

H-Diplo *Roundtables*

Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, *Racing the Enemy: Stalin, Truman, and the Surrender of Japan* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005)

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“I believe we are going to get the thing settled [ending the Japanese war] without backing up on our unconditional surrender demand.”

President Harry S. Truman to Eugene Meyer, Aug. 11, 1945

“Nobody is more disturbed over the use of Atomic bombs than I am but I was greatly disturbed over the unwarranted attack by the Japanese on Pearl Harbor and their murder of our prisoners of war. The only language they seem to understand is the one we have been using to bombard them.”

“When you have to deal with a beast you have to treat him as a beast. It is most regrettable but nevertheless true.”

Pres. Harry S. Truman to Samuel McCrea Cavert, Aug. 11, 1945

“The hurried dropping of the bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki was a brilliant success, in that all the political objectives were fully achieved. American control of Japan is complete, and there is no struggle for authority there with Russia. . . . [W]e may conclude that the dropping of the atomic bombs was not so much the last military act of the Second World War, as the first major operation of the cold diplomatic war with Russia now in progress.”

P.M.S. Blackett, *Fear, War, and the Bomb* (1949)

Tsuyoshi Hasegawa's *Racing the Enemy: Stalin, Truman, and the Surrender of Japan* is a truly impressive accomplishment, meriting prizes and accolades. Able to work in the archival collections and published literature in three languages—English, Japanese, and Russian—Hasegawa has produced a major volume in international history. Before Hasegawa's study, no one scholar in any language had written in depth, and in considerable detail, on the policies of all three major nations leading to the ending of the Pacific/Asian war in 1945.

Recognizing that much of the end-of-the-war and the A-bomb literature is shaped by implicit or explicit counterfactual analysis, Hasegawa has usefully—and courageously—addressed many of these issues explicitly in his thoughtful concluding chapter, “Assessing the Roads Not Taken.” In some ways, that valuable last chapter may help compensate for the book’s strategy of providing chapters divided into multiple small segments, with a mixture usually of substantial narrative and brief analysis, where careful readers may not always be sure of Hasegawa’s interpretation of particular motives and of alternative courses of action. The main part of the book, usually closely adhering to chronology and thus necessarily often shifting from decisions by one nation to another’s, can leave the reader unsure of why some actions were taken, why some alternatives were not pursued, and what might have occurred if alternatives had instead been pursued.

It is a difficult and bold task to seek to analyze, as Hasegawa has done, the behavior of the leaders, and sometimes the underlings, of the three major nations (other than Britain and China) involved in dealing in 1945 with the Asian war—the costs, the dangers, and the opportunities. To do so with high intelligence and focused energy, as Hasegawa has done, is truly remarkable.

This review essay, conceived as part of the roundtable discussion on *Racing*, necessarily only deals with some aspects of Hasegawa’s distinguished volume: (i) briefly discussing the nature of the problems in sources, language, and earlier interpretations, and the opportunities; (ii) briefly situating *Racing* in the major scholarship; (iii) critically examining *Racing*’s treatment of the Potsdam Proclamation of July 26 and the “Magic” intercepts of the period; (iv) considering troubling problems in the “*Racing*” framework and the analysis and explanation of the A-bomb “decision”; (v) looking critically at pre-Hiroshima and slightly at post-Hiroshima expectations by US policymakers in terms of *Racing*’s contentions about the bomb’s likely impact as a “decisive” weapon speedily ending the war; (vi) looking critically at related issues among A-bomb scientists and others on the Manhattan Project; (vii) analyzing some related A-bomb issues and the distinction between nuclear and atomic weapons in ethical and strategic terms; (viii) reexamining the August 9/10-14/15 period, with slight attention to Japan and emphasis on events in the US; (ix) considering briefly the end of the war and also later A-bomb revisionism by the right and the left; (x) and offering a short conclusion.

Thus, this essay, while looking briefly at Soviet and Japanese policy, focuses primarily on US policy in discussing *Racing the Enemy*, and heavily though not exclusively on A-bomb-related issues. A thorough, fully detailed analysis of *Racing* would reach far more broadly and deeply, and probably be nearly twice as long.

I-Dealing with Formidable Obstacles and Defining Opportunities

Until Hasegawa’s formidable book, no one examining in print the end of the war had a knowledge of all three languages. Nor, partly because of the uncertainties involving the Russian archival materials, did any one scholar, especially when faced with the massive American collections and the growing availability of Japanese files, seek to work in the archives of all three nations. It was a daunting task: bureaucratic impediments and arbitrary standards, mixed with peculiar personalism, in the Soviet Union; substantial materials in Tokyo at the National Defense

Institute and the Diet Library (but reportedly little at the Foreign Affairs Ministry); and, if the subject was properly pursued in necessary depth and breadth in the U.S., about six-to-nine months of archival research drawing not only on the Truman Library, the Library of Congress, and the National Archives, but on navy, air force, and army files elsewhere and on the papers in various libraries around the country of about a half-dozen key people.

The nature of such intensive and extensive archival work, as scholars fully understand, is that new interpretations and new suggestions about the meaning of particular documents and the possible importance of previously minimized events can drive scholars back to the same material a few times to examine questions and materials that previously did not seem significant. Vigorous and rigorous archival work, when conducted in the context of the prevailing scholarship, is often not a one-time visit to a collection but a series of trips over time.

That kind of intensive and sometimes iterative research may occur more frequently on subjects in decision-making and policy, such as the A-bomb “decision” and Japan’s surrender, when the history dialogue has been rather close-grained: Why was a particular option considered or not, and by whom, and why and how did the issues sometimes get transformed or reconceived by participants in the process? How did various people in the government making major decisions with impact on the future relate the present problems and likely future power constellations internationally and domestically? What were the personal and official connections—the channels of communication, and the nature of influence—among top people in the particular government, between various underlings, and between those underlings and the top people? How does one go about defining and establishing the dominant assumptions of various policymakers in 1945, and before, about weaponry and the likely course of the war? How much, and when, can memoirs be trusted, especially when checked carefully against the contemporaneous archival materials and important disjunctions emerge?

For example, in the case of President Harry S. Truman, who did not write his own memoirs, can one safely state, as Hasegawa mistakenly does, that Truman “wrote” them? Or, at best, can one usually say only that Truman’s memoirs, published nearly a decade after the key 1945 events, “contend” or “assert” that “X occurred for Y reason”? And what is the significance of the evidential gap between what Truman actually wrote, and what he approved for publication—sometimes with less than vigilant attention—in his memoirs? Heavy reliance upon the particular phrasing of such memoirs—as Hasegawa does—can be a serious error when the actual phrasing was normally “ghosted.”

Surprisingly, because the post-presidential files at the Truman Library are rather rich on the construction of Truman’s memoirs, including interviews with the retired president and drafts of segments of the volumes, no scholar has systematically worked through them on many of the 1945 issues involving the ending of the Japanese war. A few scholarly essays have briefly used some of the post-presidential interview and draft materials for estimates of US casualties in the invasion(s) that never occurred. But there is no sustained analysis of the construction of the memoirs on dealing with the atomic bomb, attitudes toward the Soviets and the Japanese, and ways of ending the war.

In the case of the Soviet materials, where the selective openings and closings of archives are distressing to scholars, there are obvious problems. Some researchers get to see materials that others can not. As troubling, the crucial presidential archives—Stalin's own files—are normally inaccessible to scholars. Sometimes, as in the case of Hasegawa, a generous Soviet scholar and friend (Boris Slavinsky) shared pages of notes from various Soviet non-presidential files that many other scholars had not seen, and that Hasegawa himself could usually not view.

The major limitation on Japanese materials is that the crucial files—those of the Imperial Household—are closed to all. It is ironic that if Emperor Hirohito had been tried as a war criminal, those materials would most likely have become available. But his exemption from such treatment, and the related favoritism bestowed on him and the Imperial Household by General Douglas MacArthur in the occupation, guaranteed that probably the most important materials would be long, if not forever, closed. Thus, part of the process of the postwar American-Japanese rapprochement involved the hiding of wartime history and of fundamental sources.

While apparently using many of the available Japanese files elsewhere, Hasegawa, perhaps out of a sense of understandable necessity, did sharply limit himself in examining the American files. He narrowed them down to what seemed a manageable size—but perhaps at some unforeseen and unrecognized interpretive cost. On the Soviet side, given the limitations on access to materials and the often-arbitrary opening and closing of Soviet files, he was severely restricted, which undoubtedly means that many conclusions about Soviet motives and purposes may have to be tentative.

Hasegawa was working in a field, or really a set of subfields, where a significant segmentation of questions and of historical inquiry had developed for reasons that are understandable to academic historians, but often surprising to outsiders, who do not understand how and why academic subfields requiring particular intellectual prowess and particular sources develop in the way that they do. Until well into the 1990s, there was normally a peculiar intellectual division of labor—rooted in the nature of the scholarly subfields, the locations and types of sources, and the problems of language facility—in dealing variously with end-of-the-war/A-bomb issues and often in treating those separate issues in different studies.

Based heavily in the U.S., historians of the A-bomb and the “decision” focused primarily on American policy, seldom did much on Japanese policy, usually did not know and could not use Japanese, and dealt with Soviet issues mostly in the framework of the origins of the Cold War and Soviet-American conflicts in Europe. In sharp contrast, historians of Japan, who had a knowledge of Japanese, usually focused on Japanese policy and decision-making, sometimes looked (usually, rather briefly) at Japanese-Soviet relations, and in a less limited way at American-Japanese relations, but normally did not work in any depth on America's A-bomb policy and on the “decision” to use the bomb.

The Soviet subfield on the ending of the Pacific war was the most underdeveloped, partly because of the shortage of available materials, resulting from Soviet/Russian government decisions. That government-imposed “shortage” deterred most scholars in the west, and elsewhere, who had the requisite language skills from delving into Soviet policy dealing with

Japan and the ending of the war. Lacking such language facility, most A-bomb historians, for that additional reason of limited sources, did comparatively little on Soviet policy and related Soviet ending-of-the-Japanese-war issues beyond trying to determine, often by inference, the nature and depth of the Soviet-American disputes over Europe.

II-Briefly Situating Hasegawa's Book in the Scholarship

Boldly and energetically aiming to bring together parts of the often separate scholarly subfields, Hasegawa's important volume seeks to explain the American use of the atomic bomb, US dealings in 1945 with the Soviet Union mostly on Asian matters, Stalin's desires in Asia and his handling of both the US and the Japanese, and Japan's struggle in 1945 in the war and moving toward surrender to deal with both the Soviet Union and the US. No one taking on such a large assignment in a single book, or probably even in a set of volumes, could please all readers. The issues are so complicated, the sources so numerous, and sometimes the passions so substantial that general agreement is probably impossible. That problem of likely non-agreement may be more severe because the issues engage the scholars resident in a number of nations, and sometimes their national loyalties may further affect judgments.

