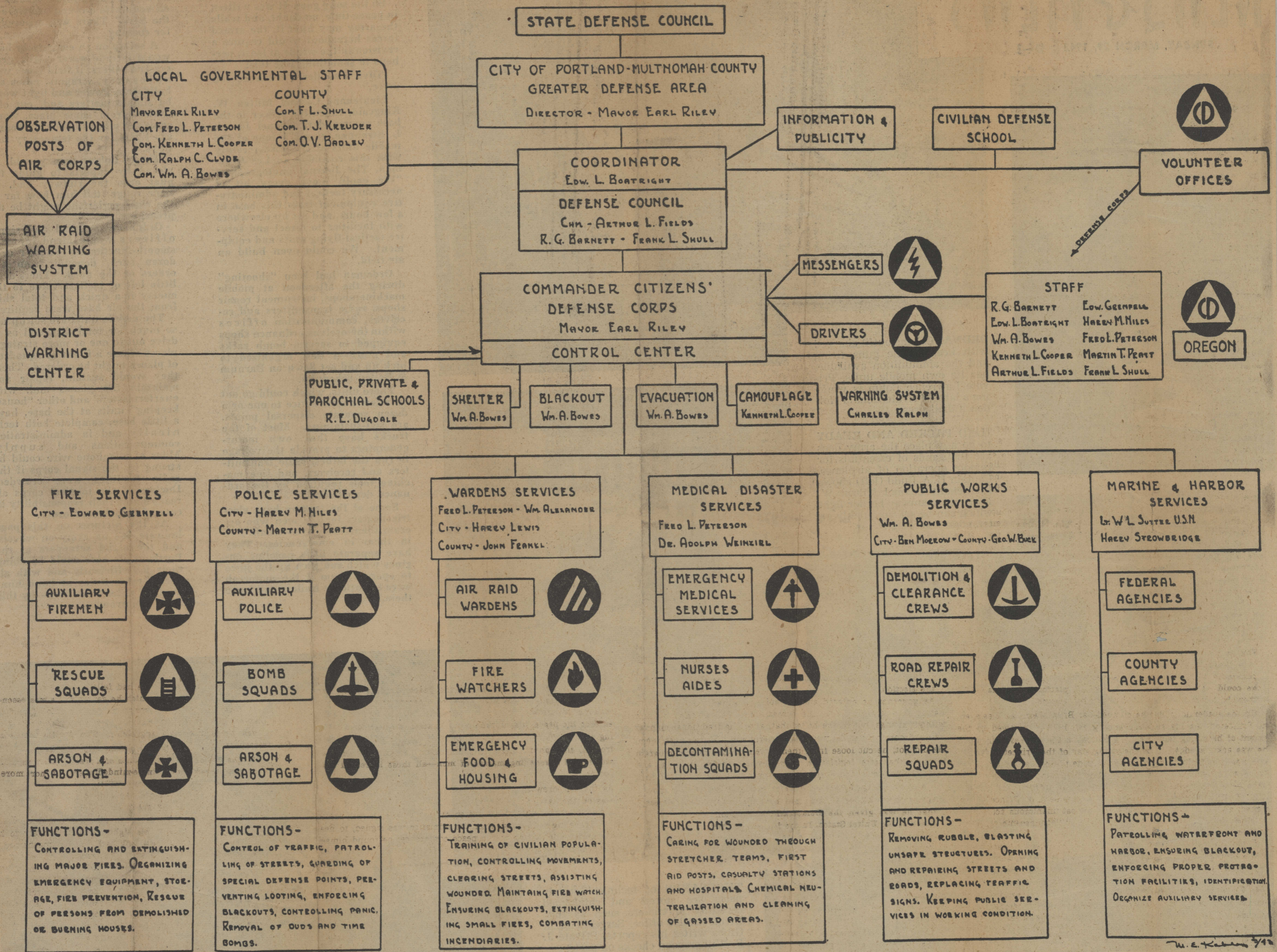


PORTLAND-MULTNOMAH COUNTY CIVILIAN DEFENSE (PROTECTION)



Portland's Civilian Defense Organized, Ready for Duty

By Larry Smyth

Out of all the reports of confusion and discord in the national civilian defense picture it develops that Portland has been going right ahead with its program, free of the friction that has developed elsewhere, until now officials in charge are about to put the finishing touches to it.

