

Safe File: Japan
Japan

part

WAR DEPARTMENT
HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY AIR FORCES
WASHINGTON

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May 3, 1942

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT: (The White House)

Subject: Raid on Tokyo.

Recent cablegram from General Doolittle, together with report made by Major Johnson who was aboard the HORNET when the 16 B-25s took off for Japan, provides a more complete picture of this mission.

A total of 16 B-25s were all that were taken aboard the HORNET. The crews were given special instructions continuously during the trip as to the operation of their aircraft, the method of attacking their objectives, and navigating to their ultimate destination.

On the 18th of April when the HORNET was 668 nautical miles East of Tokyo, the Naval Task Force ran into a Japanese patrol ship. This ship was sunk by the NASHVILLE, but not before it had had an opportunity to send a message stating that it was being attacked by hostile enemy aircraft. Later in the afternoon the Task Force sank two more Japanese patrol ships. It is to be noted that at this point the Task Force was some 150 to 400 miles further away from Tokyo than General Doolittle had planned his take-off.

Although the seas were heavier than at any time during the trip, the rise and fall of the ship being as much as 50 feet and the spray breaking over the deck, the take-off was made with General Doolittle leading in the first ship. The last airplane took off about 9:20.

At 1:30 P.M., in the midst of an English propaganda broadcast from Japan in which a woman was telling how safe Japan was from bombing, the broadcast was cut off and another broadcast made giving information that fast, low flying bombers were at that time bombing Japan. A later broadcast told of fires and requested people to pray for rain. It was not until 46 hours later, however, that a broadcast was made stating that the fire was under control. Still later, another broadcast was made which stated that casualties amounted to three to four thousand.



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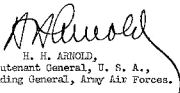
The following information sent April 30th from Chungking was received from General Doolittle:

"13 B-25s effectively bombed Tokyo's oil refineries, oil reservoirs, steel and munitions plants, naval docks and other military objectives. One bomber attacked the Mitsubishi airplane factory and other military objectives at Nagoya with incendiary bombs. Two other bombers also attacked Osaka and Kobe with incendiaries. We all took care to avoid bombing schools, hospitals, churches and other non-military objectives.

"Sky over Tokyo was clear. From West Japan to China, however, the mountains were hidden by thick clouds and fog, with the result that we had no way to locate the Chinese air fields at night.

"Enemy pursuit took off to attack us and there was intense anti-aircraft fire. There were also many barrage balloons. Their fire was ineffective and our planes suffered no loss. At least two enemy planes were shot down. 15 of our planes have been located in East China, with crews totaling 75. 53 of our pilots are safe and are enroute to Chungking. 6 are believed to have been taken prisoners. 7 are missing. Sergeant Factor is dead."

With the 15 planes reported located in East China, 1 interned in Siberia, and 1 which the Japanese claim is on exhibition, there is a total of 17 accounted for -- which is 1 more than we sent over.



H. H. ARNOLD,
Lieutenant General, U. S. A.,
Commanding General, Army Air Forces.