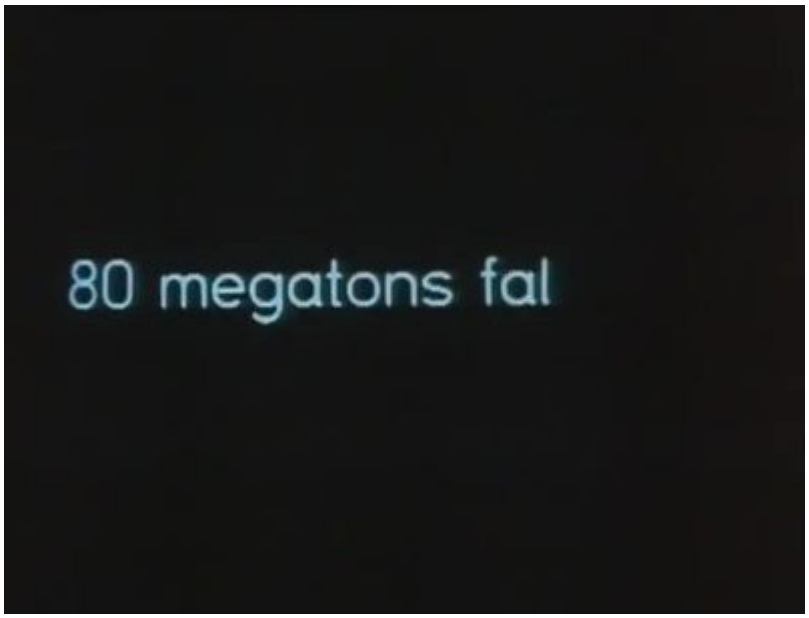
Twitter Thread by Pulp Librarian

Pulp Librarian
@PulpLibrarian

On 23 September 1984 the BBC broadcast the apocalypse: the story of nuclear war and its effects on the people of Sheffield. Filmed on a shoestring budget it still causes nightmares to this day.

This thread is not for the squeamish.

This the story of Threads...

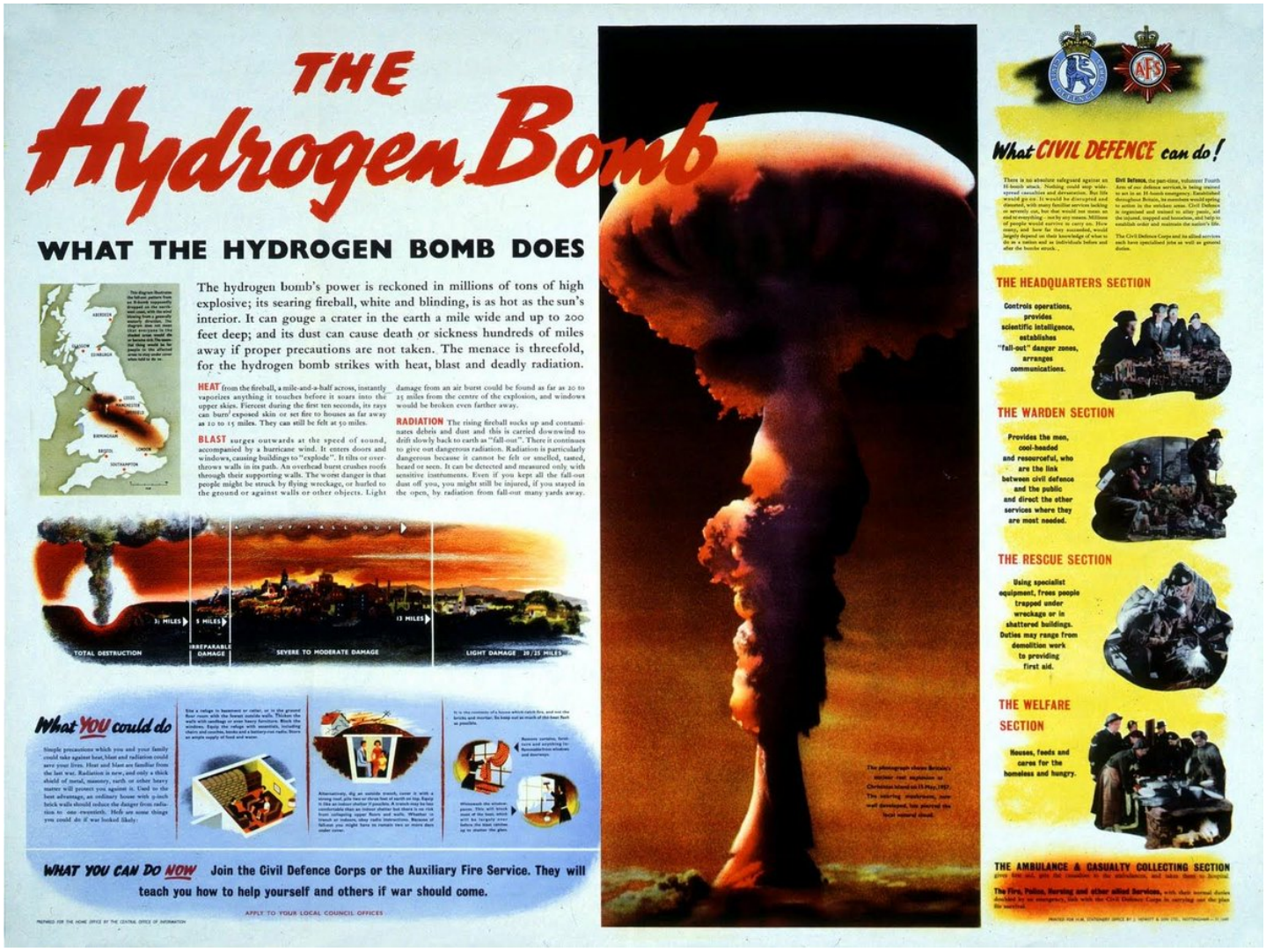


In 1965 the BBC had filmed The War Game, a fictional docu-drama about a nuclear attack on Britain. However under pressure from the government the BBC withdrew it from screening. It was finally released in 1966 as a film in selected theatres.

For many years the withdrawal of The War Game had rankled many at the BBC. Surely it was a public broadcaster's duty to show the public what the reality of nuclear war would mean. Finally in 1982 they did so.

A Guide To Armageddon was a documentary for the BBC's peak-time science series Q.E.D. Produced by Mick Jackson it graphically depicted the effect of a one megaton explosion on London. It also explored how well people could survive such a blast if they were in a fallout shelter.

Jackson had carefully researched his subject and knew how under-prepared the UK was for nuclear war. The physical and psychological effects of atomic attack would catapult what was left of Britain back to a 14th century mode of living, a time when bubonic plague killed millions.



The BBC then agreed to Jackson's idea of a drama based around his research. Like The War Game it would show a nuclear strike from the point of view of civilians caught up in its terrifying aftermath.

However it wouldn't focus on London...