

# Doom Town and Las Vegas: Fun and Fear on the Atomic Frontier

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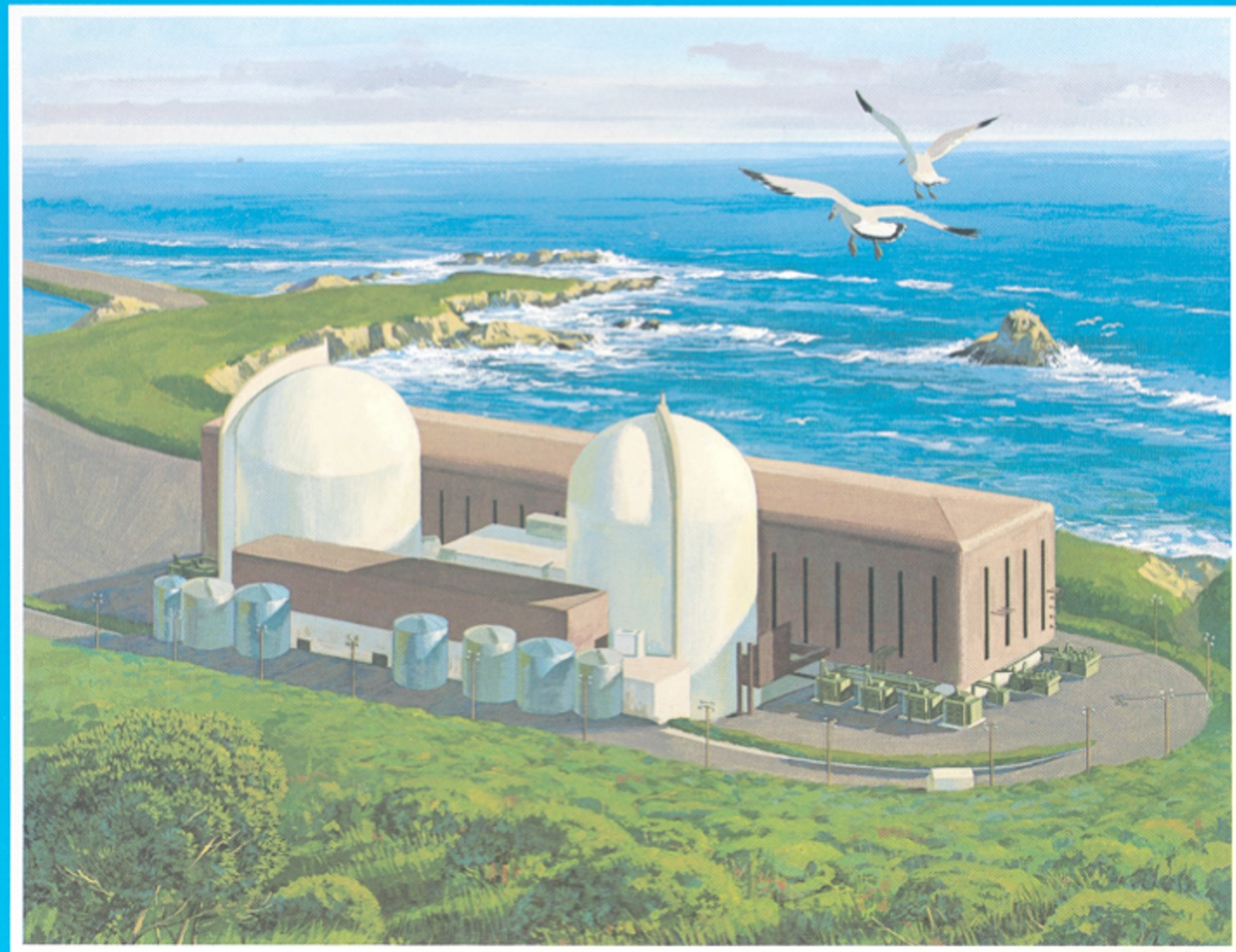
LEVERHULME  
TRUST \_\_\_\_\_