Even if various value commitments—for example, disapproving or approving of the use of the bomb, wishing or not wishing that other alternatives had instead been ardently pursued, regretting or not regretting the mass killings in the atomic bombings, and deeming or not deeming the deadly fire-bombings and the atomic bombings as morally equivalent—were not involved, it is highly likely that the nature of the evidence, the ambiguities in the records, and the difficulties of determining motives and even actions at many junctures would bar the emergence of general agreement. Indeed, as a result of the ongoing dialogue, there may well be among scholars less agreement on basic issues—why Japan surrendered? would Japan have otherwise surrendered in mid-August? why the bomb was used? whether it was necessary? how its use was connected to Soviet-American relations?—than prevailed about a half-century ago.

Ultimately, perhaps Hasegawa's book's greatest accomplishment, among its various substantial achievements, may be that it helps to define and redefine many of the issues, and to present many challenging answers, that will shape much of the subsequent scholarship in various countries on a number of key issues. Very probably, for much of the future scholarship on why and how Japan surrendered, and to a much lesser extent on the related Soviet and US policy, *Racing* will define the benchmark for the scholarly dialogue. That is a significant intellectual achievement. Rarely can a scholar, even an intelligent, honest, and energetic scholar, significantly help refocus historical inquiry on major subjects.

In view of the book's analysis of American policy—hearkening back to P.M.S. Blackett's 1948/49 interpretation that President Harry S. Truman was *Racing* to use the A-bomb to end the war to avoid Soviet gains in the Far East—Hasegawa's study should generally delight Gar Alperovitz and similar A-bomb revisionists in emphasizing anti-Soviet motives as the essential core in Truman's A-bomb decision. But whereas Alperovitz and some others emphasized American concern in using the bomb as a way primarily of gaining leverage on the Soviets in Europe, Hasegawa, like Blackett, claims that the primary US purpose in using the bomb quickly was to keep the Soviets out of the war in Asia.

Alperovitz and more moderate A-bomb revisionists (including myself) should be pleased by the contention (if correct) that Soviet entry into the war in early August, without the atomic bombing but in the context of the devastating sea-air blockade and the pummeling bombing of Japanese cities, might well have ended the war in a reasonable time and certainly before the scheduled November 1945 invasion (Olympic), thereby obviating that operation. But Hasegawa, in a conclusion that may trouble some revisionists, argues that Soviet entry (though more important than the A-bomb) had to be combined with the first A-bomb to produce Japan's surrender in mid-August. In a judgment that will trouble many anti-revisionists, he usually asserts that Soviet entry was more important than the atomic bomb in producing the surrender. Whether the issues of the comparative influences of the bomb and Soviet entry can be so neatly parsed out will remain controversial. That is partly because the sources are not crystal clear and because competing plausible narratives, using the same or similar sources, can sometimes be formulated in looking at the complicated issues of the influences on Japanese policy and decision-making in August 1945.

In studying the Japanese events, there are frequently problems of which sources to privilege, how and whether to trust post-events memories, and how to understand the desires and efforts of key people. That involves, especially, looking closely at Emperor Hirohito, General Korechika Anami (war minister), General Yosijiro Umezu (army chief of staff), Baron Admiral Kantaro Suzuki (premier), Shigenori Togo (foreign minister), Soemu Toyoda (navy chief of staff), Mitsumasa Yonai (naval minister), Koichi Kido (privy seal), and Baron Kiichiro Hiranuma (chairman of the Privy Council). These problems are compounded by Hasegawa's enterprising and sustainable conclusion that a group of second-line people in the Japanese government, including Hisatsune Sakomizu (cabinet secretary), have been unwisely minimized by most earlier interpreters and merit close consideration.

Using fewer sources than are now available, and that Hasegawa often shrewdly exploited, Robert J. C. Butow, years ago in his near-magisterial *Japan's Decision to Surrender* (1954), apparently thought that the interesting problem of the comparative weights of the atomic bombing and Soviet entry could not be fully parsed out. Butow concluded that the two events—the first atomic bombing on the 6th and Soviet entry on the 8th, coming so close to one another like trip-hammer blows—smashed through the cage of earlier Japanese indecision and errant hope in ways that even the top-level members of the government could not adequately assess the separate power of each of these two blows. Thus, Butow was suggesting that the task of weighing comparative influence was risky and perhaps not possible. He seemed, in his analysis and in his narrative, to treat the two events as roughly equal in helping to produce the mid-August 1945 surrender.

Many A-bomb revisionists—whether Alperovitz, or others—may find it unsettling that Hasegawa contends that American/Allied modification in July or in early August of the unconditional-surrender demand, by allowing a constitutional monarchy, would very probably have not produced a Japanese surrender before the date of the Hiroshima bombing. That interpretation disagrees with the speculative conclusion of Butow's *Japan's Decision to Surrender* and of some other analysts, often building on Butow's book, who long regarded the

so-called unconditional-surrender demand, without provision for allowing a ceremonial monarchy, as a mistake that may have unnecessarily prolonged the war.

While politely and respectfully differing with Butow (one of Hasegawa's mentors in graduate school years ago) on many details and often on the important content of Japanese decision-making, Hasegawa's volume may sometimes displease some important Japan scholars like Herbert Bix, who view Emperor Hirohito over time as far more active and as far more powerful than Hasegawa believes. Hasegawa's Hirohito is more like Edward Drea's Hirohito than Bix's Showa emperor. Unlike Bix's treatment in his sustained, significant biography of Hirohito, Hasegawa does not dwell in depth for much of 1945 on Hirohito, his purposes, his uses of influence, and his personality. In fact, *Racing* does not deal significantly with the personality of Hirohito. Even with Hasegawa's substantial focus on the crucial events of August 6-15, 1945, the period from the first A-bomb to Japan's surrender, the emperor remains, often, rather elusive—surprisingly so—in this intelligent, detailed study of Japanese policy.

Like many in the U.S., including both Bix and Drea, as well as some A-bomb revisionists and most anti-revisionists, Hasegawa is justifiably unforgiving of Japanese leaders (including Hirohito) for not seeking energetically, and reasonably, to end the war before August 1945. But whereas Butow rather tidily divided the Japanese leadership into the so-called militarists (the die-hards of samurai inclinations) and the so-called peace-seeking group, Hasegawa is critical of such sharp distinctions. He often finds more uncertainty among leaders, and some fluidity between these groups.

His book, like a number of studies conceived basically as diplomatic histories, does not reach out beyond the government in Japan to look at the nation's political economy in any depth or to address the interesting question, suggested by some analysts, that major Japanese industrialists and financial interests by mid-1945 were defecting from support for the war. A basic problem in diplomatic history, its critics sometimes contend, is that it can be rather narrow by not broadening the analysis to include important aspects of political economy and social history

Unlike the earlier scholarship, Hasegawa, in pursuing the use of Japanese materials in depth, offers important new information on why and how the Japanese government on August 10th, in its conditional-surrender offer, specified the requirement of Allied acceptance of maintaining the emperor's prerogatives. That demand, reaching beyond the terms of a constitutional or ceremonial monarchy, had been inserted by Baron Kiichiro Hiranuma, who had a particular interpretation of kokutai (the Japanese polity). Hiranuma's addition, going beyond the loose consensus among Japanese leaders on the 10th, added a significant demand, one that the US was certainly unlikely to grant.

Unlike the United States Strategic Bombing Survey's mid-1946 reports, and contrary to one remarkably under-researched, rather peculiar study by an American political scientist (Robert Pape) who made some excessive claims for the impact of the sea-air blockade, Hasegawa seems to conclude that Japan was unlikely to surrender in summer 1945 simply because of the impact of that strangling blockade and the fire-bombing of cities. Because of Hasegawa's phrasing, it is less clear whether, under such continuing and possibly somewhat escalating conditions, he was

also barring a pre-November surrender or only contending there would not have been an August 1945 surrender.

Hasegawa is generally in line with much of the western scholarship that laments that Stalin, in dealing with Japanese “peace-bid” suggestions, cynically dragged out the negotiations, helping to prolong the war for Soviet purposes. But Hasegawa is at odds with many who contend that the Japanese military were not truly shocked by Soviet entry into the war on August 8. It is significantly because Hasegawa stresses the role of that shock that he usually contends that Soviet entry, rather than the bomb, was more substantial in producing Japan's mid-August surrender.

Racing is a book that significantly modifies and ultimately eclipses Robert Butow's very impressive, long-admired *Japan's Decision to Surrender*, which dominated the international literature into the late 1980s, and the American scholarship into the early 1990s, on the issues of Japanese policy and detailed decision-making in 1945. *Racing* also sharply challenges Richard Frank's thoughtful, pro-atomic-bombing study, *Downfall*, on Japanese policy. Whereas Frank, not knowing Japanese, relied upon translated sources and necessarily restricted his purview, Hasegawa, born and raised in Japan, can probe more deeply and range far more widely. Hasegawa also challenges Sadao Asada's important essay in the *Pacific Historical Review* (1998) on the end of the war, and indirectly rejects Yukkiko Koshiro's possibly beguiling but unpersuasive 2004 interpretation, in the *AHR*, on Japanese policy: that Japanese leaders were prolonging the war in 1945 because they wanted Soviet entry in order that the Soviet presence in postwar Asia could constitute a useful counterweight to America in Asia.

In examining the surrender of Japanese forces beyond the four main islands, Hasegawa, like most earlier interpreters, does not seek in depth to explain how and why Japanese military leaders on the Asian mainland complied with the dictates of the central government. That large question of compliance remains little understood, and requires looking in detail at the regional armies, their leaders, and possibly the military situation in particular regions.

Because the published English-language literature on Soviet policy involving Japan and the end of the war is rather skimpy, it is less the case that Hasegawa displaces the earlier established literature and, mostly, that he lays out an arresting analysis that warrants close consideration. His efforts—especially on the dating of Stalin's decision on when to start the August 1945 Soviet invasion of Manchuria—have been subjected to a counter-analysis, by my Stanford colleague, the distinguished historian/political scientist David Holloway in a still-unpublished paper and in brief summary in this roundtable discussion. More basically, Holloway's general approach implicitly raises a fundamental methodological and conceptual question—without sharply defining it in such terms—about whether Stalin's policy can be adequately understood by beginning the study of policy basically in 1945, as Hasegawa generally does, and by not integrating Stalin's concerns about Germany with his concerns about Japan, and his concerns about Europe with his concerns about Asia.

To understand Stalin by beginning mostly in 1945 (with only a brief backdrop to earlier war years), and by focusing on Japan and Asia, Hasegawa unwisely has restricted his international history in both time and region. By not emphasizing and studying more fully how and why

Japan, for Stalin, loomed large during the war as a crucial issue in geopolitical power in postwar Asia, as Germany did for the Soviet leader in Europe, is to narrow the interpretation of Stalin.

