

LESSON 3: CIVIL DEFENCE

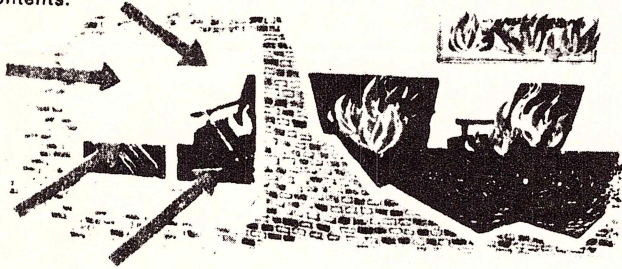
(A) CIVIL DEFENCE

Could we, in Britain, survive a nuclear war? Some people think we might. That is why we have Civil Defence. Civil Defence means that the government takes steps to protect the general public from the effects of a nuclear explosion. The governments of some countries do more than others to protect their people. For example, in Switzerland, every new house must have a properly built fall-out shelter incorporated within it, and in Sweden the government has detailed evacuation plans combined with large public shelters.

PREPARING THE HOUSE

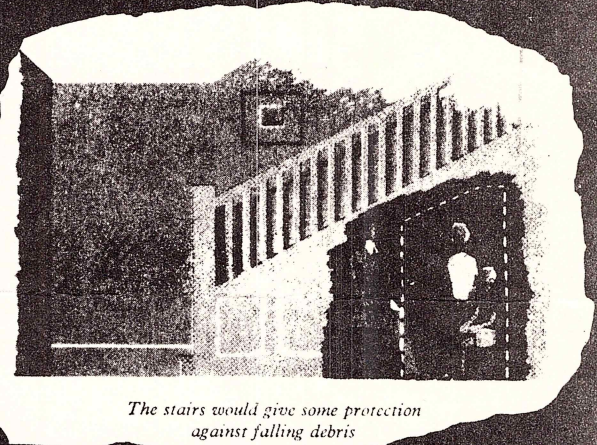
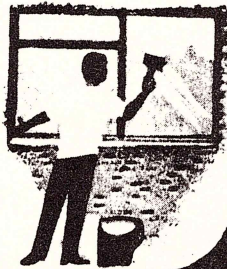
Protect against fire

The H-bomb's heat could not set fire to the brick or stone of a house but, striking through unprotected windows, it could set fire to the contents.

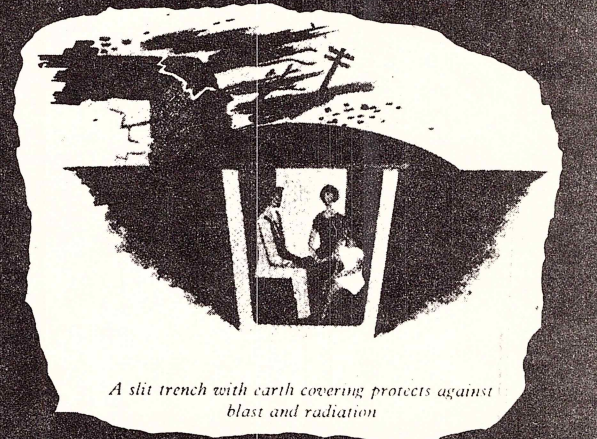


Stop the heat from entering the house

Whitewash your windows; those at the top of the building matter most. The whitewash will greatly reduce the fire risk by reflecting away much of the heat, which would have passed by the time the slower moving blast wave arrived. The blast might shatter the glass, but keeping out the heat-flash for those few seconds would prevent countless fires.



The stairs would give some protection against falling debris



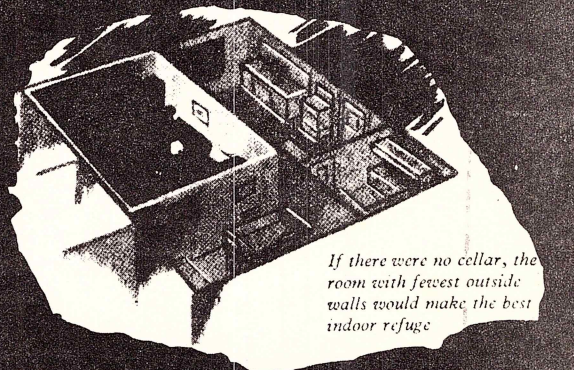
A slit trench with earth covering protects against blast and radiation

These handy hints for preparing for nuclear attack are taken from two HMSO booklets—The Hydrogen Bomb, price 9p and Nuclear Attack (now out of print).

A stirrup pump or garden syringe would be very useful. If you have one, test it and make sure that it works. Keep it close to your fall-out room.



Draw curtains and keep blinds lowered and closed. This will help to prevent injury from splinters of flying glass if the windows were shattered by the blast.



If there were no cellar, the room with fewest outside walls would make the best indoor refuge

In Britain, the government has built some underground shelters in semi-secret locations, but not nearly enough for the majority of the population. Therefore, there will be arguments and decisions taken on exactly who should be chosen for such protection. The British government has also issued some information on how to protect your house and family. [See the diagram 'Preparing the House']

The idea behind the Civil Defence programme is that after a few days, weeks or months, the survivors would re-emerge to start life again.

In practice, even underground shelters cannot solve the problem of long-term fall-out. It will be difficult to re-establish farming, for instance, and the animals left above ground and which survive will undoubtedly have suffered more than humans. So life after a nuclear war will prove to be very difficult for those lucky(?) to survive.

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS IN SENTENCES:

1. Why in Britain do we have Civil Defence? (1)
2. Assume that a nuclear attack is expected, and you know you are unable to get to a public fall-out shelter:
 - (a) Why should you whitewash the windows of your house? (2)
 - (b) In which room should the family stay? (1)
 - (c) Name TWO other steps you should take which might help you and others in your family to survive. (2)
3. Can you think of TWO examples of the type of person who might be chosen to use the special government-built underground shelters? (2)
4. Why would any survivors find it difficult to re-start farming and growing crops? (2)

TOTAL = 10 marks