

# Why Hiroshima Was Bombed: The ‘Utopians’ Duped a Nation

by William Jones

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### **Racing for the Bomb: General Leslie Groves, The Indispensable Man**

by Robert Norris

South Royalton, Vermont, Steerforth Press, 2002  
700 pages, hardback, \$40

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### **The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb**

by Gar Alperovitz

New York, Alfred Knopf Books, 1995  
847 pages, paperback, \$17

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“The United States decision to drop the atom bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki saved over one million American lives which would have been sacrificed by an invasion of Japan.”

How often has this claim been restated whenever that horrendous event is mentioned on TV or in newspapers. And yet, it remains to this day a total fiction. Not only the figure of “one million”—which was gratuitously added in the cover story published later to enhance the much lower figures actually predicted by the War Department had the United States been forced to invade Japan—but even the lower, more accurate estimates, represented a complete fallacy. There would have been no casualties in a land invasion of Japan because there would not have been any land invasion of Japan. By mid-May 1945 it was clear to all who wished to see: Japan was on the brink of surrendering.

It is the merit of Gar Alperovitz’s work that he documented the facts available as of 1995 by using the then-latest declassified records from the war period. The real purpose of

the atomic bomb was not to win the war, but rather to shape the contours of the post-war world. Alperowitz had an entire team working the files on this subject, with excellent results. The “team” aspect of the work leads, however, to a good deal of repetition. The recent biography by Robert Norris of one of the key players in that policy decision, Gen. Leslie Groves, helps to fill out the picture of the real scope and purposes of the decision to drop the atomic bomb on Japanese cities.

### **The Open Conspiracy of H.G. Wells**

In order to understand the real significance of the atom bomb decision, we must, however, go a bit beyond the confines of these two particular works—back to 1928, to the publication of a little-noticed manuscript by science-fiction writer H.G. Wells, entitled *The Open Conspiracy*. In that work, Wells called for the establishment of a “world government” which would supersede the nation-state as the primary form of human social and political existence. Reading Wells today, one gets the eerie feeling of a weird fascist experiment, wrapped in pseudo-scientific rhetoric, in which Big Brother controls one’s every move. This “Utopian” scheme, as Wells himself dubbed it, probably had little hope of success, except under conditions of raw terror, where a frightened population might come to feel that only in the womb of such a “world government” would there be any security.

With the dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945, such a condition, it was felt by Wells’ devotees, had been brought about. Shortly after the dropping of the bomb in 1945, Lord Bertrand Russell, a compatriot of Wells in the “world commonwealth” project, wrote a short essay entitled “The Bomb and Civilisation.” In this work Russell wrote: “The prospect for the human race is sombre beyond all precedent. . . . Either war or civilization must end, and if it is to be war that ends, there must be an interna-



*Manhattan Project chief Gen. Leslie Groves gets a medal from Secretary of War Henry Stimson (left) in September 1945. Both pushed hard for atomic bombing of Japan before the war could end, and led the selection of the Hiroshima target, factories “densely surrounded by workers’ housing.” Generals such as Eisenhower and MacArthur opposed the bombing as unnecessary. Britain’s H.G. Wells (above) was the ideological father of the bombing, with his “Open Conspiracy” for a fascist experiment in world government.*

tional authority with the sole power to make the new bombs. All supplies of uranium must be placed under the control of the international authority, which shall have the right to safeguard the ore by armed forces. As soon as such an authority has been created, all existing atomic bombs, and all plants for their manufacture, must be handed over. And of course the international authority must have sufficient armed forces to protect whatever has been handed over to it. If this system were once established, the international authority would be irresistible, and wars would cease. At worst, there might be occasional brief revolts that would be easily quelled.

“The power of the United States in international affairs is, for the time being, immeasurably increased,” Russell continued. “If America were more imperialistic there would be another possibility, less Utopian and less desirable, but still preferable to the total obliteration of civilized life. It would be possible for Americans to use their position of temporary superiority to insist upon disarmament, not only in Germany and Japan, but everywhere except in the United States, or at any rate in every country not prepared to enter into a close military alliance with the United States, involving compulsory sharing of military secrets. During the next few years, this policy could be enforced; if one or two wars were necessary, they would be brief, and would soon end in decisive American victory.”

Russell’s comments were undoubtedly aimed at encouraging the very thing he expressed his skepticism about. While his hatred of the United States as a nation-state was almost visceral, were a U.S. government prepared to become the center of a new Roman Empire, dictating policy to the world, he would stifle his revulsion and sign on to the project in that form.

Indeed there were in Washington, in late 1945 when Russell was writing this, already people intent on creating just such a solution. The totally unnecessary, and absolutely criminal, dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki was their attempt to impose this Wellsian nightmare on an unwitting world.

### **Japan Prepares To Surrender**

By the Spring of 1945, it was clear to all that the end of the war in the Pacific was close at hand. The successful island-hopping strategy of Gen. Douglas MacArthur, moving always for the strategic flank of the Japanese army rather than fighting for every foot of land occupied by its tenacious and fanatical soldiers, had given the greatest victory to U.S. arms with the minimum casualties, a feat perhaps unequaled in the annals of U.S. military history. Now, what terms should be presented to the Japanese to bring the Pacific war to a close?

The real discussion hinged on the question of what role, if any, the Japanese Emperor would have in a post-war Japan. Given that the tenacity of the Japanese troops was intimately bound to the role of the Emperor in society and religion, peace terms which would result in his destruction would be disastrous. As a report from MacArthur’s staff to the War Department in Washington in the Summer of 1944 notes, “to dethrone, or hang, the Emperor would cause a tremendous and violent reaction from all Japanese. Hanging of the Emperor to them would be comparable to the crucifixion of Christ to us. All would fight to die like ants. The position of the gangster militarists would be strengthened immeasurably. The war would be unduly prolonged; our losses heavier than otherwise would be necessary.” For the same reason, it was also clear that, were the Emperor to order his troops to surrender, they

would, for the very same reason, do so to the very last soldier.

