

NINE PLACES TO HIDE

If you really want to be safe from atomic destruction, here is the most up to date of survival surveys—a guide to the few remaining places on this earth where human life would not be destroyed

by CAROLINE BIRD

tion. Now a shift has come about in some of the world's thinking: war will destroy much of the life on this planet, but not all. And what this means, if it is true, is that your security depends not so much on who you are or what you believe or even what kind of fallout shelter you build, but where you live.

It is relatively simple to estimate the areas of maximum destruction. New York City, for example, has been calculated by civil-defense researchers as just about the most dangerous place on earth. Moscow runs a close second. What is safe—specifically, what few places on earth are safest—is more difficult to calculate.

ACTUALLY, the argument over the Final Hour and its consequences has been quietly raging in government and military circles for several years. Long-time proponents of the theory that some will survive include former Army Chief of Research and Development James Gavin, now Ambassador to France; Admiral Lewis Strauss, former chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission; General Maxwell D. Taylor, President Kennedy's top military adviser; and Senator Wallace F. Bennett (R., Utah). More recently, however, Herman Kahn's *On Thermonuclear War*, a book whose influence now seems all-pervasive in Washington, has crystallized these arguments behind a powerful analysis of the military might of the United States and Russia, and concluded for the defense: atomic war is terrible, but its sheer horror

will not cause it to be outlawed. War is certainly possible, Kahn reasons, and all the might of Russia and the United States combined is not capable of destroying everything. Some people somewhere will survive, and the survivors will not envy the dead.

As the Kahn school grows more and more influential, the emphasis on the necessity of an air-raid shelter in every back yard becomes more and more popular in the United States. One need only extend the logic to realize, however, that the very best protection against an atomic explosion is simply to be somewhere else when it happens. (Indications are that a surprising number of people are already moving to places they think will be safe. New Zealand, Australia and Ireland are enjoying a "safety" boom; and, in this country, Chico, California, was recently selected—by miscalculation—as a refuge.)

Your chances of surviving a nuclear war this year if you stay where you are depend on the following factors, in order of importance: the interest of a nuclear power in destroying something near you and the weapons at its disposal; your distance and wind direction from this target; your latitude, rainfall, and sources of food and water.

The likelihood of attack on a near-by target is far and away the biggest hazard. If you live near a high-priority target in the U.S., you may have to reckon with the hundred or more Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles the Russians are supposed to have this year: we have no defense against them, but aim could be so bad that it might take four to be sure of landing one on the target. On the other hand, if the Russians have atomic submarines as good as ours, they could place a few megatons with considerable ease and accuracy on any place within hundreds of miles of our coast before we could find or stop them.

Thus, if you are within tens of miles of a hit (see red areas on map on following pages), you have less than an even chance of surviving the blast, the fires, the falling rubble, the immediate radiation and the fallout, to say nothing of secondary accidents and disease.

Fallout is the dust and debris kicked up in the mushroom cloud and "flavored" with the radioactive fission materials from the explosion. It is of two kinds—"heavy" and "light"—and it is important to distinguish between them. According to Dr. Lester Machta, Chief of the Meteorological Research Projects Branch of the Weather Bureau, the radioactive debris comes in a wide variety of sizes. About sixty per cent of the radiation, however, comes from particles big enough to come down within a day near where they went up. This is local or immediate or close-in or "heavy" fallout, the most intense portion of which is concentrated about any nuclear target. It kills in four to twenty-four hours.

The other forty per cent of the radiation loosed by a nuclear explosion is spread by particles so fine that they remain suspended in the atmosphere for a long time and don't necessarily come down where they went up. This could be called "light" fallout. Five per cent of the total radiation gets into the troposphere, where it goes around the world in the latitude of entry; thirty-five per cent is embedded in particles so fine that they are carried higher up into the stratosphere and eventually deposited in a band that peaks in 45° latitude.

