

# REPLIES TO McDONALD

## D-M Boss Defends Emergency System

By JOHN RIDDICK  
Citizen Staff Writer

The commander of Davis-Monthan AFB today declared that hundreds of base personnel are involved in an emergency plan for missile accidents and they practice it regularly.

Yesterday, Dr. James E. McDonald, senior physicist with the UA Institute of Atmospheric Physics, charged that the Air Force is unprepared for emergencies such as that which happened Wednesday when poisonous fumes escaped from a Titan II missile complex north of Tucson.

Although declining to join in a public debate with McDonald, Col. Douglas M. Conlan, the D-M base commander, said: "We are prepared to respond instantly to any kind of disaster man-made or natural, that anyone can conceive of, and we practice the system regularly."

Referring to Wednesday's accident, Conlan added:

"The men did a fine job in setting up the system so quickly that the area was evacuated and a roadblock was established within 30 minutes," said Conlan.

He explained that the disaster control team is triggered into action by any report of a threatening disaster. Telephone calls are interrupted immediately to bring a wide variety of skilled people on the alert.

The team includes fire fighters, doctors, missilemen, biologists, helicopter pilots, specialists on the Phantom F4C and the WU2 aircraft, and, if necessary, the chaplain.

If there is a gas involved, a meteorologist figures out where the fumes will go.

Within four minutes, the leaders will have gathered at the Command Post of the 390th Strategic Missile Wing. The convoy will be underway to the scene within 15 minutes.

In the meantime, a mobile unit roving the area will have been notified by radio within seconds

if the disaster involves a missile.

The air police in the roving unit have a wide variety of equipment, including masks with which they can enter a poisonous zone. Civilian law enforcement authorities are notified. In the incident this week, the Air Police blocked one end of the highway while Pinal County sheriff's deputies blocked the other, Conlan said.

"The Air Force has no authority to block the highways, and in the incident this week,

numerous cars chose to proceed after having been warned of their danger," Conlan said.

Col. Robert J. Hill, the wing commander, knew of the danger within a few seconds through the web of communications covering the 18 local Titan complexes.

He immediately put into operation his own system to solve the problem which included use of a Missile Potential Hazard Team. Similar teams at March AFB, Strategic Air Command headquarters in Omaha, and the Titan II missile depot at Hill AFB, Utah, were brought into the project for advice through a network telephone system.

"The whole missile handling system from stem to stern is based on safety," said Hill. "There are thousands of safety procedures covering everything from the fuel to the warhead.

"We are charged to do the utmost to protect the people for whom we work. I think we are doing 100 per cent the best job that anybody can do. No one among the public has been hurt by a SAC weapon that I know of since 1945."

### U. S. Probes Hoodlums In Ringdom

CHICAGO — UPI — The federal government is in the midst of a wide-ranging investigation of hoodlum influence in boxing, it was reported today.

The investigation, stemming from the aborted match between Cassius Clay and Ernie Terrell, so far has involved several prominent boxing personalities, Chicago newspapers said.

The Chicago Sun-Times said it was informed the investigation began after mobsters from Chicago and New York threatened to kill Terrell if he did not consent to fight Clay in New York City.


The Chicago Tribune said federal agents were protecting fight promoter Bernard Glickman after Glickman was attacked allegedly because he continued to associate with Terrell during the negotiations conducted to get the Clay-Terrell fight staged in Manhattan.

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