In March 1945, MacArthur sent Lt. Gen. George Kenney, the head of his air forces, to Washington to brief the Joint Chiefs on the situation in the Pacific. In a long talk with Chief of Staff Gen. George Marshall, on March 16, Kenney argued that Japan had lost its air power, its navy and merchant marine, and that there was no longer any necessity to wait for an end to the war in Europe or for the Russians to enter the Pacific war, before moving toward a surrender.

As Kenney relates in *The MacArthur I Know*: “When I was in Washington in March 1945, I repeated MacArthur’s ideas, but everyone I talked to in the War Department and even among the Air crowd disagreed. The consensus was that Japan would hold out for possibly another two years. . . . While the dropping of the two atomic bombs may have hurried the Japanese decision to quit, there is little doubt that MacArthur was right in July when he told me that the projected Operation Olympic—to invade Japan on November 1, 1945—would never take place.”

“It was quite evident from a study of the context of the messages, that the Japanese realized further resistance was futile, and were willing to grant any concessions to halt the war, providing the Emperor remained as the spiritual head of the country,” Kenney wrote.

By the Spring of 1945 these peace-feelers were coming in fast and furious. On May 7, 1945, the OSS representative in Portugal informed President Truman that the Counsellor of the Japanese Legation in Portugal had told a source that the Japanese were ready to cease hostilities provided they were allowed to retain possession of the home islands and that the terms “unconditional surrender” not be employed in the actual peace terms.

Other OSS sources working with the Vatican’s Cardinal Giuseppe Montini (later Pope Paul VI), were also in touch with the Japanese, who were in the process of working out the terms of an eventual Japanese surrender—again with the proviso that the institution of the Emperor be retained.

The stated policy of the United States had been that of “unconditional surrender.” This had been stated by President Roosevelt, almost fortuitously, when he met with British Prime Minister Winston Churchill at Casablanca in January 1943. And yet, with Roosevelt, the consummate politician, there was always room for finding a way out of a dilemma if the conditions warranted it. Roosevelt did, in fact, deviate from the “unconditional surrender” formula when Italy agreed to surrender in 1944. But by May 1945, Franklin Roosevelt was dead, and his new Vice President, Harry Truman, had been sworn in as President of the United States.

Truman had replaced Henry Wallace as FDR’s Vice President prior to the 1944 elections, through the machinations of the southern Democrats who hated Roosevelt’s New Deal as well as his envisioned post-war Grand Design. They knew that Roosevelt would not survive a fourth term. They therefore wanted to replace the strong New Deal Vice President Henry Wallace, with one of their own. Former Missouri tailor

Harry Truman, a proud son of the Confederacy (both grandfathers fought for the South during the Civil War), who had come to prominence in Missouri politics as a stooge of the Kansas City-based criminal Pendergast mob, was their man. As his chief foreign policy adviser, Truman chose Sen. James Byrnes from South Carolina, an even more dyed-in-the-wool Confederate sympathizer. In June 1945, Truman made Byrnes Secretary of State.

## The Russian Factor

From the beginning of the war, the Allied forces had decided that their main thrust would be in Europe. In every aspect of supply and logistics, the Atlantic theater received the primary attention, with MacArthur, the army commander in the Pacific, having to make do with whatever he got.

The Russian armies were almost solely deployed on the European front. After initial clashes with the Japanese in Manchuria in 1939, in which the Japanese fared badly, the Russians signed a Neutrality Treaty with Japan. In his discussions with Stalin at Tehran in November 1943 and at Yalta in February 1945, Roosevelt had talked to the Soviet leader about the possibility of redeploying Russian troops to the East at the conclusion of the war with Nazi Germany. Already in the beginning of the Pacific campaign, MacArthur had called for Russian engagement against the Japanese in Manchuria, a measure that would have helped tie up some of their forces that would otherwise be available to be deployed against him. The Russians, hard pressed by the advance of the Nazi armies, were not eager to engage in a two-front war if that could be avoided.

And yet, after the decisive victory of the Red Army at Kursk in July 1943, it was felt in U.S. military circles that the Russians might now consider moving against Japan. In a Joint Chiefs’ instruction cited by Alperovitz, in the Fall of 1943 to the head of the American Military Mission in Moscow, Brig. Gen. John Deane, “the great importance to the United States of Russia’s full participation in the war against Japan after the defeat of Germany, as essential to the prompt and crushing defeat of Japan at far less cost to the United States and Great Britain,” was clearly stated. Again, just before the Big Three meeting—Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin—at Tehran in 1943, the Joint Chiefs stated: “We are agreed that every effort should be exerted to bring the U.S.S.R. into the war against Japan at the earliest practicable date, and that plans should be prepared in that event.”

By the end of 1944, the war in Europe was approaching a close. Following the Big Three meeting in Yalta in February 1945, representatives were sent to MacArthur to brief him on the results. MacArthur again called for a Russian move on Manchuria in order to tie up as many Japanese divisions as possible, especially if events necessitated an invasion of the Japanese home islands, for which preparations were, in fact, being made.

The Japanese were also aware that Russian refusal to renew the Neutrality Pact would mean that they would also

have Russia to fight. The signals of a Japanese willingness to surrender then began to multiply.

In addition to the OSS contacts in Italy and Portugal, the Japanese were also making their desires known through their representatives in Moscow and in Sweden, with representatives of the Swedish Royal Family. The Swedish reports were forwarded to the United States by Herschel V. Johnson, the U.S. Ambassador in Stockholm. Reporting on April 6, 1945, Johnson wrote that it was “probable that very far-reaching conditions would be accepted by the Japanese by way of negotiation,” but that “there is no doubt that unconditional surrender terms would be unacceptable to the Japanese because it would mean dishonor. Application of such terms would be fatal and lead to desperate action on the part of the people. . . . The Emperor must not be touched,” Johnson wrote.

### **The Atom Bomb Project**

On April 25, 1945, Secretary of War Henry Stimson and Gen. Leslie Groves, the manager of the Manhattan Project, met at the White House to brief the President on the status of the atomic bomb.

The bomb project had been initiated by President Roosevelt on the basis of an appeal by Albert Einstein. Einstein, aware of Nazi work on developing such weapons, had been urged by Leo Szilard, a protégé of Bertrand Russell, who played on Einstein’s fears, to write a letter to President Roosevelt urging him to begin work on an atomic weapon.