# My Own Personal Ground Zero

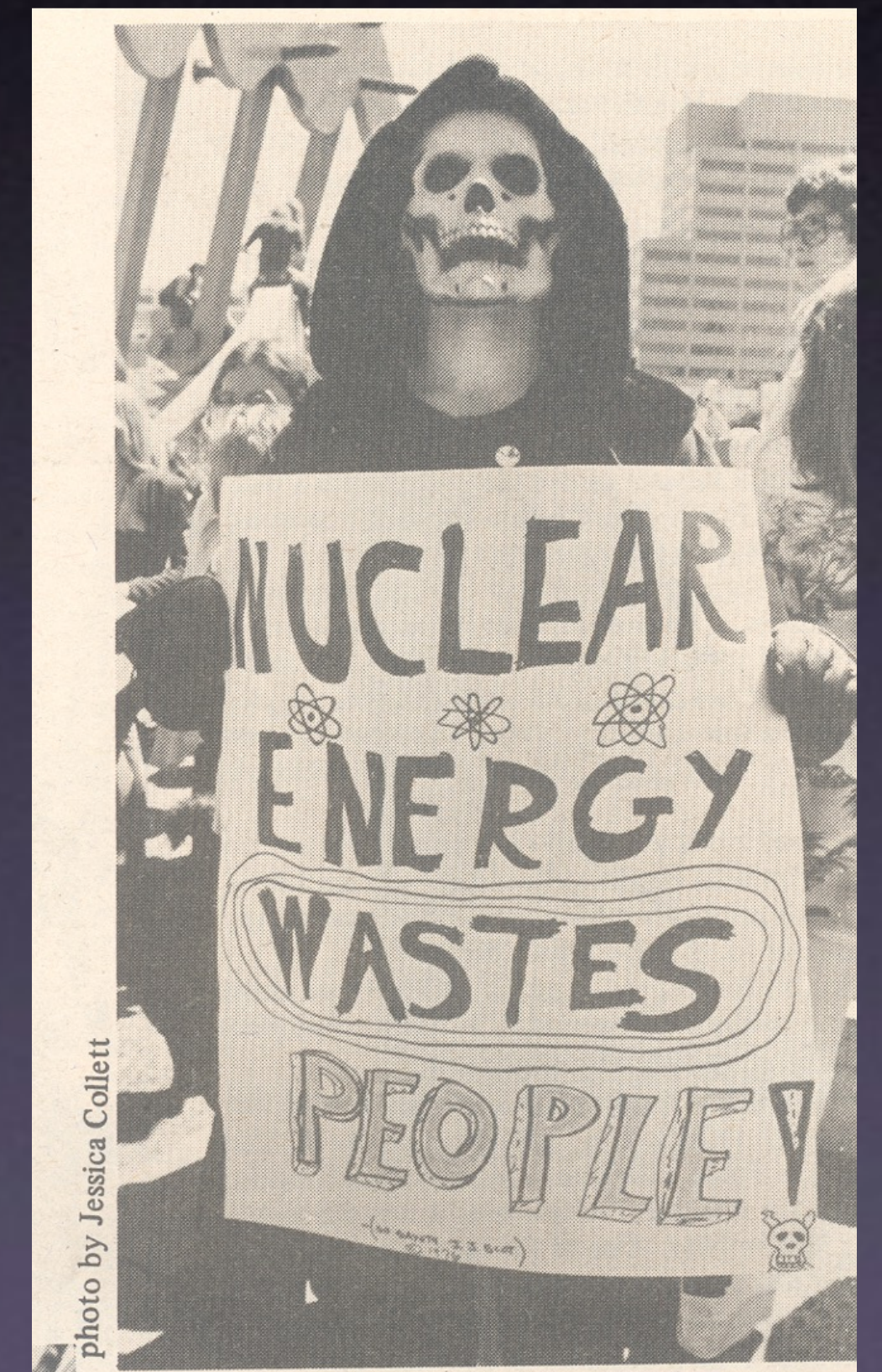
## tour

Take the 1½ hour free bus tour to the overlook of Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant as it is being built at Diablo Cove, 12 miles from the Nuclear Information Center.

Your guide will explain this vast and interesting project. Reservations for the popular bus tour can be made in advance by letter or telephone.



## Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant, California



# Atomic West & Wilderness

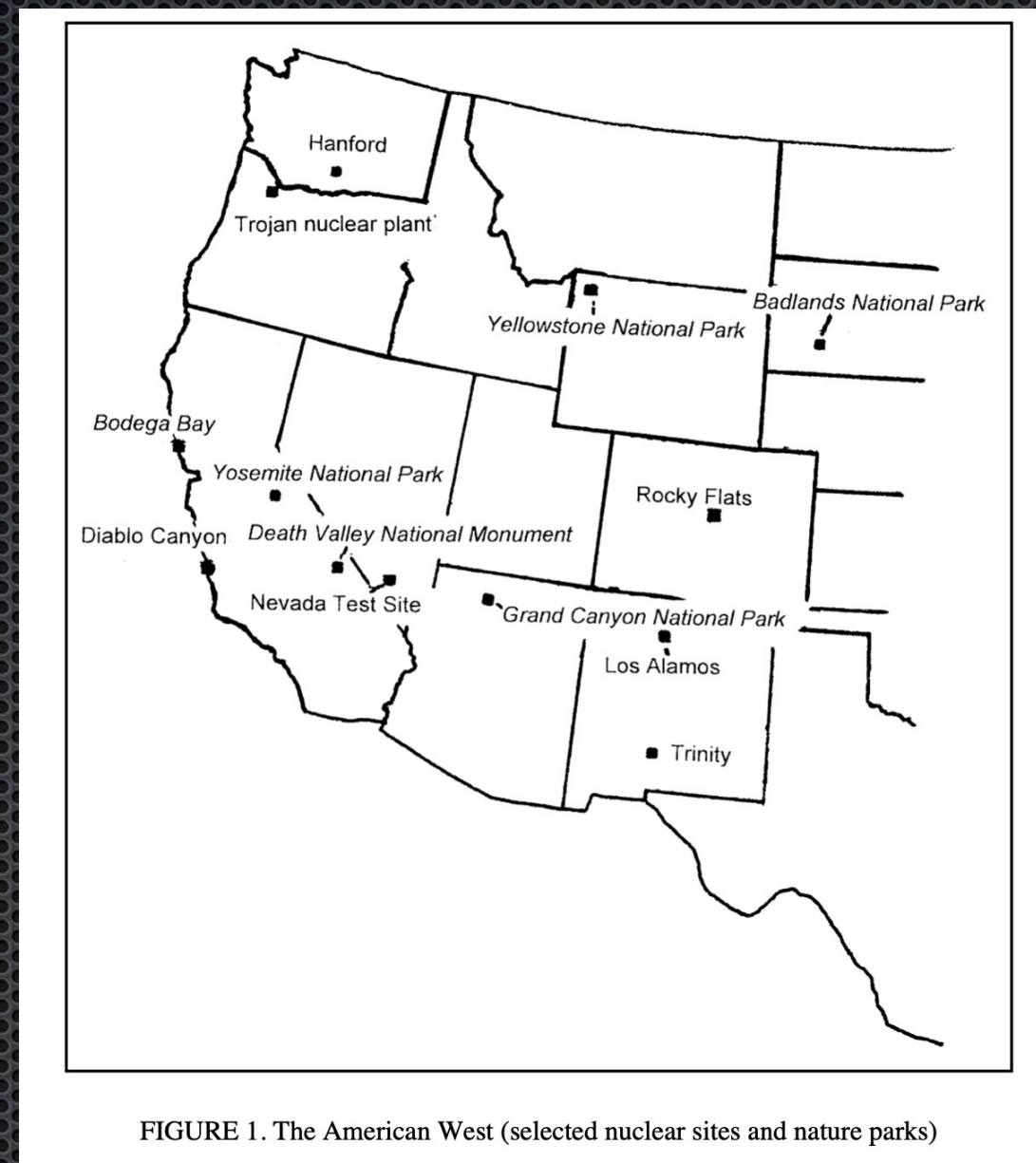


FIGURE 1. The American West (selected nuclear sites and nature parks)

## Atomic West-Land



FIGURE 2. Old Faithful geyser, Yellowstone (US National Park Service photograph)



