

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

Roundtable Editor: **Thomas Maddux**, CSU Northridge

Roundtable Participants:

Michael D. Gordin, Gar Alperovitz, Richard Frank, Barton Bernstein, David Holloway

Author's Response: Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, University of California, Santa Barbara

Introduction:

I am grateful to H-Diplo for providing its space for the roundtable discussion on my book *Racing the Enemy*. I would like to thank Tom Maddux for organizing this roundtable. It is, indeed, gratifying to learn that all four contributors, who represent a wide spectrum of schools on the atomic bomb issue and the Soviet role in the Pacific War are unanimous in their assessment that *Racing the Enemy* represents an important contribution to the scholarship on the ending of the Pacific War. Especially I appreciate Michael Gordin's view that my book incorporates three "balkanized" literatures on the ending the war—the use of the atomic bomb on Japan, Soviet entry into the war, and the unconditional surrender of Japan—into a comprehensive whole, and David Holloway's words that "for the first time a historian who can read the American, Japanese, and Russian sources has written an account that integrates Soviet as well as American policy into an examination of the timing and terms of Japanese surrender," since to write a truly "international history" on this topic, especially by bringing the hitherto neglected Soviet factor to center stage, was my primary goal above anything else.

My book represents a work in progress that will be revised and refined as new evidence appears and critical evaluations help me to revise my views on many issues. In fact, the criticisms that are raised by the commentators in this forum and elsewhere, especially in Gordin's forthcoming manuscript, *The Third Shock* (Princeton University), David Holloway's criticisms of my treatment of Stalin in the forthcoming volume I edited, *Reinterpreting the End of the Pacific War* (Stanford University Press), and Richard Frank's comments on the Togo-Sato exchange of telegrams in his contribution to this roundtable have already led me to revise some of the assumptions I presented in *Racing the Enemy*. In the Japanese edition, which is scheduled to appear in February this year, I offer revised versions. Scholarship progresses through such exchanges. Thus, I welcome and appreciate the critical comments made by the contributors and especially appreciate the civility with which they engage in this discourse, a manner that has often been lacking in the atomic bomb debate in the past. Especially, I would like to emphasize that Richard Frank has been a generous supporter of my research, making critical comments while I was in the process of writing, and he was willing to share his sources with me despite his disagreements with my view. Since I will devote a considerable amount of space in rebutting his criticisms below, I want to state at the outset that his criticisms and my rebuttal are genuine

disagreements on how to read sources and engage in historical reasoning, and that I applaud the comradely spirit in which he engages in his criticisms.

Since the contributors succinctly summarize my argument and my contributions to scholarship, I will not comment on their positive assessments of my book except to say that I appreciate all of them. Below I would like to respond to important criticisms, if not all, raised by the contributors.

I. General Comments

The comments made by the contributors are divided into two kinds: the issues that I did not write about but that they think I should have explored; and the issues that I wrote about and with which they disagree. Let me begin from the first category of comments.

1. The Atomic Bomb and Eastern Europe:

Alperovitz and Holloway raise the question about Truman's use of the atomic bomb and his policy toward Eastern Europe as an issue that I did not explore. I admit that this is an important topic that should be further researched. After Truman received Groves' report on the Trinity test, Stimson wrote that he was "immediately pepped up," and Churchill noticed that from then on Truman "stood up to the Russians in a most emphatic and decisive manner." (p. 149, all page references are from *Racing the Enemy*). After Truman told Stalin about "a new weapon of unusual destructive force," Stalin immediately understood that Truman was talking about the atomic bomb. According to Andrei Gromyko, then Soviet ambassador to Washington, Stalin commented on Truman's remarks, when he returned to his villa, and said that United States would try to force the Soviet Union to accept its plans regarding Europe with atomic monopoly, and that he was determine to resist this attempt. The connection between the atomic bomb and Eastern Europe was understood by both sides. It would be interesting for some future researcher to see how Groves' report changed the dynamics of the Potsdam conference on Eastern Europe and the German question. My guess is that, as David Holloway demonstrated in U.S.-Soviet negotiations in foreign ministerial conferences in late 1945, the atomic bomb made both sides more intransigent. Also, this issue should be examined in a longer time span than I dealt with in my book. In the essay he contributes to *Reinterpreting the End of the Pacific War*, Holloway examines this issue more fully.