World-wide fallout comes down in rains and melting snows. A heavy rain can pull down enough to make a temporary "hot spot" of radioactivity heavy enough to be felt immediately, but the hazard from world-wide fallout is almost exclusively from food. What counts is the rainfall of the place where your food is grown and whether you live directly off the land, on plants, or buffer the effect by eating animals who have eaten these plants.

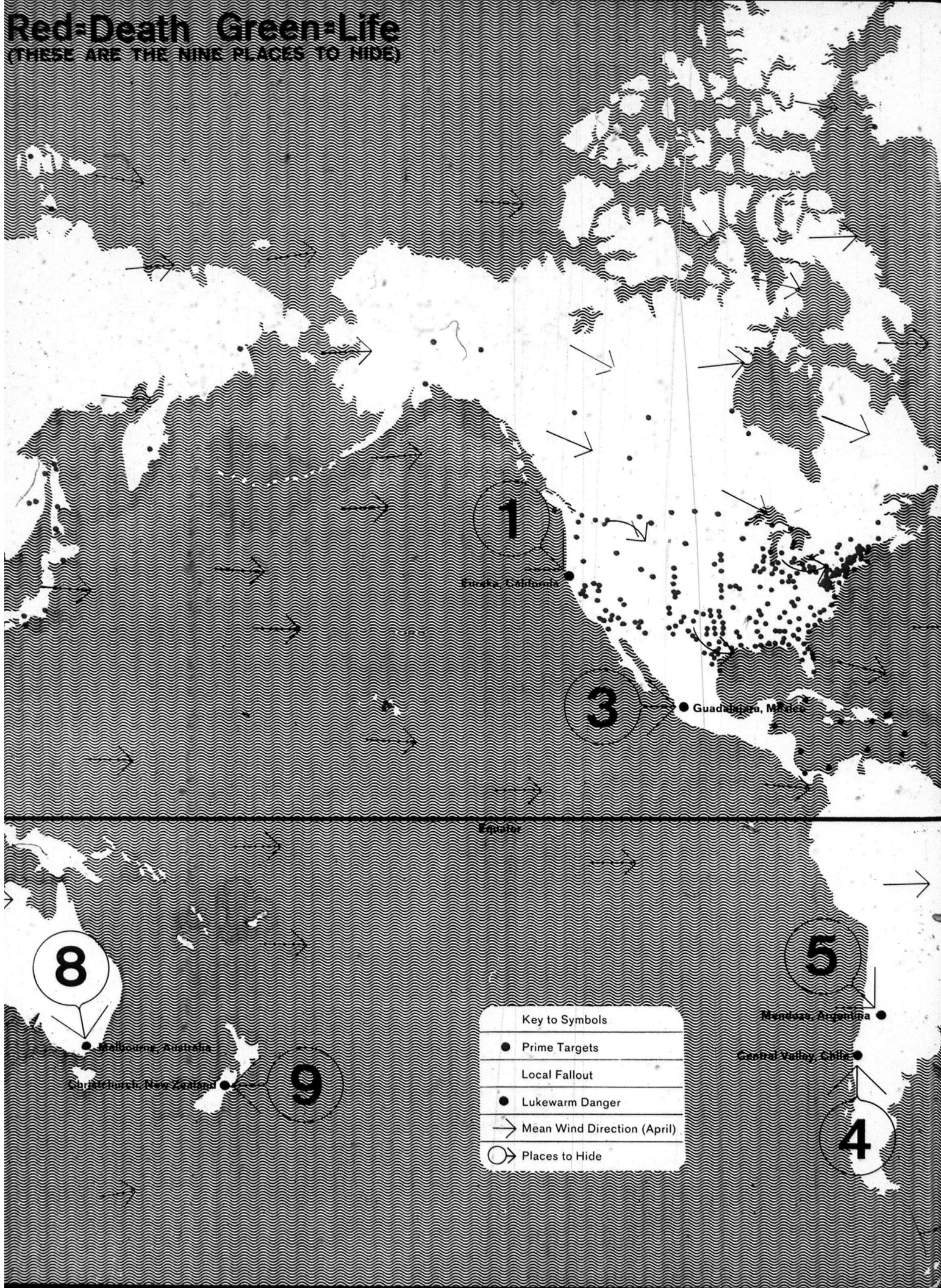
World-wide fallout is the basis for the contention that atomic explosion will "end all life on earth." It is cited as the reason why we should stop nuclear testing, if necessary unilaterally. The heat of the debate on testing has obscured several technical facts which have been conceded by all the experts:

- World-wide fallout is the smallest and most (Continued on page 128)

(See map—by Rudolph de Harak—overleaf)

Red=Death Green=Life

(THESE ARE THE NINE PLACES TO HIDE)



Key to Symbols

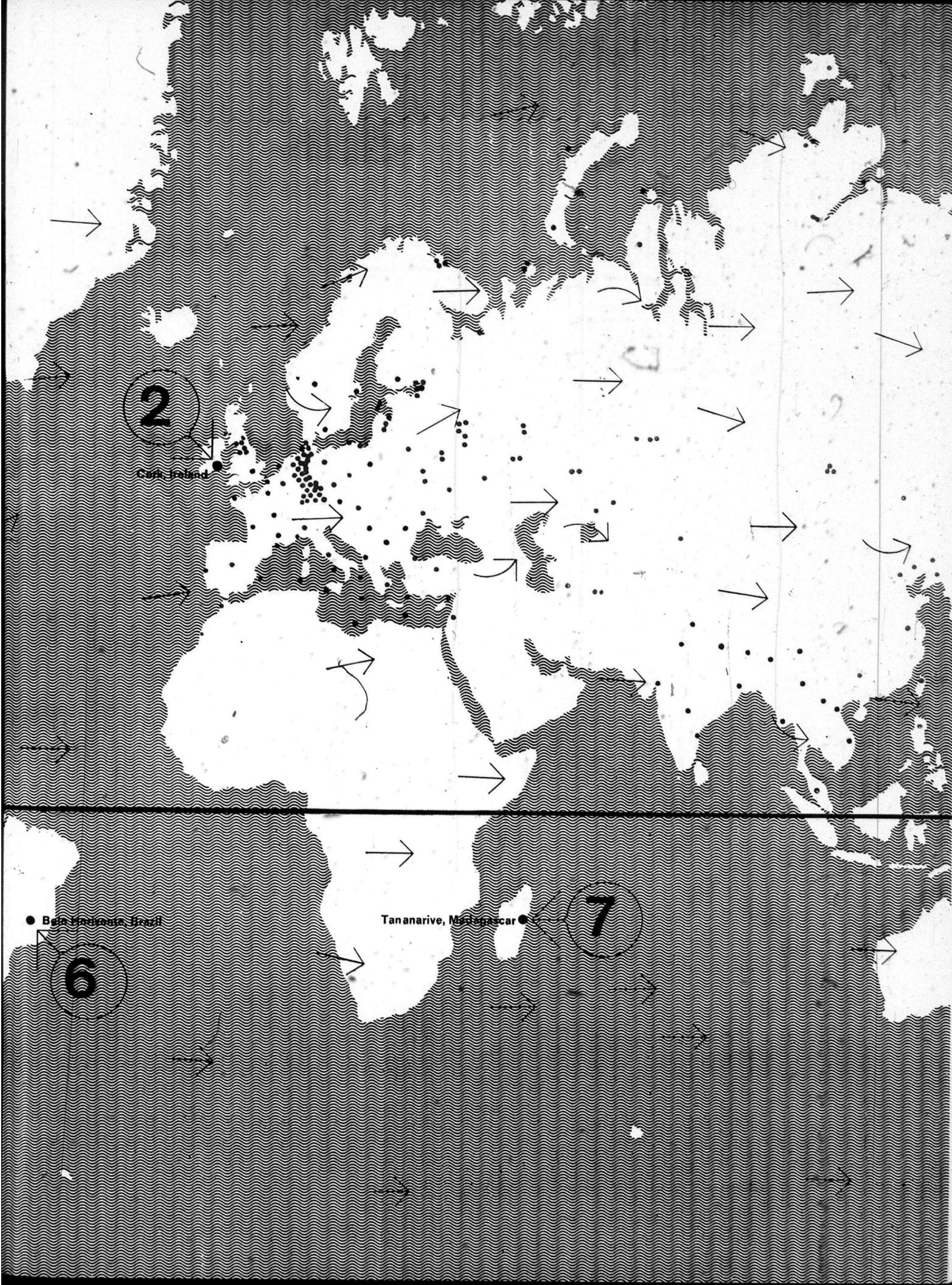
● Prime Targets

Local Fallout

● Lukewarm Danger

→ Mean Wind Direction (April)

○ Places to Hide



NINE PLACES TO HIDE (Continued from page 55)

conditional hazard of nuclear explosion. For one thing, it stays up long enough to discharge part of its radioactivity in the upper air, where it can't hurt people. Nobody really knows exactly how long the fine dust lasts in the stratosphere, but Dr. Machta calculates that unless the weapons are much larger than ten megatons, about half of the stratospheric debris stays up more than a year. The special horror of world-wide fallout is that it gets into the germ plasm and affects children yet unborn. However, the hazard tapers sharply. Estimates of the number of people whose lives will be shortened by world-wide fallout—and this includes all future generations—range from one to ten per cent of those who will be killed within months by the local heavy fallout.

• World-wide fallout is almost exclusively a problem for the Northern Hemisphere, at least as long as all the targets are north of the equator. Winds blowing away from the equator act as a bar to fallout crossing the line. Dr. Machta estimates that the average world-wide fallout in the Southern Hemisphere is less than five per cent of the average in the Northern Hemisphere and perhaps only one per cent of the zone of hottest world-wide fallout running across the United States and western Europe.

If you are within hundreds of miles downwind of a hit, you risk death from radioactive fallout unless you duck into a fallout shelter or its equivalent. In the Northern Hemisphere, winds generally blow from west to east. This means that you are safer west of a target than east of it. The safest places from fallout in the United States are west of the Sierras. The safest places in Europe are the western islands of the Atlantic.