Szilard, a Hungarian physicist and a devotee of H.G. Wells, had worked his way into Einstein’s confidence while still a young physicist in Berlin. In 1928 Szilard had read Wells’ *Open Conspiracy*, and waxed enthusiastic. By 1929 he had travelled to London to meet with Wells and to negotiate the rights to publish Wells’ works in Central Europe. Szilard himself worked on a scheme to realize Wells’ vision of a “world government” controlled by a chosen “scientific elite.” In fact, so enamored was he of this idea that he developed his own plan for creating such an “elite,” which he called the Bund, “a closely knit group of people whose inner bond is pervaded by a religious and scientific spirit.” Although formulating this proto-fascist vision at an early age, Szilard bandied such ideas about in different forms until his death.

How the Einstein letter led to the Manhattan Project, under General Groves, is well known. By the time the new President, Harry Truman, was briefed on the Manhattan Project in April 1945, the bomb was almost ready for testing. The growing realization by Truman of the power and capability of the new weapon gave Truman the means to accomplish the task for which he had been chosen—to dismantle Roosevelt’s entire post-war design.

Roosevelt had dealt with the mercurial Russian leader, Joseph Stalin, in a rather straightforward and open manner. Not that this was without its difficulties, given Stalin’s propensities and paranoia. Nevertheless, by 1944 Roosevelt felt that he had created a certain rapport with Stalin and intended to work to bring wartime ally Russia into the concert of Euro-

pean nations after the war. Writing in May 1944 in the *Saturday Evening Post*, Forrest Davis, a correspondent favored by Roosevelt, wrote: “Mr. Roosevelt is striving to bring the Soviet Union, which has fallen out with the European tradition, back into the family of nations, as a condition precedent to world organization. Convinced that unless that reunion takes place, there can be no world association, nor assured hope of peace, the President’s ‘great design’ rests on two assumptions. First, he accepts the prevalent view that the Soviet Union will be able to organize effectively its manpower and resources in peace as well as war, thus becoming permanently a great power. He further assumes that the interests of a victorious Russian state can be reconciled to those of the Atlantic powers, China, and the small nations of Europe and America. Mr. Roosevelt, gambling for stakes as enormous as any statesman ever played for, has been betting that the Soviet Union needs peace and is willing to pay for it by collaborating with the West. By no means unaware of the risks, he declines, nevertheless, to acknowledge them even to close associates. The White House is a delicate sounding board, reflecting everything that happens everywhere on the globe. It would be absurd to suppose that the President has not considered the implications of his Russian policy in all angles and facets. The alternative—a Russia excluded, aggrieved and driven in on itself to prepare for the inevitable war of continents—was to him so much worse, that he saw himself with little choice. He chose, moreover, to prosecute his policy so sincerely that the Russians, proverbially mistrustful, could have no ground for misgiving.”

The Utopians’ plans for establishing their global dictatorship were, on the other hand, precisely geared to play into those Russian misgivings.

### **The Road to Potsdam**

While the production of the atomic bomb had been initiated by Roosevelt based on assumptions (later proven false) that the Nazis were progressing rapidly on building a similar device, the “bomb” now became, in the hands of the Utopians, the essential tool in imposing their political vision on the post-war world. But, in order to do that, the power of this new weapon had to be demonstrated in a devastating manner, to convince all nations to accept the straitjacket of “world government.”

The Manhattan Project had been essentially an Anglo-American project from the start, although certain aspects of it were revealed to Churchill only after the fact. The wartime alliance with Russia had not included informing them of the existence of the bomb project. Some people had, however, urged this step on Roosevelt, aware that withholding the information now might create serious misunderstandings after the war.

Danish physicist Niels Bohr, aware that the Russians certainly knew of the possibility of developing atomic weapons and had perhaps more than an inkling of the Manhattan Project, feared a post-war arms race. He therefore urged President



*General Groves with Robert Oppenheimer (right), scientific director of the Manhattan Project. Groves' instruction to Oppenheimer to rush the first atomic bomb test through by July 14, 1945, is part of the evidence that President Truman was using the bombing of Hiroshima for "diplomatic," not military purposes.*

Roosevelt to inform Stalin of the bomb project. He also spoke to the British Prime Minister, who rejected the idea out of hand. "As for any post-war problems," Churchill told Bohr, "there are none that cannot be amicably settled between me and my friend, President Roosevelt." Roosevelt, who saw things quite differently, but who, for reasons of his own was not prepared at that time to reveal the secrets of the bomb to Stalin, didn't overrule the British Prime Minister on this issue.

By May 1945, with Roosevelt dead, differences over the post-war fate of Poland were calling for top-level consultations among the Big Three. Churchill wrote to Truman in May 1945 that it was urgent "that a settlement must be reached on all major issues . . . before the armies of democracy melted." But Truman was not interested in meeting with Stalin until he had a successful test of the atomic bomb to use as a bargaining chip in such a meeting.

The political implications of the bomb were clearly in the

forefront of interest for the Utopian faction. Chief among them was Secretary of War Henry Stimson. Speaking on May 14 to Army Chief of Staff Gen. George Marshall and John J. McCloy (one of Stimson's top assistants at the War Department), relating a discussion he had just had with British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden, Stimson commented: "It is a case where we have got to regain the lead [over Russia] and perhaps do it in a rough and realistic way. . . . I told him this was a place where we really held all the cards. I called it a royal straight flush and we mustn't be a fool about the way we play. They can't get along without our help and our industries, and we have coming into action a weapon which will be unique."

Truman was of one mind with Stimson on this point, and, therefore, worked to delay a meeting with Stalin. Truman wrote Churchill that he wanted to put off the Big Three meeting until after June 30 on the flimsy pretext that the U.S. budget was coming up in Congress. Stalin was anxious to meet. Harry Hopkins, just back from a trip to Moscow on May 28, was told the meeting would not be until July. Hopkins objected: "I think Stalin would like to have the meeting at an earlier date because of the many pressing problems to be decided." And yet Truman persisted in delaying, raising suspicions among the Russians as to his motives.