While Hasegawa wisely avoids the trap of much Cold War orthodoxy and does not view Stalin as an ideologue dominated by communist ideology, Hasegawa fails to deeply examine as early as 1941 the importance for Stalin of postwar Japan. Significant concern about postwar Japan did not require being a communist, or a capitalist, but really only a shrewd leader with a sense of history and with an understanding of the role of industrial power in the international world. Such a leader might well worry about who would control Japan and on what terms in the postwar period. The task for the historian, in reaching beyond Stalin's concern with the Kurils, southern Sakhalin, Port Arthur, and Dairen, and regaining what had been lost by Russia to Japan in 1905, is to make sense of the Soviet leader's larger world view. In turn, that requires looking closely at divisions among his advisers in their wartime thinking about postwar Japan, Stalin's possibly changing views of tactics in 1945 in handling the Japan problem, and precisely how in World War II he placed the Japan question in the context of shifting wartime and future postwar Soviet-American relations.

Reaching beyond the earlier published work of David Glantz, which mostly focused on military issues, Hasegawa carefully examines the politics and the salient military details of the Japanese-Soviet war from mid-August and into early September. Analysts often forget that the war continued in Manchuria for at least a few days, and in the Kurils for a few weeks, after the formal Japanese announcement on August 15 (August 14, in the US) of surrender.

Building somewhat on David Holloway's important earlier work, Hasegawa briefly—probably too briefly—investigates Stalin's hopes and plans of invading and occupying Hokkaido in later August and Truman's stern words that Stalin should not. What remains to be deeply explored—though Holloway has thoughtfully dealt with some of this in an unpublished essay—is what Stalin's backdown on entering Hokkaido, as well as his decision not to occupy all of Korea, which would have been militarily possible, means about Stalin's hopes in August/September 1945 of avoiding conflict with the United States. Was not Stalin, despite the shock of Hiroshima, seeking a *modus vivendi*, albeit an uneasy one, with the US? If so, should that quest be seen as limited to Asia? Or does it suggest a useful way of interpreting what may be viewed as a similar Soviet pattern of some Soviet flexibility in Europe, even extending to Soviet policy in the Hungarian and Bulgarian elections?

III-The Problems of the Potsdam Proclamation, the "Magic" Messages, and American Policy

There are various segments of *Racing*, perhaps partly because of its unduly coercive interpretive framework, where criticism seems warranted. Two important, troubling parts are (1) Hasegawa's analysis of the origins and intended function of the Potsdam Proclamation, and (2) his related analysis of the "Magic" messages of mid-1945 before the Hiroshima bombing of August 6 (Japanese time).

Consider, first, Hasegawa's unduly cynical argument about Truman's use of the Potsdam Proclamation (issued on July 26) and the removal, after its early drafts, of the possibly crucial provision allowing a Japanese constitutional monarchy. Often wishing and thus frequently

concluding that such a provision might have produced a pre-Hiroshima surrender and obviated use of the A-bomb, some earlier historians have tried to explain why this provision was deleted. The issue of why the constitutional-monarchy statement was removed has produced an interesting dialogue over time among historians, usually focusing on three different interpretations and sometimes combining two of them in a useful mix.

Hasegawa believes that the final Proclamation was ultimately devised to be unacceptable, that it was expected to be unacceptable, and that it was conceived and used by Truman primarily to justify the forthcoming use of the atomic bomb: to legitimize the atomic bombing. But if Truman, as Hasegawa argues, was ardently seeking to end the war before Soviet entry, it was unwise of the president to forego the possible opportunity—by modifying unconditional surrender, and offering the prospect of a constitutional monarchy—of trying to achieve a surrender before, and thus without, any Soviet intervention in the war.

Most analysts have focused on Secretary of State James F. Byrnes as the key person on this matter of removing the constitutional-monarchy provision. One interpretation has been that Byrnes, and thus also Truman, feared that such a concession, especially if it did not work, could be a political disaster in America, where anti-Hirohito emotions were widespread. In that interpretation, the efforts of Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson, Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal, and Under Secretary of State Joseph Grew lost out because of administration fears at the highest level about the likely political backlash at home. Put simply, domestic politics—the fear of a backlash—triumphed for Truman under Byrnes's tutelage.

Some (including myself) have linked that domestic-politics interpretation to the fear—suggested by some in Washington at the time—that such a concession of a constitutional monarchy might embolden the Japanese to stiffen their resolve, thus producing the hope in the Tokyo government that American concessions indicated the likelihood of greater forthcoming concessions and thereby encouraging the Japanese to fight on in the interim. Put simply, American concessions could backfire—badly.

A third interpretation—usually often focusing on Byrnes—has maintained or implied that the US did not want to risk ending the war before it could use the A-bomb, because such nuclear use had ulterior motives: intimidating the Soviet Union. That third interpretation—often associated with Alperovitz, despite his demurrer—could be loosely linked, possibly with some strains, with the domestic-politics interpretation.

Hasegawa has uneasily woven together parts of the first interpretation (domestic politics) with a heavy strand of the third (want to use the bomb), and added, without strong evidence, another: Truman insisted upon unconditional surrender because he wanted revenge for Pearl Harbor. Hasegawa is undoubtedly correct that Truman did have strong feelings on the crucial matter of terms for Japan, but Hasegawa's arguing the "revenge" motive in this context seems dubious.

Hasegawa moves boldly, but unconvincingly, to contend that the Potsdam Proclamation was conceived by Truman to justify use of the bomb. The powerful liability of that provocative argument is that it seems to depend upon strained inferences and misses some of the subtleties of bureaucratic/organizational politics in the US government—namely, that the Proclamation had

been in the works for some time—and that there was no reason for Truman to avoid issuing the Proclamation. It did stipulate generally what Truman wanted to state publicly to Japan and the world. There was a small chance that the Proclamation would succeed in ending the war, there were substantial expectations that it would not, but there was no anticipated cost to issuing the Proclamation. To repeat: It expressed the terms that Truman wanted to offer and to emphasize.

There is no evidence that Truman felt, before Hiroshima, that he had to justify the use of the atomic bomb on Japan. Nor did he feel that he had to justify the fire-bombing or the blockade.

In addition, Hasegawa's evidence on Truman's belief that the Potsdam Proclamation would definitely fail is rather flimsy. The source for Hasegawa's judgment is a single, brief comment—a sentence and a half—in Truman's Potsdam diary on July 25, the day before the Proclamation was released: “[W]e will issue a warning statement asking the Japs to surrender and save lives. I'm sure they will not do that, but we will have given them the chance.” It is possible, and not unreasonable, to view this statement substantially as an expression by Truman of regret and rue—the war will continue, Japan will not surrender.

At Potsdam, Assistant Secretary of War John J. McCloy, in his diary, indicated that he thought that the Proclamation might well produce Japan's surrender. “I would not be surprised to see their surrender very quickly,” he wrote in his diary. He added, interestingly, “Maybe the Secretary's big bomb may not be dropped—the Japs better hurry if they are to avoid it.”

Hasegawa loosely links his Potsdam Proclamation analysis in *Racing* to his lament—that many share—that Truman did not delay the use of the bomb, and that the president did not dwell on the evidence in the “Magic” intercepts of the softening of the Japanese position on surrender.

Such a lament is understandable—and I partly share it. But Hasegawa overstates the evidence for optimism in the “Magic” intercepts. It is significant that the divided Japanese government, before the Hiroshima bombing, could never give its beleaguered ambassador in Moscow, Naotake Sato, concrete terms for surrender. There were no reasonable concrete terms. Because of the sharp divisions within the Japanese government in Tokyo, Foreign Minister Shigenori Togo even had to be careful in his messages to Sato not to offend Japanese military leaders, lest he overreach in seeking to move toward surrender. The frequent results, in Togo's messages, were the stuff of evasion and equivocation. Reading those messages underscores the divisions in Japan's government, and that government's distance from offering reasonable terms.

This is not the place to work through all the July and early August Japanese messages in depth and in great detail. Suffice it to say that the basic problem, likely to be clear to top-level Americans who read the “Magic” materials, was that Japan did not state that it was very close to surrender on terms that approached American demands, even if the emperor issue had been waived. Stimson, Forrestal, and Grew had hopes, but they were not sure, only hopeful, that softer US terms (allowing a constitutional monarchy) might produce a surrender.

Reaching beyond Hasegawa's analysis, and delving into the background of Under Secretary of State Grew, Secretary of War Stimson, and Secretary of the Navy Forrestal in particular, might help make clear why they could apparently find in the “Magic” intercepts grounds for some

guarded optimism and a willingness to gamble on offering Japan softer terms of a constitutional monarchy. As men somewhat removed from electoral politics, they were willing to have the Truman administration take a risk in the framework of a domestic American politics, where anti-Hirohito sentiment was strong.

It is significant that Grew and Forrestal, as well as Stimson—with the minor exception of Stimson's one unsuccessful run for governor nearly a third of a century earlier—had no deep experience in American electoral politics. They were, by experience and inclination, a part of what was emerging in WWII as a national-security elite, which sought to override popular concerns, avoid political partisanship, and contend that experts could discern and should act on the national interest.

By background and temperament, Byrnes, who had spent most of his public life in electoral politics, was more inclined to worry about popular sensibilities and also partisan politics. Deeply rooted in electoral-politics for more than two decades, Truman, with little earlier experience in foreign policy and national-security decisions, was also very sensitive to domestic politics and popular concerns.

As late as early August 1945, shortly before the Hiroshima bombing, the "Magic" intercepts, if read critically and not optimistically, did not provide good evidence that Japan was very close to surrender on reasonable terms. The issue blocking Japan's surrender was not simply allowing a constitutional monarchy. The problems were much greater: The "Big Six" in the Japanese government was badly divided on major issues; those leaders could not agree even among themselves on terms.

That is clear in the "Magic" and "Ultra" intercepts. On various occasions, Ambassador Sato, after trying to approach the Soviets on the possibility of some kind of negotiations involving the Soviets serving as peace intermediaries, had been directed by the Soviets to provide concrete terms before the Soviets would move toward negotiations. That was partly a way of the Soviets delaying matters, knowing, undoubtedly, that no reasonable concrete terms would soon be forthcoming from Japan. The "Magic" intercepts underscore this.

Consider the evidence from early August 1945. On August 2, Magic report #1225, for example, provided to US officials a copy of the decrypted, translated cable of that date by Foreign Minister Togo to Ambassador Sato on the question of peace terms. Here is a key segment of Togo's words to Sato: "[I]t should not be difficult for you to realize that, although with the urgency of the war situation our time to proceed with arrangements for ending the war before the enemy lands on the Japanese mainland is limited, on the other hand it is difficult to decide on concrete peace conditions here at home all at once." After briefly mentioning that the Japanese government still hoped that Prince Fumimaro Konoe would be accepted by the Soviets as the chief Japanese negotiator, Togo went on to discuss the difficulty of defining terms and the effort in Tokyo to do so: "[W]e are exerting ourselves to collect the views of all quarters on the matter of concrete terms." Togo added, in parentheses: "Under the circumstances there is a disposition to make the Potsdam three Power Proclamation the basis of our study concerning terms."

