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# THE PORT CHICAGO ENIGMA

CASE FILE: REOPENING THE 10,000 TON GADGET

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DATE: JULY 17, 1944  
LOCATION: SUISUN BAY, CALIFORNIA  
SUBJECT: S.S. E.A. BRYAN VAPORIZATION

OFFICIAL VERDICT: Conventional Munitions Accident  
EVIDENCE: Points to the first domestic nuclear  
detonation in history.

# THE RUMMAGE SALE DISCOVERY

SPRING, 1980 // SANTA FE, NM

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EXHIBIT A: THE LOCATION - CHRIST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH, SANTA FE.



EXHIBIT B: THE DISCOVERY - DUSTY BOX OF PHOTO SUPPLIES & ENVELOPE.

Researcher Peter Vogel purchased a box of old photo supplies at a Santa Fe church rummage sale. Hidden at the bottom was a folded document inside an envelope.

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“I took that out... and realized that I had an atomic bomb document.” – Peter Vogel

STATEMENT RECORDED: MAY 1, 1980

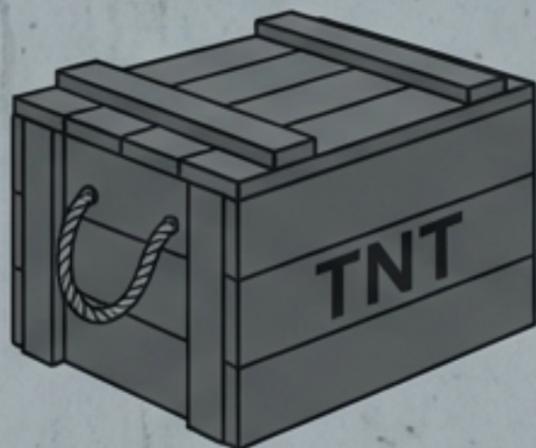


# TWO THEORIES OF DESTRUCTION

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## OFFICIAL NAVY NARRATIVE

Courier Prime



**Cause:** Unsafe loading practices.

**Event:** Conventional explosion of TNT and munitions aboard the S.S. E.A. Bryan. [REDACTED]

## THE VOGEL HYPOTHESIS

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**Cause:** Clandestine Field Test.

**Event:** Detonation of a Uranium 'Gun-Type' nuclear weapon to prove yield before combat use, disguised as an accident. [REDACTED]

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# EXHIBIT B: THE WHITE FLASH

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**CHEMICAL EXPLOSION**  
**(9,000°F)**

**NUCLEAR FIREBALL**  
**(1,000,000°C)**

**Chemical Signature:**  
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Glows Red/Orange/Yellow due to lower combustion temperatures.

**Nuclear Signature:**  
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Radiates Brilliant White Light (Solar Temperature).