If you live in the Northern Hemisphere, between 40° and 50° latitude, in rainy places, or where food is from plants, your life may be shortened by world-wide fallout from a nuclear explosion anywhere in the Northern Hemisphere.

The safest places on earth are going to be out of the way of these differing hazards. In order to assign priorities, this writer consulted military strategists in and out of official positions, civil-defense authorities, specialists in radiation, weather and economic geography.

The map on pages 56 and 57 distinguishes three orders of danger:

1. The red dots are the world's hottest targets—known locations of the key striking forces of atomic powers and major cities of a million or more (because major cities are centers of communication, skilled man power and industrial strength). Foreign military targets are a dead secret. (The Soviet targets on the map are compiled from unclassified foreign publications. Obviously, however, there are fewer "red" targets shown on the map for Russia than for the United States, because the Soviet does not disclose the location of its military installations while the U.S. does.)

2. The yellow tails streaming from the red targets are the areas of major hazard from intense local fallout. They are considered a second-order danger because it is possible to survive in them if proper precautions are taken. Dr. Paul Tompkins, chief of the Research Branch of the Division of Radiological Health, U.S. Public Health Service, categorically declares that we now have enough technical knowledge so that there's no reason why "anyone, anywhere" should die of radiation.

Dr. Machta estimates that about ninety per cent of those people who stayed out in the open in the yellow areas would get a lethal dose of radiation in the first forty-eight hours and that they would die within the month. But more than half of the population could be saved if they had sense enough to stay in their basements or other shelters now available.