For a few weeks, top government officials in Tokyo knew that the Soviets were demanding something concrete before they would open negotiations with Japan. Read in that context, Togo's message was a combination of obvious bureaucratic evasion, an implicit confession of near-despair, and the expression of faint glimmers that something could be worked out. He offered no schedule, no useful particulars. Mostly, he was saying: I'm trying, there are severe problems, perhaps something can be worked out, there are no useful particulars yet available, but please try again with the Soviets. That was not a message inspiring reasonable hope in Sato or in US leaders.

Only American leaders inclined to optimism, wishing not to step up the use of violence against Japan, and not wanting to use the A-bomb on Japan, would have found in this message, which was in line with earlier cables from Togo to Sato, evidence that there would soon be "concrete terms" likely to be acceptable to the US. To historians, knowing that the A-bomb attack was otherwise imminent, there is often an understandable tendency to be unduly optimistic in interpreting this Togo-Sato cable traffic.

Such optimism can be partly punctured by Sato's own message of the 3rd. Reported in "Magic" #1228, Sato's statement was a cable pleading for Tokyo's speedy action, and advising strongly against further delay. That message of the 3rd, though in content somewhat like Sato's earlier cables, was probably not available to high American leaders until the 5th, when the *Enola Gay* was already taking off or in its deadly flight to Hiroshima. Nothing in Sato's rather despairing and often hortatory cable to Togo, if examined closely and carefully by Truman or Byrnes before the *Enola Gay*'s attack, would have been likely to produce optimism and to evoke a belief that Japan was on the verge of surrendering on reasonable terms.

Even Stimson, who sometimes hoped for the best, did not explicitly seize upon the "Magic" traffic as evidence of a very likely Japanese surrender if the constitutional- emperor provision was offered to Japan. Stimson had some hopes, not expectations. Had there been better evidence available in "Magic" and "Ultra," Stimson had the highly intelligent staff, including former *Harvard Law Review* editors, to produce a near-brief that he might have employed to press Truman. But "Magic" and "Ultra" required too much optimism for the evidence in them to seem compelling.

Contrary to some interpreters, there is no evidence that Stimson was seeking to avoid the use of the A-bomb. By various means, both diplomatic and military, he was seeking to obtain Japan's surrender and to avoid the invasion. A guarantee of a constitutional monarchy was not conceived by him—had such a provision been in the Potsdam Proclamation—to obviate use of the bomb. For Stimson, softer peace terms and the atomic bombing, operating in the context of the sea-air blockade and the conventional bombing of Japanese cities, might produce a surrender before November. In prospect, for him, that was—might, not would.

Coercing the reformulation and the issuance of the Potsdam Proclamation and the interpretation of the material in the "Magic" intercepts into Hasegawa's "racing" framework, as he sometimes does, leaves too many jagged pieces, too much that warrants more subtle interpretation. It's as if there was a strained effort, amid the considerable evidence not available to the marvelously intelligent and often shrewd Blackett in 1948/49, to redeem most of his interpretive framework.

Unfortunately, much of Blackett's framework—based on his naively trusting use of the United States Strategic Bombing Survey reports of mid-1946—cannot be sustained.

IV-Hasegawa's "Racing" Framework: Starting in 1945 and the Constructing/Distorting Effects in Understanding the A-bomb "Decision"

Because most of Hasegawa's analysis really begins in 1945, there is a serious problem in his not examining in depth earlier policy, not assessing the pre-1945 decisions and implications, and not looking at events in a broader prism than the "racing" framework. In addition, his "racing" framework is designed to interpret Soviet and US policy in Asia in 1945 as in fundamental conflict in a particular way: (1) Stalin wanting to prolong the war until he can enter it, and gain the spoils promised at Yalta, and then panicking before Hiroshima to move up the schedule for Soviet entry into the war, lest Japan otherwise first surrender and the Soviets lose out on gaining what FDR at Yalta had promised Stalin as a *quid pro quo* for Soviet entry into the war. (2) Truman, by Potsdam, when he learned of the successful A-bomb test at Alamogordo, seeking energetically to end the war before Soviet entry and "racing" to do so. Thus, according to Hasegawa, the American use of the atomic bomb—somewhat as for Blackett in 1948/49—was significantly conceived to force Japan's surrender before the Japanese could enter the war.

In important ways, Hasegawa, while often not seeming to recognize the full historiographical implications of his argument, ends up in an interpretive camp very similar to Blackett. Yet, unlike Blackett, as well as Alperovitz, Hasegawa's book—without adequate explanation—does not view the American A-bomb policy as contributing to the Cold War. That is a strange—and highly questionable—conclusion. The bomb's use, and the secrecy of the US project, certainly added significantly to Soviet mistrust, further tearing at the frail bonds of the uneasy Soviet-American wartime partnership.

That Soviet-American part of the wartime Grand Alliance, like the Anglo-Soviet part, had never been comfortable. Each segment involving the Soviets was marked by significant mistrust. The Soviet-American wartime partnership was conceived in exigency—the commonalty of Germany as an enemy and threat—not in deep desire or true friendship. The issues of Eastern Europe, of the treatment of Germany, and of power relations in Europe, as well as elsewhere in the world, bedeviled the uneasy wartime alliance. The A-bomb issues, dramatized by the Hiroshima bombing, added to those substantial problems.

In general, American A-bomb policy before about April-May 1945 is unfortunately slighted in *Racing*. Hasegawa never discusses the earlier systematic American, and the systematic joint American-British efforts, to keep the Soviets from any useful knowledge of the existence of the A-bomb project and from the scientific/industrial secrets of how to make the A-bomb. That secrecy policy did not begin with Truman nor in 1945, but much earlier. Thus, from early in this top-secret weapons project, there was an assumption that the A-bomb, when developed, would offer the prospects of gaining leverage on the Soviet Union. That was a conception under FDR, and well antedated Truman's presidency. It was a conception that Truman inherited, that Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson came to nurture, that James F. Byrnes embraced, and that fit Truman's own inclinations.

That conception did not require combat use of the A-bomb on the enemy, but it certainly nicely dovetailed with combat use. Had Germany dragged out its war effort a few months longer and not surrendered in May 1945 (as occurred), or had the bomb been ready some months earlier (as it was not), it seems highly likely that the weapon would have been used on Germany. An interesting and important question, but one seldom phrased—let alone, addressed—in the literature is whether the nuclear-weapons targeting, as in the case of Japan, would have been, basically, on German cities and massively German noncombatants if Germany had been the A-bomb target.

What Hasegawa significantly misses, by basically starting his A-bomb analysis and his A-bomb archival research in spring 1945 under Truman, is that an implicit American decision—really a dominant assumption—had long existed: that the bomb would be used against a hated enemy. There is no substantial evidence, despite some spotty documents, that Roosevelt, had he lived, would have chosen to abstain from using the bomb on Germany, or on Japan. After all, the bomb project had originally been conceived under FDR in what was believed, erroneously, to be a desperate race with Germany, and therefore use against Germany under FDR was highly likely if the bomb was ready and Germany was still strongly at war. And in early March 1945, under FDR, the dramatic firebombing of Japan—with the massive killings in Tokyo—helped prepare the way for use of the A-bomb on Japan. Neither FDR before his death, nor Truman in April and beyond, or their top advisers, objected—or even raised basic questions—as the new country (Japan) was being targeted. Starting much earlier than March, and certainly visible in late 1944, the targeting had already shifted to Japan from Germany.

Such powerful assumptions about A-bomb use, and the presence of partial precedents in conventional bombing for such use, prepared the way for Truman, with the approval of his top associates—notably Secretary of War Stimson and Secretary of State Byrnes—to employ the bomb on Japan. The reason that careful historians cannot find records of a top-level A-bomb “decision” is not because there was a fear by US policymakers and advisers of keeping records or mentioning the bomb (quite a few diaries of the time mention it, usually in now-easy-to-decipher code), but, rather, because there was no need for an actual “decision” meeting. Such a meeting would have been required if there had been a serious question about whether or not to use the bomb on Japan. No one at or near the top in the US government raised such a question; no one at the top objected before Hiroshima and Nagasaki to use of the weapon on the enemy.

The one partial exception in the US government, Under Secretary of the Navy Ralph Bard, was not really close to the top of decision-making and influence. Bard's partial dissent—which is sometimes uncritically used by historians—has to be understood as the doubts presented by a man not at or near the top. Contrary to some unsubstantiated claims, and at complete odds with Bard's own statements, he never saw or sought to see Truman on the A-bomb/Japan surrender issues. Contrary to some fanciful postwar writings by others, Bard certainly never argued in the oval office against use of the bomb on Japan.

Admirable as was their moral/political concerns, the various dissenting scientists—James Franck, Leo Szilard, Eugene Rabinowitch, and some others, mostly in Chicago—were far outside the orbit of Washington power and policy. Perhaps lamentably, they had no influence on the use of the bomb on Japan. It is highly unlikely, if their dissenting report or dissenting

petitions had reached Truman, that such pleadings by these scientists could have reversed the course of powerful assumptions: to use the bomb on Japan

Both in the Manhattan Project, and occasionally in the high-level Interim Committee, there were various official meetings on how (not whether) to use the bomb. Some of those meetings, often at levels far below Truman, focused on important matters involving in detail how to use of the bomb: the height of the detonation, the cities on the target list, the weather conditions for use, the need for a visual drop, the risk to the bomber and crew, etc.

The basic decision on using the bomb flowed from overwhelming, long-held assumptions. To Truman and others, the bomb promised to help end the war earlier than otherwise, presumably to save some American and other Allied lives, possibly to force a surrender before the dreaded November invasion, and, as a potential bonus, conceivably to intimidate the Soviets in future dealings. If one concludes, analytically, that Truman's A-bomb "decision" was basically the implementation of long-run assumptions that jibed with his own inclinations, then there is no great difficulty in explaining why he used the bomb.

To explain, of course, is not tantamount to justifying. Historians must make the effort to understand the moral-political context in 1945 for American policymakers by acknowledging their values and beliefs in 1945. But that sustained effort at interpretation does not mean approving of the use of the bomb or refusing to make moral judgments—about the atomic bombing, and about the lack of a serious quest for likely alternatives.

To Truman, in prospect, the use of the bomb on Japan promised benefits, not liabilities. Abstaining from using it on Japan would have made no moral or political sense for him. Such abstention could have been politically and personally costly: In his view, not using the bomb might well prolong the war, cost US and other Allied lives, probably fail to justify the massive secret project and its great expenditures, and undoubtedly expose him, as he could predict, to outrage at home for missing an opportunity to help end the war earlier.

In much of this, he was not unusual. What likely US president in 1945 would have chosen not to use the bomb, to struggle to find alternatives, and to worry deeply about prospective use? Not former Vice-President Henry Wallace, had he instead been president. Certainly, not James F. Byrnes, had he been president. Not the Republicans Thomas Dewey or Robert Taft, had either been president. To make this point more emphatically, and reaching selectively to some top Manhattan Project scientists, not J. Robert Oppenheimer, despite his somewhat ambiguous postwar comments from time to time about the use of the bomb and the physicists knowing sin.

