

NEVADA ATOM TEST AFFECTS UTAH AREA

**Radiation Keeps 5,000 Indoors
3 Hours After Explosion—
Drone Plane Braves Heat**

LAS VEGAS, Nev., May 19 (UP)—An atomic device was exploded in a test today, showering radioactive particles on communities 100 miles away and forcing 5,000 persons to take shelter for three hours.

Radioactivity from the cloud produced by the ninth blast in the 1953 atomic series was so heavy that motor and pedestrian traffic was halted in the St. George area of southwestern Utah.

All residents were asked to stay indoors from 9 A. M. until noon Pacific daylight time. Nearly 100 automobiles were found to have been contaminated and officials ordered that they be washed.

Atomic Energy Commission representatives who monitored the blast said the radioactivity was too low to be harmful to human beings or animals. The monitors remained in St. George overnight, however, to continue making checks.

"We spread the word [of the radioactivity] in such a way as not to frighten or alarm the people," said Sherman C. Lamb, St. George chief of police. "We just told them they might have to wash their clothing if they remained on the street."

Roadblocks on U. S. Highways 91 and 93, main routes from Las Vegas into northern Nevada and Utah, halted about 200 cars.

Drone Plane Braves Heat

The explosion marked the first successful flight by a pilotless drone plane through the flame and heat of an atomic blast.

In the previous atomic test on May 8 two pilotless jet planes were guided by radar through the atomic cloud that follows a nuclear detonation but today's flight was the first in which a plane successfully had flown through the thermal (heat) envelope.

The blast from a 300-foot tower was set off at 5:04½ A. M. (8:04½ New York time).

The explosion appeared to observers to rank with the most powerful ever set off at Yucca Flat.

But to scientists the feature of the test was the drone plane's flight through the thermal envelope. In a previous effort the pilotless plane crashed.

Fireball Visible 17 Seconds

The plane that made the flight was a single-engined, propeller-driven Navy AD-2 Skyraider that landed a few moments later at the near-by Indian Springs Air Base.

The detonation itself unfolded a fireball visible for seventeen seconds, considered unusually long, and then sent its familiar mushroom cloud soaring into the sky. An ice collar was visible clearly below the churning head of the cloud as it towered some 40,000 feet.

The atomic blast made a vivid impression on twenty-three Congressional observers, according to their spokesman, Representative Hugh Scott, Republican of Pennsylvania, who described their feelings.

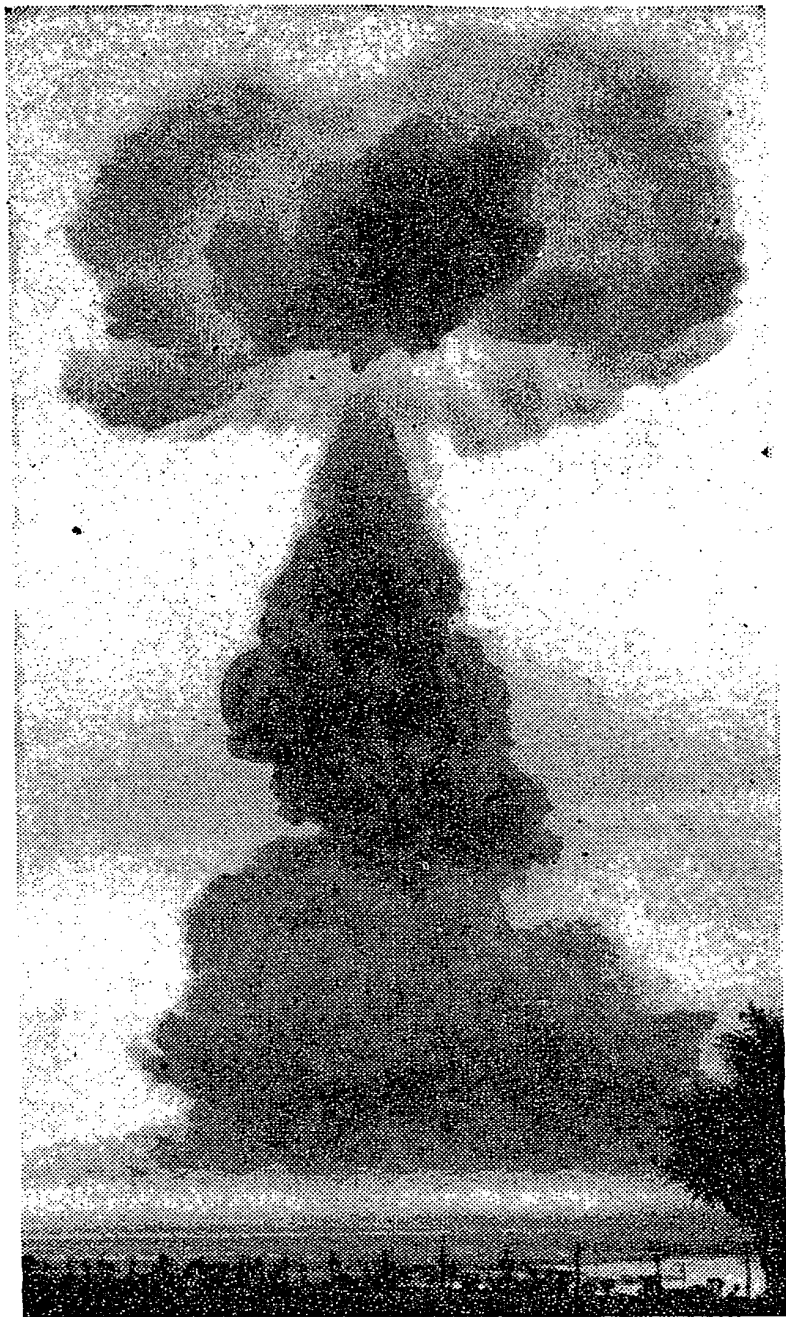
"None of us was fully prepared for what we saw, even after three days of intensive preparation and briefings," he said. "It was greater than we could have imagined."

The shock of the blast was felt both close and far away from the scene of the detonation. Mr. Scott reported it had rattled windows at the control station where the Congressmen viewed it.

The brilliant flash also momentarily blinded observers thirty-five miles away on Mount Charleston. The Atomic Energy Commission said the shock was recorded on seismographs at Pasadena, Calif., 300 miles southwest of here. The flash was reported seen in Colorado, Idaho, Utah and California.

Approximately 1,000 armed forces observers witnessed the blast from trenches a little more than two miles from the blast but did not conduct any military maneuvers.

The tenth and final test in the current atomic series was scheduled for next Monday when an atomic projectile is scheduled to be fired from a cannon.



BY THE DAWN'S EARLY LIGHT: The familiar atomic mushroom took a slightly different shape yesterday morning as it rose from the desert floor of Yucca Flat in Nevada in one of the Atomic Energy Commission's current experiments. The nuclear device was detonated from a 300-foot steel tower. It was the last conventional shot before the testing of the atomic-energy cannon, which is scheduled for next Monday.