The size and shape of the areas actually threatened by local fallout depends on wind speeds and directions at all altitudes from the ground to the top of the mushroom cloud. These factors are impossible to predict, but the areas of local fallout are conventionally drawn as elongated cigars along the path of prevailing winds. For simplicity, our yellow areas have been drawn on the assumptions made by the Joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy: 15-knot winds blowing in the direction of the upper-air wind flow in the month of April. They are all 150x25 miles. At the borders of the yellow areas, the death rate for exposed individuals would fall from ninety to fifty per cent and drop rapidly to zero with distance. Thus, while it might appear from the red and yellow areas in

this country that most of the U.S. would be obliterated, you should keep in mind that the map is of a very large scale, targets appear to be closer together than they actually are, and an active fallout shelter system would reduce casualties in the yellow zones.

3. The blue circles surrounding red dots and appearing throughout the world are symbols of lukewarm danger, at least for 1962. The countries in which they appear are not likely to have fixed bases from which atomic attack could be launched. They are, however, of enough military or political interest to an atomic power to be worth a warning shot over the bow as it were, a demonstration bomb by Red China to announce its entry into the nuclear club, or a blow intended to paralyze without destroying.

Our atomic submarines prowl the Mediterranean and, for all we know, the enemy's are prowling the Caribbean, where they have friends in Cuba. India, Scandinavia, and the South-east Asian peninsula carry blue circles because they are politically important to nuclear powers.

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Where to go is a decision subject to several considerations. If you insist on staying in the United States or Europe, there are a few places much safer than others. Just where they are is a question good for hours of heated debate among civil-defense and military specialists. The informed agree on these:

The safest place in the United States is Eureka, California, a landlocked port of nearly 30,000 people 283 miles north of San Francisco and more than 100 miles north of the nearest target. Eureka is the principal city along the lightly settled, dry stretch of California's coast. It generally escapes damage in the war-game attacks because it is west of the Sierras and upwind from every target in the United States. Unless you want to go clear out of the country to Baja California—a haven that appeals to some—Eureka is on the safest stretch of the continent's West Coast, north of the vulnerable SAC targets, south of the heavy rainfall on the shores of Oregon and Washington. Eureka, incidentally, is safer than Chico, California, that mountain town of 14,750, 150 miles northeast of San Francisco, where thirty Long Islanders fled to find nuclear safety. Chico is only fifty miles north of Beale Air Force Base and seven miles south of a projected Titan base.

The safest place in Europe is Cork, Ireland, the country's second city and growing industrial center of 80,000. Cork is a good two hundred miles upwind from the Midlands of England which bristle with missile targets, and it is well south of the Polaris anchorage at the Holy Loch, which has been stirring protest from British pacifists. Ireland now has only half as many people as it fed a century ago and, as its industrial-development literature points out, the country has everything a modern economy needs except oil and iron ore. New industrial installations near Cork include an oil refinery (which could process crude shipped in from safe areas), an automobile assembly plant, a shipyard, freezing-drying capacity for processing produce, and a steel mill.

According to the spokesman for an American advertising agency retained to promote investment in Ireland, many of the new facilities have been built by thriving West German companies as insurance of company survival in the event of nuclear war.

Neither Eureka nor Cork, however, is an ideal place in which to survive and build the world anew. Both are in the heavy world-wide fallout area, where it may take courage to have children. Neither is likely to inherit what's left of the earth.

The most dramatic lesson of the map is that an atomic duel will shift world leadership to the Southern Hemisphere. The U.S. industrial heartland in the northeast, the comparable Soviet industrial area in the Russian northwest, the Midlands of England, and the thriving factories of West Germany and Italy are likely to be reduced—at least for some years—to the economic level of the underdeveloped safer areas south of the

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equator. There is some real estate left from which to choose. Those planning to leave in 1962 might look for a place where:

- It would be possible to live off the country at least as well and for at least as long as the Pilgrims and the settlers of the American West. That rules out Antarctica, rocks in the Pacific like Eniwetok (safe because the U.S. will never test twice in the same spot), and stunning wilderness resorts like the lake country of Southern Chile which occur to sophisticated travelers for whom the best of everything is automatically imported from the atomically vulnerable, highly developed areas of the world.