For what was Truman waiting? General Groves was pushing his scientists to test the bomb by the beginning of July. Technical considerations caused a delay in the test—and another delay in Truman's planned meeting with Stalin. Finally, Grove pushed for a test on July 14. Biographer Norris notes how Groves, in explaining the rush to project director J. Robert Oppenheimer on July 2, stressed "the importance of trying to arrange for the 14th [of July] . . . and to tell his people that it wasn't his fault. But came from higher authority." On June 5, Truman then informed Churchill in regard to the forthcoming meeting, "I find, after full consideration that July 15 is the earliest date that is practicable for me to attend." Indeed, if all went well, it was the earliest date at which Truman would know if the test had been successful.

## **The Decision To Bomb**

The test in Alamogordo, New Mexico, on July 14, 1945, produced results beyond anyone's imagination. As reports streamed back to Washington, the mood was almost ecstatic among the Utopians. Indeed, Stimson felt that the effect of the bomb was so great that he advised Truman the weapon might enable the United States to force the Soviet Union to abandon or radically alter its entire system of government. A War Department memorandum on June 16 noted that "the President feels the U.S. is by far the strongest country in the world and he proposes to take the lead at the coming meeting," and that in "this connection he proposes to raise all the controversial questions."

With the successful test of the bomb, the issue now became whether to use it—and, if so, against whom? With the surrender of Nazi Germany already a fact, Japan was really

the only candidate. But what if the Japanese also surrendered before the bomb was actually used in war, as all indicators were showing they intended to do? Testing the bomb in a real-time situation required, therefore, delaying such a surrender for as long as possible in order to use the bomb to end the war—and demonstrate in an unequivocal and stark, terrifying manner, the raw power now possessed by the United States.

Plans for the bombing of Japan were already well under way when the Alamogordo test took place. Under the frenetic leadership of Groves, targets were being picked. An Interim Committee had been set up by Stimson's assistant, Harvey Bundy, consisting of Stimson; James Conant, chairman of the National Defense Research Committee; Dr. Vannevar Bush, director of the Office of Scientific Research and Development (OSRD); Dr. Karl Compton, head of the Office of Field Service (OSRD) and president of MIT; Assistant Secretary of State William Clayton; and the Undersecretary of the Navy, Ralph Bard. At Stimson's suggestion, Truman appointed Jimmy Byrnes to serve as Truman's personal liaison to the committee. The Interim Committee was to advise the President on how the bomb was to be used after the war. Groves, who was a member of the Target Committee, also received a permanent invitation to attend the meetings of the Interim Committee, and, in fact, attended all of their meetings. Two or more bombs were to be prepared.

Truman became totally euphoric when Groves' more detailed report on the Alamogordo experiment reached him on July 21. "The President was tremendously pepped up by it and spoke to me of it again and again when I saw him," Stimson confided in his diary. Byrnes was also ecstatic, telling Szilard "that our possessing and demonstrating the bomb would make Russia more manageable in Europe."

Indeed, there was a growing feeling that with the Anglo-Americans retaining sole possession of the bomb, the post-war period would indeed become something of an Anglo-American Century, as Bertrand Russell would call for in his piece later in 1945. Norris' book clearly shows Groves to have been a strong proponent of such a view, though more inclined to make this solely an "American" preserve, not to be shared fully with the British. As he would express this later more publicly, in an important quote overlooked by his biographer Norris, but not lost on Alperovitz, Groves was committed to "an American-administered Pax-Atomica—an atomic league of nations, founded upon the West's supposed technological superiority and the secret, preclusive monopoly of atomic raw materials."

In the light of this policy shift, the appearance of Japanese peace-feelers now became a threat that might obviate the use of the atomic bomb in war. Anything that would permit the Japanese to surrender before its use against Japan was therefore to be squelched. The envisioned entry of the Russian forces into Manchuria had therefore to be delayed for as long as possible.

Some people in Washington saw clearly what was in the works. Acting Secretary of State Joseph Grew, a former am-

bassador to Japan, caught wind of what was happening—and it frightened him. Grew renewed his efforts to quickly get a statement of intent from the United States which would guarantee a retention of the Emperor, and facilitate a rapid Japanese surrender—before the bomb could be used. More generally, Grew realized that there was a substantial peace party in Japan, and that the peace-feelers the Allied intelligence forces were picking up, were for real. The position of the United States, he felt, should be supportive of that peace party, and immediately clarifying the role of the Emperor in the peace terms was absolutely essential if peace were to be quickly achieved.

Many leading Republicans were also calling for such a statement. On July 3, the *New York Times* reported that the Senate Republican minority leader, Wallace White, "declared that the Pacific war might end quickly if President Truman would state, specifically, in the upper chamber, just what unconditional surrender means for the Japanese." The War Department's Operations Division advised on July 12, 1945 that "the present stand of the War Department is that Japanese surrender is just possible and is attractive enough to the U.S. to justify us in making any concession which might be attractive to the Japanese, so long as our realistic aims for peace in the Pacific are not adversely affected."

Indeed, by this time the Japanese peace-feelers were becoming a drumbeat. On July 12, as Truman was travelling to Potsdam aboard the Presidential yacht, the *Augusta*, Emperor Hirohito was declaring in a meeting of the Supreme Council for the Direction of the War, that although war planning had to continue, it was also "necessary to have a plan to close the war at once." A cable intercepted on July 12 from Foreign Minister Togo to Japanese Ambassador Sato in Moscow, and given to Truman aboard the *Augusta* on his way to Potsdam, stated: "We are now secretly giving consideration to the termination of the war because of the pressing situation which confronts Japan both at home and abroad." Unlike the previous peace-feelers, these were very official and very high-level, even involving the leadership of the Japanese Army, the only real hold-outs for continued fighting. By the time of the Potsdam meeting it was also known that Japan was asking Russia, with which it still had a neutrality treaty, to help it get out of the war.

### Using the Bomb 'Diplomatically'

But Truman, with an entirely different agenda, was not ready for peace—not yet at any rate. Indeed, arriving at Potsdam, the United States was already taking measures to delay Russian entry into the war in the Pacific.

