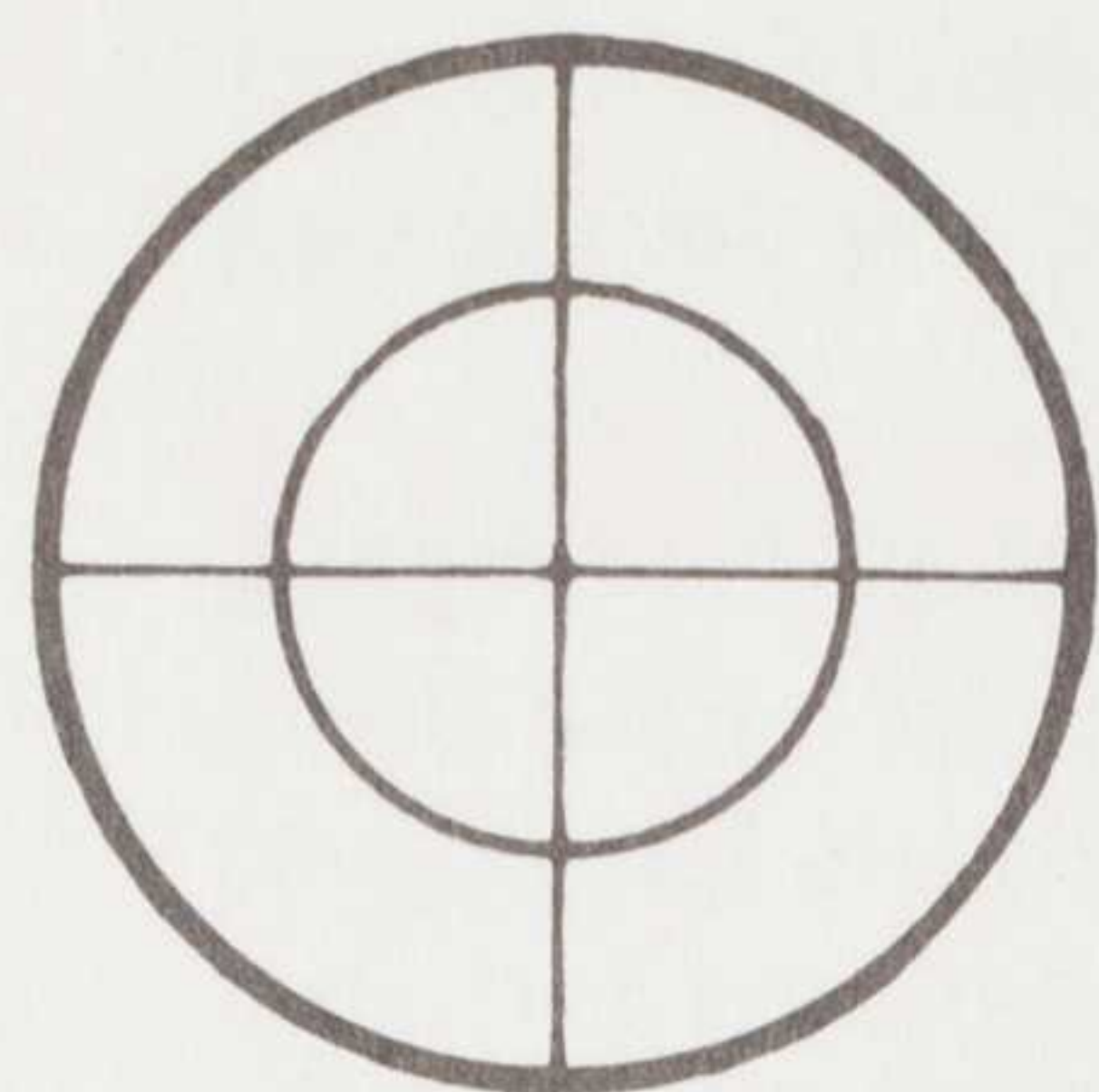




MAHA, Nebraska, is a typical midwestern town — typical except that it is less than 15 miles away from the

Strategic Air Command, the control center for all of America's strategic nuclear forces. What would happen if a 15 megaton nuclear weapon exploded over SAC headquarters?

