

THE RISING SUN SETS

THE COMPLETE STORY OF THE BOMBING OF NAGASAKI



Compiled FROM UNPUBLISHED DOCUMENTS PROVIDED BY
THE BESER FOUNDATION FOR ARCHIVAL RESEARCH AND
PRESERVATION

Edited by JEROME BESER AND JACK SPANGLER

“If World War 3 is fought with atomic weapons, World War 4 will be fought with sticks and stones.”

Jacob Beser



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(EBook Edition)

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“As in any war, our goal was—as it should be—to win. The stakes were too high to equivocate. We had to do what was necessary! Humane warfare is an oxymoron. War by definition is barbaric. I particularly feel a special sense of indignation at those self-proclaimed humanitarians that make an acceptable or intolerable distinction between the use of nuclear explosives or the use of conventional explosives and/or fire bombing or bullets as the means of killing the enemy. To try and distinguish between an acceptable method of killing and an unacceptable method is ludicrous. In my mind, to suggest that one specific act of war is barbaric and thereby illegal is to imply that other forms of slaughter are acceptable and consequently legal! If you have to die in warfare, what is the difference of being killed by a bomb or a bullet?”

“We do not claim that we as mortal men alone won the war. We do not claim that the thousands of men and women on the home front that designed and built the atomic bombs in record time won the war. A secret weapon far greater and far more powerful than the atomic bomb won the war - American ingenuity, industry and unanimity of purpose were the deciding factors.”

*Jacob Beser
October 1945*

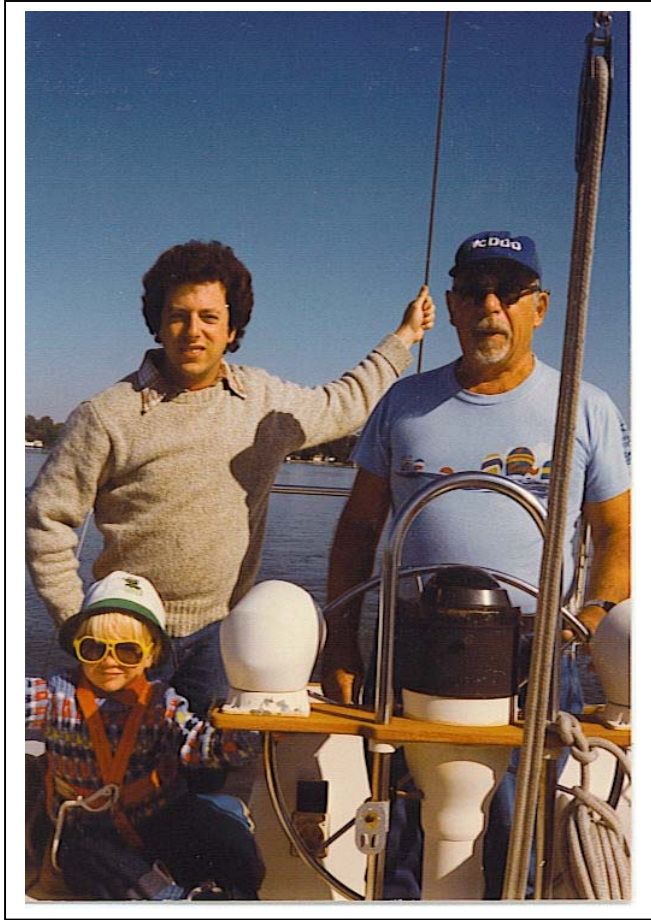
DEDICATION

Freedom is never really free
It is the most costly thing in the world
It is never paid for in a lump sum
Installments come due in every generation
All any of us can do is offer the generations
That follow a chance for freedom

This book is dedicated to
The valiant men of the U S Army Air Corps 509th
Composite Group
Whose selfless patriotism and devotion to duty
Contributed directly to maintaining the freedom
Of this great country
And especially to the memory of
My father Jacob Beser

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Jacob Beser with his son Jerome and grandson Joshua enjoying leisure cruise of the Chesapeake Bay on his Bristol 34 sailboat.

Foreword

On December 7, 1941 over 300 carrier based airplanes clearly marked with the "Rising Sun" emblem of the Japanese Empire, initiated World War II in the Pacific by an unprovoked attack on the US Naval base at Pearl Harbor. The first wave hit the American airplanes on the ground. Most were destroyed. An inbound flight of B-17 bombers stumbled on the raid and several were destroyed. Ninety-four war ships lay at anchor and were attacked by dive bombers and torpedo planes. Almost all were destroyed or severely damaged. America was at war in the Pacific!



Japanese aerial photo of battleship row soon after the USS Arizona exploded

The overwhelming military power of the Rising Sun's army and navy followed up with irresistible drive and swept over Malay and the Philippines, then Java and finally Burma, conquering Southeast Asia in about a half a year. However, the Rising Sun reached its zenith in mid 1942 when its rise was halted at the Battle of Midway. From then on the Rising Sun began to set as the Japanese forces were forced to retreat as the Americans defeated them in the various land, sea and air battles in the South Pacific.

By the late summer of 1945 the war in Europe was over and Germany had surrendered. The war in the Pacific had been going on for almost four years and the world wanted to get it over with as soon as possible. Despite heavy losses on the ground and the destruction of their home island cities by the relentless fire bombing, the Japanese steadfastly refused to surrender. An invasion of the Japanese homeland would be required and was being planned. Men and material were being assembled in the area in preparation for a November invasion. Events of the months before August 1945 confirmed to Allied leaders that the Japanese would defend their homeland just as vigorously as they had defended Saipan, Iwo Jima and Okinawa. Casualties on both sides were expected to be in the hundred's of thousands if not in the millions.

The situation changed abruptly on August 6th. It was on this day that a single B-29 bomber from the Army Air Corps' 509th Composite Group based on Tinian Island and proudly displaying the name *Enola Gay* on its nose dropped the first atomic bomb on the Japanese City of Hiroshima. The explosive power of this bomb was greater than that of 2,000 B-29s flying with their maximum bomb loads. In an instant Hiroshima, the eighth largest city in Japan with a population of over 340,000 people, was obliterated. Still the Japanese refused to surrender even though they knew an invasion of their homeland was coming soon. They were hoping to get better terms if they could inflict heavy casualties on the Americans when the invasion occurred. Three days later, on August 9, another B-29 named *Bock's Car* dropped a second and more powerful atomic bomb on the city of Nagasaki. Now the Japanese knew that the Americans were serious and had more than one atomic bomb. In face of continued atomic bombing and the total destruction of their homeland, they surrendered nine days later. What had started as a day of unspeakable terror at Pearl Harbor ended with one blinding flash of light at Nagasaki!

Jacob Beser, my father, was the only man to fly as a crewmember on both the *Enola Gay* for the Hiroshima Mission

and the *Bock's Car*¹ for the Nagasaki Mission. He witnessed first hand what happened on both missions.

In 1985 my father visited Hiroshima and Nagasaki and wrote his first book *Hiroshima and Nagasaki Revisited*. In 1990 he was contemplating writing a second book to tell the complete and untold story of the Nagasaki mission. Unfortunately he passed away in 1992 and was unable to fulfill this ambitious goal. However in 2006 Jack Spangler, a close family friend and I have attempted to complete my father's desire to tell the complete story of the Nagasaki mission and emphasize the horrors of nuclear warfare. We have used tape recordings from his radio and TV interviews, manuscripts and notes to tell his story in his own words and have included his personal opinions as he expressed them. At this point we should note that his personal opinions are blunt and in some cases opinionated. Anyone who knew my father knew him as a man who was not afraid to speak his mind and did so

¹ Editor's Note: *Bock's Car* or *Bockscar*, which is correct? We don't know! Jacob Beser as well as Colonel Tibbets, Major Sweeney, Cmdr. Ashworth and Capt. Beahan consistently used "*Bock's Car*" in their writings. However some historical writers use *Bockscar*.