How could any American president in 1945, in conducting the war against the hated Japanese, explain to the American people, the Congress, and ultimately himself, the taking of considerable risks by not using the bomb, and thus presumably caring about saving Japanese lives? To Americans—whether the president, rank-and-file citizens, soldiers and sailors, and even school children—not all lives were equal. In the United States in 1945, as for virtually all modern nations at war, the citizenry was concerned most about the welfare of their own people and seldom, if ever, about the enemy. In 1945, as earlier in the war, American lives, by near

unanimity in the United States, were most valuable. In that moral/political framework, enemy lives—soldiers and sailors, and normally enemy noncombatants—were not important.

For many rank-and-file Americans, there was actually great enthusiasm for killing the Japanese, known even in newspaper headlines, in unflinching racist parlance, as the “Japs.” Killing them was generally deemed desirable. To most rank-and-file Americans, unlike some American leaders, killing Japanese noncombatants was even attractive—an aim to be sought, not to be avoided.

After Pearl Harbor, after the various reported Japanese atrocities in the Pacific war, and after the terrible American costs in casualties at Iwo Jima and Okinawa, a presidential decision not to use the bomb on Japan would have seemed, by reasonable standards at the time, very risky, if not morally and politically bizarre. None of this should deny that Truman himself, as he indicated in some post-Hiroshima comments (see the headnote), might have further welcomed use of the bomb in order to punish the Japanese for Pearl Harbor and for various atrocities. But such sentiments of punishment and revenge were not the key motives for use. They reinforced, and thus over determined, what was already determined. Those revenge/punishment sentiments did not constitute the core of the decision, but may have helped to make the decision easier.

If the A-bomb decision is understood in this complex analytical and historical context, there is no need to seek, as does Hasegawa, the hidden ulterior motives—a *Racing* quest against Stalin—primarily to explain Truman's actions. Using the bomb as quickly as possible, in a visual drop and in decent weather, made ultimately good sense. For Truman, Byrnes, Stimson, and others, why delay?

Hasegawa's framework of “racing” as the way of understanding Truman and the use of the bomb has various analytical liabilities. That framework fundamentally misunderstands the A-bomb “decision.” The “racing” framework assumes that new reasons had to intervene to push Truman to use the bomb, fails to appreciate the power of inherited assumptions, and does not recognize that speedy use fit all the expectations. If there had not been a commitment to speedy use, there would be good reason for historians to puzzle about the reasons for a delay.

If speedy use of the bomb on Japan minimized the Soviet role in the war, that would undoubtedly have been a benefit to the administration. As Secretary Byrnes made clear to Forrestal and to Byrnes's assistant, Walter Brown, Byrnes was clearly very eager, if possible in reasonable or nearly reasonable ways, to end the war without Soviet entry into the war. For Truman, a Japanese surrender without Soviet entry would have been attractive. But there is no reason to conclude that, even after the dramatically successful Alamogordo test of July 16th, Truman based policy upon such an expectation of excluding the Soviets. That was neither expectation nor policy, because such exclusion—before the actual Japanese surrender—was too risky. The bomb was not a guaranteed substitute for Soviet entry. Both could be useful.

What if the war had continued, and the Soviets did not enter it. For the US, an important opportunity would have been lost to add significantly to the Japanese burdens, in their beleaguered empire, by forcing Japan to fight on an additional front: against the Soviet Union in Manchuria, on the mainland. The Soviet attack, and the war on the mainland in Manchuria

against the Kwantung army, would help further weaken Japan, add to the terrible burdens on that nation's forces and polity, and perhaps help produce a pre-November Japanese surrender, thereby obviating the November invasion.

Truman had not acted to block or impede Soviet entry, and there was good reason—as he lived history forward in late July and early August—for him to view that entry as militarily desirable, despite the likely political costs of expanded Soviet power in Asia. In view of Stimson's counsel, in summarizing General George C. Marshall's analysis at Potsdam, it is not even clear that Truman believed that he could do much, if anything, to stop or speed up Soviet entry into the war.

Until the Japanese actually offered on August 10th to capitulate with a single-condition surrender, there was the very real likelihood that the war might drag on for some time. In such a context, for Truman, who was eager to avoid placing American troops in significant numbers on the Asian continent to fight in the war, Soviet entry would be valuable: to deal with the massive Japanese armies in Manchuria and elsewhere on the continent. He and other American leaders at the top—contrary to the later interpretations by some historians—undoubtedly underestimated the likely “shock” value, as opposed to the military value, of such Soviet entry on the Japanese leaders.

That “shock” value was considerable. To neglect it is a mistake in analysis. Whether or not Soviet entry was greater in its effect on the Japanese government—and on whom in that government, and when—will remain vigorously disputed by historians.

V-Expectations About the Bomb: Was It Viewed by Truman and Others as Likely to End the War Speedily and Before Soviet Entry?

Unwisely, Hasegawa assumes—incorrectly, and in the face of substantial, indirect, contrary evidence—that Truman was “*Racing*” to use the bomb to end the Japanese war before the Soviets could enter it and gain spoils. That argument assumes that Truman believed the bomb would be a decisive weapon speedily ending the war, before mid-August and before Soviet entry. But there is no good evidence that Truman believed that the bomb would speedily end the war, and indirect evidence to the contrary.

Indeed, Truman's not taking certain actions involving American domestic economic policy strongly indicated that he believed that the bomb would not be speedily decisive in ending the war. Moreover, there is added evidence on this matter of expectations: The top people near him, as well as some who were more distant but who knew about the atomic bomb, did not expect that the bomb's use on Japan would quickly end the war. Rather, like him, they seemed to hope, not expect, that using the bomb might soon (that did not mean within a few days or even a week or two of use) help end the war. Put sharply, the bomb, in prospect, was not viewed as a decisive weapon, but rather as an additional, and very powerful, useful weapon.

In their conceptions, the atomic bomb would be a powerful supplement to the strangling sea-air blockade and the deadly fire-bombing of Japanese cities. The economic strangulation of Japan, the massive killing of enemy noncombatants, and the destruction of Japanese industry were all

part of the US war strategy to seek to force surrender and, ideally, to obviate the November invasion. But the American planning did not generally anticipate such a pre-November success of Japanese surrender, though Admiral Ernest J. King, chief of naval operations, and Maj. General Curtis LeMay, who commanded the B-29s in the Pacific, may each have thought that the conventional warfare—with King emphasizing the navy, and LeMay the air force—could force a pre-November surrender.

Despite the efforts by the US Strategic Bombing Survey in summer 1945 to refine the targeting for conventional bombing, to shift the air force from generally hitting cities, and to concentrate the bombing on transportation and a few key industries, much of the American war strategy in dealing with Japan in the summer was both blunt and brutal. Fitting into that framework, the A-bomb, because of its likely “shock” value, and also because of its substantial addition to the mass killing and mass destruction, would add to the significant burden on Japan. That was part of the larger American military strategy.

Discussing the relevant archival evidence on American expectations—that the A-bomb in prospect was not viewed as decisive—is important. That evidence involves looking at what Truman and those around him thought, and at what they did or did not do. Necessarily, much of the evidence, in dealing with Truman, is indirect and requires inferences, because his comments were few and because one main source (his diary, kept on scraps of paper at the time) should normally not be taken literally.

Over the years, there has sometimes been an inclination—mistaken, in my view—to take literally some of Truman's statements in his so-called Potsdam diary in mid-July about the likely impact of the bomb on Japanese surrender in August. The basic analytical and evidential problem, if one takes those optimistic diary comments literally, is that they do not jibe with what Truman actually did. Thus, there is a fundamental problem in how to interpret sources.

The best test of what Truman thought and believed, if one uses reasonable standards for analysis, is not to rely upon some scattered, rather hyperbolic words by Truman in a handwritten diary, but on what he actually did. If his actions on related matters were congruent with his diary words, then trust those words. But, if as is the case, his words ran contrary to his actual actions on important matters, then base the analysis upon his actions—not his words—as the reliable indication of Truman's actual beliefs and expectations.

There is no persuasive evidence, rooted in his actions, that he expected that the atomic bombing would end the war before mid-August 1945. That was the date that Stalin, at Potsdam had told Truman the Soviets would enter the war on the Asian mainland. Thus, by *Racing's* analysis, Truman believed that using the A-bomb would end the war before mid-August.

The evidence does not support *Racing*. Had Truman at Potsdam expected that one or even two atomic bombings would end the war speedily, and in view of the schedule of available weapons, he would have cabled from Germany his top demobilization, reconversion, and economic chiefs in Washington to get ready quickly for an imminent peace. He would have directed them to prepare promptly to formulate and promulgate the necessary regulations for demobilization and reconversion. He did not take that action—and that non-action is very meaningful.

Not to be prepared for demobilization and reconversion was to risk a terrible economic/political mess at home—strikes, unemployment, inflation, and possibly depression. The terrible fear was, by many analyses, a return to the conditions of the Great Depression. The *Magazine of Wall Street*, claiming to be optimistic, had forecast that peace would mean “only” about 9 million soon unemployed. That was over 17 percent—a horrendous number. Many analysts, stressing the importance of speedy, effective demobilization and reconversion, worried about even higher unemployment.

Truman's strength as the nation's new chief executive in 1945 was his experience in domestic policy, not in foreign policy. It did not require an unusually savvy US politician to know that federal plans had to be quickly and carefully formulated to deal at home with a speedy peace, if a speedy peace was expected. The fact that Truman never sent such a cable from Potsdam to Washington—nor is there any evidence of worries by James F. Byrnes, who was experienced in economic mobilization—clearly indicates that neither man expected the war to end quickly. It would be peculiar, if not bizarre, to contend or assume that these two men did not easily understand the relationship between a quick peace in the Asian war and the needs of demobilization and reconversion in the US.

Nor, before Hiroshima and Nagasaki, did anyone at or near the top in Washington—if we use only contemporaneous sources, not later memory or memoirs—have different expectations: that the war was quickly about to end. Take for example, Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal, who knew about the bomb and had seen many of the “Magic” (and probably “Ultra”) intercepts indicating Japan's plight and policy. As late as August 8, three days after the Hiroshima bombing (August 5 in Washington), Forrestal, still expecting the November invasion of Japan, took the risk of offending Truman by giving him politically undesired advice: In effect, don't let General Douglas MacArthur run the invasion; instead, choose a navy man or even General Dwight D. Eisenhower or General George C. Marshall to head the final operations against Japan. Had Forrestal believed on the 8th that the war would soon end, and thus that there would definitely not be a November invasion, he would not have pleaded this touchy case and risked annoying Truman. Forrestal expended scarce political capital by presenting his unwelcome advice, because he very much thought there would be an invasion of Japan.