2. Implementation of Surrender after August 15:

The second issue that both Gordin and Frank criticize me for not exploring sufficiently is the process in which the Japanese government attempted to implement unconditional surrender to the armed forces overseas after the emperor's acceptance of unconditional surrender on August 14 and his radio broadcast of the imperial rescript on August 15. Both Gordin and Frank acknowledge the importance of my treatment of the Soviet-Japanese War after August 15, as Gordin praises this part of this book as "one of the most important and surprising features" of my book. But Gordin states that in military theaters beyond the Soviet Japanese theater as well "the war was in a half-alive, half-dead state," until Japan signed the surrender documents on September 2, and he wishes that I examined this more fully. Likewise Frank argues that the

uncertainties involving Soviet-Japanese situations represent an overall situation that extended everywhere.

I agree that I should have more fully examined the efforts by the Japanese imperial headquarters to implement unconditional surrender for the armed forces overseas other than in Manchuria, southern Sakhalin, and the Kurils. As I mentioned in my book, on August 15, the imperial general headquarters issued the Continental Order No. 1381, to obey the imperial rescript, while continuing the current task until further notice. It was not until 4 PM on August 16, that the imperial general headquarters issued Continental Order No. 1382, ordering all troops to cease any military action except self-defense. These orders did not mean much when most of the Japanese forces were engaged in self-defense in Manchuria, Korea, southern Sakhalin, and the Kurils. Thus the imperial general headquarters issued the order to the Kwantung Army on August 16 and the Fifth Area Army on August 19 to stop all actions, including self defense, and surrender arms. In addition, the Emperor sent his own relatives overseas to implement surrender: Prince Kan'in to Saigon and Singapore, Prince Asaka to China, and Prince Takeda to Manchuria. Furthermore, on August 17, the emperor issued an imperial rescript to the soldiers and officers, ordering the Japanese troops to accept surrender.

I must stress that each region had its own unique problems. For instance, in China there arose a serious question of maintenance of order. In addition, in some places in Manchuria the Communist forces demanded the surrender of Japanese forces before the arrival of the Nationalist forces. By August 18 the imperial general headquarters ordered all Japanese forces to cease any military action.¹

The question is why the imperial headquarters delayed the issuance of the imperial rescript until August 17, when it had been written already on August 15, and why it delayed the order to stop all military actions (including self-defense) until August 16 (to the Kwantung Army) and until August 19 (to the Fifth Area Army). Frank asserts that this delay was "in fact entirely consistent with the underlying problem that the compliance of the armed forces with the emperor's order was not simply a foregone conclusion." Needless to say the emperor's statement of surrender itself did not ensure the surrender of Japanese armed forces unless the imperial general headquarters specifically ordered them to surrender. Frank's statement dwells on the obvious but it does not explain the reasons behind this delay.

In my opinion, it is important to make a distinction between the Soviet-Japanese military theater and other areas. In the areas where the Japanese were not fighting against the Soviets, Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces MacArthur's cease-fire order on August 15 became immediately in force. But MacArthur's order did not extend to the Soviet military theater. In fact, Marshal Vasilevskii, the Soviet commander-in-chief of the Far Eastern Theater, ordered the Soviet forces to keep fighting despite the emperor's acceptance of unconditional surrender. Another important point is that the Japanese army, including Army Minister Anami Korechika, clung to the incredulously unrealistic hope that even after the Soviet invasion it would be possible and expedient to negotiate with Moscow to restore its neutrality and attempt to decouple the Soviets from the Americans and the British. This was the reason why the Japanese government never declared war against the Soviet Union. Gordin is right in pointing out that,

¹ Hattori Takushiro, *Daitoa senso zenshi* (Tokyo: Hara shobo, 1965), pp. 944-955.

had I delved more into this general situation, my argument for the special situation in the Soviet-Japanese military theater might have become more forceful. But I do not support Frank's assertion that what happened in the Soviet occupied territories represented the universal problem elsewhere.