- The climate is healthy and dry. This rules out the disease-ridden tropical rain forests Arnold Toynbee suggested and such otherwise attractive underdeveloped areas as the huge, rich islands of Borneo and New Guinea, and the Chaco of Paraguay, where a colony of Mennonites has been living quietly away from it all for some time now.

- The natives are friendly. In 1962, this puts just about every place in Africa out-of-bounds to the white man.

- There's room for expansion. Indonesia is safe and fertile, but the ground is pretty well filled. Very small islands make military strategists nervous, even if they are as unstrategic as the idyllic Seychelle Islands in the Indian Ocean, where a happy few live on coconuts and fish a thousand miles away from any other place. Tahiti and Bali are great to visit, offer a *dolce vita* of their own, and might support a very few more people if cut off, but they are unlikely to be the Chicago, the Birmingham, or even the Paris of the new world.

- The following seven places seem the most likely from which to choose. They differ slightly in safety and widely in economic potential and life style. All have drawbacks. Some are more limited than others. Each has its supporters among economic geographers and world travelers.

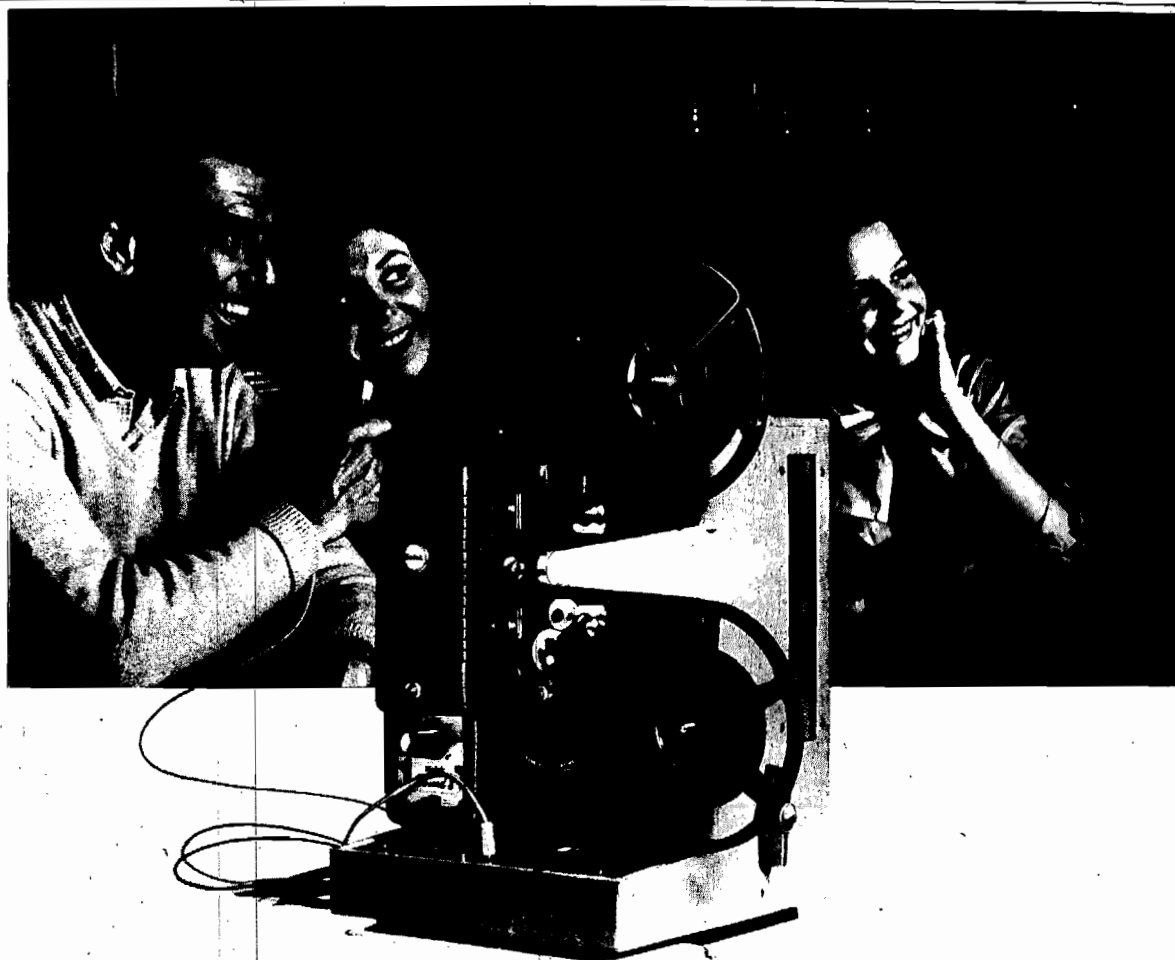
- *Guadalajara, Mexico*, the second city of that country, is in the Northern Hemisphere, but it is in a low world-wide fallout zone well away from U.S. and Caribbean targets. It is dry, mild and healthy and the land around it could feed more people than it now supports. Guadalajara is obviously safer than Mexico City, the capital of the country and the center on which a demonstration