There is more evidence on the subject of expectations at that time about the atomic bombing's likely influence on the war. On August 2, Under Secretary of War Robert Patterson, who knew both about the A-bomb project and that there was a plan for imminent use of the weapon on Japan, queried one of Secretary of War Stimson's top A-bomb aides, George Harrison, about whether the War Department should therefore cut back and cancel production contracts for “the war against Japan.” In effect, Patterson, a former Court of Appeals judge who had long known Harrison, another prominent Harvard Law School graduate, was asking: Will the Japanese war quickly be ending? Is the A-bomb going to produce the desired surrender very soon? If so, shouldn't we act quickly, and prepare now? Tell me what to do.

These were two men who generally trusted one another, and they were both loyal to Stimson. They did not want to go wrong, and Patterson realized that Harrison, as one of Stimson's key A-

bomb aides, was the right man to ask about the political impact of the bomb on Japan. Unsure about the future, Patterson had turned to an expert in the War Department.

Harrison's answer and the date of his reply to Patterson are meaningful. He did not respond on the 2nd or 3rd, or the 4th, shortly before the atomic bombing, and say: The war will soon be over, and terminate the contracts. Rather, he delayed six days—until the 8th. That was three days after the Hiroshima bombing. Then, on August 8th, Harrison replied in very hedged terms. He explained that he could not give an answer on the 2nd, because “it was impossible to anticipate with definiteness what would be the extent of its [the A-bomb's] success. Accordingly, . . . I felt that developments had not then reached a stage which would warrant changes in your [the War Department's] general munitions program.”

But Harrison on the 8th was still remarkably cautious, and markedly elusive. Events were occurring, he stated in a somewhat turgid memorandum to Patterson, that still were not certain. Here is Harrison's hedged statement: When the evidence is complete, resulting from these events, there will be “warrant, at least, [for] a resurvey of your program.” To add to the bureaucratic mushiness, Patterson added another hedge, full of caution: “whether the evidence when complete will justify any change in strategy or production [,] I, of course, do not know.”

Put bluntly, for Harrison, when the Japanese war will end was still unsure on the 8th. It would be soon advisable to “resurvey” the production program. But actually cutting back production, canceling war contracts, and moving quickly toward demobilization and reconversion—all that, on the 8th—was still somewhere in the future, near or distant. It was in the vague future. Harrison would not even hazard a useful guess.

Careful readers of Stimson's diary, of the diary of his Assistant Secretary, John J. McCloy, and of Byrnes's aide, Walter Brown, for these days in very late July and early August will not find any clear indication that these men, or their superiors, expected that the atomic bombing would produce an imminent surrender—one within a few days, or even two weeks. Nor, as a result, was there any evidence in their diaries of surprise, or dismay, right after the Hiroshima bombing that the Japanese government did not speedily, within a day or two or three, change its policy and surrender.

There is more archival evidence from this August period on the matter of expectations. On the 8th, after Truman had returned from Potsdam, a White House staff member cast a directive for the War Production Board chairman, Julius Krug: Weapons production for the war against Japan will continue amid the development of a healthy economy. Truman, rather than revising this key language that assumed continuation of the Japanese war, retained it verbatim in his official paper to WPB chairman Krug on the 9th.

On the 9th, for top US leaders, even after two atomic bombings sandwiched around Soviet entry into the war, the situation was still markedly unclear on what would happen, and when. On the 9th, Under Secretary Patterson, in recommending language for Truman's forthcoming speech to the nation, suggested a phrasing that nicely encompassed the extremes: “an unconditional surrender of Japan within the immediate future or . . . a long, bitter last ditch struggle to abolish Japanese military power.” Such a statement certainly did not indicate firm expectations that the

war would speedily end. Perhaps relying on Harrison's judgment of the 8th, Patterson, somewhat like Harrison, had provided words that carefully avoided any meaningful prediction.

It was as if two physicians, when asked about a very ill patient, had answered: The patient could die very soon, or drag on for time, at great expense. Put bluntly, speedy death or prolonged, costly life. But no prediction about which course of events. Death was predicted, recovery would not occur. The schedule—the crucial issue of the likely date of death—was markedly unclear.

Hasegawa, variously disregarding or minimizing such archival evidence on expectations, is morally offended that Truman allowed the second atomic bombing to occur. How, Hasegawa in effect asks, could Truman do that? Was it not insensitive, and immoral, because, by Hasegawa's analysis, Truman should have known, and therefore did know, that the second atomic bombing was unnecessary.

Many of us who wish that Truman had been more cautious, and reluctant about using another atomic weapon on Japan, can agree with Hasegawa's moral lament. But that is not equivalent to agreeing with Hasegawa that Truman should, and did, know the war was just about over, that Japan would very soon surrender, and that the second A-bombing was therefore unnecessary. There was, unfortunately, no solid reason, in view of the available evidence in Washington, for Truman to reach that set of optimistic conclusions.

It would have been surprising, if not shocking, if the president had reached those optimistic conclusions on August 7th, 8th, or 9th. No one in Washington in the upper reaches of government—the president, Byrnes, Stimson, or Marshall—thought that Japan's surrender was imminent, and that the second A-bomb was unnecessary.

It is unlikely that Truman paid much, if any, attention to the particular timing, or to the selection of the primary and secondary cities targeted, for the second bomb. It was not, as historian Stanley Goldberg argued in an ill-conceived, wrong-headed essay in the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* some years ago—in which he also cited some non-existent documents, and misdated others—that General Leslie Groves, commanding general of the A-bomb project, had cleverly kept the president ignorant and, implicitly, thus deceived Truman about the forthcoming use of the second bomb. Rather, the dating for the second bomb and the choice of the particular city to be targeted for that weapon were matters to be handled within the framework of the official order of July 25 to the air force of using A-bombs “as made ready,” until Japan surrendered.

There would have been no good reason for Truman, or Byrnes, to pay close attention to the details of use. For them, the correct assumption was that A-bombs would be used, the sea-air blockade continued, and the “conventional” fire-bombing maintained, if not escalated, until Japan surrendered. In that military context, with Soviet entry occurring on the 8th, the prospects for gaining a Japanese surrender and avoiding the November invasion were improving. But, aside from some American middle-level, military contingent planning, no one at or near the top in Washington was thinking seriously about an imminent Japanese surrender—one in the next few days.

On August 10th, the unanticipated did occur. When the Japanese offer of a conditional surrender reached Washington that day, no one at the top in Washington had expected any Japanese response—whether a conditional surrender, or an unconditional surrender—at that time. Revealingly, Stimson, presumably believing nothing was going to happen, had actually been about to leave on a vacation on the morning of the 10th when the unexpected Japanese message arrived. The various diaries—of Stimson, Forrestal, Admiral William Leahy, and Walter Brown (he was not at the oval-office session, but summarizing mostly what Byrnes told him)—dealing with the crucial White House meeting on the 10th on how to respond to Japan's offer do not indicate that top American leaders had anticipated, let alone expected, a Japanese surrender offer of any kind on that date or about then.

It is a serious analytical error to ignore, or dismiss, this collective evidence on expectations, to believe that Truman and others viewed the use of the atomic bomb, in anticipation or even immediately after Hiroshima, as decisive. After the war, however, in view of Japan's conditional offer on August 10th and the final surrender on August 14th, there would be some substantial rewriting of history. In that dubious rewriting, the bomb, in prospect, had been viewed as decisive.

For historians, and others who by profession often think critically about the nature of sources, using post-facto sources, when they are likely to be self-serving, is very risky. On A-bomb matters, because of the passions and values involved in the understanding and presentation of pre-Hiroshima and pre-Nagasaki events, there is a great danger of going wrong by uncritically using such post-event materials.

To summarize: In prospect, the bomb was not viewed as decisive. Multiple atomic bombings, US policymakers hoped, might end the war before November, thereby obviating the dreaded invasion. That was a hope, not an expectation.

Understanding that analysis, in the context of summer 1945, is crucial to analyzing why the A-bombs were used. But to repeat: Such understanding does not entail moral approval of the actions, nor should explanation bar the employment of ethical values to assess what happened, why possible alternatives were not ardently pursued, and to inquire, critically, about how the American nation state conducted war against a hated enemy.

To place such matters in a fuller historical and political-ethical context, it is worth asking: In 1945, in a war on a number of continents that probably killed over 40 million humans, would any warring nation, with a monopoly in the atomic bomb, have acted differently in conducting war?

VI-Thinking about the A-bomb

To gain added analytical leverage on the pre-Hiroshima and the pre-Nagasaki conception of the bomb, and its likely political impact on Japan, there is some value in looking at the Manhattan Project members themselves. The available evidence is rather limited, but it is also useful. There is no evidence that anyone on the project—in contemporaneous sources—expected that the atomic bombing would quickly end the war within a few days or even about a week, or so, of use of the weapon on Japan.

The dramatic Trinity test at Alamogordo of the first atomic weapon, on July 16, revealed that a plutonium bomb, if conforming to that test's results, was likely in use against Japan to produce a yield equivalent of about 21,000 to 24,000 tons of TNT. The weapon, clearly, was of a different magnitude from earlier weapons. It would obviously kill more people, and devastate a larger area, than had a single conventional bomb. Whether or not a single A-bomb would be as destructive as a batch of conventional bombs—consider the Tokyo fire-bombing of early March—was not clear.

How large an area would be destroyed in Japan, and how many people would be killed and injured, would obviously depend on more than the A-bomb itself. Planned targeting, effective delivery, and ultimately the actual targeting in dropping it would help make a crucial difference. In prospect, what the bomb's explosion over Japan, and the mass deaths, would mean to Japanese decision makers politically, and emotionally, was certainly unclear. Nobody on the Manhattan Project, among the top scientists and others in the project, believed that a single A-bomb—even in the context of the strangling sea-air blockade and the fire-bombing of cities—would make a speedy difference in producing a Japanese surrender.

Not even General Leslie Groves, commanding general of the top-secret A-bomb project, expected that one or two A-bombs would end the war speedily. Though not knowing much about the Japanese situation, and understandably impressed by the A-bomb test, he was assuming—on July 19th, three days after Alamogordo—that at least two A-bombs, probably three, and maybe four of these nuclear weapons would be necessary “to conform to planned strategic operations.” That is what he told J. Robert Oppenheimer, whose Los Alamos laboratory was producing the weapons.

By the planned production schedule at the time, as Groves and Oppenheimer knew, three A-bombs would have taken the war into at least late August. A fourth bomb, they understood, would have meant early September.

By late July 1945, Groves was reporting to General George C. Marshall, and probably to Secretary Stimson, the details of substantial future nuclear-weapons production, on the apparent assumption that many more A-bombs would probably be needed in the ongoing war before Japan's surrender was achieved: three bombs in August, three or four in September, three or four in October, at least five in November, seven in December, and an “increase decidedly in early 1946.” Whatever Groves's hopes, his expectations for a quick A-bomb-induced surrender seemed modest, if not absent.