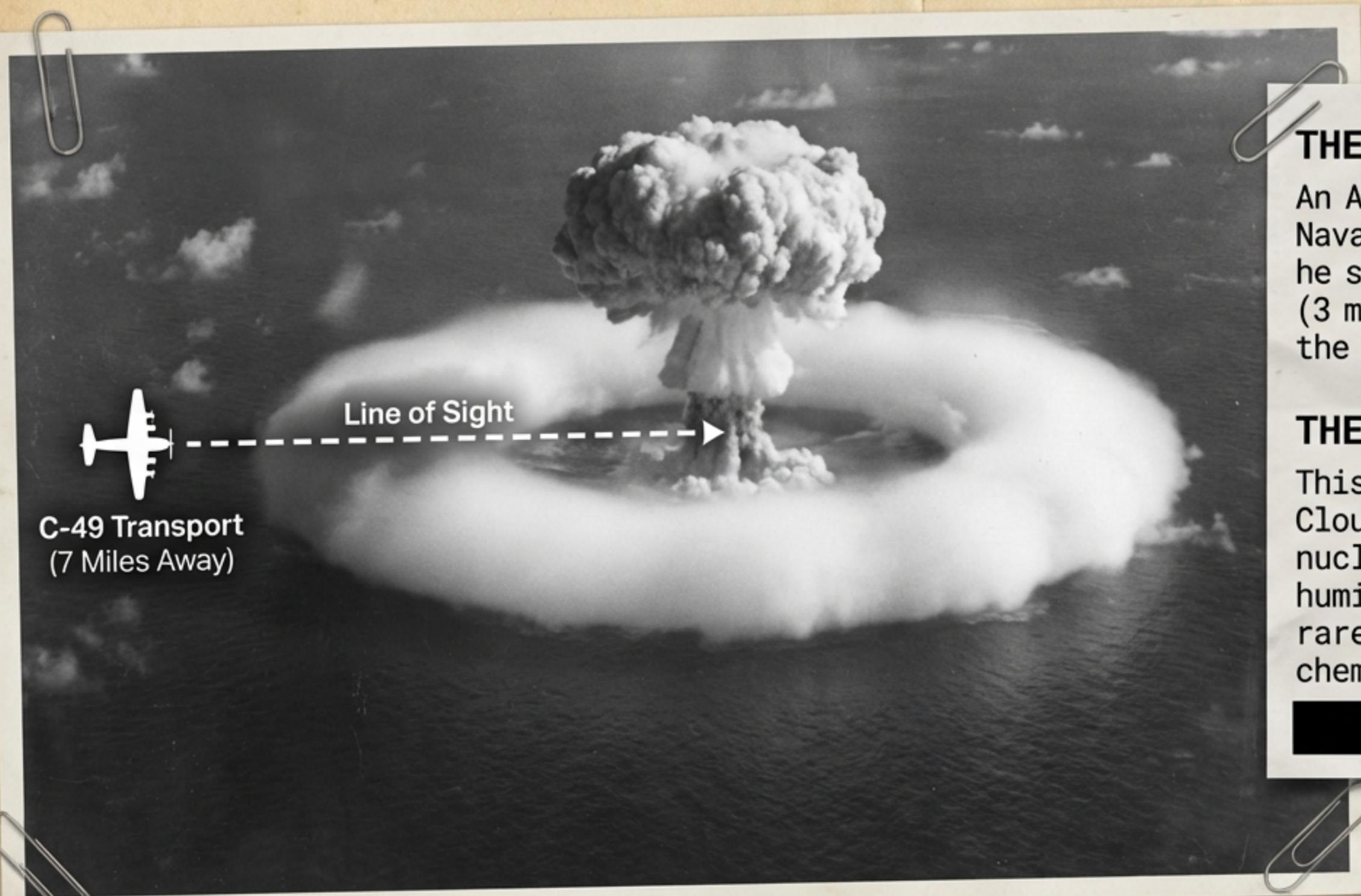
**WITNESS TESTIMONY:** Port Chicago observers reported a “brilliant white flash” blindingly different from standard ordinance detonations.

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# EXHIBIT C: THE DONUT RING

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## THE OBSERVATION:

An Army pilot testified to a Naval Court of Inquiry that he saw a "donut-shaped ring" (3 miles wide) whoosh out from the center. [REDACTED]

## THE SCIENCE:

This is a Wilson Condensation Cloud. It is created when a nuclear shockwave compresses humid air over water. It is rarely seen in conventional chemical blasts. [REDACTED]