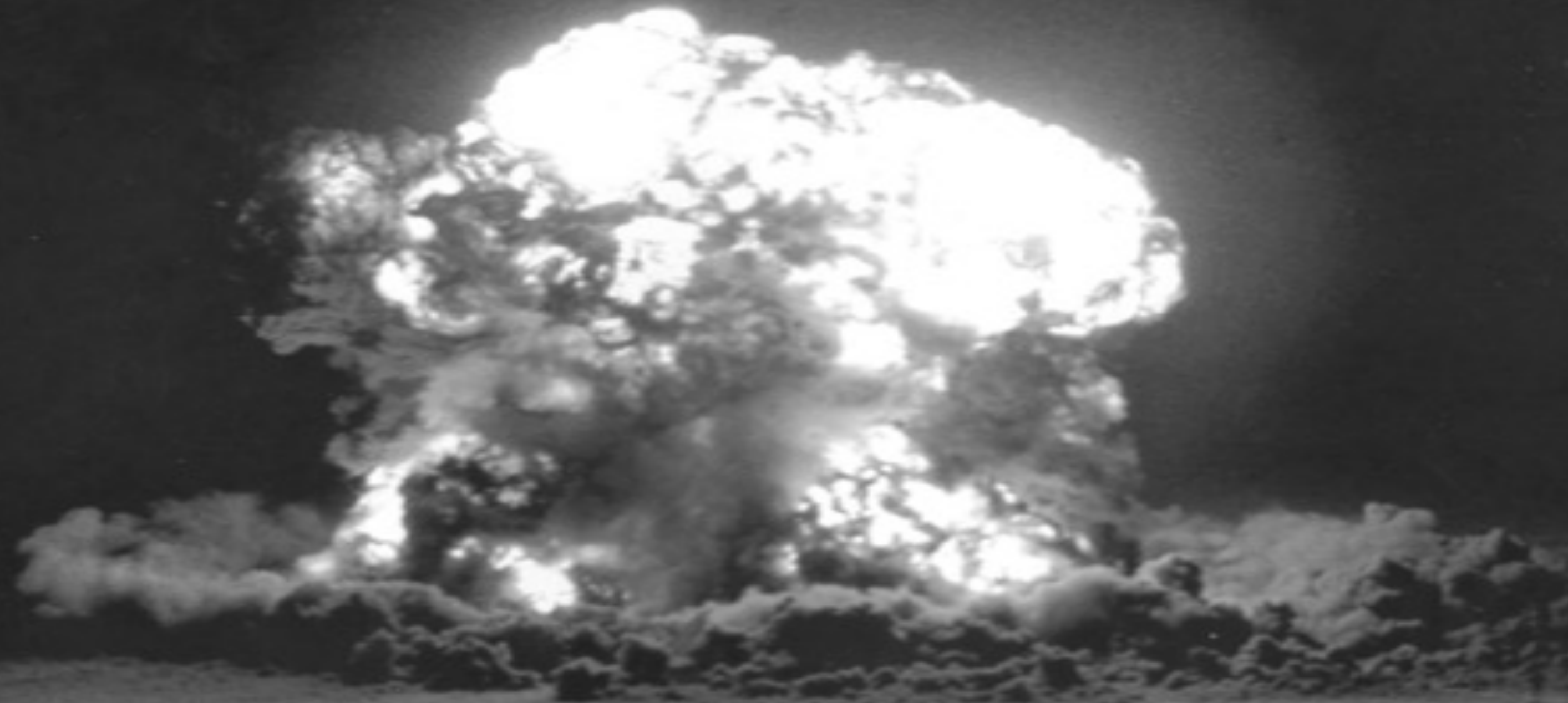
FIGURE 3. 'Nancy' tower shot, Nevada, 1953 (US Department of Energy photograph)

# Wastelands



Richard Misrach  
Crater and Destroyed Convoy  
(1986)