At Yalta it had been agreed that Russia would enter the Pacific theater in exchange for several conditions: It would receive the Kurile Islands from Japan, regain control over the Chinese Far Eastern and South Manchurian railroads as well as the ports of Dairen and Port Arthur, and the "independence of Mongolia would be assured." In turn, Stalin agreed to sign a treaty with Nationalist China. Roosevelt had assured Stalin

that he would convince Chiang Kai-shek to accept concessions to Russia in Manchuria.

The signing of an agreement between China and the Soviet Union would therefore be the immediate prelude to Soviet entry into Manchuria. With Truman's new agenda, and the successful demonstration of the atomic bomb, the brakes had to be put on the signing of such an agreement. On July 6, as he was leaving for Potsdam, Jimmy Byrnes instructed Averell Harriman, the key contact with the Soviets, to "inform both the Soviet Government and T.V. Soong [the Chinese Foreign Minister then in Moscow for negotiations with the Russians] that as a party to the Yalta Agreement we would expect to be consulted before any arrangement is concluded between the Soviet and Chinese governments." Harriman even had to pressure Soong to be tougher with the Russians about these concessions. "He [Soong] was far less concerned than we had been about such details as whether Chinese or Russian troops would guard the railroad or who would be the Port Master of Dairen," Harriman wrote. "I saw him almost every day and urged him to be more firm."

At Potsdam, Truman adopted his most belligerent pose. In a letter to his wife Bess on July 20, Truman wrote: "We had a tough meeting yesterday. I reared up on my hind legs and told 'em where to get off, and they got off. I have to make perfectly plain to them at least once a day that so far as this President is concerned, Santa Claus is dead, and that my first interest is U.S.A., then I want the Jap War won and I want 'em both in it."

After the plenary session of July 24, Truman approached Stalin as Stalin was about to leave the conference, and mentioned to him casually "that we had a new weapon of unusual destructive force." The poker-faced Stalin simply commented, according to Truman, that "he was glad to hear it and hoped we would make 'good use of it against the Japanese.'" Judging from Stalin's placid reaction, Truman and Churchill thought that Stalin didn't really understand that Truman had been referring to the atomic bomb. The wily Soviet leader, however, knew a lot more than he was letting on. What his Russian science advisers, like the great scientist Vladimir Vernadsky, were not able to tell him about the bomb, well-placed spies in the Manhattan Project were. Marshal Zhukov relates Stalin's comments to his own people following this encounter with Truman. "Stalin, in my presence, told Molotov about his conversation with Truman," Zhukov wrote in his memoirs. "'They're raising the price,' said Molotov. Stalin gave a laugh, 'Let them. We'll have to have a talk with Kurchatov today about speeding up our work.'" Stalin was referring to the Soviet bomb program, headed up by Academician I.V. Kurchatov.

### **Potsdam: Preventing Japan's Surrender**

It was also at Potsdam that Churchill was informed of the successful test. British Chief of Staff Field Marshal Sir Alan Brookesby wrote that Churchill "was completely carried away. It was no longer necessary for the Russians to come

into the Japanese war; the new explosive alone was sufficient to settle the matter. Furthermore, we now had something in our hands which would redress the balance with the Russians."

By this time, the Interim Committee had decided that the bomb would be used, without warning, on a Japanese war plant, preferably in the vicinity of an area in which many Japanese workers were living, for maximum psychological effect. Norris relates how Groves wanted to target Kyoto itself, the most important religious center for the Japanese, but Stimson, anxious that the Japanese remain malleable enough after the war in order to serve in the post-war battle against the spread of Communism in Asia, rejected this proposal, assenting only to the targeting of Hiroshima, Nagasaki, Niigata, and Kokura. There was only one true dissenter to this decision of the committee—Ralph Bard, Navy Secretary James Forrestal's undersecretary and representative. In a June 27 memorandum, Bard wrote: "Ever since I have been in touch with this program I have had a feeling that before the bomb is actually used against Japan, that Japan should have some preliminary warning, for say two or three days in advance of use. The position of the United States as a great humanitarian nation and the fair play attitude of our people generally is responsible in the main for this feeling." Bard also stressed that some U.S. declaration regarding the status of the Emperor should be given to encourage the Japanese to surrender quickly. But Truman and Byrnes were not prepared to issue such a declaration.

In fact, the draft statement for the Potsdam meeting, drawn up by Stimson and John McCloy, had included explicit assurances for the Emperor. William Leahy, the chief of staff of the Army and Navy under Roosevelt, who had been kept on by Truman, wrote on July 18: "From a strictly military point of view, the Joint Chiefs of Staff consider it inadvisable to make any statement or take any action at the present time that would make it difficult or impossible to utilize the authority of the Emperor to direct a surrender of the Japanese forces, in the outlying areas as well as in Japan proper." Although Truman was in agreement with the policy of building up post-war Japan as a counterweight to Soviet influence, he, in collaboration with Byrnes, decided to purge the reference to the Emperor from the Potsdam Proclamation. As far as the Japanese knew, "unconditional surrender" was still the policy of the allies. In a further affront to Stalin, the United States issued the Proclamation to the press before even informing him, much less soliciting his approval of the final text.

The effect of the Potsdam Declaration was devastating. Navy Captain Ellis Zacharias, a specialist who had been working on psychological-warfare ideas in cooperation with the Overseas Branch of the Office of War Information, had been, like his Navy commanders, keen on encouraging a quick Japanese surrender. Zacharias had been closely following the Japanese intercepts, and knew that the signals to end the war were coming from the highest levels, and that the position of the Emperor was *the* decisive issue. The Potsdam Declaration



*Left to right: Britain's Clement Attlee, President Truman, and Russia's Joseph Stalin, at the Potsdam conference in July 1945. Truman delayed the conference of the Big Three powers until he could be sure of the successful test of the atomic bomb in Alamogordo, New Mexico on July 14—for use as a bargaining chip against the Russians.*

smashed these hopes. It “wrecked everything we had been working for,” Zacharias would later explain. “Instead of being a diplomatic instrument, transmitted through regular diplomatic channels and giving the Japanese a chance to answer, it was put on the radio as a propaganda instrument pure and simple. The whole maneuver, in fact, completely disregarded all essential psychological factors [for] dealing with Japan.”