bomb might be dropped. It is a more practical place for one to settle than Oaxaca, the provincial capital, because it is big enough to share in the dynamic economic growth of Mexico.

- *The Central Valley of Chile*, from the modern capital city of Santiago south to Concepción, is

as fertile and attractive as the central valley of California. It provides semi-feudal, ranch-style living on a fruit or wine "fundo" where it is possible to grow any animal or vegetable one might want and to vary it with the rich sea food brought north by the Humboldt Current from the radi-

ation-free waters of the Antarctic. There is a high-energy climate about the place marred only by the threat of earthquake; there would be friendly and predominantly European neighbors, plenty of room for expansion, and enough near-by iron and coal, steel-making and hydroelectric capacity to build a



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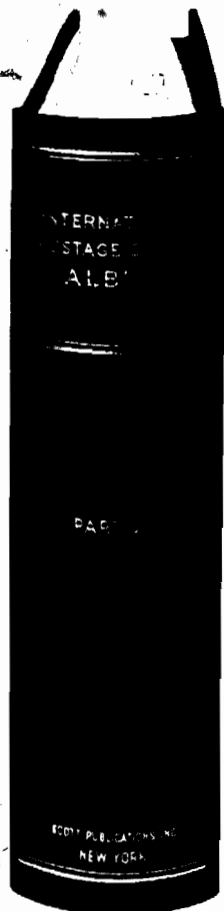
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new Pittsburgh if the residents happened to feel so inclined.
• *Mendoza, Argentina* (population 120,000) is one of the "oases" of the dry eastern slopes of the Andes which economic geographers regard as fabulously underdeveloped. A beautiful city, made green by streams from the Andes which flow right through it, Mendoza is a center for raisin growing, wine producing and cattle fattening on the main route across the Andes. It sits in the middle of an arid region which blooms with every kind of crop when it is irrigated—a point in its favor. Irrigated water carries less fallout to crops grown on it than natural rainfall.

The advantages of Mendoza have so far remained the well-kept secret of a mysterious American developer who regards the whole province as a land of opportunity as well as a haven from atomic disaster. He is publicity-shy Joseph J. Coney of San Francisco, an old-style economic adventurer. During the past six years he has quietly bought a 2,300,000-acre hunk of the state of Mendoza, including thirteen producing oil wells and workable (but unworked) deposits of every valuable mineral except bauxite, gold, tin, and nickel. So far, other American investors either haven't been sufficiently interested or have been scared away by Castro.

• *Belo Horizonte, Brazil* (600,000) is the bustling, progressive, third city of the South American country most likely to blaze a new economic trail. Up from the coast—a plus on safety—Belo Horizonte is a garden spot exporting truck and dairy products that could easily feed newcomers and it could develop light industries from the surrounding mineral resources to employ them. It is moderate and semitropical and was a health resort in the days when doctors recommended a high, dry climate for t.b. Laid out at the turn of the century as the capital of the rich state of Minas Gerais (General Mines); Belo Horizonte was the first and, after Brasilia, the most successful of Brazil's synthetic cities. It has television, the amenities of modern life, and a pulse which charms North Americans who hope for an industrial society that can support affluence without fits of Calvinist guilt.