# Atomic Doomsdays



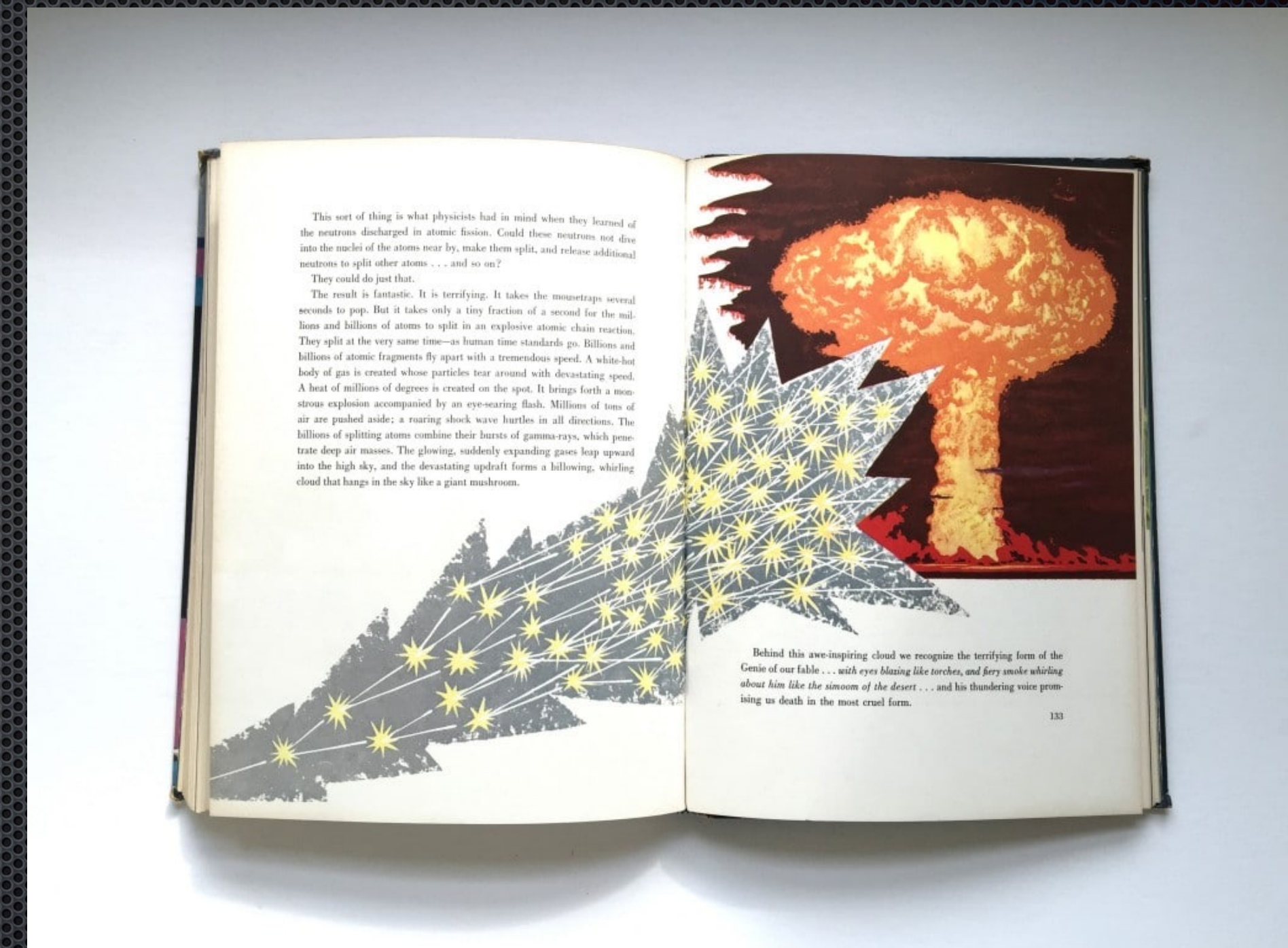
'Diablo' test, Nevada Test Site, 1957



# Fun and Fear on the Atomic Frontier



Duck and Cover (FCDA 1951)



Our Friend the Atom (Disney 1957)

# Suburban Constructions and Simulated Spaces



Auto-geddon



# A Corporate Experiment: Airstream Bomb Trailer



## ATOM BOMB TEST

by Edward L. Wilson

Managing Director Mobile Homes Manufacturers Assn.

### ABOUT THE PICTURES

On the opposite page is a picture (courtesy of United Press) showing the atomic fireball of Operation Cue spreading across the desert floor and reaching toward Survival Town. Three of the houses used in the test can be seen as very small images at lower right. Other installations can be seen as small dots along the base of the fireball. This photo was made from a distance of 7.5 miles with a 36 inch lens. Exposure was 1/500 second at F-16.

At right is seen the row of mobile homes stationed at 10,500 feet from the blast center, just before the bomb was touched off.

Left, center, is the same row of mobile homes and travel trailers. Two of the smaller units in this line, at 10,500 feet, were tipped over by the blast. Note their position: it is obvious they were tipped over, but did not roll. The small units that did tip were broadside and at a 45 degree angle to the blast, which came from the right.

Below, right, is the interior of a mobile home after the blast. This trailer was parked in the 10,500 foot line. Except for a few glass splinters, an overturned chair, and a dislodged ceiling fixture, the peaceful scene before the blast was almost the same after the big bomb was detonated.

