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WAR DEPARTMENT

WASHINGTON

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 11652, Sec. 3(E) and 5(D) or (E)
NND 730039
By ERC NARS, Date 6/24/94

6 August 1945.

MEMORANDUM TO THE CHIEF OF STAFF

The gun type bomb was ready at Tinian on 31 July awaiting the first favorable weather. The daily 24 hour advance forecasts kept indicating unsatisfactory conditions until 3 August when there was a prediction of possible good weather over the targets for 4 August at 2200Z (5 August 0700 Tinian or 4 August 1800 EWT). Later predictions delayed this a day. At 5 August 0415Z General Lemay finalized the take-off time, final assembly of the bomb proceeded and take-off actually occurred on schedule at 1645Z 5 August. Two B-29's with recording instruments and special scientific observers accompanied the vital plane. The anticipated weather over the targets was not certain to be good but only fair.

One hour prior to the bomb take-off, three B-29's were dispatched for final weather check observations over three of the designated targets. Reports to date do not indicate which three were observed.

Arrangements were made for the vital plane to stage at Iwo Jima to await more favorable weather if that should be deemed desirable. A spare B-29 was dispatched to that point for use as a replacement if that should be necessary.

The target used was Hiroshima, the one reserved target where there was no indication of any POW camp.

The following flash report from the vital plane by Captain Parsons, USN, my chief ordnance expert, was received at Tinian after the attack and relayed to Washington: "Results clearcut, successful in all respects. Visible effects greater than New Mexico test. Conditions normal in airplane following delivery." The plane also radioed "Target at Hiroshima attacked visually 1/10th cloud at 052315Z. No fighters and no flak."

permanently parts to support more special points

*Shown to Col's who read
Gen Arnold
G L Harrison*



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Memo To The Chief of Staff

6 August 1945.

After return of the vital aircraft to base, the message below was sent from Tinian at 0645Z 6 August and received in Washington at 0845Z (4:45 EWT): "Following additional information furnished by Parsons, crews, and observers on return to Tinian at 060500Z. Report delayed until information could be assembled at interrogation of crews and observers. Present at interrogation were Spaatz, Giles, Twining, and Davies.

"Confirmed neither fighter or flak attack and one tenth cloud cover with large open hole directly over target. High speed camera reports excellent record obtained. Other observing aircraft also anticipates good records although films not yet processed. Reconnaissance aircraft taking post-strike photographs have not yet returned.

"Sound - Not appreciably observed.

"Flash - Not so blinding as New Mexico test because of bright sunlight. First there was a ball of fire changing in a few seconds to purple clouds and flames boiling and swirling upward. Flash observed just after airplane rolled out of turn. All agreed light was intensely bright and white cloud rose faster than New Mexico test reaching thirty thousand feet in three minutes it was one-third greater diameter. It mushroomed at the top, broke away from column and the column mushroomed again. Cloud was most turbulent. It went at least to forty thousand feet. ~~Flattening across its top at this level.~~ It was observed from combat airplane three hundred sixty-three nautical miles away with airplane at twenty-five thousand feet. Observation was then limited by haze and not curvature of the earth.

"Blast - There were two distinct shocks felt in combat airplane similar in intensity of close flak bursts. Entire city except outermost ends of dock areas was covered with a dark grey dust layer which joined the cloud column. It was extremely turbulent with flashes of fire visible in the dust. Estimated diameter of this dust layer is at least three miles. One observer stated it looked as though whole town was being torn apart with columns of dust rising out of valleys approaching the town. Due to dust visual observation of structural damage could not be made.

"Parsons and other observers felt this strike was tremendous and awesome even in comparison with New Mexico test. Its effects may be attributed by the Japanese to a huge meteor."

- 2 -

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The operational plan provided for three photo planes to cover the target four hours after the drop. No report has yet been received from these.

As of 1020Z, 6 August, G-2 WDGS has not received through FCC or OWI radio intercepts any Japanese broadcasts of exceptional significance.



L. R. GROVES,
Major General, USA.

- 3 -

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