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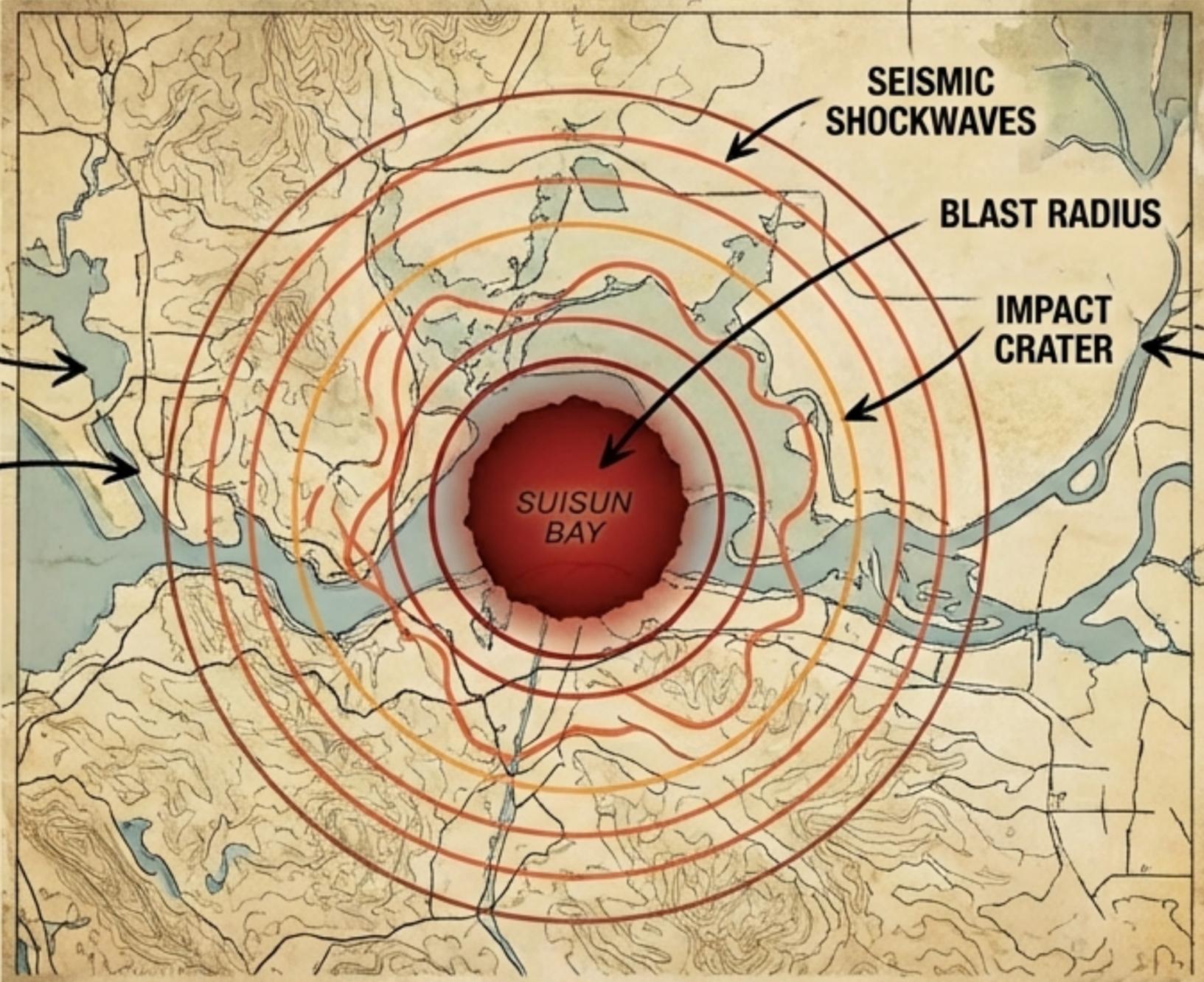
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# EXHIBIT D: MATHEMATICS OF YIELD

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## ANALYSIS:

In mass conventional detonations, only a percentage of cargo explodes "high order." The rest scatters or burns.



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## THE DISCREPANCY:

Even assuming 100% detonation of the manifest cargo, the damage to the facility and the seismic footprint exceeded the theoretical maximum energy of the [REDACTED] S.S. E.A. Bryan's load.