3. Political History vs. Military History

Frank criticizes *Racing the Enemy* for focusing merely on the political dimension and ignoring the military dimension. Frank is a judicious and careful military historian and examined various military dimensions of the endgame, including the Ketsu-go, the impact of the firebombs, importance of military intelligence, etc., from which I learned a great deal. But I did not intend to write a military history, and I do believe that the most important aspect on the ending the war was not in the vicissitudes of military actions or in the military strategy, but rather in the political decisions. The fact that the Japanese military had decisive influence in Japan's decision-making process does not necessarily make the military dimension more important than the political dimension, since what mattered was the political dimension of the military's influence. Frank is convinced that the Ketsu-go provided the most decisive key to understand the Japanese government's position and that the military always held the upper hand throughout the endgame. Therefore, in his view the attempt by Stimson and others to modify unconditional surrender in the hope that it would help the peace party within the Japanese government to gain more influence was a pipe dream, and Truman and Byrnes justifiably rejected Stimson's recommendation because their judgment was based on the intelligence source that assessed the Japanese political situation accurately. I argued that the Japanese situation was more complex, showing the gradual shift of power balance in favor of the peace party. But in all this, what mattered was not the military dimension, but the political dimension of the endgame.

4. Methodological Questions about Speculations and Lack of Documents:

Gordin makes an important point about "intentions" in diplomatic history. Documents are not always available; if they are available, they are often unreliable; and even if all documents become suddenly open, it is impossible to get into the minds of Stalin, Truman, and Hirohito. Often historians have no choice but to rely on speculations. One can test the validity of speculations on the basis of plausibility and historical reasoning. Gordin finds most of my speculations plausible, but others weak. That's fair enough, but it is often not a fair question to ask the author to provide direct evidence, the smoking gun, to support speculations. Herein lies a difference between history and a court of law.

II. Response to Frank's criticisms

Now I come to respond to the criticisms on what I wrote. Frank's single-spaced 38 page critique (originally, it was 52 pages) is the most detailed review of my book that has appeared to date and it is unlikely to be surpassed in length. He graciously accepts the book's original contribution, as the one that "eclipsed Butow's book." In my view Butow's elegantly written masterpiece will never be eclipsed by any work, and I believe that my book only supplants it with new evidence that has become available since the publication of his book half a century ago and with a broader international framework than Butow's. Nonetheless, I appreciate Frank's generous appraisal.

But he fundamentally disagrees with the following three key arguments that I make in the book: (1) the decision made by Truman and Byrnes to insist on unconditional surrender by refusing to include the guarantee for a constitutional monarchy under the present dynasty, as Stimson and others advocated, was closely connected with the use of the atomic bomb; (2) their decision to use the atomic bomb was closely connected with the Soviet factor-in fact, there was an intense race between Truman and Stalin as to whether Truman could end the war before the Soviets entered the war by dropping the atomic bombs on Japan or Stalin could succeed in entering the war before Japan surrendered; (3) the atomic bombings on Hiroshima and Nagasaki were not the most decisive factor that led Japan to surrender; the Soviet entry into the war was more decisive than the atomic bombs.

What Frank does in his critique is to single out the validity of specific pieces of evidence to support my theses. His method is to chip the selective stones to crack the edifice of my theses. If I have enough space in this forum, I would gladly respond to each and every point that Frank makes in his essay, and such debate may be enlightening for historians and graduate students, illuminating how two different historians reach different conclusions, using the same sources and interpreting them completely differently. But if I take this option, my rebuttal will be as long as Frank's essay. I fear that I do not have the luxury of taxing the patience of the readers. In order to limit my reply to a manageable length, I will construct my rebuttal around Frank's criticisms on these three fundamental points, deferring the debate on other points for later or through personal correspondence.