The usual procedure was for the aircraft commander to select the name for his airplane so if Fred Bock said it was *Bockscar* then that name would be correct. But with Tibbets, Sweeney, Ashworth, Beahan, Beser and others thinking it was *Bock's Car* there must have been some reason for the confusion!

Most of the airplanes had names before the Hiroshima and Nagasaki missions based on what Tibbets and others have written. This indicates that Capt. Bock's airplane was probably known as *Bock's Car* certainly by Tibbets, Sweeney, Ashworth, Beahan and Beser.

The nose art on the B-29 clearly shows *BOCKSCAR* with the possibility of a small space between the "K" and the "S". Some documents indicate that the markings on the airplanes were removed before the Nagasaki mission for security reasons. Another document says the name *BOCKSCAR* was painted in black capital letters after the mission.

We have used my father's unfinished manuscript and his archived documents to complete his book. We have neither performed any extensive research to confirm the accuracy of what he said nor have we extensively edited his words or grammar. We have simply taken his unfinished manuscript; supplement it with what he said in other writings; personal conversations and interviews; and, stitched them together to complete his book more or less in accordance with his original plan. Since my father consistently used *Bock's Car* we have left the spelling in as he had written.

sometimes rather abrasively. But the message he preached until the day he died was always clear. War is immoral. If you are going to have a war its academic how you die. The lessons he learned from the atomic bomb missions speaks clearly “never again.” His hope was not only never again use weapons of mass destruction but never again to wage a war that would necessitate using such weapons.

This is more than just a simple rerun of the many stories that have been told for over half a century about the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It is very easy to sit back in an easy chair today with a limited understanding of the conditions in 1945 and argue about what should have been done to end the war. But when you see it from the perspective of someone, such as my father, who was there and participated, you have a much better understanding about what took place. That is what my father did in his first book “*Hiroshima and Nagasaki Revisited* “ and intended to do in his second book.

If you are looking for an apology for the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki you won't find it here. Dad had absolutely no intent of ever apologizing for what happened during the later days of World War II. While he was against war in general and atomic warfare in particular, he was proud of his role in missions that ended World War II. He felt then and felt the same way until the day he died that what he and the other 1800 or so members of the 509th Composite Group did in August of 1945 saved the lives of millions of Allied and Japanese soldiers and civilians. He felt that way despite what revisionist historians say and would like people to believe. He also thought that Monday morning quarterbacking 45 years later is easy for people who didn't have to make the hard choices that had to be made in 1945 and get up on a soapbox and criticize the decisions of those whose job it was to win the war. But, as my father said “*Our job was to bring the war to a speedy end with a minimum number of casualties on both sides and we did our job in the best way we knew how.*”

My Mission to Complete My Father's Work

My father spent his entire career from 1945 to 1985, with the exception of a short interval, in service to his country either in the Army or in defense work. As I said earlier, he held the distinction of being the only man to fly on both the strike aircraft that bombed Hiroshima and Nagasaki. At both Hiroshima and Nagasaki he saw first-hand the destruction caused by the atomic bombs. Later in his role as an employee of defense contractors, he had access to various weapon performance reports and study documents that further delineated the awesome destructive power of both the bombs dropped on Japan as well as the much larger bombs that have since been developed and tested. Based on his first-hand observation and the other information in his possession, he had more than just a casual observer's point-of-view of the opening of a new era where man's inhumanity to his fellow man had exceeded all previous assaults.

While chemists and physicists were utilizing the periodic table elements of uranium and plutonium to construct bombs, Dad also considered another element not in the chemical periodic table - the potential effects on humanity. Many times Dad said he was in total agreement that the use of the bombs was fully justified in 1945, but he was also firmly convinced that a better way must be found to settle future international disputes. Atomic bombs should never again be used in warfare! But, he was a willing participant and he had never regretted his part in the development of and the use of the first atomic weapons.

In 1985, my father retired 40 years after his Hiroshima and Nagasaki experiences. Based on his personal experiences in 1945 and what he had learned over the next 40 years from the test reports and studies, he felt he had a post-retirement mission to do as much as he could to better inform the public of the horrors of nuclear warfare.

In 1988, Dad published his first book, "*Hiroshima and Nagasaki Revisited*." In this book, he related some of his experiences during the development and the delivery of the bombs as well as the results of his trip to Japan in 1985 for the 40th

anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. He faced head-on and bluntly answered questions of "revisionist historian" about his feelings regarding his wartime experiences. He also discussed in detail the response that he received from the Japanese people two generations later that were totally ignorant of World War II history. He even attempted to answer their questions, "*How could all of this ever happened?*"

In 1990 my father outlined his second book. In this book, he planned to tell the unknown story of the Nagasaki raid. He also planned to answer some of the thousands of questions that had been asked over the past 40 years. Furthermore, he wanted to express his deep feelings that the world should never again have to experience the effects of atomic bombs in warfare. While preparing to write this book, Dad accumulated a vast archive of source material and renewed his effort to locate the voice recordings that he made while over Hiroshima, just minutes after the first bomb exploded. The contents of his document archive and the tapes would once and for all answer a number of questions and speculations that had plagued objective and revisionist historians for 40 years.

On June 17, 1992, my father passed away from melanoma cancer. As his illness progressed, unbeknownst to our family, he stored his archive of documents in his office at the family home. Unfortunately, after more than 40 years of searching, Dad never found the in-flight recording which he had made onboard the *Enola Gay*.

In 2004, the family home was sold. In the process of moving, my father's archives were discovered. Upon review of his documents, I found that they contained a wealth of historical documents. These documents included hundreds of unpublished private correspondence, lecture notes, interview recordings, mission planning, meeting agendas, summary reports and eyewitness debriefing transcripts as well as a number of private photos and films from crew members and military sources.

Reviewing my father's document collection revived my memories of our many conversations about his wartime experiences. It was then that I started my mission to complete the book my father had planned to write. At this point I renewed his

search for the in-flight recording and also started restoring and digitizing his archived documents. In the process, I learned more about the true facts pertaining to the atomic bomb missions, the end of World War II, as well my father's life mission. My journey to complete his work has not been an easy one. In 2005, I was diagnosed with a large cell tumor mass that, due to its late discovery and pain, nearly caused me to come very close to ending my quest to finish his work. But, when my health failed, people stepped forward to pick up the torch. Friends like Jack Spangler and Robbie Jacobson and my immediate family, with both physical and emotional support, by working by my side as my health deteriorated and took over when it all became too painful. This was particularly appreciated starting from the beginning of my diagnosis, during the time of my surgery, induced coma, recovery and rehabilitation. As a result of studying the documents in Dad's archives and with assistance, I have been able to complete my Dad's last mission.

Above all, Dad wanted my generation and generations beyond to recognize the true state of the world in 1945 and to be aware of the many thousands of lives on both sides that were saved by the use of the atomic weapons. He also wanted people to recognize that war itself was the immoral act, not just the weapons that were used. Dad stressed that we must study the mistakes of the past to prevent repeating them in the future.

My father was aware that many of the existing stories were misleading as to why Hiroshima and Nagasaki were selected as targets and continued to propagate myths of guilt and remorse from the soldiers who participated in these missions. My father wanted to correct these stories and myths with indisputable facts, not hearsay or propagandist material. In his manuscripts, lecture notes and other papers, he has quoted, with both written and spoken words of those that were there and participated in the target selection and the actual bombing missions.

The recording that Dad made immediately after the bomb exploded over Hiroshima were lost for more than 50 years, but has now been found. Also, *Enola Gay* crew interview transcripts made immediately after and 15 years later have been uncovered. The Hiroshima recording clearly disposes of the myth that Bob Lewis

said, "*My G-d, What have we done?*" Neither was it found on the recordings that any of the crew members expressed any feelings or guilt or remorse. What was found on the recordings and also in the interviews was that some of the crew expressed sorrow for the Japanese citizens, but did not condemn what they had done. They instead expressed a belief that the bombings would bring a quick end to the war, thus saving the lives of an untold number of American and Japanese servicemen and civilians.