Organization has been carried on throughout the city to the extent that 80 per cent. of the air raid warden service personnel has been recruited and the specialized services of auxiliary police, fire, medical, public works, public utilities and marine and harbor services have been brought up to proper strength.

So far-reaching is the civilian organization in Portland that about one third of the total population will have some duty to perform in civilian defense. The big job, of course, is that of the air raid warden, but there are other jobs just as important, if not more so, and they take in people from all walks of life—all united in a plan to give Portland the protection it needs if a disaster brought on by an enemy should strike here.

Mayor Riley tops the civilian defense setup in Portland and the metropolitan area. Under him is Assistant Fire Chief Edward L. Boatright, who is co-ordinator of the OCD here, and in direct charge of getting all the functions of the big organizations moving in a streamline.

Advising them is a committee of which Arthur L. Fields is chairman and R. G. Barnett and Frank L. Shull, county commissioner, are assistants. They operate as the heads of the entire program directly under the mayor with Boatright as the executive officer.

The largest group in the program is the air raid warden setup under City Commissioner Fred L. Peterson. There are 18,000 blocks in Portland but because some of them do not have houses on them, the city is patrolling only 16,447.

In each block Peterson and his No. 1 man, Bill Alexander, are recruiting seven persons, including a man block warden and four men and two women assistants. One of these will be a first aid specialist and one will be a messenger. Five will be fire watchers to put out fires.

In the event of an air raid all telephone communication in Portland will be shut off at once. The only telephone lines open in a raid will be those used for emergency such as police and fire, public utilities, and the private phones which block wardens will have "spotted" to send messages to the control center. Messages from one warden to another will be sent by a messenger on foot.

Block wardens will agree on a single telephone for each four blocks to be used in the emergency. This phone will connect with the central control station in the city hall. There operators will receive calls from wardens and send out all necessary aid.

That is, if only fire apparatus is needed, a fire engine will be sent. If police are needed, they will be sent. If doctors and nurses or ambulances are needed, they will be sent. The control station will act on the advice of the block wardens and send whatever equipment and personnel is needed. This is to avoid duplication and confusion.

Commissioner Peterson figures that 120,000 block wardens and assistants will be needed but when the first recruiting is over he feels that 80,000 will do the job. There are 1800 auxiliary firemen enrolled and 4500 auxiliary policemen. The air raid wardens must pass a first aid test now being held in 48 schools in the city under the direction of the policemen and firemen who have Red Cross certificates. No warden may wear an arm band of his rank unless he passes the test.

There are 402 doctors registered in the service and these are augmented by a crew of nurses and nurse aides, women who have not only passed their first tests but also have gone through a course of 80 weeks in a hospital course. The entire medical group is expected to reach 1800.

The fire services under Fire Chief Grenfell will supervise the

auxiliary firemen, the rescue squads and arson and sabotage squads. Their jobs will be to control and extinguish major fires, organize emergency equipment, storage and fire prevention and rescue persons from demolished or burning houses.

The police will control traffic, patrol streets, guard special defense points, prevent looting, enforce blackouts, control any possible panic, and remove duds and time bombs. This work is under the direction of Chief of Police Harry M. Niles and Sheriff Martin L. Pratt.

Commissioner Peterson operates the warden service with his aide, Bill Alexander, assisted by Police Captain Harry A. Lewis and Deputy Sheriff John Franklin. Their duties will include air raid warden work, fire watchers, and emergency food and housing. Peterson is also head of the medical disaster service with Dr. Adolph Weinzirl as his aide in this division.

The public works service is under City Commissioner William A. Bowes and City Engineer Ben S. Morrow and County Roadmaster George W. Buck. Their job is to remove all demolished buildings and see that public utilities continue to operate. They

are closely aligned with the already established protection service set up by the private utilities and defense plants.

The navy and the customs service have complete charge of the marine and harbor services in the protection of that area.

W. E. Johnson 7/42