At the left hand bottom of the page is shown the mobile homes that were placed at 15,000 feet. Note that the glass is still intact in most windows. Hardly any more damage was noted than that suffered by the low-lying, windblown sagebrush on the desert floor.

"No major damage was sustained," the Atomic Energy Commission reported.

Media Hill, Yucca Flats, Nevada. The home industry offered up, with great difficulty, a sacrifice to the Great Bomb. We say with great difficulty because the test bomb, planned for April, was actually exploded in May, after a wait of many days.

Industry observers, stationed high on Media hill, were almost frozen to death. Many were discouraged long before the

bomb dropped, and left for home and business, leaving sand, wind, blistering sun and the biting night cold of the desert to whip, tear and bake the two clusters of mobile homes, one stationed 10,500 feet from blast center, and one a good 15,000 feet away.

Behind them they left nineteen units, including a cabana type aluminum structure, the whole valued at almost \$75,000. These were just a part of the offering to the Great Bomb, for along with them were hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of permanent type homes, buildings, electronic equipment, machinery, foodstuffs, refrigeration equipment, and specially designed bomb shelters.

And of course soldiers and newsmen, part of the experiment, huddled in trenches or crowded in tanks a few hundred yards from the mighty weapon.

Almost two years ago the Federal Civil Defense Administration called upon the mobile home industry to form a co-operative committee and work on the test program to be officially designated "Operation Cue." The FCDA explained that in order to conduct such a program all industries were donating material and man-power.

The program was presented to the boards of directors of Mobile Homes Manufacturers Association, Mobile Dealers National Association, and the Trailer Coach Association. All agreed to the program.

An industry steering committee was formed, and later a technical sub-committee went to work. Their job was to set up the units and later evaluating possible damage.

Mobile homes were to be placed some distance from the bomb, about the distance that suburban areas of a major city are from the center of the city. Individual units were placed at various angles to the point of blast to determine effects. Some had full sides exposed directly to the blast; some ends; and some corners.

The project committee was advised it could enter the blast area as soon as possible after the blast—possibly a matter of minutes or hours, and start its evaluation of possible damage.

Within three hours members were checking the mobile homes . . . and found things about as they expected. The official government report, issued fol-

lowing the blast, agreed with their findings.

In the first area, according to government observers, two of the smaller units were tipped over, but five others remained upright. Some exterior walls were slightly dished in and most windows broken. Most glass from windows fell outside but, in the case of picture windows, glass was blown inward except where the insides were protected by venetian blinds. Upset furniture made interior scenes disorderly.

At the 15,000 foot line some windows were broken, but none of the units were overturned.

Industry officials were satisfied that the test proved their point. Mobile dwellings, usually located on the perimeter of major cities, provide not only comparatively safe habitation during possible air attack, but also offer great value for emergency housing.



### BLAST SURVIVOR

Above are four pictures of the Airstream after it had been exposed to the Atom Blast at the 10,500 foot marker. The trailer was then towed down to Los Angeles, where these pictures were taken.

