



# NUCLEAR DYNAMITE

Data, summaries, distribution

## Production Data

Title: Nuclear Dynamite  
Length: 71:53 or 52:00  
Original language: English  
Production format: Beta SP (1.33:1) NTSC  
Release format: Digital Betacam / Beta SP  
Audio: Stereo ( international version available with split tracks: Dialogue and M&E )  
Close captioned: Yes  
Completion date: May 1 2000  
Broadcast premiere: CBC *The Nature of Things*  
First Broadcast: Canada : October 2000  
International release: following Canadian premiere  
Genre: Science, Technology and Society, History, Environment

## Credits

Director/Writer: Gary Marcuse  
Producers: Gary Marcuse and Betsy Carson  
Producer for the National Film Board: Selwyn Jacob  
Editor: Stuart de Jong  
DOP: Kirk Tougas  
Music: Henry Heillig and the Heillig Manoeuvre  
Narration: David Suzuki  
Sound Recordists: Jeff Henschel, Gary Marcuse, Betsy Carson  
Consultant Dan O'Neill, author of *The Firecracker Boys*  
Sound Supervisor: Gael MacLean  
Sound Editors : Gina Mueller, Rusty Dunn  
Re-Recording Mixer: Ewan Deane  
Original Graphics Carl Chaplin  
Animation: Mark Rasmussen , Enigma Animation  
Executive producer for the NFB: Graydon McCrea  
Executive producer for the CBC: Michael Allder  
Produced by Face to Face Media in coproduction with the National Film Board, and in association with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation  
Produced with the participation of the Canadian Television Fund  
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Telefilm Canada: Equity Investment Program  
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## Shorter summaries

Russian and American scientists planned to re-shape the surface of the planet with nuclear explosives. *Nuclear Dynamite* cracks open the archives and interviews scientists and environmentalists in this first-ever documentary on this bizarre atomic megadream. (35 words)

*Nuclear Dynamite* cracks open Russian and American archives and traces the roots of the environmental movement back to the 1950s as it presents the untold story of superpower plans to harness the power of the atomic bomb for planetary engineering projects. (41 words)

*Nuclear Dynamite* reveals the untold story of American and Soviet plans to use nuclear explosives to launch spaceships and carry out gigantic "geographical engineering" projects including digging a new sea-level Panama Canal with atomic bombs. More than 150 nuclear blasts were carried out between 1958 and 1988 before this bizarre and extraordinary atomic dream was destroyed by the emergence of the environmental movements in both countries.(66 words)

In the 1950s Edward Teller, the co-inventor of the H-Bomb proposed using "the great and violent power" of the atom bomb for peaceful purposes. *Nuclear Dynamite* explores the Soviet- American race to develop nuclear explosives for gigantic megaprojects. Scientists planned to harness the power of the bomb to launch huge spaceships, dig an instant harbour in Alaska, blast out oil and gas deposits, cut through mountain ranges, and dig a new Panama canal with 300 explosions. More than 150 nuclear blasts were carried out between 1958 and 1988 before this bizarre and extraordinary atomic dream was destroyed by the emergence of the environmental movements in both countries. (107 words)

## Archives

The archival material was gleaned from many sources, including the National Archives and Records Administration in Washington, the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratories, the Oral History Department and Film Archives at the Elmer E. Rasmuson Library, University of Alaska, Fairbanks, and the Moscow archives of the Ministry of Atomic Energy

## Untold history

This is the first ever documentary on this extraordinary subject. Our crew combed the archives of the US and Soviet nuclear programs and turned up hundreds of reels of film documenting nuclear experiments in geographical engineering, and the development of a nuclear powered rocket ship. The program utilizes extensive stock footage from the once secret Soviet archives, newly discovered footage from the American program, promotional and propaganda films of the era, and interviews with participants and witnesses to explore one of the most ambitious "big science" projects ever imagined.

## Audiences

### Science, Technology and Society.

For younger audiences *Nuclear Dynamite* locates the origins of the environmental movement in the nuclear protests of the 1950s. For older audiences this strange tale revives a forgotten story about one of the most ambitious "big science" projects ever conceived. For all viewers this program raises difficult questions about the consequences of new technologies in applied science. Many discoveries -- including nuclear technology, antibiotics, and biological engineering -- offer great promises and bring great risks. How will society evaluate and regulate new technologies that have the potential to alter or damage the biosphere?

## On Location

This documentary was prepared during the spring and fall of 1999, and was shot on location at the Inupiat village of Point Hope Alaska and at the Nevada Test Site. The Russian participants were interviewed in Las Vegas during a joint US-Russian nuclear test ban testing verification conference. Edward Teller was interviewed at Livermore where he is director emeritus, in the fall of 1997.

## Diverse perspectives

The story of Nuclear Dynamite is told by witnesses and participants. Scientists in the US and Soviet program recall the excitement of trying to capture the power of the sun and put it to work on earth. Inupiat hunters in Point Hope recall their fight to prevent a huge blast near their village in the western Arctic. Other scientists and activists recall the dawning awareness of the dangers of fallout that helped to give birth to the early environmental movement in the 1950s, and put an end to plans for atomic mega-projects.

## Distribution

### US and Canadian Broadcast, US video

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Face to Face Media  
1818 Grant Street,  
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### International Broadcast and Video

National Film Board of Canada  
International program  
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### In the UK

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### France

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75007, Paris, France  
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### Canadian Video

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