

# US nearly Detonated Atomic Bomb over North Carolina - Secret Document

Journalist uses Freedom of Information Act to disclose 1961 accident in which one switch averted catastrophe Share 2468

By [Global Research News](#)

Global Research, September 22, 2013

[Guardian](#)

Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [Militarization and WMD](#)

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by **Ed Pilkington**

**The Guardian, Friday 20 September 2013**

*The bomb that nearly exploded over North Carolina was 260 times more powerful than the device which devastated Hiroshima in 1945.*

A secret document, published in declassified form for the first time by the Guardian today, reveals that the US Air Force came dramatically close to detonating an atom bomb over [North Carolina](#) that would have been 260 times more powerful than the device that devastated Hiroshima.

[The document](#), obtained by the investigative journalist Eric Schlosser under the Freedom of Information Act, gives the first conclusive evidence that the US was narrowly spared a disaster of monumental proportions when two Mark 39 hydrogen bombs were accidentally dropped over Goldsboro, North Carolina on 23 January 1961. The bombs fell to earth after a B-52 bomber broke up in mid-air, and one of the devices behaved precisely as a nuclear weapon was designed to behave in warfare: its parachute opened, its trigger mechanisms engaged, and only one low-voltage switch prevented untold carnage.

**Excerpt. Read full report in The Guardian**

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/sep/20/usaf-atomic-bomb-north-carolina-1961>

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