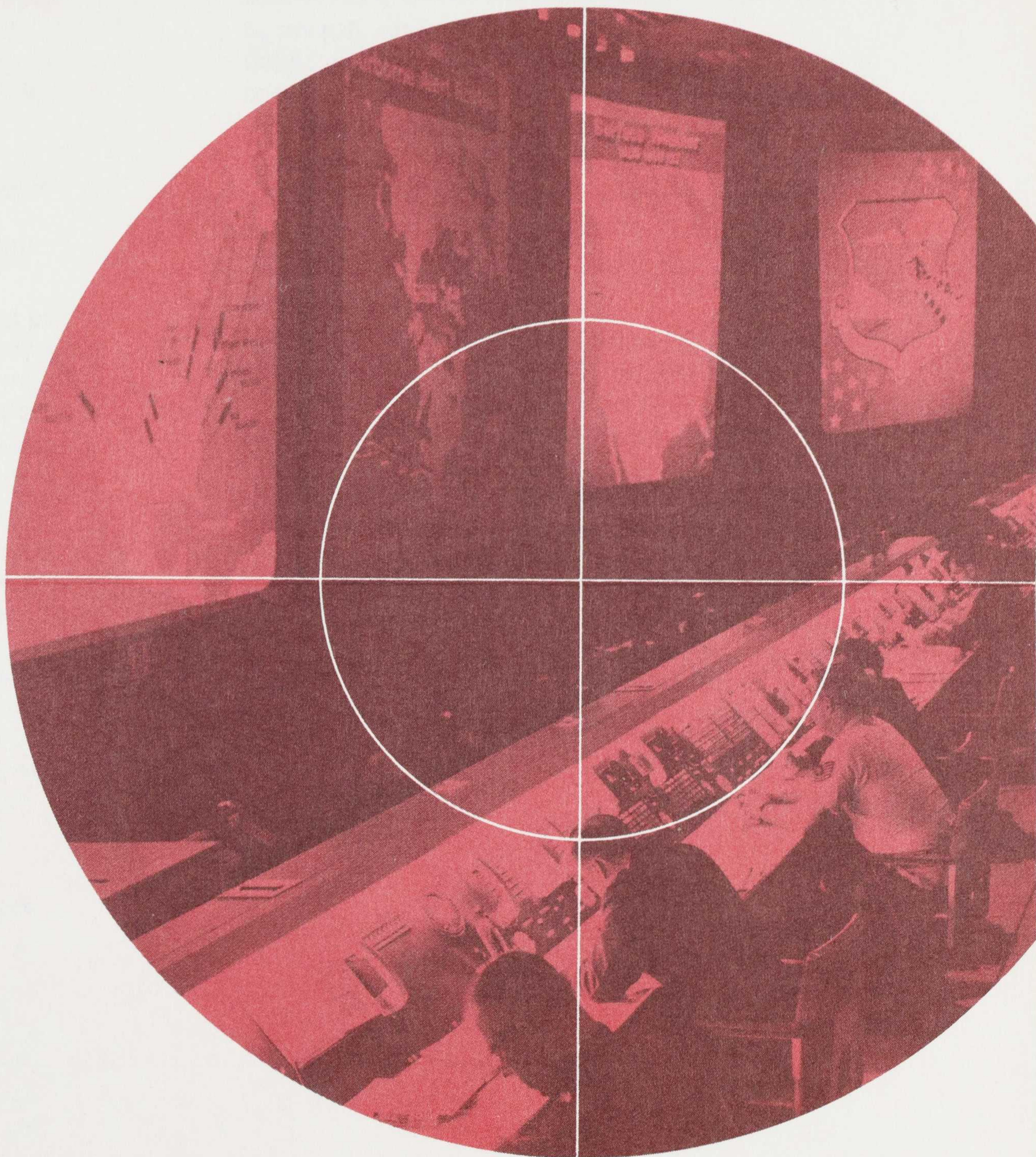
In a recent broadcast of *CBS Reports: The Defense of the United States — Ground Zero*, Dr. H. Jack Geiger, Logan Professor of Community Medicine at the City College of New York and a prominent spokesman for Physicians for Social Responsibility, described the physical and medical effects of such an attack on the people of Omaha.

“15 megatons is 1,200 Hiroshima explosions at the same moment in the same place, and there is simply nothing in human experience that serves as a precedent for such immense destruction.

“In the seconds following detonation, the bomb would create a huge fireball with temperatures of twenty to thirty million degrees Fahrenheit. Anyone even glancing at the fireball — from as far away as 35 miles — would be blinded by retinal burning. Tens of thousands of people on the side of Omaha closest to the SAC base would suffer third degree burns.

“The shock wave created by the explosion would cause skull fractures, ruptured lungs, and crushing injuries to the chest. There would be broken backs, deep lacerations from flying debris, and massive hemorrhaging. Even at 11 or 12 miles from ground zero, the overpressure would be great enough to turn an ordinary window into a lethal weapon as thousands of pieces of glass exploded at one hundred miles per hour.

“These injuries do not include the many who would be killed by random spontaneous fires fueled by gasoline stations, natural gas lines, and oil



“PSR may be the most effective group in the antinuclear movement.”

TIME, March 29, 1982