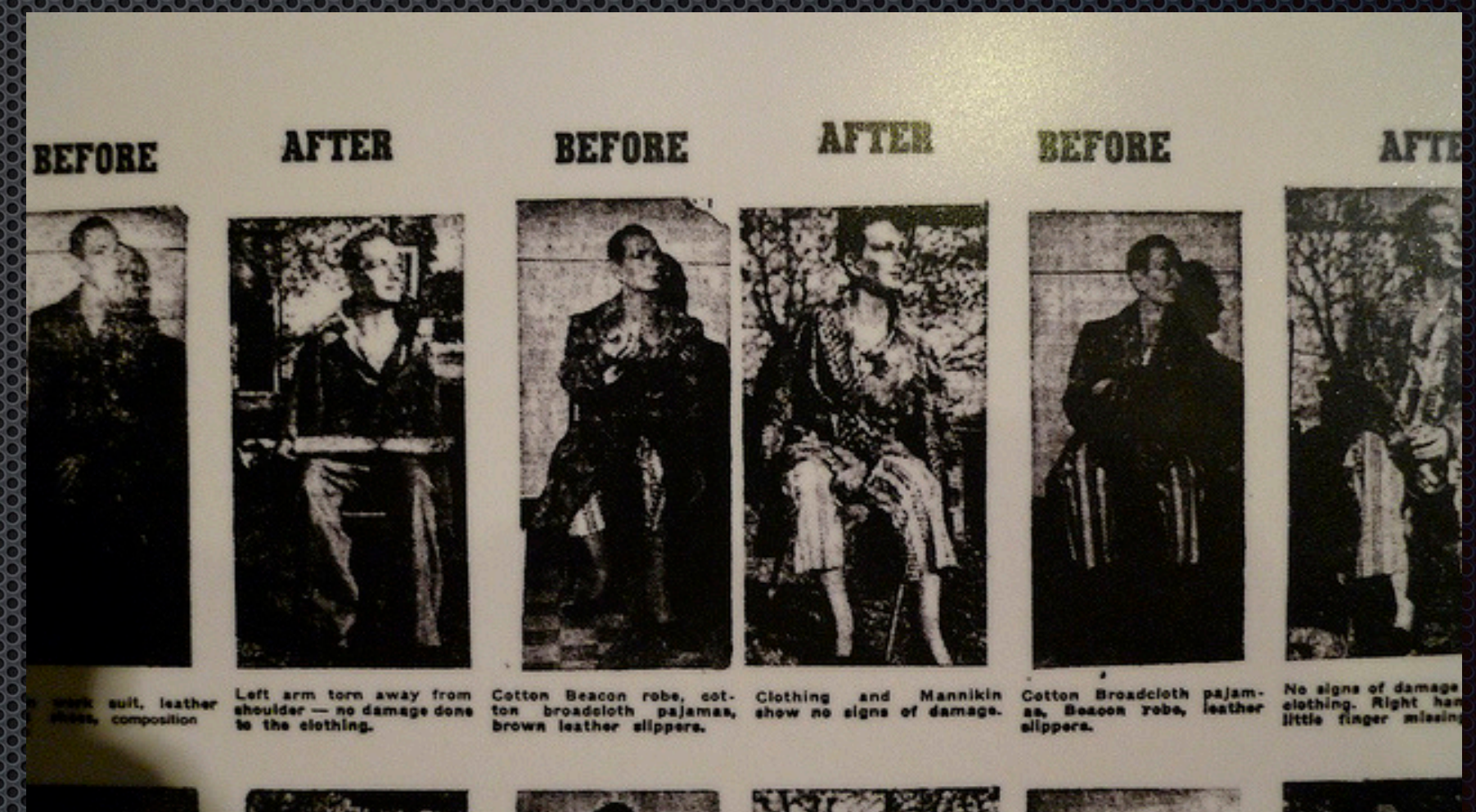
Note slight dents. All windows—and door—open perfectly. Interior was undamaged. All other damage suffered can be seen in these unretouched pictures.

Photos are by Peter Furst, supplied courtesy of Airstream Trailer Co.