## CONCLUSION:

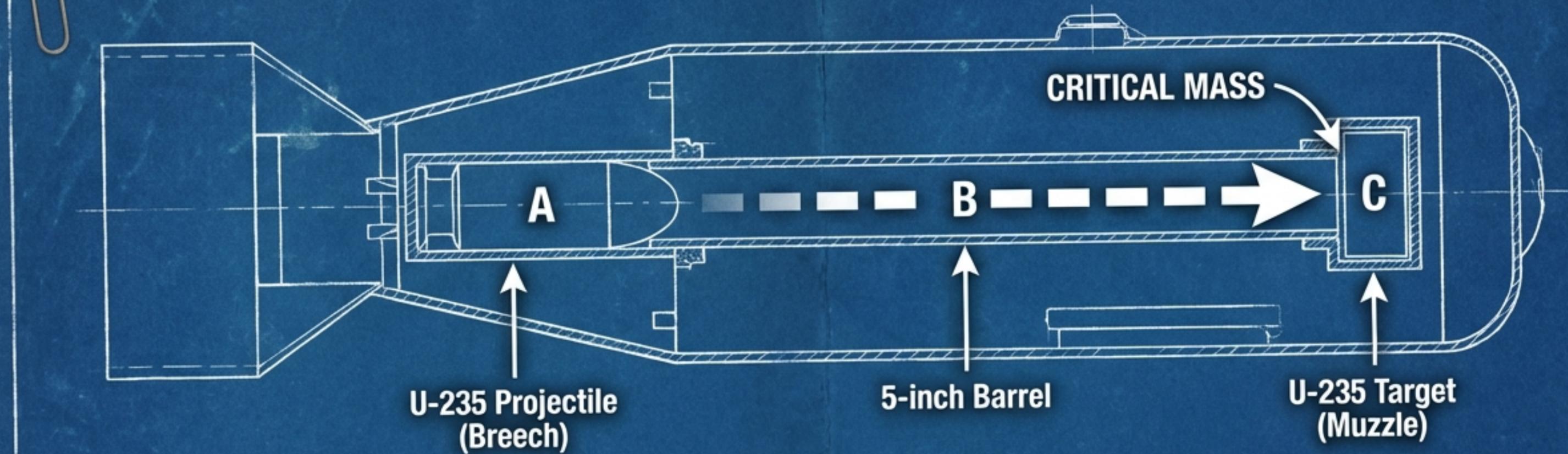
The energy yield suggests a power source magnitudes denser than TNT.

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# THE MECHANISM: URANIUM GUN-TYPE

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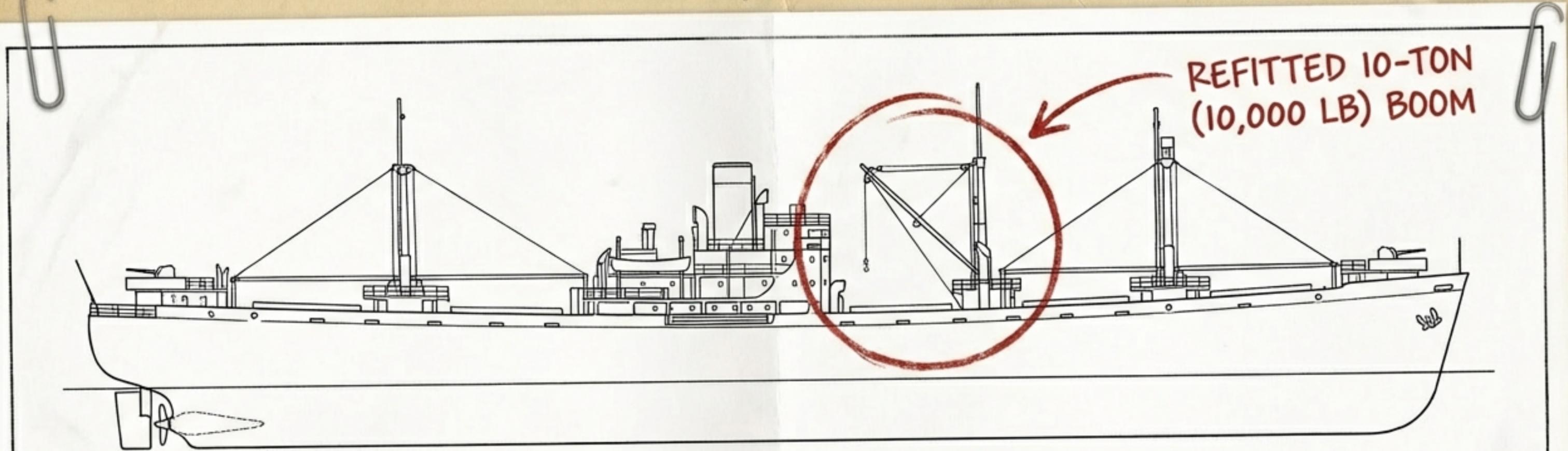
**HOW IT WORKS:** Simple ballistics. A Uranium bullet is fired into a Uranium target.