The members of the *Enola Gay* crew were all young men, many in their late teens through the late twenties. Fifteen years after the bombing, the same men were again interviewed. Again, there were no expressions of remorse or guilt for what they had done in 1945. Each and every man said that if the conditions existed today as they did in 1945 he would volunteer to do the same thing again! They still believed that this mission had helped bring a rapid end to the war and saved thousands of American and Japanese lives.

My father was a 1st. Lieutenant in the Army Air Corps 509th Composite Group. In addition to flying on both missions, Dad also participated in the Manhattan Project during the atomic bomb development and in the mission planning activities. In this capacity, his chain of command was Colonel Paul Tibbets, Commander 509th Composite Group; General Leslie Groves, Manhattan Project Manager; Henry Stimson, Secretary of War; and Franklin D. Roosevelt, President of the United States. In recognition of the importance of his service to his country, he was awarded the Silver Star, the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Air Medal, the Asiatic Pacific Service Medal, the American Campaign Medal and the WWII Victory Medal.

My father was a Jewish boy who grew up in Baltimore, Maryland. His grandparents had emigrated from Germany for political and religious reasons. His grandfather was from the area of Cologne and his grandmother was from Southern Germany. He still had close relatives in Germany and France that had been victims of the Holocaust. When the British entered World War II, Dad was a restless young man and wanted to withdraw from college and join the Royal Air Force "to kill some Nazis," but he complied with the requests of his parents and remained in college

to finish his engineering degree. But, immediately after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor his parents, recognizing that he would eventually have to go to war anyway, relented and approved of his enlisting in the Army Air Corps. It was then that his superior performance at the Army communications, radar, and radar countermeasures schools enabled him to become one of the top rated radar countermeasures officers in the Army.

My father's experience as an amateur radio operator and his advanced training and knowledge of the new science of radar and electronic countermeasures, coupled with his college training as a mechanical engineer prompted the Army to select him to participate in the Manhattan Project. While with the Manhattan Project, he assisted Dr. Norman Ramsey and other civilian scientists at the Los Alamos laboratories in solving technical problems with the radar altimeter proximity fuse and the mechanical/ballistic configuration of the atomic bomb. In addition, his knowledge of the radar altimeter design and his advanced training in radar countermeasures made him an invaluable participant in the delivery of the atomic bombs.

Dad was small in stature, but was extremely strong in his opinions. Many would have described him as a feisty individual who did not let political correctness stand in his way in expressing his thoughts. This characteristic did not always make him popular with his fellow officers, who sometimes regarded him as a "cocky oddball," but respected his knowledge of radar. Some of his enlisted subordinates considered him a "longhair" because of his college education. But, Dad was an excellent interpreter of human nature. He once said that he saw "*the Japanese, both civilian and military, as fanatic fighters, human certainly, but dedicated to the cause of a Japanese victory at all costs.*" Dad never deviated from his opinions during his entire lifetime.

On the strike mission to Hiroshima, he utilized a lathe disk recording device connected to the in-flight intercom to record the verbal reactions of the *Enola Gay* crew after witnessing the deployment of the first atomic bomb. This recording was turned over to a news journalist after landing on Tinian. Soon after being broadcast on the WOR Network, the recordings disappeared.

After the war ended, Dad remained active in the 509th Composite Group's Alumni effort to document and preserve a record of the events and the processes involved in the planning and execution of the missions. Over the years, he became an authority of the history of the Manhattan Project and the resultant bombing missions on Japan. Unlike many of the members of the *Enola Gay* or *Bock's Car* crews, my father did not try to avoid the news media. He utilized his political and media connections to collect documents, photos, film, audio, eyewitness transcripts, government media reports, and correspondences that accurately and chronologically validated these historical events.

In 1985, Dad returned to Hiroshima and Nagasaki with "Good Morning America" and their television crew for the 40th anniversary of the bombing. Motivated by this experience and utilizing materials from his archives, he wrote his first book "*Hiroshima and Nagasaki Revisited*." It was during this trip that he also visited Japanese World War II museums. The central theme in several exhibits was, "We must not dishonor our Veterans." Dad saw a kamikaze plane on display surrounded by the uniforms and letters left by some of the young kamikaze pilots. He said such an exhibit was understandable, but there should have been an explanation of why they did what they did other than loyalty to the Emperor. In short, he felt that in many cases the Japanese were advancing the cause of peace activists who were determined to transform history into myth.

Other museum exhibits portrayed Japan more as the victim than as the aggressor. He often heard protesting Japanese extremists ask, "*Was the bomb truly dropped to save American lives that would have been lost in a bloody invasion?*" "*Was the decision tinged with racism, or was it simply a desire to send a signal to the Soviet Union?*"

Simply put, the message that Dad got from most of the Japanese citizens was that a war was on which was wanted only by the militarists in Tokyo and not by the Japanese people. An often-heard comment was "*You Americans did what you had to do to win the war and we did what we had to do to defend ourselves.*" These words were repeated almost every day that he was there, even from folks that bore scars from the Hiroshima blast.

One of the men Dad talked with was an elderly Japanese citizen, perhaps a little younger than himself. As a young man, this man had been trained for a kamikaze flight. He too said, *"You did what you had to do and we did what we had to do to defend ourselves."* He went on to say that late in the war the call went out for volunteers 18 years or older and not the first born in the family to train as suicide airplane and submarine pilots to defend the Emperor. At the completion of a short flight-training period, he was given a scarf and a samurai sword. At the same time, clippings from his hair and finger and toenails were collected. When he completed his mission, which obviously he never did, these mementos would be returned to his family in a memorial box.

But what bothered my father most during his visit to Japan was hearing the American children, who were there for the 40th anniversary of the bombing, say they were ashamed of their country and viewed the atomic bombings as unwarranted and criminal acts. Japanese television also showed some American children viewing Hiroshima exhibits weeping and choking with remorse and shame for even being an American the nation that they felt had committed these war crimes. Some were even saying they thought the United States should pay compensation to the Japanese. These were children who had absolutely no understanding of what had taken place. None were aware of the actual atrocities that occurred during the war. Most of these children could not, or would not, even intelligently discuss the Japanese raid on Pearl Harbor or the Bataan death march, but in all fairness, neither could or would the Japanese children.

It was my father's opinion that if one wishes to remember the personal sufferings of those who died at Hiroshima and Nagasaki in World War II, one must also ask why we ignore the millions of victims of Japanese atrocities. Yet thanks to contemporary "enlightened" historians, the primary victims - the victims of Japanese aggression across the Pacific - have been ignored while the secondary victims - the Japanese themselves - have been raised to a privileged public altar. It is as if the war in Europe were to be commemorated by yearly attention to German civilians who died in the bombing of Dresden and Hamburg, while the victims of

Nazi aggression on the battlefield and in the death camps were completely ignored.

My father had no doubt that the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki helped to bring a speedy end World War II. While these bombs brought death and destruction on a horrifying scale, they averted even greater losses of American, English and Japanese lives that would have occurred if an invasion had taken place. No man can say what would have been the result if we had not taken the steps that we did in 1945 to achieve this end the war quickly.

As I said earlier Dad, in his second book, had also planned to address some of the more controversial issues and focus on the untold events that occurred during the Nagasaki mission as well as clear up some of the popular revisionist misconceptions that have been circulating for almost 50 years. In addition he specifically intended to address a number of other items:

- (1) How much did the crew really know about the mission prior to flight time?
- (2) Who was supposed to fly the first mission - Sweeney or Tibbits?
- (3) Why were Hiroshima and Nagasaki selected as the target cities?
- (4) Did an in-flight recording from the *Enola Gay* really exist and, if so, what happened to it?
- (5) What problems really occurred on the Nagasaki mission?
- (6) Did Bob Lewis really say, "My G-d what have we done"?
- (7) Did the mission cause Claude Eatherly to go insane from guilt and remorse; and,
- (8) Did any of crew members suffer from remorse as a result of the missions?

