

Anatomy of an A-bomb ex

IF A nuclear bomb drops on you it is likely to be Russian, carried on a SS20 missile, and will almost certainly have been pretargeted to your little plot of earth some considerable time ago.

This knowledge will not be consoling, but along with other pieces of information it could well save lives in the event of nuclear war. Knowing just what the effects of a nuclear bomb are likely to be can help in planning safety measures.

The Russian SS20 missile carries warheads about one megaton in power; this is equal to one million tons of high explo-

sive, and British defence experts estimate that about 200 of these missiles could be destined for Britain.

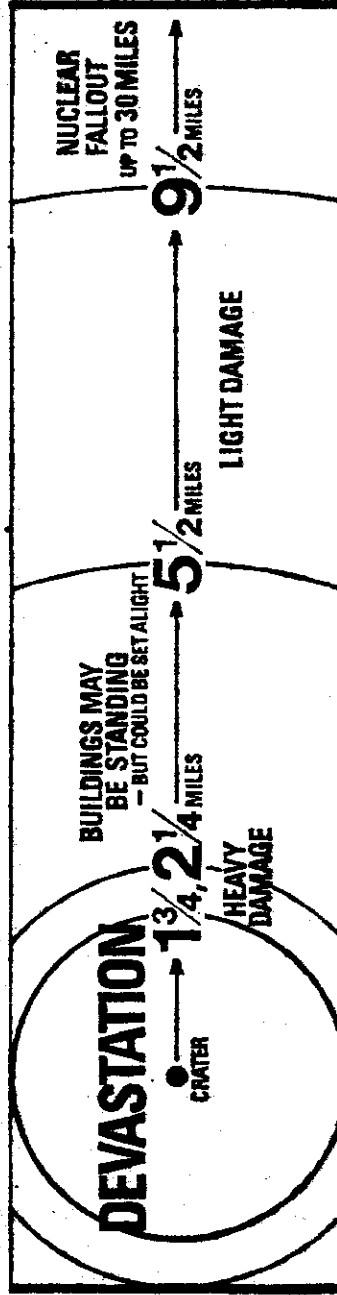
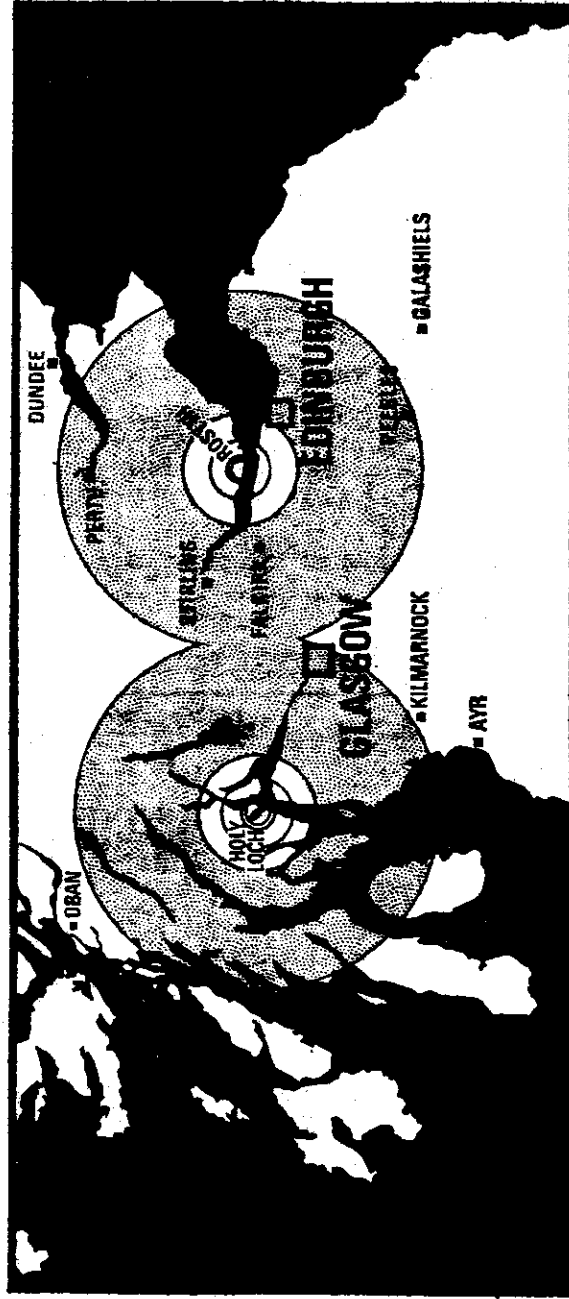
Each nuclear explosion involves three factors — heat, blast, and fallout. The heat generated is like a white-hot fireball with a duration of about 20 seconds. This is so intense that people standing in the open several miles away would be killed. Even nine miles away anyone unprotected is likely to suffer from very severe blisters.

The next factor is the effect of blast. It has been compared to a hurricane,

with buildings up to two miles from the centre of the blast being virtually demolished.

Fallout is perhaps the most feared and least predictable effect of a nuclear blast. Many people imagine that fallout is debris from the bomb itself raining down in the aftermath of the explosion.

In fact, it is nothing more than everyday dust from a variety of sources which was lying about at the location of the blast. The force of the explosion sucks up vast quantities of dust from the ground and whirls it up through the



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