Also at Potsdam, more pressure was put on T.V. Soong to conduct a delaying action. On July 23 Churchill wrote to Sir Anthony Eden, “Mr. Byrnes told me this morning that he had cabled to T.V. Soong advising him not to give way on any point to the Russians, but to return to Moscow and keep on negotiating pending further developments. It is quite clear that the United States do not at the present time desire Russian participation in the war against Japan.” Nevertheless, hearing from Truman that the bomb test had been successful, Stalin pushed up the invasion of Manchuria from Aug. 15 to Aug. 8—a mere two days, in the event, after the bombing of Hiroshima.

### **Opposition to the Decision**

The decision to bomb was, however, meeting with considerable resistance. The initial reaction came from those who were most in the know on the subject—the Manhattan Project scientists. A nervous Groves was keenly aware of the growing opposition among the scientists to the use of the bomb without warning. In a poll taken among 150 of the scientists working at the Manhattan Project's Chicago facility, almost half of those polled also recommended “a military demonstration”

to be followed by renewed opportunity for surrender “before full use of the weapon is employed.”

Leo Szilard was perhaps more upset than anyone. The spiritual “father” of the atomic bomb. Szilard, like Bohr, knew something of the Soviet capabilities through his early contact with Russian scientist Peter Kapitsa, and realized that the atomic bomb would not long remain the monopoly of a single power. Indeed, its use in combat, he feared, threatened to set off an arms race which would upset all his plans for using it to establish the “world government.” In late May 1945, Szilard and fellow scientists Harold Urey and Walter Bartky met with Jimmy Byrnes. Byrnes told them that General Groves had informed him that Russia had no uranium, and that therefore there was no fear of them developing atomic weapons.

In reality, already in 1940, Russian scientist Vladimir Vernadsky had appointed a committee to investigate the uranium resources of the Soviet Union. While they did discover uranium deposits in Central Asia, it would be the countries of Eastern Europe and Soviet-occupied East Germany which would provide the great bulk of the uranium for the Soviet nuclear program. In a memorandum to Byrnes, Szilard underlined that it was the post-war organization of the atomic bomb threat which would be of utmost importance. In accordance with his Wellsian program, he urged that there be established international controls on atomic research, with the direct involvement of the scientists in the decisions as to its use. Byrnes found the idea rather ludicrous. “He [Szilard] felt that scientists, including himself, should discuss the matter with the Cabinet, which I did not feel desirable. His general de-





*Gen. Douglas MacArthur receives a medal from President Harry Truman in 1950. MacArthur, the wartime commander of the Pacific theater, knew that the Japanese were close to surrender; the Utopians only informed him of the decision to bomb Hiroshima five days beforehand. MacArthur insisted until his death that the bombing of the Japanese cities had no military value whatsoever.*

meanor and his desire to participate in policymaking made an unfavorable impression on me.”

More significant opposition came from the military leadership of the country, most of whom were adamantly opposed to the use of the atomic bomb. Alperovitz documents this resistance quite extensively in separate chapters dealing with the reaction from each of the uniformed services; all regarded the bombing as militarily unnecessary. Stimson himself, when in Europe for the Potsdam talks, saw fit to solicit the opinion of Gen. Dwight Eisenhower, Commander-in-Chief of Allied Forces in Europe. “The incident took place in 1945 when Secretary of War Stimson, visiting my headquarters in Germany, informed me that our government was preparing to drop an atomic bomb on Japan,” Eisenhower would later write in his autobiography, *Mandate for Change*. “I was one of those who felt that there were a number of cogent reasons to question the wisdom of such an act. . . . The Secretary, upon giving me the news of the successful bomb test in New Mexico, and of the plan for using it, asked for my reaction, apparently expecting a vigorous assent. During the recitation of the relevant facts, I had been conscious of a feeling of

depression, and so I voiced to him my grave misgivings, first on the basis of my belief that Japan was already defeated and that dropping the bomb was completely unnecessary, and secondly because I thought that our country should avoid shocking world opinion by the use of a weapon whose employment, I thought no longer mandatory as a measure to save American lives. It was my belief that Japan was, at that very moment, seeking some way to surrender with a minimum loss of ‘face.’ The Secretary was deeply perturbed by my attitude, almost angrily refuting the reasons I gave for my quick conclusions.”

Although Gen. Douglas MacArthur, the Pacific theater commander, wasn’t informed of the existence of the atomic bomb until five days before it was dropped on Hiroshima, he had already, in the Spring of 1945, sent his air force chief, Maj. Gen. George Kenney, to Washington to explain his view that the Japanese were close to surrender. When Kenney came to Washington and explained this to Gen. George Marshall, Marshall called in his top advisers. Kenney would report to MacArthur later that he had not succeeded in convincing them. MacArthur, until his death, insisted that bombing Hiroshima and Nagasaki had no military value whatsoever.

Truman’s Chief of Staff, Adm. William Leahy, who chaired the meetings of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, continually insisted that the Japanese were on the brink of surrender. As late as July 16, Leahy was urging the British Chief of Staff to have Churchill get Truman to modify the term “unconditional surrender.” Leahy would later say, quite accurately, of the decision: “Truman told me it was agreed they would use it, after military men’s statements that it would save many, many American lives, by shortening the war, only to hit military objectives. Of course, then they went ahead and killed as many women and children as they could, which was just what they wanted all the time.”

Adm. Ernest King, the Commander in Chief of the U.S. Fleet, was convinced that the successful blockade of Japan was bringing Japan to its knees. There was no need to invade Japan proper, King argued, because Japan was as good as defeated. This analysis would later be fully corroborated by the Strategic Bombing Survey, which in 1946 examined the destruction caused in Japan by a combination of the blockade and the incessant conventional bombing. The Survey concluded that Japan would likely have surrendered in 1945 without atomic bombing, a Soviet declaration of war, or an American invasion.