This all brings me to today. During the process of compiling this book using Dad's archives and other sources as reference material I became deeply involved in other projects including the search for and returning soldiers and sailors still missing in action from World War II and Korea. I found this very enjoyable and self-rewarding. It was then that I decided to continue and expand my efforts by bringing together a team of highly skilled individuals

to create *The Beser Foundation for Archival Research and Preservation*.

It is the intent of the Beser Foundation to encourage others to become more engaged in locating, cataloging and preserving the records of the past. It is hoped that with my efforts and the efforts of the others with similar interests, we will be able to obtain and preserve materials that accurately validate historical events from the past up to the current times. The approach we are using is to make the talents of skilled individuals currently performing historical research available to mentor college students and teach them the methods and art of meaningful historical research with hands on experience. I want to do this not only for my children, grandchildren and myself but so that important historical information will be readily available for generations to come. Simply put “It is preserving the past for the benefit of the future.”

Jerome Beser
January 2007

Myths and Facts

Did Captain Bob Lewis really say :” My God what have we done when he saw the results of the Hiroshima bomb?”

What happened to the voice recordings Jacob Beser made over Hiroshima immediately after the bomb exploded?

Introduction

Editor's Note: It is only fitting that I use my father's own words that he used over and over again in father and son conversations and many speeches to introduce this book. He says:

There has been hardly a day in the past forty-three years that I have not been approached by a friend, a colleague, or a member of my lecture audience with the following question: Would you do it again? You see, I had the unique experience of having been the only person in the United States Army Air Corps to have been aboard both strike aircraft that delivered the Atomic Bombs to Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August of 1945. Since then I have received many letters from people all over the world. I have been regarded at various times as an instant expert in Atomic Warfare, a National Hero, a Hired Killer, a Pariah, and even a War Criminal. I am none of these but was just a typical American College student who was thrust into the limelight by events of the time. If one finds this difficult to understand, one need only look at the voluminous stack of letters, newspaper clippings, or listen to the radio tapes or view the video tapes that have been amassed in my personal files over the years. This should remove any doubt from even the most casual observer's mind that such is the case.

When I wrote of my experiences in my first book, "*Hiroshima and Nagasaki Revisited*," I tried to show that by pure happenstance, a kid from the upper middle class Jewish suburbia in Baltimore Maryland, suddenly found himself right smack in the middle of one of the turning points in human history. To this day I often wonder what made me so lucky to be at the right place at the right time and for what real reason was I chosen for the task that I was called upon to perform.

As with all accounts that are based upon human recollection the passage of time has a way of modulating the recollection so that the details become melded into the whole, and what comes out is a composite of what the individual can best recall and human rationalization of the remainder. In other words, unless one is debriefed immediately after an event, or within a short interval of time thereafter, what he relates is what he thinks he recalls as the detailed description of the event. But there are exceptions to this. When the event that has occurred is of such uniqueness or of such a bizarre nature that it has been indelibly installed into the human

memory system, and thus can be recalled forever exactly as it happened. Events that fall into this category are usually those that have some profound effect on the life or times of the viewer. My participation in the Atomic Bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki can be categorized as having given me more than just a casual observer's view of the opening of this new era where man's inhumanity to his fellow man has exceeded all previous assaults. It has also placed me if not in the mainstream of discussion very close to it, and has provided me with an audience that I would otherwise never have obtained. It is the unique fall-out of my experiences that I have tried to capitalize upon for these many post-war years. I seldom, if ever, refuse an invitation to speak to students at any level, high school to college graduate, and share with them my views. These young people are the potential leaders of tomorrow, and although I do not claim to be THE authority in these matters, I know what I did, what I saw, and the impression it has made on me. Not only that, I react differently to their impact, real and potential, on matters of world affairs and international relations. I feel that my reactions are based upon my experience and intimate first hand knowledge of the devastating results of the primitive weapons that we used at the close of World War II, and my continuing association with the defensive arsenal of the United States over the ensuing years. In order that there be no misunderstanding, let me state at the outset, in the clearest way I know how, I was and still am in full accord with what we did in the final days of World War II, and I will never renege on this approval. There is no denying the fact that for every day the war was continuing during the late summer of 1945, 3000 Americans of our armed forces were becoming casualties. And, whether there was agreement or not at the various levels of command, an invasion of Japan was in the offing and another 1-3 million people on both sides would have become casualties.

We cannot redo the strategy of the war, nor can we deny the facts as they existed at that time. We can only judge the results of our actions and the impact that they have had on subsequent events. The fact is, that the Japanese, who were digging-in to resist the impending invasion that they knew had to come, were persuaded to alter their plans to resist and accept the terms of surrender that were evolving. In essence, the horrible effects



Jacob Beser 1981

of the Atomic Bombs that were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki were sufficiently persuasive to change their minds.

Our retired Generals can argue until Hell freezes over that Japan was already beaten and several more weeks of conventional bombings and the results would have been the same. While there is no denying that Japan had suffered terribly under the onslaught of the B-29s, they had previously demonstrated a will to fight to the death. This had occurred in each of the Island battles and there certainly was no reason to expect that they would do otherwise in resisting our invasion of their homeland. In what is to follow I will discuss with you my reader how I have come to my conclusions. These conclusions are based upon what I have seen, heard, and read over the past forty-three years and how all of this affects the manner in which I interpret the events that are taking place in the present time period {1988-89}.

Finally, a recent review of all that I have written and said in public, and even in private, indicates that from the moment we left the skies over the city of Nagasaki, I was hoping then and there that this will have been enough. As time went on, within months, I had firmly concluded that it was imperative that we find some other way to resolve disputes between nations.

I have saved many manuscripts of the talks that I have given over the years. There is a consistent refrain that appears in all of them. What we did in 1945 was right. We saved thousands of lives by shortening the war. We have established a general recognition of the futility of nuclear conflict and we are at that point in human history that says we must find another way of settling conflicts between nations or civilization as we have known it will perish. This refrain will appear many times in the following chapters.

Part 1 The Road to Hiroshima and Nagasaki

The conditions that prevailed in 1945



The Manhattan Project had a 50% chance of success. But President Roosevelt was willing to accept the challenge if it would help to bring about an earlier conclusion to the war.

The Manhattan Engineering Project

The atomic bombs were developed and built by the Manhattan Engineering Project. This super-secret project was one of the largest, if not the largest, projects ever undertaken by the United States Government at that time. It involved more than 130,000 people and included the best scientist and engineers available as well as the commitment of the full industrial manufacturing capacity of the United States.

According to Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia², the Manhattan Project refers to the project to develop the first nuclear weapons during World War II by the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada. Formally designated as the Manhattan Engineering District (MED), it refers specifically to the period of the project from 1942-1946 under the control of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, under the administration of General Leslie R. Groves, with its scientific research directed by the American physicist J. Robert Oppenheimer. On August 8, 1945 after the Hiroshima bombing the War Department made a three page public release to the news reporters assembled on in the Mariana Islands. A photocopy of this document is included in Appendix 2.

The 1930s decade was especially turbulent in Europe. Adolph Hitler had become the uncontested leader of Germany. By the later years of the decade his armies had overrun Europe and North Africa. His conquest of England had begun. During his build up of military and political power, Hitler's aggressive and inhumane treatment of certain people because of their racial or ethnic background had sent hundreds of thousands of people to the gas chambers. During the early and mid years of the decade, many of the brilliant physicist and mathematicians had fled Germany and immigrated to the United States to escape persecution by the Nazis. Dr. Albert Einstein was one of these refugees.

In 1939, just before the beginning of World War II, Dr. Einstein penned a letter to President Franklin D. Roosevelt in which he expressed the concerns of himself and several other

²See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manhattan_Project

scientists and mathematicians of the efforts in Nazi Germany to purify uranium. They believed that the Germans might use the fissionable U-235 isotope to build the ultimate weapon of war - an atomic bomb.