The major A-bomb scientists at Los Alamos and those sent to Tinian (the Pacific outpost from which atomic-bomb-laden B-29s would leave for Japan), all of whom knew much about the A-bomb but little about the details of the war or the thinking in the Japanese government, were also assuming that a number of bombs would be necessary and used. Those scientists in Los Alamos, and those who went to Tinian, did not expect that only one or two A-bombs would be used on Japan.

For example, in communicating his expectations, physicist Norman Ramsey, a future Nobel laureate, wrote from Tinian a day or two after the first atomic bombing to Los Alamos director Oppenheimer. Ramsey knew that the second bomb would soon be ready, though he probably did not foresee its use as early as the 9th. In his letter (probably on the 7th), shortly after the Hiroshima bombing, Ramsey assumed that more bombs would be used after the second weapon and that the war would go on for some time. In that letter, Ramsey said that he hoped that Oppenheimer in that extended period, presumably after the second atomic bombing, would come out to Tinian. "Can you visit us sometime?" And Ramsey also said that he hoped he could get back to Los Alamos—"between units [A-bombs] sometime." All that suggested a war stretching at least into September, and perhaps beyond.

Others Manhattan Project physicists on Tinian at the time, as revealed in their correspondence then or in later recollections, had roughly similar expectations. On Tinian at the time, physicists Robert Serber, Philip Morrison, and Luis Alvarez, looking back years later, all said that they had expected that they would be there for some time, that the war would not end with one, two, or three A-bombs.

At Los Alamos, based upon contemporaneous documents and more often on later reports, a number of A-bomb physicists had similar expectations. Among them were Robert Oppenheimer, his brother, Frank, Robert Bacher, Hans Bethe, and Emilio Segrè. These were not self-serving recollections, and they all pointed in the same direction: multiple atomic bombings would probably be necessary, and the war would continue for some time.

After all, Los Alamos had been rushing to get the third A-bomb materials ready for shipment. On August 10th, after the second A-bomb and after publicity about Soviet entry into the war, Los Alamos was still working hard to produce more A-bombs. That day, based on recent information from Los Alamos, Groves informed General Marshall: The third bomb, originally scheduled to be ready for use from Tinian by August 24th, would be available about a week earlier for use by about the 18th on Japan.

That memorandum was not the report of a commanding general (Groves), who, in the flow of living history forward, anticipated that the two atomic bombings would suffice. Later, in rewriting the "history" of this period, he contended otherwise. But memoirs, as historians should know but sometimes forget, can be remarkably self-serving and remarkably unreliable, except when they provide information that runs contrary to interest or independent of interest.

VII-Conceiving of the A-bomb in History

Running through Hasegawa's analysis, as with many revisionist-inclined studies looking at the A-bomb "decision" and A-bomb policy, is the assumption that the atomic bombing was morally different from the fire-bombings (including Tokyo in March), that policymakers and A-bomb scientists always felt this way, and that the conventional-bombing versus atomic-bombing distinction, in moral and strategic ways, was obvious, not surprising, and not meriting explanation.

Yet, careful historical analysis suggests the need to examine this dominant framework critically. It is a problem that I have poked at, often intermittently and not in suitable depth, over the years. Moving beyond my occasional efforts, Michael Gordin of Princeton University is pursuing this important set of issues in much greater depth, with a sharper focus, and usually with better questions.

To understand pre-Hiroshima and even pre-Nagasaki thinking about the bomb, there is need to focus on the contemporaneous evidence. It is interesting and merits close consideration. Indeed, the A-bomb in prospect was viewed sometimes as markedly different from conventional weapons; sometimes it was not. The task, in working back through the archival materials is to define, with clarity and keen analysis, how and when differences emerged, why, and whether they persisted or somewhat waxed and waned for different individuals or the same individuals.

For General Groves, for example, the atomic bomb as a weapon long seemed different in magnitude, but not morally so. For General Marshall, by late May 1945, as his meeting with McCloy and Stimson indicated, the bomb seemed rather different in moral terms, but Marshall's concern was perhaps somewhat unusual: targeting noncombatants, not the actual use of the weapon otherwise on the enemy. For him, the crucial issue was killing many noncombatants.

For Secretary Stimson, as Sean Malloy, a historian at the University of California (Merced), has shown in some provocative unpublished work, there was an emerging concern involving the A-bomb about targeting noncombatants. Can historians see this for McCloy, or Vannevar Bush and James Conant? How much of Stimson's concern about A-bomb targeting was a carryover from his unhappiness that the US air force was massively hitting cities with conventional weapons, and killing many noncombatants?

Whatever the limitations of Truman's Potsdam Diary, it does seem warranted to conclude, on the basis of that diary, that he was morally uneasy about massively targeting and killing noncombatants with the A-bomb. But there is no evidence that he ever worried in similar terms about conventional bombing. In the case of Truman, he uneasily "solved" the problem of targeting noncombatants with the A-bomb by contending, in his diary on July 25th in likely self-deception, that he and Stimson agreed that the bomb would be dropped on military targets.

When Japan's conditional surrender arrived on August 10th, Truman made a sharp distinction between the conventional bombing and atomic bombing. He told his assembled advisers that he would continue the conventional bombing, but halt the atomic bombing. Stimson and Forrestal, overruled by the president, had desired to halt both forms of warfare.

Hasegawa, dubiously, concludes that Truman still wanted "revenge" against Japan, and thus continued the conventional bombing on Japan. More likely, the president believed that such continued warfare would enhance the likelihood of Japan quickly capitulating on American terms, but the president, especially after seeing some of the reports on the Hiroshima bombing, realized painfully how many noncombatants had been killed there by the atomic bomb.

Despite the massive numbers also killed in Tokyo in early March, Truman had good reason to know that the so-called conventional bombing, for multiple reasons, normally killed many fewer

in Japan's cities in an attack than had either of the two atomic bombings. Speaking to his cabinet on the 10th on his decision to halt the use of atomic weapons, Truman said, in the summary words of cabinet member Henry Wallace, "the thought of wiping out another 100,000 people was too horrible." According to Wallace, "[Truman] didn't like the idea of killing, as he said, 'all those kids.'" Before Hiroshima, at Potsdam on July 25th, Truman may briefly have felt similar concerns. But he vanquished them on the 25th, and they returned forcefully, in expressed words, on the 10th. That day, because of the conditional surrender offer, he could act on that uneasiness. He was not committed to abstain from atomic warfare, but he had committed himself to try not to use more atomic bombs on Japan.

VIII-Japanese Decision-making and the American Response to Japan's Conditional-Surrender Offer

Going beyond Butow's important 1954 book, Asada's 1998 essay, and Frank's 1999 volume, Hasegawa has provided the most probing study of the impact of Soviet entry and the atomic bomb on Japanese decision-making. His narrative and analysis conclude that the Nagasaki bombing, unlike the Hiroshima bombing, played no role in Japan's conditional-surrender offer.

Hasegawa's analysis of events in Japan for August 9/10-15 is likely to be far more controversial than his study of events in America for that period. Perhaps he expended more effort on the crucial matters in Japan, because of the likelihood of sharp controversy, and that may explain his overlooking some useful materials on the US side and his questionably interpreting others for that August 10-15 period. Well before Hasegawa's book, American decisions during August 10-15 were closely examined in a journal article nearly three decades ago, but the availability of added information and new questions suggests the need for reconsideration of this period, reaching beyond Hasegawa's study.

Using a source that was available more than 30 years ago, Hasegawa contends, questionably, that a State Department Japan expert, Joseph Ballantine, had to persuade Secretary Byrnes on the 10th not to endorse accepting Japan's conditional-surrender offer, because of the condition of allowing the emperor to retain his prerogatives. Ballantine did claim this accomplishment in his oral-history memoir 15 years later in 1961, but all the archival evidence from August 10-11, 1945, moves strongly in the opposite direction. Most notably, Walter Brown, Byrnes's assistant, indicates that Byrnes opposed making any concession because it would mean, in political terms in America, the "crucifixion" of the president. Why, asked Byrnes rhetorically on the 10th, according to Brown's summary at the time, should the US modify its terms and allow soft terms when the US, before possessing the A-bomb and before Soviet entry into the war, would not do so.

What has never been adequately explored, in depth, is American attitudes during the summer, and especially in August 10-15, 1945, on allowing the emperor to remain, even under MacArthur. In providing some useful background, Hasegawa argues earlier in his book that Truman during the summer in June-July, before the conditional surrender offer of August, had more political "space" than many have recognized to modify surrender terms and allow a constitutional monarchy.

Hasegawa's evidence, focusing heavily on various US columnists, is suggestive and warrants further development. He may be right, but there is some danger, as he knows, in conflating columnist opinion with public opinion or congressional opinion. When the Japanese conditional offer was announced on August 10th, Congressional members—there is evidence on about 18 or so—split about in half, with Democrats slightly more opposed (5-4) than Republicans (4-5) to accepting terms allowing a constitutional monarchy. A few Democrats like Senator Richard Russell were obviously eager to continue the war. Some Republicans, including Robert Taft ("Mr. Republican"), favored ending the war on modified terms. How much they were responding primarily to ending the war and avoiding more American casualties, and how much to hoping to minimize Soviet influence in the Far East by obtaining a quick, though conditional, surrender, remains unclear.

What historians have not adequately appreciated is how strongly Truman himself felt on this issue of a conditional surrender allowing maintenance of some form of emperor system and conceivably retention of Hirohito on the throne. Going beyond much of the earlier scholarship, Hasegawa briefly treated this matter of Truman's desires in an earlier segment of *Racing*, but may have gone somewhat wrong on Truman's motives. Hasegawa believed that Truman wanted revenge for Pearl Harbor and thus resisted allowing an emperor system. Unfortunately, *Racing* does not in depth discuss the key relevant evidence for this conclusion about Truman's motivation.

The key available evidence—a report to a *Time* journalist by two Democratic congressman, who summarized Truman's thinking on August 10th after the president's separate meetings with them—suggests a somewhat different motive by Truman: the quest for American-defined justice, and appropriate punishment, not revenge, with a desire to root out Japanese totalitarianism, which Truman linked to Hirohito and the emperor system. As the *Time* journalist summarized what Truman had reportedly said on August 10th in a meeting with a Democratic senator: The President "thought that no special concession should be made to preserve the emperor inviolate, that he was a war criminal just as much as Hitler or Mussolini, in many respects, and was now trying to weasel his nation out of war, preserving its essentially totalitarian structure."

But Truman, according to that journalist, had in effect acknowledged the conundrum, as that *Time* journalist put the matter in his own summary words: There was no alternative group "in Japan with whom to deal, or which might set up a government, so it might be essential to retain the emperor without making special concessions. Only through him could the surrenders [by the Japanese military] in the field be arranged."