**TESTING LOGIC:** The mechanics were simple enough to skip a full prototype test (unlike the complex Plutonium bomb). However, scientists still needed to verify if the fission material would actually produce the predicted massive yield.

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# Trade Gothic Bold Condensed THE DELIVERY SYSTEM

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**VESSEL:** S.S. E.A. Bryan

**MODIFICATION:** Ship refitted with heavy-duty gear shortly before the explosion.

**CAPACITY:** Standard booms could not lift a bomb casing. The upgrade provided exactly enough capacity to load a completed "10,000 Ton Gadget" onto the vessel. [REDACTED]

LIBERTY SHIP

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# “PERSON OF INTEREST”

CAPTAIN WM. STERLING PARSONS

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## LOS ALAMOS

Senior Naval Officer,  
Manhattan Project.



## PORT CHICAGO

Arrived immediately  
post-blast to write the  
official report.



## HIROSHIMA

Weaponer on the  
*Enola Gay* (armed the  
Gun-Type weapon).



## BIKINI ATOLL

Supervised Operation  
Crossroads nuclear  
tests.

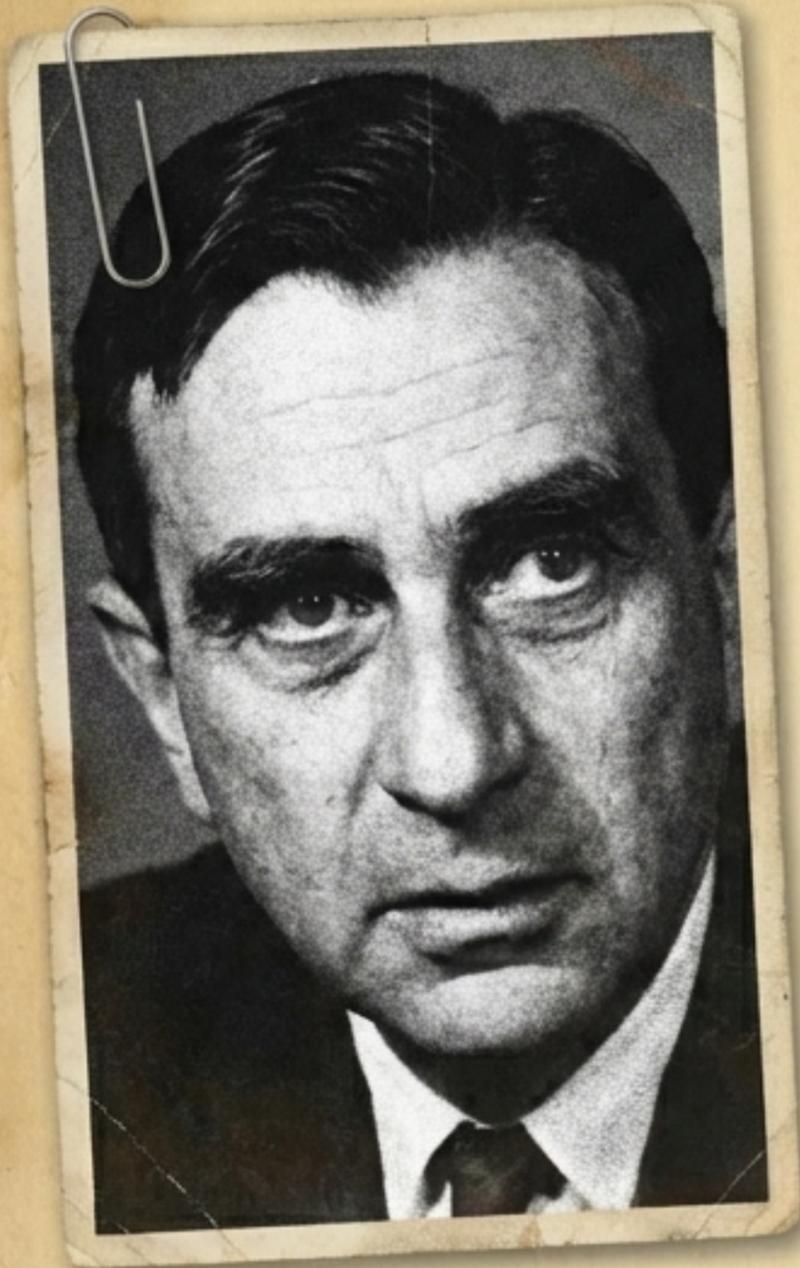
SIGNIFICANCE: The man who investigated the “accident” was the U.S. Navy’s top nuclear ordinance expert.