1. Truman, Byrnes, and Unconditional Surrender

Frank rejects the connection between the atomic bomb and Truman/Byrnes' insistence on unconditional surrender. He defends their decision to excise the passage that promises the Japanese to maintain "a constitutional monarchy under the present dynasty" from Stimson's draft of the Potsdam Proclamation. Their judgment was based on the fear, he argues, that any revision of unconditional surrender would be taken by the Japanese government as a sign of American weakness and that such revision was bound to embolden the hardliners in the government that insisted on the continuation of the war. Reports coming from intelligence sources that they received from Magic and Ultra intercepts indicated that the Japanese government was not close to accepting surrender, and this assessment accurately reflected Japan's reality. Thus, any president in this situation had no alternative but to insist on unconditional surrender, which was the only terms acceptable to the United States, and thus to use the atomic bomb.

(a) JCS, JSSC, OPD, and the Potsdam Proclamation

One matter on which I take pride in my book is my analysis of the internal debate within the Truman administration on unconditional surrender. I argue that the Truman administration was divided on the issue of whether or not unconditional surrender should be modified to allow the Japanese to retain the monarchical system. The pressure to revise unconditional surrender came from Grew, and then Stimson, among others, but eventually Truman and Byrnes rejected their recommendation. I argued that the decision made by Truman and Byrnes was closely connected with their intention to use the atomic bomb. A part of my argument I developed on this issue is the internal debate between the Joint Strategic Survey Committee and the Operation Division on

the wording of Paragraph 12 of Stimson's draft of the Potsdam Proclamation, and on the subsequent decision by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to accept the JSSC recommendation and reject the OPD's recommendation (pp. 145-148).

I am happy to see Frank call attention to this issue, but he makes a frontal assault on my interpretation on the USSC-OPD debate.² The JSSC recommended that the guarantee of "constitutional monarchy under the present dynasty" in Paragraph 12 should be stricken out, because, first, this passage "may be misconstrued as a commitment to depose or execute the present Emperor and install some other member of the Imperial family," and second, "to the radical elements in Japan, this phrase may be construed as a commitment to continue the institution of the Emperor and Emperor worship." Therefore, the JSSC recommended that the passage that promised the possibility of Japan's maintaining a constitutional monarchy be crossed out, and that it be substituted with the following passage: "Subject to suitable guarantee against further acts of aggression, the Japanese people will be free to choose their own form of government."

I argued that this was strange reasoning. A promise to preserve a constitutional monarchy could hardly be taken as the intention to depose or execute Hirohito. On the contrary, this promise would soften the concerns of those who feared that unconditional surrender meant the destruction of the emperor system. Furthermore, there were hardly any "radical elements" in Japan (perhaps with the exception of a handful of Communists in jail) strongly opposed to the preservation of the constitutional monarchy under the present dynasty.

Frank, however, interprets the JSSC's view as "a reasonable and useful warning that the silence about the incumbent emperor could be interpreted as having sinister implication for Hirohito." If the fate of Hirohito was in question, the passage in question could be corrected by modifying it as the OPD suggested below. But to throw out the entire passage because of this fear was tantamount to throwing out the baby with the bathwater, since it would mean that the concerns of those who equated unconditional surrender with the destruction of the monarchical system would not be eliminated. As for the "radicals," Frank thinks that the JSSC was probably thinking about "radical rightists." This simply does not make sense, since no right-wing radicals would possibly advocate the elimination of the emperor system.