• *Tananarive, Malagasy Republic*, the capital of the new state better known as Madagascar, is a metropolis of 250,000 people in the invigorating highlands of the world's fourth-largest and most neglected island. It's safely south of the equator and, so far, totally uninteresting to any world power. It has a variety of climates and crops and could feed more people than it now contains. There are said to be reserves of everything it takes to build a modern economy except oil—and some people think that it is there for discovering. It's about as developed as America before the Boston Tea Party, largely because everyone (including its former French owners) simply forgot it was on earth. Unlike the ethnologically different natives of near-by Africa, the Mala-

gasy are open-minded about white men and hospitable to visitors.

• *Melbourne, Australia*, the financial capital of the subcontinent, may not be the safest spot on earth, as Australian resident Nevil Shute implies in his book *On the Beach*, but it is one of the most likely post-attack world centers. It has two million people and, according to residents, is adding population faster than other cities in the world. The climate is described as : delightful cross between Washington and California, and electronic, electrical and automotive industries are booming.

Australia is underpopulated. An exporter of lamb, beef, butter, wheat, and all good things to eat, it is actively seeking white immigrants to protect its pantry against the embarrassing hunger of Asiatic neighbors. Twenty million people could be added to the ten million who live in Australia now, and, if the dry areas were irrigated, boosters think it could support as many people as the United States.

Australia will be safe in 1962. The British air-launched missile is tested at Woomera, northwest of Adelaide, Australia, but there is as yet no atomic-attack capacity to attract enemy attention. This immunity may not last. Western military strategists would like to see missile bases down under, and if the Red Chinese formally join the atomic powers, Australia may want them badly enough to become the first atomic target south of the equator.

• *Christchurch, New Zealand* (215,000), one of the fastest-growing cities of the Commonwealth, is on the big grain-growing plain on the dry eastern side of South Island. New Zealand is some thirteen hundred miles to the east of Australia and less likely to acquire atomic bases. Almost as big and fertile as the British Isles, New Zealand has fewer than three million people and one of the highest standards of living and highest potentials for expansion in the civilized world.

One might choose New Zealand over Australia for safety, for scenery, for climate (it's moderated by the sea so that there isn't the difference between winter and summer you'd expect of this latitude) and for health. Whether it's the climate, the abundance of good food, or the Socialist health service, New Zealand has one of the world's lowest death rates. These days, it is a tighter little set of islands than the British homeland and very proud that fewer than two per cent of its population was born outside the British Commonwealth. They're eager to welcome English-speaking immigrants.

Immigration is up at last, and authorities think that safety has something to do with it. New Zealand is the destination of an American Utopian Society which has been advertising in little magazines for recruits to set up a "creative" community out of reach of atomic war. They plan to move the vanguard of a hand-picked group of a hundred fifty early in 1962. Members are pledged not to disclose their names to the press for fear that some will become more equal than others.

WHETHER or not to move is a grim decision, with the only unknown factor seeming to be that of time. There is no doubt at all, however, that for those who decide to stay, the construction of fallout shelters is prudent. It isn't generally known, but back in the days when everyone thought we had the bomb and they had not, John Foster Dulles was quietly building a shelter in the garden of his New York town house.

And total safety remains relevant, even for those who do move. One can calculate wind, weather, fallout and probable areas of destruction, but the path of history remains unpredictable. Example: the man who saw World War II coming and moved to a tropical island. His choice: Guadalcanal. #

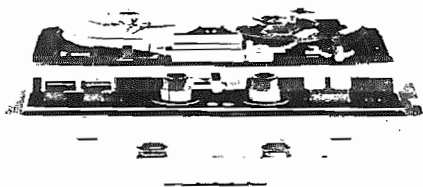
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