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NotebookLM

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**THE REACTION**

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**INTERVIEW SUBJECT:** Edward Teller (1980)

**ACTION:** Shown the "Typical Port Chicago Fashion" document by Peter Vogel.

"I believe you have a classified document... I will deny ever having seen this document and I will deny ever having spoken about [REDACTED] Port Chicago with you."  
[REDACTED]

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# EVIDENCE TAMPERING: THE MISSING REEL



**MISSING FOOTAGE**

## THE OFFICIAL STORY

The Navy claimed a film of the explosion was either a “Hollywood simulation” or destroyed because it was dangerous nitrate stock.

## THE FLAW

Nitrate film was phased out in the early 1950s. If the film was nitrate, it was authentic 1940s footage, not a later simulation.

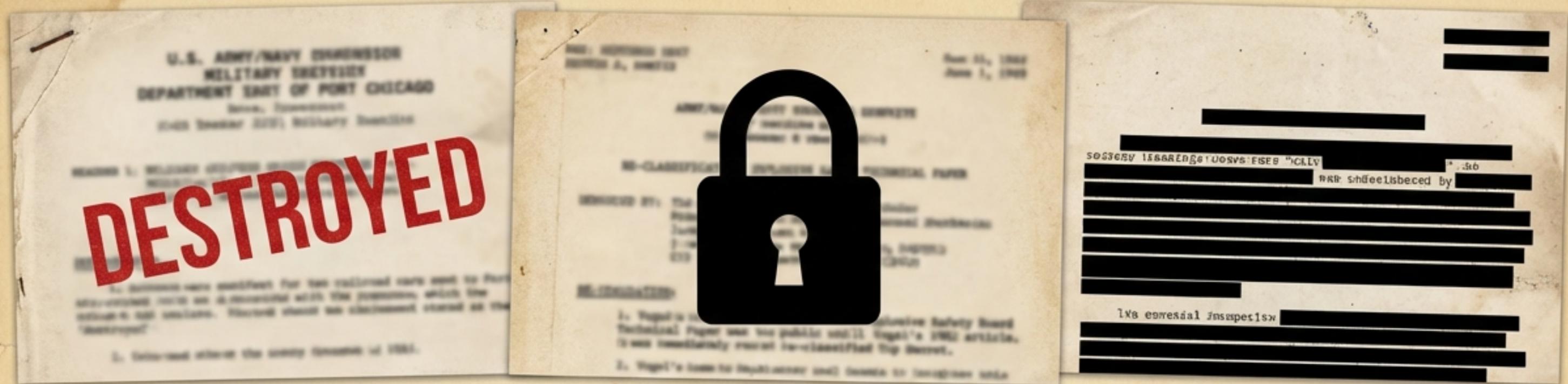
## THE DISCOVERY

Vogel located a duplicate clip at KQED showing the fireball formation—evidence the Navy claimed didn't exist.

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# A PATTERN OF SECRECY

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- **DESTRUCTION:** Manifests for two railroad cars sent to Port Chicago were listed as 'destroyed'.
- **RE-CLASSIFICATION:** The 1947 Army/Navy Explosive Safety Board Technical Paper was public until Vogel's 1982 article. It was immediately re-classified Top Secret.
- **INTIMIDATION:** Vogel's home was burglarized twice. Valuables were ignored, but his Port Chicago research files were stolen.