In theory an atomic bomb is very simple. An atomic nucleus is composed of elementary particles called protons and neutrons. The nuclear energy holding these particles together is thousands of times greater than the chemical energy binding atoms in molecules of conventional explosives together. For certain very heavy elements, uranium 235 and plutonium 239 in particular, the nucleus is almost unstable. When hit by a neutron, it will split into two smaller nuclei and more neutrons. When the nuclei fly apart the energy, that held them together, is released. If a "critical mass" of such an element is rapidly brought together as in a bomb, the average neutron cannot escape from the mass before it hits and splits another nucleus. This releases more neutrons, each of which repeats the process. The resulting "chain reaction" runs through the fuel in a few millionth of a second. The energy released by this reaction is enormous and is equivalent to that in many tons of conventional TNT explosives.

About the time of the Battle of Midway in 1942, laboratory experiments had confirmed that it was possible to split the U-235 atom and release tremendous amounts of energy. Based on these experiments it was suggested to President Roosevelt that America should prove whether or not it was possible to build an atomic bomb. If successful this new weapon could end the war immediately.

President Roosevelt's advisors cautioned that success could only be achieved if the full industrial and economic power of the United States was committed to the project. Even with this commitment it was felt that there was only a slightly better than 50% probability of success. But, it was a gamble that our scientific leaders felt should be made because they were suspected that Germany was probably working on a similar project. It would be a race between the scientific and industrial forces of the United States against those of Germany and Japan. The bottom line was that President Roosevelt was willing to accept the challenge if it would help bring about an earlier conclusion of the War.

Shortly thereafter, on limited study funding, the United States Government began the serious undertaking known as the Manhattan Project. Simply put, the initial focus of Manhattan Project was a jump ahead of the German scientific research. But based on the results of these earlier studies and experiments and the entry of the United States into World War II, the government expanded the scope of the Manhattan Project and committed a large percentage of the national wealth toward expediting research and production. Or stated otherwise, the Manhattan Project was committed to expedite atomic research and development and produce the atomic bomb!

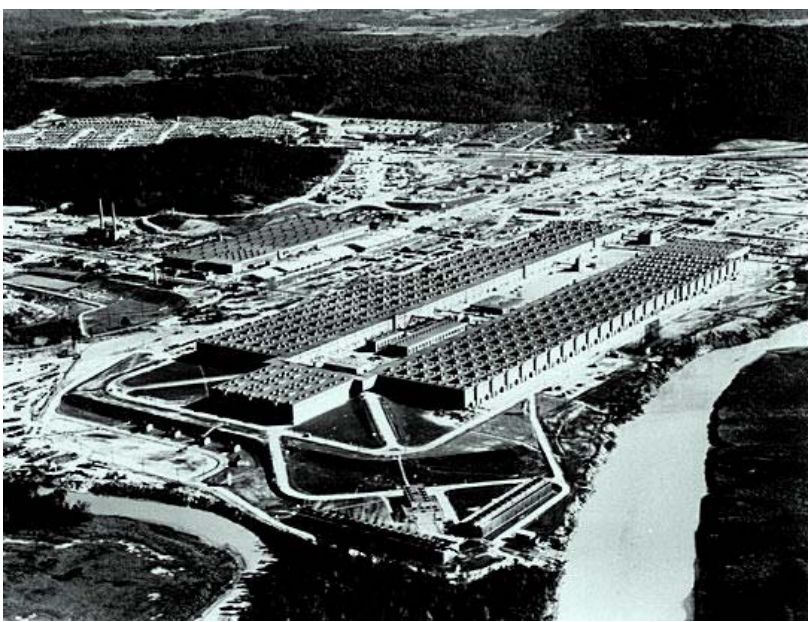
The fact that the bomb was completed from initial concepts to a weapon in time to help finish World War II is remarkable. Most of the theoretical breakthroughs in nuclear physics that made it possible were less than twenty-five years old. Many of the fundamental concepts in nuclear physics and chemistry had to be confirmed by laboratory experimentation. The design and engineering difficulties that would be involved in translating theoretical concepts into working devices capable of releasing the enormous energy of the atomic nucleus in a predictable fashion were unknown. The industrial base created in less than five years is a tribute to American ingenuity and industrial base.

The atomic bomb project was originally conceived as a counter to the threat that Nazi Germany might develop one first. But it was not ready until after Germany had surrendered. Thus only by historical circumstance was the bomb deployed to avoid an even bloodier alternative namely the invasion of the Japanese homeland.

The Manhattan Project had a series of complicated chemical and metallurgical problems that had to be solved. The physicist had shown that U-238 is practically useless in making a bomb but by using the U-235 isotope a bomb could be built. The typical uranium ore contained only about 0.2 percent uranium metal or which only about one percent was the U-235 isotope. The most complicated problem the scientist faces was the separation of ample amounts of U-235 uranium from U-238 to sustain a chain reaction.

Because of their similarity in chemical makeup, non-fissionable U-238 and fissionable U-235 are very difficult to separate. There were no ordinary chemical means available to separate these isotopes. In order to solve this problem a three step process was developed consisting of an electro-mechanical magnetic process followed by gaseous diffusion and a gas centrifuge process to effectively separate the heavier non-fissionable U-238 isotope from the lighter U-235 isotope.

Because of the quantity of U-235 required for an atomic bomb and the difficulty in separating it from U-238, a massive laboratory was constructed at Oak Ridge, Tennessee. Engineers and scientist



Gaseous Diffusion Laboratory

had to not only develop the process but also develop the materials required for implementing the processes. Uranium hexafluoride was used in the gaseous diffusion and gaseous centrifuge processes. This gas is very active and chemically corrosive. Some of the challenges include developing a material that would contain this gas. Teflon was one of the materials that resulted. The solutions to other challenges resulted in the development of very

clean high vacuum diffusion pumps and high strength materials such as high strength aluminum.

The program consumed more than two billion dollars from its inception in 1939 to the successful production and explosion of three bombs in 1945. It was managed by General Leslie Groves with Dr. Robert Openheimer being a major driving force behind the scientific work. Dr. Openheimer was the overseer of the project and literally ran the show. Under his leadership, the formulae for refining uranium and separating the U-235 isotope were developed and the metallurgical materials required were developed at the various colleges and at Oak Ridge, Tennessee.

The program had two goals, first to create the engineering capability to accomplish the separation of the U-235 from the U-238, and second, to establish a facility to build a practical bomb that could be airlifted to a target. The facility at Oak Ridge was assigned the problem of U-235 separation and the Los Alamos Laboratory had the task building the bomb.

At Los Alamos the first and logical approach to achieving a critical mass of U-235 was to attempt to unite two sub-critical masses together to form a critical mass capable of sustaining a chain reaction. The obvious approach was to use a gun to fire a projectile of the material into a target of the same material at such a speed that the critical mass would be achieved before the two parts were blown apart by the chain reaction. Experiments were conducted to evaluate the concept. Eventually it was determined that a 5-inch gun barrel about ten feet long and a powder charge would provide the necessary velocity for the projectile to enter the target and "go critical". In the final design the target was surrounded by a mass of U-238 to act as a tamper and contain the explosion as long as possible. This was the "Little Boy" bomb that was used to attack Hiroshima.

At the same time the "Little Boy" bomb concepts were being developed another approach using a new element, Plutonium, not found in the natural state to build a different type of bomb.

Plutonium is also capable of fission but its natural neutron background was such that using the "gun barrel technique" would require exceedingly high velocities and would require a barrel

almost 30 feet long. This did not appear to be a practical solution for an air transportable bomb.

Another and possibly a practical approach would be to squeeze a sub-critical mass together with sufficient force that it would become critical and thus generate and support a chain reaction. Although the idea seemed to have merit there also seemed to be no conceivable way of generating sufficient force to accomplish the required "squeeze" of a sphere of Plutonium the size of a softball to the size of a billiard ball.