When *Washington Post* publisher Eugene Meyer, whose paper had earlier suggested moving away from unconditional surrender, wrote to Truman on the 10th, that newspaper owner urged "insisting on the strict fulfillment of our peace terms," which, in Meyer's view, seemed to allow a ceremonial monarchy, if desired in the future by "the free will of the Japanese people." Truman, not getting bogged down in the details or the substance of Meyer's letter, replied on the 11th, rather bluntly but optimistically, "I believe we are going to get the thing settled without backing up on our unconditional surrender demand."

Truman and Byrnes, as well as Stimson and presumably Forrestal and Leahy, did not realize that the Byrnes-conceived reply to Japan's conditional surrender would provoke a crisis in the Japanese government, leading to a near-triumph there for continuing the war. The US official reply on the 11th implicitly (not explicitly) rejected the Japanese condition on prerogatives was dangerously ambiguous on whether some form of emperor system might be permitted. That reply of the 11th did include a provision for the emperor continuing (time unstipulated) under MacArthur, and spoke of the "ultimate form of government of Japan [being] established by the freely expressed Japanese will of the Japanese people." To Japanese leaders, the meaning of the American reply was uncertain, and some argued for fighting on because an emperor system had not been explicitly allowed.

On August 11th, President Truman and top advisers, not foreseeing the problems in Japan, thought that the Suzuki government would quickly accept the American terms. Secretary Stimson left for a vacation, apparently sure that Japan's surrender was imminent. Assistant Secretary McCloy, believing the war was virtually over, worried about what he should do in the postwar period.]

But the expected surrender response by Japan did not quickly occur. On August 12th, in a significant report (not discussed in *Racing*), Maj. General Clayton Bissell, the assistant chief of staff in army intelligence, sent General Marshall a revealing set of conclusions. Possibly Japan would not accept the American terms, and choose instead to fight on. If so, "atomic bombs will not have a decisive effect in the next 30 days."

On August 13th, at the behest of General Marshall, Lt. General John Hull, the head of the operations division, queried one of Groves's assistants (Col. L.E. Seeman) on the schedule of future A-bombs and the possibility of using a batch (maybe about seven or eight) as tactical weapons as part of the still-scheduled November 1945 invasion. Being contemplated by Marshall, the tentative planning, after maybe using a third bomb if Japan did not speedily surrender, was to hold the other bombs until the invasion period. In briefly treating Hull's conversation with Seeman, Hasegawa did not note that the query about the availability of bombs originated with Marshall himself and was part of a tactical nuclear-warfare conception.

On August 13th (Monday), General Groves, who had held up the shipment of the third-bomb components because of Japan's conditional-surrender offer and Truman's new order on using A-bombs, informed one of Marshall's top aides that on Wednesday, the 15th, he would again ask his superiors about sending the components to Tinian. If such a shipment was approved, the planes would depart from New Mexico on the 16th, Groves stated, and the weapon on Tinian would be ready for use on the 20th or 21st. His message, by its statement of a schedule, implied that a sudden change in policy at a higher level before the 15th could mean a somewhat earlier shipment and somewhat earlier readiness at Tinian for use of the third A-bomb on Japan.

On the evening of August 13th, as Hasegawa notes, George Harrison telephoned McCloy to suggest issuing an ultimatum to Japan asserting that America's terms must be immediately accepted or the Potsdam terms would be withdrawn and the war would go on. Whether or not Harrison was including more atomic bombings in his thinking is unclear, but it seems likely that he anticipated dropping a third bomb soon if Japan did not quickly surrender. Shortly after

Harrison's call, McCloy, who was serving as Acting Secretary of War with Stimson on vacation, telephoned Patterson about an ultimatum to Japan. Summarizing that conversation, McCloy wrote in his diary: "Patterson agreed—feels strongly it should be done."

By August 14th, for Truman and Byrnes, anxiety and frustration were greatly building up because Japan had still not surrendered. That day, apparently with the approval of Byrnes, Walter Brown was crafting a drastic public warning to Japan: Surrender, or face more destruction, including presumably atomic bombings. Byrnes's lament, according to Brown, was that the third A-bomb would not be speedily ready. Apparently Byrnes believed the likely date was August 22nd.

On August 14th, (in a source not used in *Racing*), Truman met with high-ranking British visitors. At that noon-time session, according to then-secret British report back to London, Truman, despairing of the lack of a Japanese agreement, "remarked sadly that he now had no alternative but to order an atomic bomb to be dropped on Tokyo."

Whether Truman would in fact have chosen Tokyo, and risked killing the emperor, is unclear. Whether the president's comments that day should be taken literally, or simply as an expression of his growing frustration but not as a true commitment that day to an imminent third nuclear attack, is unclear. Nor is it clear that he knew that the key components of the third A-bomb, though ready for shipment, were still in Los Alamos and thus that the bomb, if he gave the shipment order that day, could not be assembled and ready for use from Tinian until about the 18th or 19th.

Despite uncertainties in interpreting the report on Truman's conversation of August 14th, it seems safe to speculate that, had Japan not surrendered in about the next week, a third atomic bomb would very probably, soon thereafter, have been dropped on Japan. Thus, Kokura, or Niigata, or perhaps Tokyo, or possibly even Kyoto, would have joined Hiroshima and Nagasaki as painful symbols of the "new world" of nuclear weapons.

With Japan's delay in surrendering, and with the growing evidence provided in "Ultra" intelligence of a large, continuing Japanese troop buildup on southern Kyushu, the pressure for the use of a third A-bomb might well have significantly increased on Truman. That would not have been so much a case of public pressure—though there was considerable popular-level support in the US for more atomic bombings—but, rather, of Truman's own concerns about the course and cost of the war for the US.

Had there been three or four atomic bombings, and not only the two nuclear bombings that did occur, how much would the analysis by historians change on the important counterfactual issues of missed opportunities to end the war by other means, and on the related issues of the comparative impact of Soviet entry and the atomic bomb in producing Japan's surrender?

Fortunately, more atomic bombs were not used. The war did end, and Truman happily announced the surrender at 7 p.m. on the 14th.

IX. The End of the War and the Future Challenges and Dissents

Celebrating that event, McCloy wrote in his diary on August 14th: "The bells are ringing, the wars are over." He went on to say: "Nothing left but to thank God, the soldiers and sailors and the dead. . . ." Yet, as Stimson, Truman, and others would soon come uneasily to recognize, Americans and others would sometimes question how the war was ended, whether the atomic bombings were necessary, and, yes, whether Soviet entry into the war could have been avoided. Those issues, often raised in the US by conservatives in 1945 like Herbert Hoover, *Human Events* editor Felix Morley, and *United States News* (later *U.S. News & World Report*) editor David Lawrence in 1945, would take on more salience in later years.

Such early rightwing revisionism, gaining more support in the late 1940s and in the 1950s among American conservatives including *National Review* in 1958, was often rather similar to an early leftwing revisionism, partly initiated in 1946 by Norman Cousins and Thomas K. Finletter (who became Truman's Secretary of the Air Force). In the pens in 1948/49 of journalist Helen Mears and physicist P.M.S. Blackett, soon joined by others, that leftwing revisionism, with important variations and more sustained analyses over the years, would continue into the present.

Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, who had started his end-of-the-war research with strong doubts about, if not hostility, to A-bomb revisionism certainly did not anticipate that he would become, in a sense, an heir of Blackett. Hasegawa's probing research, his effort to make sense of the sources, and his emerging interpretation pushed him, in ways he had not initially foreseen, toward the "Racing" framework. Of course, his valuable, thoughtful book, in multiple ways, often reaches beyond that framework.

X-Brief Conclusions

The events and issues involving the use of the atomic bombs, Soviet entry into the war, the ending of the Japanese war, and Japan's surrender are sufficiently complicated, especially when embedded in the larger context of US-Soviet-Japanese relations, that it is not difficult for a critic, without being churlish, to lament omissions in *Racing* and to argue with some of the book's interpretations. Probably no scholar who has worked in depth on even part of these complicated issues will endorse all of Hasegawa's analyses in his important study.

Nevertheless, the scholarly world is considerably indebted to Tsuyoshi Hasegawa for his honest probing research, his intelligent analysis, and his challenging interpretations and reinterpretations. To disagree with him is to appreciate, not diminish, his accomplishments. He has usefully evoked a valuable dialogue, and his thoughtful book will heavily influence the content of that dialogue in future years. That is, and will be, eloquent testimony to his achievement in *Racing the Enemy*.

In private discussions with Hasegawa before and after his volume appeared, in reading various parts of it in draft, in seeking critically to assess it, and in participating in a related project with him on Japan's surrender and the ending of the war, I have received considerable intellectual benefit. He has helped establish, as have Richard Frank and Gar Alperovitz in my dialogue with him, that civility and generosity in scholarship do not require interpretive agreement on major A-bomb/Japan surrender issues.

That is especially impressive because some of the interpretive questions—in the US particularly those involving the use of the A-bombs—are often understood to be important, directly or indirectly, in defining the nature of the Truman administration, perhaps the US government, and possibly the national society in 1945. For some interpreters, disputes on those matters have bitterly spilled over in recent years to rancorous dialogue, where scholarly and journalistic standards have been severely violated, where *ad hominem* attacks have unjustly occurred, and where unsubstantiated published claims, sometimes based on apparently non-existent documents, have gained support and where neither the authors nor the editors or publishers, when challenged, have provided the requisite evidence.

Hasegawa's fair-minded book, and his generous dealings with scholars who agree substantially or disagree substantially with him, is in marked contrast to the rather different behavior, which users of the web looking at blogs, attendees at some professional meetings, and readers of scholarly journals and popular-history magazines have observed among some amateurs and professionals writing on A-bomb/Japan surrender issues.

Note:

I have purposely not sought to footnote this essay. Some segments, as readers may recognize, are based on earlier work I have published. The brief treatment of Blackett and the more extended treatments of A-bomb expectations and the August 9/10-14 period in the US, as well as the brief statements about A-bomb revisionism by the right and left and the general historiography on why and how Japan surrendered, are based partly on various work still in draft. This essay does emerge, in part, from probably a half-dozen recent conversations with Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, and perhaps more than a dozen-and-a-half with my colleague, David Holloway. Over the years, for interpretive conversations and the sharing of research materials, I am indebted to many scholars, including, among others, Gar Alperovitz, Sadao Asada, Kai Bird, Conrad Crane, Edward Drea, Richard Frank, Gian Gentile, Michael Gordin, Sean Malloy, Robert Newman, Martin J. Sherwin, and J. Samuel Walker. Both Hasegawa and Holloway, as well as Thomas Maddux and other contributors to the roundtable, have been generous and patient in tolerating my tardiness in submitting my essay for this extended dialogue.

Because I am a poor typist, and undoubtedly did not catch all of my typographical errors, I apologize to readers. On-line "publishing," with little delay between completion of an essay and its issuance on the web, means for me not having that normal third and fourth opportunity, including galleys, to catch such typos. Such on-line "publishing" is a new venue for me and I have not yet learned fully to adjust to its schedules and operations.

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