To the OPD (and to Stimson as well), this passage that the JSSC proposed to eliminate constituted the linchpin of the ultimatum, and the OPD was horrified by the JSSC's recommendation. "The purpose of issuing the ultimatum," the OPD fired back, was "to induce Japan's surrender and thus avoid the heavy casualties implied in a fight to the finish," and "the basic point on which acceptance of surrender terms will hinge lies in the question of the disposition of the Emperor and his dynasty." Thus, the OPD amended the JSSC's "amendment": the OPD substituted the JSSC's added passage with the following sentence: "The Japanese

² I set aside for the moment my response to his other points: chronology of dropping the passage of the constitutional monarch from the Potsdam Proclamation and the news of the atomic bomb text in New Mexico and the interpretation of Weckerling's analysis on Togo's July 11 Telegram to Sato. As for the former, Stimson's diary for July 16 makes it clear that Byrnes and Truman had already worked out a "timetable," implying the connection between the timing of issuance of the ultimatum and the use of the atomic bomb. For the second point, I developed my criticism of Frank's interpretation in my book (pp. 110-115), and Frank does not respond to the points of my criticism in this critique.

people will be free to choose whether they shall retain their emperor as a constitutional monarchy.”

The Joint Chiefs of Staff discussed this matter on July 17 at Potsdam. Although it had two reports in its possession, only JSSC's recommendation was presented. Leahy explained: “this matter had been considered on a political level and consideration had been given to the removal of the sentence in question.” On the following day, it adopted the JSSC's recommendation.

When I examined this issue, a number of questions came to my mind. Who in the JSSC proposed the amendment and why? Why did it make contradictory reasoning behind its amendment? Why did the JCS accept the JSSC's recommendation over the objections of the OPD? Why did it take two days for the JCS to reach its decision on this issue? Why did Stimson and McCloy, to whom the deleted passage constituted the linchpin of the entire document, accept defeat without any protest? Why did they keep silent on this crucial matter in their diaries?

And I speculated. Encouraged by Japan's peace overtures to Moscow, Stimson doubled his efforts to persuade the president to modify unconditional surrender. But Stimson was told by Byrnes on July 17 that the president and Byrnes had worked out a “timetable” for the end of the war. On July 16, at the Combined Chiefs of Staff meeting, British Chief of Staff Alan Brooke commented on Paragraph 12 of the draft ultimatum, and suggested that “Allies make it clear to Japanese that the emperor might be preserved “shortly after a Russian entry into the war.” Leahy told Alan Brooke that this question had been discussed at a political level, and suggested that Churchill should put forward that view to Truman. On July 17 at the JCS meeting Leahy said that this question was considered on a political level. Stimson must have felt how strongly Truman and Byrnes were committed to unconditional surrender. Likewise, informed by Leahy that Truman and Byrnes had already made up their mind to remove the passage, the JCS had to accept that decision.

These questions do not concern Frank. What matters to him were only two pieces of documents: the JSSC's recommendation and the record of the JCS's meetings. There is not a “scintilla of evidence that Truman and Byrnes manipulated the JSSC.” The JCS “plainly based their recommendation on the report of the JSSC.” And he adds: “to suggest otherwise is pure conjecture contrary to the contemporary written record.”

Like a lawyer in the courtroom, Frank trusts nothing but the two documentary evidence, and urges us not to consider all these questions that I raised as mere “conjecture” that are not supported by the two documents. As for the third “written record” produced by the OPD, he dismisses it since the OPD lacked the competence on this matter, ignoring the fact that the OPD was the prime agent that produced Stimson's draft. In fact, if one were to question the OPD's competence on this matter, the whole draft of the Potsdam Proclamation would have been thrown out. Incidentally, I do not say in the book that “Truman and Byrnes manipulated the JSSC,” since I do not know then and even now what the JSSC was, and who composed this committee. This is the matter that must be researched further.

I would like to return here to the question I raised above about the role of speculations when one comes to assess “intentions.” I raise plausible scenarios based on circumstantial evidence and speculations based on historical reasoning. Frank can question if this reasoning is plausible. But to tell us to stick to the written documents alone and enjoin us not to engage in “conjectures” beyond that is written in these documents is to impoverish history and to reduce history to a trial court.

Let us review the series of revisions that were rendered in Stimson's original draft. (I highlight the revised parts by putting them in brackets [])

Stimson's original draft:

The occupying forces of the Allies shall be withdrawn from Japan as soon as our objectives are accomplished and there has been established beyond doubt a peacefully inclined, responsible government of a character representative of the Japanese people. [This may include a constitutional monarchy under the present dynasty if it be shown to the complete satisfaction of the world that such a government will never again aspire to aggression.]