Captain William S. Parsons U.S. Navy, a naval ordnance expert and Dr. John von Neumann³ a theoretical mathematician came up with a solution. They concluded that it might be possible to generate, with the use of a properly designed high explosive system, a collapsing shock wave of such magnitude as to accomplish the force required to reduce the size of the Plutonium sphere to a critical mass.

Los Alamos perused this concept and the problems eventually solved with a design of a bomb that would fit in the bomb bay of a B-29 that ultimately would carry the bomb. This set the outside dimensions of the package at approximately five feet in diameter and ten feet long.

The secret of the Plutonium bomb was a method of making subcritical amount of Plutonium become critical by squeezing it together. The small core of Plutonium was surrounded by a sphere of conventional high explosive segments. These segments were shaped to focus the explosive shock wave inward. Each of the explosive segments had an electrical detonator. Each segment had to explode simultaneous with a tolerance of less than one microsecond. The resulting shock wave would compress a sphere of Plutonium about the size of softball into a sphere about the size of a billiard ball in order to achieve a critical mass and a resulting chain reaction. The theory had never been tested.

The test, code named "Trinity", came on the morning of July 16, 1945 in the desert of south-central New Mexico at a site located on a remote section of Alamagordo Air Base. At about 5:30 am the sky ignited with a light brighter than the noonday sun.

³See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_von_Neumann

A reddish-yellow ball of fire a quarter-mile in diameter was boiling and churning furiously on a tower over ground zero. The sudden released nuclear forces expanded with consuming fury its fireball reaching back to the ground as if the sun had suddenly came down on the earth. Then the fireball shot upward, sucking the desert sand beneath it into a column that within twenty seconds reached a mile into the sky.

Seconds after the flash the accompanying shock wave sent debris flying ahead of it. It was estimated that the core temperature at the instant of the explosion exceeded 50,000,000 degrees centigrade. The searing heat from the blast was sufficient to cause paint on buildings a few miles away to catch fire almost immediately and glass windowpanes to melt before the panes were broken or blown inward by the shock wave.

From the force measurements of the shock wave, the size of the fireball and the level of radiation in samples taken from the bomb's crater, it was estimated that the yield was equivalent to 20,000 tons of TNT. Incidentally this is where the number President Truman used when he announced that Hiroshima had been bombed came from.

Such an explosion certainly aroused the curiosity of the residents in the nearby towns of Alamagardo, Las Cruces, and Santa Fe, New Mexico and El Paso Texas. In anticipation of questions from the local residents a preplanned cover story was released by the Alamagardo Air Base Commander that said a remotely located ammunition dump containing a considerable amount of high explosive and pyrotechnics had exploded.

Trinity's aftermath is now history. The Postdam declaration to the Japanese to surrender or face prompt and utter destruction was rejected. The untested "Little Boy" U-238 bomb leveled Hiroshima on August 6, 1945. Three days later a duplicate of the Trinity Plutonium bomb was exploded over Nagasaki. A second Plutonium bomb had been shipped from Los Alamos in early August and was awaiting shipment to the war zone but it was never needed. Japan surrendered on August 14.

The fusing used in both bombs was essentially the same. Tail warning radars that were used in bombers to detect fighters attacking from astern provided the basic element of the proximity

fuse. In order to provide the desired height of burst of the bomb, the radars were modified and adjusted to trigger the fuse when a certain range to the ground had been reached.

Whereas the basic design of the "Little Boy" U-235 bomb lent itself to easy solution of the ballistic design problem, the basic spherical design of the "Fat Man" was a nightmare. To approach some kind of an acceptable ballistic shape it was decided to enclose the explosive sphere and the electronic components attached to it, inside an ellipsoid shaped case. Further, it was decided that the bomb should be protected from fifty caliber bullets should enemy fighters attack the delivery aircraft. This required a half-inch of special treatment steel formed into the ellipsoid shape, something that had never been done before by the armor plate industry. Small sections of the armor plate had to be formed into shapes with a compound curvature and then each section welded together to complete the case. Holding the proper shape during the welding process turned out to be an almost impossible job.

First, fins were tried to provide the stabilization in flight necessary to yield a reproducible trajectory, but without success. Wind tunnel test showed that perhaps a large box tail might solve the problem. But again, flight was erratic and reproducible trajectories were not achieved. At this point Captain Parsons suggested placing baffles in the box tail to provide a parachute effect. Tests showed that this was the answer. Time of fall was reduced significantly and reproducible flight achieved so that data could be obtained to calculate the bombing data inputs required by the Norden Mark XV bomb sight that would be used in the B-29.

During the winter of 1944 and the spring of 1945 tests of all the components of the bomb, both individually and in their final configuration, were conducted at the Army Air Corps base at Wendover, Utah. As it turned out the radar proximity fuse, which my father had helped design, gave the most trouble and testing continued right up until the date of the drop of the first bomb on Japan. As a rehearsal for the operation with the Fat Man bomb, a complete bomb without active material installed was carried out off the island of Tinian. This was the first time that the bomb in its

final configuration had ever been dropped out of an airplane. The next day a Fat Man bomb was successfully dropped on Nagasaki. This was undoubtedly the shortest time between development and combat use of any ordnance in modern history.

The task of using the atomic bomb in the war was assigned to the Army Air Corps. However for security reasons this was a closely guarded secret. When the Army Air Corps officers visited the classified sites at Albuquerque, they would remove any military insignia that would indicate Air Corps personnel and replace them with Corps of Engineer insignia.

When it became reasonably certain that the Manhattan Project would be successful before the end of the war, the Army Air Corps proceeded full speed ahead to develop the means to deliver a bomb and to train flight crews in the tactics which would be required. This task was assigned to Colonel Paul W. Tibbets, Jr. He had been scrutinized by security agents to confirm that he had the right technical qualifications; the right mental attitude; absolute loyalty to the United States; and, that he would not unnecessarily divulge any information that should not be released.

Colonel Tibbets was a master of strategic bombing tactics and a veteran of the air war in Europe and North Africa where he had successfully lead a number of B-17 raids as well as flying General Mark Clark to North Africa and General Eisenhower to Gibraltar. For this new assignment he reported to the highest levels in the War Department and was given the authority necessary to implement the task to which he was assigned.

At the time it was not known how many missions would be required of Tibbets and his crew. In order to successfully complete the tasks assigned and maintain the utmost secrecy required Colonel Tibbets formed 509th Composite Group. All told, the 509th was an 1800 man mini-air force with 15 B-29 bombers along with all the flight crews; staff personnel; ground support personnel; security personnel; and, equipment necessary to support them as an autonomous and self-sufficient combat unit. The 393rd Bomber Wing became the basic cadre for the 509th Bomber Group in the spring of 1944. After training at Wendover, Utah and other locations in the United States, the unit was

deployed to Tinian Island in the Marianas from where the operations against the Japanese homeland would originate.

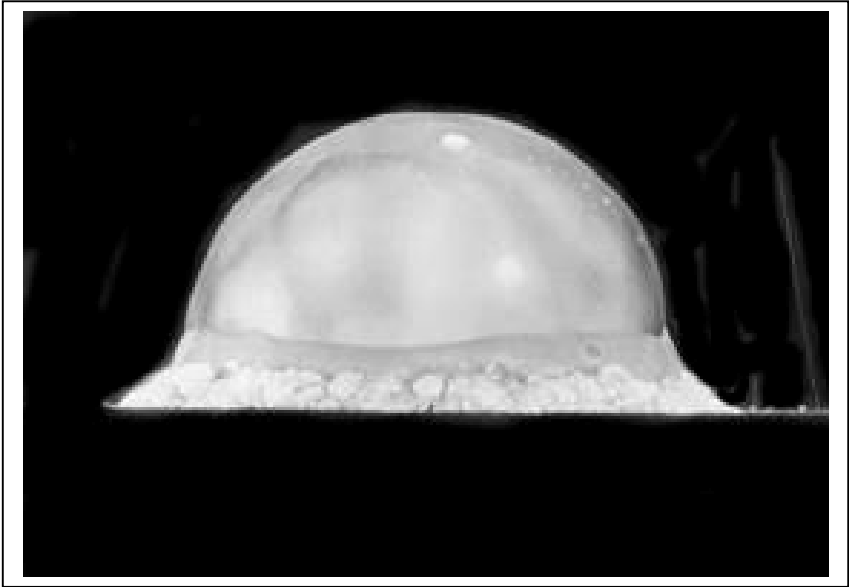
On July 16, 1945 the first atomic bomb, a Plutonium device, was successfully detonated at Trinity Site near Alamogordo, New Mexico. Two days later the first atomic bomb, "Little Boy", was loaded into the bomb bay of a B-29 for transport to the war zone. After a refueling stop in Hawaii it was delivered to Tinian Island. By July 25, 1945 the potential targets had been finalized and the decision had been at the highest levels in Washington and approved by President Truman to use the bomb. Orders were generated and a letter was sent from the War Department Office of the Chief of Staff to General Carl Spaatz, Commanding General United States Strategic Air Force directing the use of the bomb. This letter said in part:

"1. The 509th Composite Group, 20th Air Force will deliver its first special bomb as soon as weather will permit visual bombing after 3 August 1945 on one of the targets: Hiroshima, Kokura, Niigata and Nagasaki. To carry military and civilian scientific personnel from the War Department to observe and record the effects of the explosion of the bomb, additional aircraft will accompany the airplane carrying the bomb. The observing planes will stay several miles distant from the point of impact of the bomb.

2. Additional bombs will be delivered on the above targets as soon as made ready by the project staff. Further instructions will be issued concerning targets other than those listed above."

The Manhattan project's objectives had been completed and would soon be deployed.

Dawn of the Nuclear Age



Nuclear fire ball 0.025 Seconds after the first atomic bomb exploded in the New Mexico desert near Alamagado July 16, 1945

U. S. DECLARES STATE OF WAR One Battleship Lost, 1,500 Killed in Hawaii

FDR Aide Bares Toll In Air Raid

Navy's Failure Blow Explained

WASHINGTON, Dec. 8 (AP)—The United States today has announced a toll of 1,500 killed and 1,100 wounded in the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, announced today, and the Japanese fleet's losses.

Generalissimo Francisco Franco, Spain's dictator, today announced that he would support the United States in its fight against Japan.

Generalissimo Benito Mussolini, Italy's dictator, today announced that he would support the United States in its fight against Japan.

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Japanese Embassy Staff Burns Papers



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Lone Vote Against War Cast Following President's Appeal

WASHINGTON, Dec. 8 (AP)—Congress today proclaimed existence of a state of war between the United States and the Japanese empire 33 minutes after the dramatic moment when President Roosevelt stood before a joint session to pledge that we will triumph—so help us, God.

The senate acted first, adopting the resolution by a unanimous roll call vote of 82 to 0.

The House followed in a similar fashion, voting 419 to 0.

The lone vote against the war was cast by Representative Charles McNary of Oregon, who voted "no" on the resolution.

Late War Bulletins

NEW YORK, Dec. 8 (AP)—The National Broadcasting company's correspondence at Manila reported today that there is a new order Japanese bombardment.

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Lewis Victor In Mine Edict

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Great Naval Engagement Under Way in Mid-Ocean

WASHINGTON, Dec. 8 (AP)—United States and Japanese fleets were engaged in a great naval battle in the Pacific today, after a Japanese aerial attack on the Hawaiian Islands opened war between the two great Pacific powers.

The United States fleet, commanded by Admiral Ernest King, was reported to have sunk several Japanese ships and to have inflicted heavy losses on the enemy.

The Japanese fleet, commanded by Admiral Yamamoto, was reported to have suffered heavy losses in the air and on the sea.

British Join U. S. in War

Churchill Cites Far East Attack

WASHINGTON, Dec. 8 (AP)—President Roosevelt today announced that the United States and Great Britain are now at war with Japan.

Prime Minister Winston Churchill of Great Britain today announced that his country has declared war on Japan.

The British government today announced that it would support the United States in its fight against Japan.

Bombers Blast Japan Strikes At Philippines At Singapore

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Daily Almanac

TEMPERATURE recorded in the city today: 61 to 68.

WIND: light breeze from the north.

MOON: full moon, 11:30 p.m.

SUN: sets at 4:58 p.m., rises at 7:58 a.m.

STAR: Sirius, the brightest star in the sky, is visible in the winter months.

Complete Text of Roosevelt's Message to U. S. Congress

My fellow citizens: Yesterday, December 7, 1941, a day which will live in infamy, the Japanese navy, air and land forces, attacked the United States without warning at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

They killed more than 2,000 Americans, including many of our finest young men. They sank the battleship USS Arizona, and they crippled the battleships USS West Virginia and USS Oklahoma.

They also destroyed the USS Yorktown, a fleet oiler, and a destroyer. They captured the USS Neah, a minesweeper, and the USS Oglala, a minesweeper.

They also captured the USS Sigsbee, a minesweeper, and the USS Lamson, a minesweeper.

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From a College Student to a Unique Place in History

Editor's Note: This text has been extracted from one of my father's 1966 radio interview.

Pearl Harbor was December 7, 1941 and I was a senior at Johns Hopkins University. On December 8, I withdrew from Hopkins fully intending to go into the Army Air Corps. I enlisted on December 8 and was immediately accepted into the cadet program but there was about a six months lag before the class was called up. So I went on active duty on the 4th of June 1942 and stayed on active duty until March 1946.

I went through the aviation cadet program at Scott Field and came out as a communications specialist, a second Lieutenant, in the Army Air Corps. From there I went to Radar School at Boca Raton, Florida. There I was in one of the first classes of Air Corps officers to be fully trained in this new field. From there I went to Orlando, Florida to the Air Corps school of Applied Tactics, where I taught for a while in the heavy bomb division. I took time out to go back for more training in electronics countermeasures. I was rated as a countermeasures observer. Incidentally this was the beginning of my undoing, the thing that got me into this program that later dropped the atomic bombs on Japan.

At that time the men who went through the countermeasures training had received the most advanced electronic training in the Air Corps. This was a brand new field and we were learning as we went. One of the requirements, or attributes they were looking for, was for people with an amateur radio background. I had been interested in ham radio since I was about eleven or twelve years old. They wanted someone who could improvise at the moment, as the need developed to build his own equipment in the field and to use the tools that he had and so forth. This wasn't a firm requirement but it helped.



In the spring of 1944, I went with a cadre that was moved out of Orlando to form a B-29 group. I had the assignment as the Group Electronics officer. Somewhere along the way I took leave and went to Chicago and didn't make it back to the group on time. I don't recall all the events that lead up to that. But anyhow I got back and the Group Commander was more than a little perturbed and they put me in the 393rd Bomb Squadron as a disciplinary measure. The commanding officer of that squadron was a real fine fellow by the name of Tom Classen. I think Colonel Conley felt it would do me a good to get disciplined for awhile. Anyhow, I transferred over there with the understanding that for about a month to fill an opening that existed. This was the 504th in Fairmont, Nebraska. About a week or so after I transferred into the 393rd, a freeze order came down from the Second Air Corps that no one could be transferred into, or out of, the 393rd. It had been surveyed and was in the advanced stages of training of all of the squadrons that were being set up at the time and we were given real peculiar temporary duty orders. These orders required the whole 393rd squadron, complete with organizational equipment, to go to Wendover, Utah. This turned out to be a permanent transfer. The 393rd formed the basic cadre for the 509th Group that was the one set up for the Atomic Bombing missions.

I was the Group's Electronic Officer with a section of 45 men under me. I had in my group fifteen B-29s and was responsible for all the electronic equipment on them. In addition to which, I had these other duties with the project that included some special instrumentation equipment and some other assignments associated with the weapon. So, I had some little part to play in the design and operational planning as well as the delivery of the weapon.