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FILE NO. 80-0423

# THE HUMAN COST

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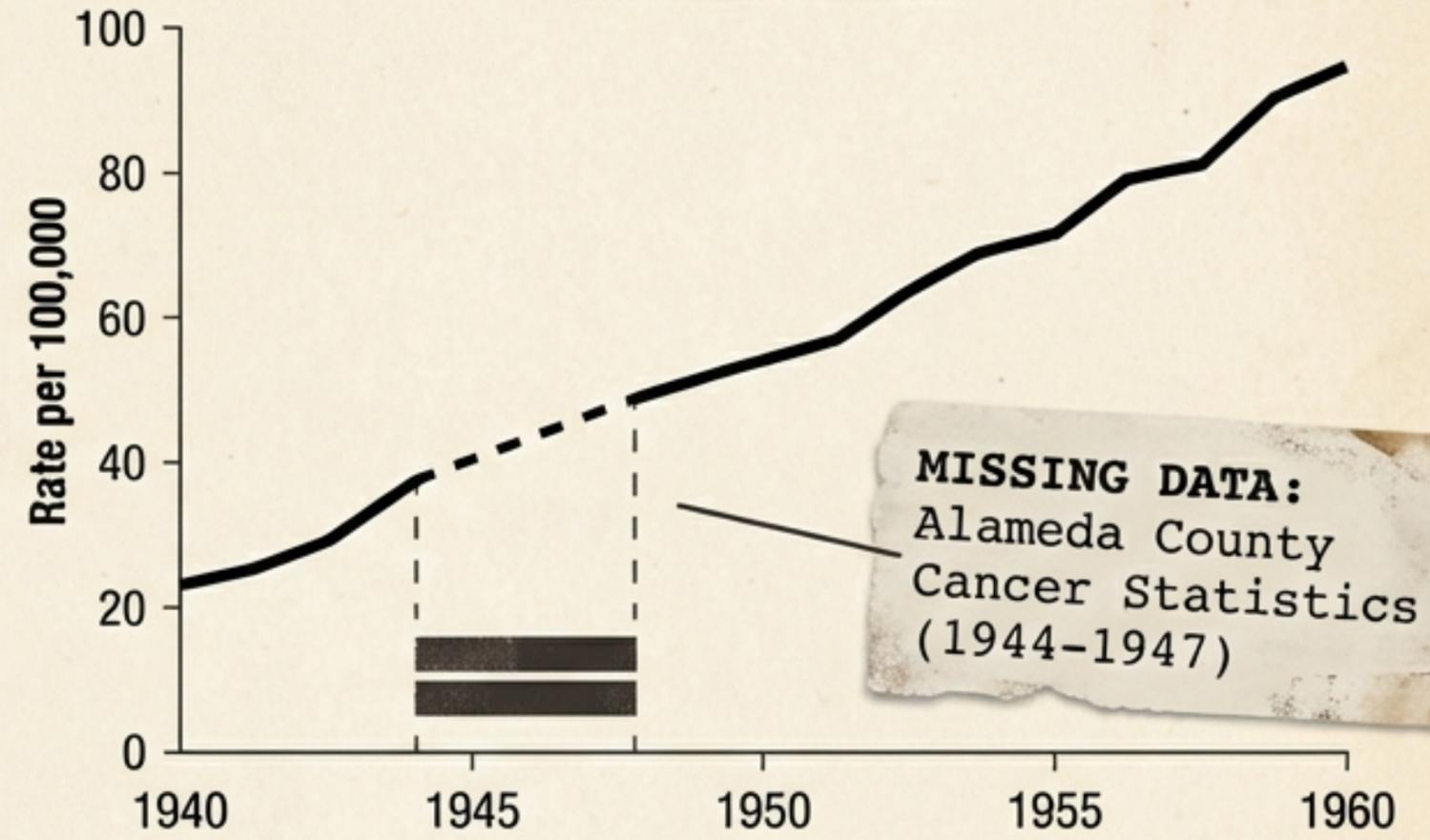
[REDACTED]

**FLASH BURNS**  
consistent with  
intense thermal  
radiation



[REDACTED]