That the Utopians were also aware of these facts is attested by comments made to Truman on June 6 by Stimson. Stimson wrote in his diary. “I told him I was anxious about this feature of the war [massive conventional bombing] for two reasons: first, because I did not want to have the United States get the reputation of outdoing Hitler in atrocities; and second, I was a little fearful that before we could get ready, the Air Force might have Japan so thoroughly bombed out that the new weapon would not have a fair background to show its strength.

He laughed and said he understood.”

On Aug. 6 at 8:16 in the morning the bomber *Enola Gay* dropped “Little Boy,” with a yield equivalent to 12,500 tons of TNT, on the city of Hiroshima, with a population of 290,000 civilians and 43,000 soldiers. When calculations were made at the end of August, the death toll was in the realm of 100,000, but many more would die soon thereafter from the effects of the bombing. By the end of 1950, the toll had reached 200,000, with death rates calculated at 54%! On Aug. 9, “Fat Man” was dropped on Nagasaki, with 70,000 dead calculated by the end of 1945 and a total of 140,000 dead within the next five years. On hearing of the successful bombing of Hiroshima, Truman commented, “This is the greatest thing in history!” General MacArthur was dumbfounded, as MacArthur’s pilot, Weldon E. Rhoades, noted in his diary on the day after the bombing: “General MacArthur definitely is appalled and depressed by this Frankenstein monster. I had a long talk with him today, necessitated by the impending trip to Okinawa. He wants time to think the thing out, so he has postponed the trip to some future date to be decided later.”

### The Reaction and the Cover-Up

More significant, perhaps, than the arduous plodding through the files to get a clear step-by-step picture of the events leading up to the decision, are the revelations by the Alperovitz team of the growing U.S. domestic reaction to the bombing and the frantic efforts by the perpetrators to cover their tracks—a story which has received very little publicity.

Reports of the terrible facts and consequences of the atomic bombings—most especially, author John Hersey’s “Hiroshima,” which filled the August 1946 issue of *The New Yorker* magazine and sold hundreds of thousands of copies—had a strong impact on the American public. A steady stream of criticism of the bombing came from key religious leaders in the United States. The effect of what James Conant derided as “this type of sentimentalism” moved Conant—now president of Harvard—to ask his friend Harvey Bundy to get Stimson to counterattack. Conant agreed with Bertrand Russell that the demonstration of the atomic bomb in a war situation had been essential to force the world into a control regime. But the American citizen had to be “convinced” by a counter-story on Japan.

At the time Stimson was working on his memoirs, being assisted by Harvey Bundy’s son, McGeorge Bundy. The two now readily undertook the task of providing the “cover-up” for the atom bomb decision. McGeorge Bundy would write a draft for Stimson’s perusal and signature. After his discussions with Conant, Harvey Bundy himself had drafted a number of “pointers” that he felt should be included in such an article: namely, that the bomb decision was primarily ordered with the thought that it would save American lives; that no major person in authority thought that Japan would surrender on terms acceptable to the Allies; that the Interim Committee had rejected targets “where the destruction of life and property



*A newspaper being read by General Groves’ daughter reports the obliteration of the city of Hiroshima by the bomb in a surprise U.S. attack. Public shock and opposition grew in the United States, and was met by a famous Stimson-McGeorge Bundy article launching the claim that the atomic bombing “saved a million American lives that would have been lost in an invasion of Japan.”*

would be the very greatest”; that the committee had discussed “intensively” whether the bomb should be used at all; and that the committee had also considered the possibility of a demonstration prior to its use in war. In particular he wanted to downplay any inference that the bomb played any role in U.S. relations with the Soviet Union.

With “old Bundy’s” notes in hand, “young Bundy”—who later, as National Security Adviser to Kennedy and Johnson, would help to maneuver these Presidents into the jungles of Vietnam—went to work on the draft. Various people, including Groves, Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter, Secretary of War Robert Patterson, and Bernard Baruch, who would shortly present Truman’s first draconian nuclear control plan to the United Nations, had their say in the draft. Groves underlined the basic lie of the piece: that the dropping of the bomb shortened the war by months and

saved many human lives which the planned invasion of Japan would have exacted.

Conant himself wanted to make the point that, given the tremendous destruction of the conventional bombing of Japan, the atom bomb was just like any other bomb, only a bit more destructive. Tellingly, Conant urged Bundy to drop all reference to the issue of the Emperor in the paper.

In the final draft, Bundy so exaggerated the figures that it stated twice that the dropping of the bomb had saved over a million lives. And yet, the best estimates given to General Marshall of the possible casualty rates of American forces in a full-scale invasion, were always in the range of 40,000 to 46,000. The big lie just kept getting bigger.

The essay was published in the February 1947 issue of *Harper's* magazine. Breaking all precedent as regards copyright, *Harper's* gave permission for anyone who wanted to reproduce the article to do so. It was therefore quickly reprinted in the *Washington Post*, the *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, the *Omaha World Herald*, *Reader's Digest*, the *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*, and many other papers. McGeorge Bundy quipped to Stimson, "The *Harper's* article has been read by everyone I meet, and it seems to have covered the subject so well that I find no follow-up work needed. . . . I think we deserve some sort of medal for reducing these particular chatterers to silence."

Not everyone felt that the effect was sufficient, however. Conant had Karl Compton, the president of MIT, launch a parallel defense of the bombing in the *Atlantic Monthly*, upping the ante in terms of the outrageous claims of the number of lives saved. "I believe, with complete conviction, that the use of the atomic bomb saved hundreds of thousands—perhaps several millions—of lives, both American and Japanese," Compton wrote. This was, for them, not merely an attempt to justify their actions. "If the propaganda against the use of the atomic bomb had been allowed to grow unchecked," Conant wrote Stimson, "the strength of our military position by virtue of having the bomb would have been correspondingly weakened, and with the weakening would have come a decrease in the probabilities of an international agreement for the control of atomic energy." Indeed this, and not the defeat of Japan, had been the real Wellsian purpose of the bomb project to begin with.