JSSC's revision (JCS adopted this amendment): [subject to suitable guarantee against further acts of aggression, the Japanese people will be free to choose their own form of government.]

OPD's amendment: [The Japanese people will be free to choose whether they shall retain their Emperor as a constitutional monarchy.]

Truman's amendment-final version: [The occupying forces of the Allies shall be withdrawn from Japan as soon as our objectives are accomplished and there has been established in accordance with the freely expressed will of the Japanese people a peacefully inclined and responsible government.]

Frank does not see that the final version was more stringent and less clear about the status of the emperor. Even the JSSC's (and JCS's) amendment directly addresses the question of “the form of government,” namely whether they choose the monarchical form of government. In Truman's final version, the question of the form of government is completely dropped, and refers vaguely “the freely expressed will of the Japanese people” and “a peacefully inclined and responsible government.” Whether or not the Japanese people could retain the monarchical system, which was the centerpiece of Stimson's draft, was watered down by the JSSC's amendment, and completely disappeared in Truman's final version.

If one examines the transformation of Stimson's draft into Truman's last version, one can clearly see that Truman and Byrnes were interested in removing any promise of a monarchy, the issue that the Japanese policy makers, regardless of the peace party or the war party, were most vitally interested in. Frank equates unconditional surrender with the “terms acceptable to the United States,” but the American policy makers were divided precisely on the terms of unconditional surrender, namely, over the question of whether it should include the maintenance of a constitutional monarchy. There was no unanimity over “the terms acceptable to the United

States.” Truman and Byrnes overruled the views advocated by Stimson, McCloy, Forrestal, and Grew. Moreover, when Truman and Byrnes decided to strike out this passage, they knew full well that this ultimatum would be rejected by the Japanese precisely because it did not contain the promise of the preservation of the monarchy.

Truman and Byrnes made the condition less acceptable to the Japanese, and they knew that the final version would be rejected by the Japanese. The question is why they chose this alternative by rejecting the alternative recommended by Stimson and the OPD? I hypothesized that their choice was connected with the use of the atomic bomb and Soviet entry into the war. I do not agree with his categorical statement that any president would have made the same decision. Certainly, Byrnes would have. But FDR? Hoover had sided with Stimson.

(b) Togo-Sato Exchange of Telegrams: Frank and I also differ on the interpretations of the Togo-Sato exchange of telegrams.

Frank argues that the editors of the “Magic” Diplomatic Summary made it “crystal clear to policy makers that Togo flatly rejected Sato’s proposal that acceptance of unconditional surrender should be made with one condition: preservation of the Imperial House.

This is, indeed, a very important criticism, which could potentially undermine one of the important arguments in my book that the elimination of the passage promising a constitutional monarchy was integrally connected with the decision to use the atomic bomb. In his previous telegram, No. 1416, on July 18, Sato advocated the acceptance of unconditional surrender “with the sole reservation that Japan’s ‘national structure-i.e. the Imperial House-be preserved.” If Togo’s July 21 telegram rejected Sato’s proposal, then it follows that Truman’s rejection of the guarantee for a constitutional monarchy can be perfectly justified, because the Japanese government would reject the provision that contained the passage allowing the Japanese to maintain the constitutional monarchy. This also means that Togo’s telegram punctured a big hole in the argument presented by Stimson, Forrestal, Leahy, Grew, and McCloy.

What did Togo really say in his very important July 21 telegram? This is what he said according to the July 22 Magic Diplomatic Summary:

With regard to unconditional surrender (I have been informed of your 18 July message)

We are unable to consent to it under any circumstances whatever. Even if the war drags on and it becomes clear that it will take much more bloodshed, the whole country as one man will pit itself against the enemy in accordance with the Imperial Will so long as the enemy demands unconditional surrender.³

This passage seems to confirm the validity of Frank’s assertion that Togo rejected not only unconditional surrender in general, but also the qualified unconditional surrender demand that excluded the preservation of the kokutai, as suggested by Sato.

