

New York City releases nuclear war alert

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12 July 2022

On Monday, New York City’s Office of Emergency Management (OEM) released a 90-second public service announcement (PSA) giving instructions to city residents on what to do in the event of a nuclear attack on America’s largest city.

The video begins with the narration, “So there has been a nuclear attack. Don’t ask me how or why, just know that the big one has hit.”

The narrator, standing in what appears to be an undamaged luxury apartment, gives the following suggestions: “Get inside,” “stay inside,” and await further instructions.

The advice given to residents includes to “shower with soap or shampoo” and to “stay tuned” using the “notify NYC” internet-based phone app. The video concludes with the narrator saying, “All right? You’ve got this,” before walking out of the frame.

Everything about the video, from its breezy narration to its trivial advice, is completely absurd.

In the event of a nuclear strike on New York City, there will be no buildings to shelter in, no water to shower with, and certainly no internet to get phone notifications.

At first glance, it would appear that the people who commissioned and released the video have absolutely no idea what they are talking about.

But such a video, dealing with critical civil defense issues, could only have been produced in consultation with the highest echelons of the Pentagon and the US government. Its absurdity is a product not of ignorance, but of deception. Its aim is to acclimate the public to the idea of nuclear war, while hiding its horrifying reality.

A nuclear attack on New York City would be part of a full-scale thermonuclear exchange, involving the launching of thousands of warheads at cities and infrastructure throughout the United States and the world.

Such an event would make 9/11 seem minuscule in comparison. The city and its environs would be struck by multiple thermonuclear warheads, each with a yield of over one hundred times the “Fat Man” nuclear weapon that destroyed Hiroshima.

In such a scenario, the entire New York City skyline would be incinerated and leveled, killing almost everyone taking shelter in the metropolis’s skyscrapers. Those who somehow survived in underground shelters would face not only the collapse of agriculture and trade, but the permanent effects of nuclear radiation that would continue to kill and maim year after year.

A nuclear exchange between Russia and the United States would “release soot and smoke into the upper atmosphere that would block out the Sun resulting in crop failure around the world,” a study published by Louisiana State University concluded last month.

The study found that such an exchange would lower global temperatures by approximately 13 degrees, greater than the last ice age that ended around 11,700 years ago.

The global ice age triggered by a nuclear war between Russia and the United States would decimate the population of every single part of the planet, even the residents of the most remote Pacific islands or the deepest Amazon rainforest. The scenario depicted in the PSA would, in other words, be the end of human civilization.

The PSA begins by stating, “Don’t ask me how or why.” However, faced with this horrifying prospect, the population must clearly ask “how” and “why”—before it’s too late.

Left completely unexplained is why the OEM of America’s largest city decided that now was an appropriate time to issue the first public service announcement on nuclear war in decades.

“As the threat landscape continues to evolve, it is important that New Yorkers know we are preparing for

any imminent threats and are providing them with the resources they need to stay safe and informed,” said New York City Emergency Management Commissioner Zach Iscol.

Asked by a reporter about the timing of the announcement, and “is there something we should know,” New York City Mayor Eric Adams replied that the PSA was issued after “the attacks in the Ukraine,” adding later in the briefing that “it was really taking necessary steps after what happened in Ukraine.”

But these evasive statements only raise other questions. Did instructions for the creation of this announcement come from the federal government? Will other cities be making similar announcements? Who proposed the publication of this video?

By any standard, the release of such a video is a major news event. Its release can only mean that New York City officials, acting on information they have received from Washington, believe that a nuclear war is now a distinct and even imminent danger.

The reality is that this video is part of a systematic effort to acclimate the public to the plans of the US government for nuclear war.

The announcement takes place just two weeks after a NATO summit in which the US, among other NATO allies, announced plans for “high-intensity.... warfighting against nuclear-armed peer-competitors,” including Russia and China.

This open declaration of plans for nuclear war follows a years-long buildup of US nuclear forces and the systematic dismantling of all remaining international restrictions on the use and deployment of nuclear weapons.

In 2018, the Trump administration withdrew from the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, freeing the United States to ring Russia and China with short-range nuclear weapons capable of hitting major cities in a matter of minutes. This was accompanied by a massive expansion of the US’s nuclear modernization program, the cost of which subsequently ballooned to nearly \$2 trillion.

The Biden administration has doubled down on the nuclear preparations of its predecessors. Biden’s proposed 2023 budget calls for creating new versions of every single weapons system in the US nuclear “triad.”

By systematically building up its nuclear forces, destroying international arms control agreements, and

recklessly provoking conflicts with Russia and China, both nuclear-armed states, the US is putting its own population, and that of the world, in massive danger.

Last week, the Pentagon gave what was in effect a public green light for Ukraine to attack Crimea, an action that observers have warned could trigger nuclear retaliation by Russia.

As the US escalates its war with Russia, America’s generals are publicly declaring that the population must accept the prospect of nuclear war.

“We have been so worried about nuclear weapons and World War III that we have allowed ourselves to be fully deterred,” said Lt. Gen. Frederick B. Hodges, the former top US Army commander in Europe in April. “We have been deterred out of an exaggerated fear of what possibly could happen,” complained Frederick B. Hodges, the former top U.S. Army commander in Europe.

Washington’s nuclear arms race and its escalation of the war with Russia and conflict with China are the outcome of a decades-long drive by the American ruling class for global hegemony through war, which has already led to the destruction of Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya and Syria. Now, confronted with a social, economic and political crisis it sees no way out of, the ruling class is recklessly escalating conflicts that threaten to lead to nuclear war.

As demonstrated by US capitalism’s homicidal response to the pandemic, the American ruling class is capable of sacrificing the lives of millions of Americans in pursuit of its aims.

Stopping the reckless and homicidal war aims of American imperialism requires conscious political intervention by the working class. Throughout the country, workers are entering into struggle against the soaring cost of living. All over the world, workers must take up the struggle against war. We urge our readers who agree with this perspective to contact us today.



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