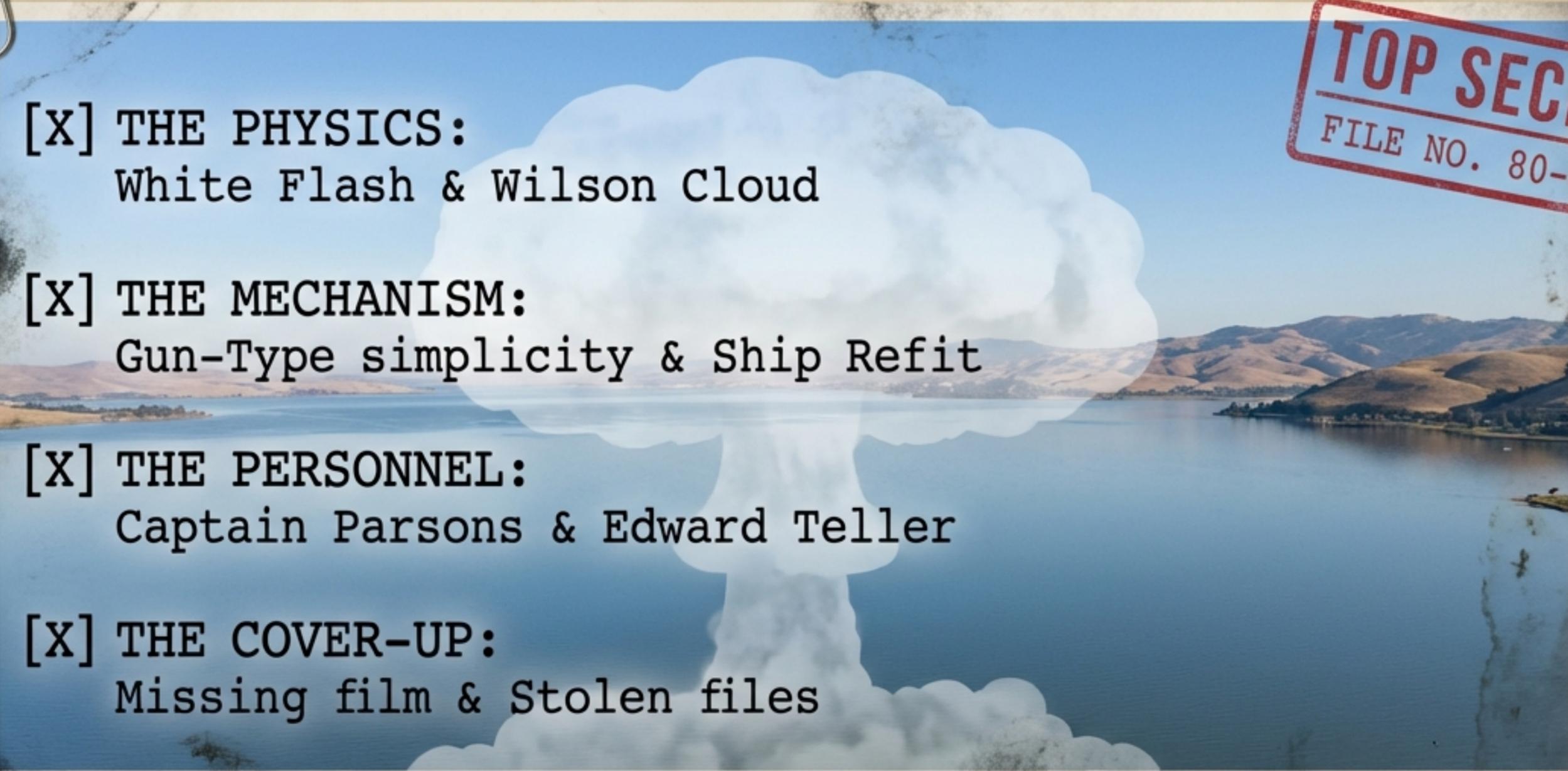
## CANCER RATES



**MISSING DATA:**  
Alameda County  
Cancer Statistics  
(1944-1947)

**IMPLICATION:** A high incidence of cancer in the fallout zone would be the final signature of a nuclear event.

# THE VERDICT: PREPONDERANCE OF EVIDENCE

- 
- [X] THE PHYSICS:  
White Flash & Wilson Cloud
  - [X] THE MECHANISM:  
Gun-Type simplicity & Ship Refit
  - [X] THE PERSONNEL:  
Captain Parsons & Edward Teller
  - [X] THE COVER-UP:  
Missing film & Stolen files

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FILE NO. 80-0423

**Port Chicago was likely not just a tragedy of negligence,  
but the secret debut of the Atomic Age.**