

# Safeguarding the Charters of Freedom from Nuclear Attack in 1975: Agency Convergence and Idea Divergence

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**Abstract:** New challenges presented by the Cold War Era brought concerns regarding ways to safeguard the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States, and the Bill of Rights (known collectively as the “Charters of Freedom”) from on-going nuclear threats. The Archivist of the United States formally approached the National Research Council (NRC) in 1975 to express concerns about existing procedures for safeguarding these important documents and solicit feedback. In May 1975, the NRC, under the auspices of the Advisory Committee on Civil Defense, called an *ad hoc* meeting to review background material and consider options available for maintaining and increasing the security of the Charters of Freedom. Attendees included experts, a team from the National Archives, a representative from the Office of Preparedness, two individuals from the Defense Civil Preparedness Agency, and several NRC staff. While there was general agreement on the need to review existing procedures and make changes, there was disagreement on specific measures to be taken. With this poster we will look at the organizational affiliations of participants in the process and examine proposed solutions. Based on research conducted using the donated papers of Dr. Charles Fritz, currently housed in the E.L. Quarantelli Resource Collection at the University of Delaware's Disaster Research Center.

## About the Authors:

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