When asked how and when he became associated with the Manhattan Project, my father's reply was: "I was quite anxious to get into it {combat}. I wanted to go to Europe. Classmates were there. I had family in Germany who had been chewed up already." I first got an inkling that something was up in the spring of 1944. I went to Washington with the expressed purpose of getting myself transferred to the 8th Air Force and to the good offices of a friend of my father, Major General Ulio the Adj. General. He had the authority to send me anywhere he wanted to. But much to the

surprise of everyone, when the records came upstairs, he said "Sorry son I cannot touch you, I don't know why but go back where you came from. I am sure it will unfold."

Upon returning to Orlando, I went right to work getting myself assigned to the 9th Bomb Group. Rumors were flying about the 9th going to B-29s. This was the super fortress, the world's best bomber. What's more, every B-29 squadron was to have assigned to it one radar countermeasures officer. Since this was an inside transfer I never discussed my experience {conversations with General. Ulio} in Washington and no one ever ask me about it.

That was in the spring of 1944. In the late summer or early fall, I was transferred to the 393rd Squadron. It was about a month later that the orders came down from Washington freezing all the personnel in the 393rd. - Nobody in and nobody out. We were also alerted for a temporary move to Wendover Airfield. They said take everything you own with you - all your trucks and your organizational equipment. I thought this unusual {for a temporary move}!

The project plans and my expected role would soon be revealed. I was proud to be able to assist in furthering the technology needed to make this weapon a reality.



The War in the Pacific

Editors Note: This chapter has been expanded utilizing current source material unavailable to my father.

In order to more fully understand what and why the nuclear bombings of Japan were necessary and justified in August 1945 one must be aware of what was happening on the battlefields in the Pacific; the atrocities committed by the Japanese prior to and during the war; their final fanatical resistance; and, the mood of the American people.

In short the American people would accept no less than unconditional surrender. This is not intended to be a history of World War II with Japan but instead I would like to summarize some of the prewar conditions and battles during the war that greatly influenced the mindset of the American people as well as that of our Allies in 1945. A lot of this kind of information is frequently left out of revisionist one point-of-view articles.

The true motivations and circumstances that led up to the invention and deployment of the first atomic weapon came from one of the darkest period of humanity. Without clear unbiased factual documentation and a society that understands the danger of allowing history to fade into the past, unfortunately the possibility of history repeating itself becomes a real danger to current and future generations. As my father said: **“If World War III is fought with atomic weapons, World War IV will be fought with sticks and stones.”**

It is often said that history consists of lies, myths and facts. Many issues surrounding the causes of the war with Japan and the use of the atomic bombs to end World War II are prime examples where this is frequently occurring. Unfortunately some modern day revisionists incorporate an ample number of lies and myths and represent them as facts as a part of their cultural reinterpretation of history.

We cannot redo what happened in Asia prior to the war or the conduct of the war by all parties involved. Neither can we deny the facts as they existed at that time. We can only judge the results

of their actions and the impact that they have had on subsequent events

We agree that history can be viewed from more than one perspective. However, we totally disagree with enlightened or sophisticated educators, politicians, religious leaders and anyone else who would deny history, or water down, change or make up facts to preserve their private morality issues or to further their private agendas. In this chapter we have attempted to present only documented facts without any interpretation on our part.

Prior to 1853 Japan was an ancient feudal state essentially isolated from Western influences. The Japanese considered Westerners barbarians. Westerners considered the Japanese uncivilized. Though not an industrialized country the Japanese society was complex where arts and culture flourished under a highly structured government and class system. The Japanese lived under rules that governed every aspect of their lives according to a person's inherited status. Each level of the class system held a different responsibility and importance for the Japanese society.

In 1853 Commodore Perry's unwelcome visit of four U.S. warships to Tokyo awakened Japan from an isolated state to one with a reckless quest for power and dominion over all of Asia. Now after hundred's of years of strict seclusion the Japanese people were exposed to western ideas, production techniques and military might. In the short period of less than 90 years of international relations, the nation of Japan changed herself from an ancient feudal state into a nation with an army and a navy trained and equipped to rival those of the European powers.

At the same time this was happening a master plan, "The Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere"⁴, was being implemented to give Japan domination of the whole of southeast Asia and all the Islands in the western Pacific irrespective of any Western

⁴ The Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere was a concept created and promulgated by the government and military of the Empire of Japan which represented the desire to create a self-sufficient "bloc of Asian nations led by the Japanese and free of Western powers". The sphere was to extend from the Kurile Islands southeast to the Marshall Islands, west to the Netherlands East Indies, and in a great curve to India. This was one of a number of slogans and concepts used justify Japanese aggression in East Asia in the 1930s through the end of World War II.

resistance. Therefore, in order to implement this plan, the Western influence had to be completely removed at once and for all time.

Prodded by her military leaders in pursuit of this master plan, Japan launched in the early part of the 20th century an attack on China. The occupation of Manchuria began with the Russo-Japanese War in 1904-1905 which resulted in undisputed Japanese influence in Korea which was annexed in 1910 and the transfer to Japan of Russian railways along with considerable land and mineral development rights in Manchuria.

Anti-Western feelings developed in Japan in the same time period and intensified when, at the Washington Naval Conference, the Japanese Government was forced to agree to keep her navy smaller than those of Great Britain and the United States in a 5-5-3 ratio. The anti-western feelings were further intensified two years later when the United States passed an immigration act barring Japanese and other nationalities from immigrating to the United States.

In 1931 a group of mid-level Japanese officers, apparently with support and consent from higher-ups, staged a railway bombing in Mukden. Japan then used this incident as an excuse to "suppress bandits" and initiated a full-scale occupation of Manchuria. The official justification was the protection of natural resources -- Manchuria's coal, iron, and minerals -- crucial to Japan's economic health and strategic security.

The Japanese solidified the occupation of Manchuria on March 1, 1932 when they set up the Puppet State of Manchukuo. However the international community refused to recognize the legality of the Japanese occupation in accordance with a truce that had been negotiated in 1931. The League of Nations sent observers who condemned the invasion and sham-autonomy as an imperialistic land grab, whereupon Japan resigned from the League of Nations and began courting better relations with Germany and Italy.

The establishment of Manchukuo did not settle the question and border skirmishes between Japanese forces and various Chinese forces continued. The Japanese also increased their military presence in China's treaty ports, "*in order to better protect*

Japanese nationals” and their increasingly important business interests in China.

In spite of internal civilian and military reservations about full-scale operations in China, the opportunity to settle the ongoing border skirmishes was too good to pass up and the Japanese military proceeded to invade deep into China. They took a huge swath of northern China and the urbanized coast with remarkably little difficulty. What resistance they did meet they responded to with great brutality, including the atrocities at Nanking.

At the end of 1932 the Japanese Army invaded Chahar Province. The Chinese, armed only with spears and obsolete rifles, resisted the attack resulting in the War of Resistance at the Great Wall. The province fell to the Japanese. After the predictable victory, areas to the west of Beijing fell to the Japanese.

In 1933, Japan annexed Rehe using the security of Manzhouguo as a pretext. Consequently all areas north of the Great Wall and hence north of Beijing fell to Japan resulting in the establishment of several puppet governments in the area. The Japanese installation of various puppet governments was a deliberate attempt to annex the whole country of China by a nibbling process.

On July 7, 1937 a clash occurred between Chinese and Japanese troops near Peiping⁵ in North China. When this clash was followed by indications of intensified military activity on the part of Japan, Secretary of State Hull urged upon the Japanese Government a policy of self-restraint. In a conversation of July 12 with Japanese Ambassador Saito, Secretary Hull elaborated upon the futility of war and its awful consequences, emphasizing the great injury to the victor as well as to the vanquished in case of war. He said that a first-class power like Japan not only could afford to exercise general self-restraint but also in the long run it was far better that this should characterize the attitude and policy of the Japanese Government; that he had been looking forward to an early period when Japan and the United States would have opportunity for world leadership with a constructive program like that proclaimed by the American republics at Buenos Aires in

⁵ Peiping was the name of Beijing in China from 1928 to 1949.