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BRITAIN'S THIRD ATOMIC EXPLOSION. 19/1/54.

These pictures record how, in Emu Field, in the desolate waste land of the Central Australian desert, preparations were made for Britain's third atomic explosion. Even the job of getting the equipment to the site was a major operation ; and months of preliminary work now culminated with the arrival of the senior scientists, whose labour was now to be put to the test.

In overall charge is Britain's leading atomic authority Sir William Penney --- who puts on a bushranger hat, as protection against the sun in a heat of 112 degrees. He looks first at the tower from whose top the explosion will take place. And, getting ready for zero hour, are the hundreds of instruments that will record the scientific data. Looking round is the Minister of Supply, Mr Duncan Sandys.

After all preparations were complete, the scientists had a wait of some ten days before they were able to give the word "go". They were held up until the wind veered in the right direction; if the explosion had been set off with the wind in the wrong quarter, radio-active clouds would have been sent drifting over inhabited areas in the far distance. Dust storms added to their difficulties.

At last, all was set; the watch on the instruments intensified; special cameras recording the split-second activity of split atoms, were made ready for action; and the seconds ticked away towards zero hour.

The lights show that all points are on the alert; everything awaits that awful flash.

After the white-hot blast, rockets were fired through the radio-active centre --- carrying apparatus to record the effect.

followed by a plane

And here comes a closer view. Sir William Panney said that this was probably one of the world's smallest atomic weapons.

Once again --- complete success. Advancing, still further, Britain's knowledge of this terrifying new power; the power that can bring so much benefit to a world at peace; , and so much misery in war.