## The Cold War Begins

The effect on Russia of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings was immediate. Visiting Moscow together with Marshal Zhukov a few days after the bombing of Hiroshima, Eisenhower, according to Edgar Snow, answered "a private question privately," with the following remarks: "I would have said, I was sure we could keep the peace with Russia. Now, I don't know. I had hoped the bomb wouldn't figure in this war. Until now I would have said that we three, Britain with her mighty fleet, America with the strongest air force, and Russia with the strongest land force on the continent, we

three could have guaranteed the peace of the world for a long, long time to come. But now, I don't know. People are frightened and disturbed all over. Everyone feels insecure again."

Three policies emerged for dealing with the advent of the nuclear age. Bertrand Russell and his Utopian co-thinkers demanded the United States get ready for preventive nuclear war against the Soviet Union, to enforce a U.S.-British nuclear monopoly.

The policy of Truman, and of Wall Street, was the "Baruch Plan" for world government enforcement of complete nuclear technological *apartheid*. Among Truman's circles there was still the illusion that the United States would remain sole proprietor of nuclear weapons for a long time to come. On Oct. 8, 1946, Truman was asked if the United States would keep control of all nuclear technological information. "Well, I don't think it would do any good to let them in on the know-how," Truman said, "because I don't think they could do it, anyway."

Truman's initial response to this was to attempt to use the forum of the United Nations to impose top-down control on the nations of the world with regard to the research and development and the production of nuclear technology, and the top-down control of the nuclear materials themselves—one of the key elements in the Groves post-war plans for nuclear weapons, as Norris documents. Truman appointed the aging financier Bernard Baruch, formerly head of the War Production Board during World War I, as the head of the U.S. delegation to the UN Atomic Energy Commission, assuring a hard line on the control issue. Baruch's plan demanded "swift and sure punishment" of any nation which attempted independently to develop nuclear technology, and insisted that the veto power of the UN Security Council be suspended entirely in matters of atomic control.

Bertrand Russell was also delighted with the Baruch Plan, as the realization of his "world government" idea. And the Soviet Union's swift and complete rejection of the Baruch Plan in 1946, provided grist for Russell's "preventive war" mill; in 1949 George Eliot published a book entitled *If Russia Strikes*, in which he called on the United States to present Moscow with an ultimatum: Cease research and production efforts on the atomic bomb and accept the Baruch Plan, or face an American attack that would "raze the U.S.S.R. with an air atomic offensive." The "preventive war" scenario also won its adherents among some U.S. military layers, particularly those Air Forces officers who had bought into the supremacy of "air power" as the real war-winning capability.

The head of the newly founded United States Air Force, Gen. Henry H. (Hap) Arnold, in a report to Secretary of War Stimson, asserted that the "one defense against the atomic bomb" was "to hit it before it starts." In a speech at the Boston Navy Yard on Aug. 25, 1950, Navy Secretary Francis Matthews gave a speech which supported the Utopians' thesis. Matthews said that the United States should consider "insti-

tuting a war to compel cooperation for peace.” Many other leading figures in the Truman Administration supported Matthews’ call—including Stuart Symington, director of the National Security Resources Board and former secretary of the Air Force, and Gen. Albert Wedemeyer, commander of the Sixth Army.

By the time of the Matthews’ speech, however, the Soviets had eliminated the U.S. atomic monopoly on nuclear weapons, exploding a nuclear device on the steppes of Kazakstan in August 1949. The proposals for “preventive war” would continue on and off for several years, but neither Truman, nor much less Eisenhower—who effectively judoed the Utopian gameplan—were ever prepared to go that far. The world now entered the era of Mutual and Assured Destruction.

### Eisenhower’s Atoms for Peace

From here on in, preventive war with the Soviets would be viewed as more and more suicidal. The resulting ‘balance of terror’ would now be used by the same Utopians as the argument for bringing the world into the era of world government, including Russell’s attempt during the Cuban Missile Crisis to bring the Americans and the Soviets into an “arms control regime.”

The third post-war nuclear policy, however, and the initiative that promised to break through this controlled environ-

ment, was the “Atoms for Peace” program launched in 1953 by President Eisenhower. Envisioning international cooperation between states as the means of fostering their development by the peaceful uses of nuclear power, rather than the establishment of the institutional straitjacket of a world police regime, Ike succeeded in engaging the Soviet Union in cooperation for development. In the course of that program, between 1956 and 1959, the United States concluded nuclear cooperation agreements with 40 countries, with the Soviet Union providing nuclear power for the satellite countries of Eastern Europe.

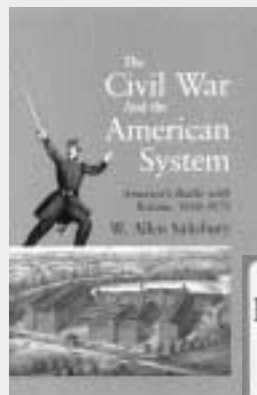
From 1956 to 1962, the Atoms for Peace program provided research reactors, nuclear training, and fissionable material to 26 states. Later, in a similar peace-through-development initiative, President Ronald Reagan adopted Lyndon LaRouche’s technology-sharing concept for his Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) proposal. The Utopians in the Reagan Administration—who included such well-known figures in today’s “Get Saddam” operation as Richard Perle, Doug Feith, and Paul Wolfowitz—succeeded in sabotaging that program, creating the basis for their “comeback” under George Herbert Walker Bush. They are now intent on realizing the nightmare of the Wellsian-Russellite vision by the establishment of a new Roman Empire under Anglo-American direction.

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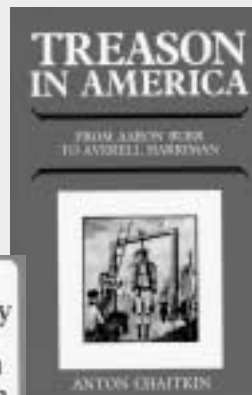
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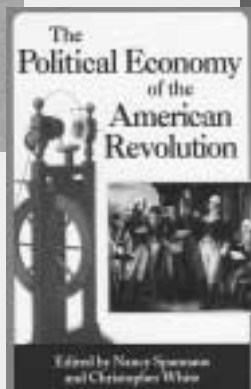
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