



## Source 5

**British civil defence poster on the hydrogen bomb and what to do in a nuclear explosion, not dated**

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### Questions

1. Why do you think this source was written? What were the objectives of the government?
2. To what extent do you believe people would have been reassured by such information?
3. How realistic are the defence measures contained in this information?
4. Would you agree or disagree with the view that this poster deliberately gave a misleading impression by playing down the real impact of a hydrogen bomb?



# HEROES & VILLAINS

Kennedy & Cuba > Why didn't this lead to nuclear war?

## Source 5

**THE Hydrogen Bomb**

**WHAT THE HYDROGEN BOMB DOES**

The hydrogen bomb's power is reckoned in millions of tons of high explosive; its searing fireball, white and blinding, is as hot as the sun's interior. It can gouge a crater in the earth a mile wide and up to 200 feet deep; and its dust can cause death or sickness hundreds of miles away if proper precautions are not taken. The menace is threelold. For the hydrogen bomb strikes with heat, blast and deadly radiation.

**HEAT** From the fireball, a half-mile-wide column, usually damage from its air burst could be found as far as 20 to 25 miles away. Fifteen during the first ten seconds, its rays would be broken even farther away.

**BLAST** Blast strikes outwards at the speed of sound, driving debris and dust into the air. There is continuous motion, causing buildings to "quake." It kills or maims, blows down walls in its path. An overhead burst sends water, dust and debris flying through the air. People might be struck by falling wreckage, or blinded by the ground or against walls or other objects. Light

**RADIATION** The rising fireball sends up and scatters more debris and dust and this is carried downwind to other areas. There is a "fallout" of dust and debris. There is continuous motion, causing buildings to "quake." It kills or maims, blows down walls in its path. An overhead burst sends water, dust and debris flying through the air. People might be struck by falling wreckage, or blinded by the ground or against walls or other objects. Light

**HEAT DAMAGE** 1/2 MILE

**BLAST DAMAGE** 1/2 MILE

**RADIATION DAMAGE** 1/2 MILE

**WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW** Join the Civil Defence Corps or the Auxiliary Fire Service. They will teach you how to help yourself and others if war should come.

**WHAT CIVIL DEFENCE CAN DO!**

**THE HEADQUARTERS SECTION**  
 Control operations, scientific intelligence, "fall-out" danger zones, arrangements.

**THE WARDEN SECTION**  
 Provide the man, cool-headed and resourceful, who are the link between civil defence and direct the other services where they are most needed.

**THE RESCUE SECTION**  
 Using specialist equipment, rescue people trapped under wreckage or in buildings and rescue from demolition works in progress.

**THE WELFARE SECTION**  
 Rescue, feed and care for the homeless and hungry.

**THE AMBULANCE & CASUALTY COLLECTING SECTION**  
 The first-aid services and other-aid services.