# A Corporate Experiment: Behlen's Atomic Building



# A Corporate Experiment: J.C. Penney's Mannequins



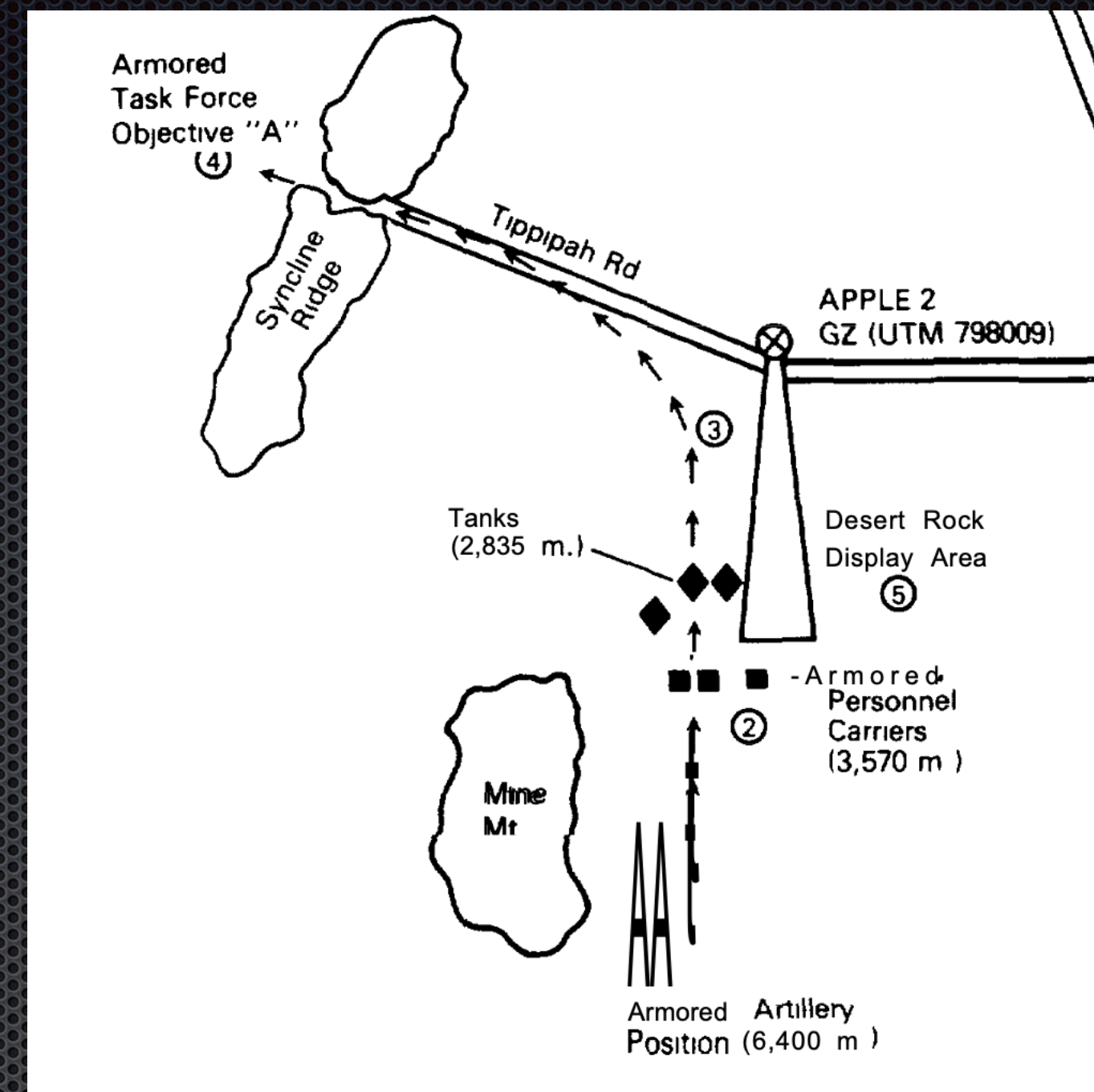
# White Middle Class Audiences on 'Set'



# Live Television and Audiences From Afar



# The Atomic Battlefield



1000 troops in an Armored Division approach Ground Zero

# 'The Most Bombed Place on Earth'



# Doom Town in Three Dimensions



**NOW** **BIG 3 UNIT**  
**3-D SHOW!**

Now in  
**3-D** The Suspense Novel  
That Startled The World!

**THE  
MAZE**

**2nd**  
**3-D UNIT** SEE CAMPUS PANTY RAIDS  
in **3-D** "College Capers"

**3rd**  
**3-D UNIT** See the ATOM BOMB  
in **3-D** "Doom Town"

*Both* **PARAMOUNTS**

<b>DOWNTOWN</b> 6th and HILL - MI 7221 DOORS OPEN 10:30 A.M. PARK FREE - ANY SYSTEM LOT - NITES AND SUN	<b>HOLLYWOOD</b> HOLLYWOOD & MICHIGAN <b>HO 3-3263</b> DOORS OPEN 12 Noon
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# Las Vegas - 'the Atomic City'



# Atomic Tourism



Nevada Test Site, Feb 18 1955



Last Frontier, May 8 1953

# Atomic Showgirls at The Sands (1955)



Miss Cue (Opera Singer  
Marguerite Piazza)



Miss Cue (Copa Girl Linda  
Lawson)

# Survival in Vegas



Gerry Henderson's Underground House (early 1970s)

Cable S. Jones & the Nuclear Wall (early 1950s)

# Doom Town Shockwaves

- Storytelling and Modeling Attack
- A Corporate Tale
- Subverting the Suburban Idyll
- The Mass Media Spectacle
- Home-grown Hiroshima
- Perfecting the Horror Image
- Shift towards Cynicism



# Doom Town Today



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