³ SRS 1736, 22 July 45, pp. 2-3.

But if one examines the Japanese original, the sentence in parenthesis quoted above is: “Kiden dai 1416 go ryosho zumi).”⁴ “Ryosho” means “understand and accept.” It therefore strongly implies that Togo was not only informed of Sato’s proposal, as the Magic Diplomatic Summary stated, but also he accepted it. This interpretation is consistent with the foreign ministry’s consensus that the only condition that should be attached was the preservation of the Imperial House. It was therefore unfortunate that “ryosho” was mistranslated as “informed” in the Magic.

It is quite possible to interpret the Magic’s translation, as Frank does, that Togo rejected Sato’s proposal. But it does not necessarily follow, however, that the Magic Diplomatic Summary “made it crystal clear that Togo rejected” Sato’s proposal.⁵

It is also important to pay attention to the next passage that followed the part that I quoted above and that Frank chooses to ignore completely.

It is in order to avoid such a state of affairs that we are seeking a peace which is not so-called unconditional surrender through the good offices of Russia. It is necessary that we exert ourselves so that this idea will be finally driven home to the Americans and the British.

This passage makes it clear that Togo was interested in the termination of war on terms other than unconditional surrender, and that he wanted to convey this message not merely to the Soviets but also to the Americans and the British.

Frank is correct in pointing out that Togo did not specify what conditions should be sufficient to terminate the war. Togo stated that it would be “disadvantageous and impossible from the standpoint of foreign and domestic considerations.” The military opposition was a formidable obstacle, as Frank correctly points out. Togo was treading on a tight rope on the precarious balance between the peace party and the war party. But he believed that the only way to break this stalemate was Konoë’s direct negotiations with Moscow, the imperial sanction of the terms that Konoë would bring back from Moscow, and the imposition of these terms by the emperor on the reluctant military. And Konoë’s advisers were unanimous in their assessment that the only condition that should be attached was the preservation of the imperial house, the same position that Sato advocated in his Telegram 1416.⁶

Clearly, as Frank asserts, Byrnes and Truman interpreted Togo’s July 21 telegram as the evidence that Japan intended “to fight on rather than accept an unconditional surrender” (p. 157). But was this the only conclusion that American policy makers drew from Togo’s July 21 telegram? Forrestal wrote that the Japanese leaders’ “final judgment and decision was that the war must be fought with all the vigor and bitterness of which the nation was capable so long as the only alternative was the unconditional surrender.”⁷ From Togo’s July 21 telegram, Forrestal

⁴ *Shusen shiroku*, vol. 3, p. 180.

⁵ Sato’s Telegram 1416 is not, for some inexplicable reason, included in *Shusen shiroku*.

⁶ Frank misrepresents the tentative plan prepared by Konoë’s advisers to be brought to Moscow. It advocated the attachment of only one condition: the preservation of the Imperial House. It even included the possibility of Hirihito’s abdication.

⁷ Walter Mills, ed., *Forrestal Diaries* (New York: Viking Press, 1951), p. 76.

and Stimson concluded that Japan was close to surrender if the United States revised unconditional surrender to include the retention of a constitutional monarchy with the current dynasty (pp. 157-158). Based on this telegram, Stimson, who had previously given up the hope to restore the guarantee of the constitutional monarchy, once more tried to persuade Truman to change his mind on July 24 (pp. 156-157).

Togo's July 21 was, indeed, important, but it was not the decisive factor that triggered Truman's decision to reject the promise of the constitutional monarchy, since the decision to delete this promise had been already made long before July 21, as I argue above.

(c) Magic Far Eastern Summary and Ultra:

Frank should be credited for uncovering the existence of Magic Far Eastern Summary as well as Ultra. I must confess that I did not use these important materials. Frank states that the Magic Far East Summary, which was often delivered together with the Magic Diplomatic Summary, took the position that "so long as the Imperial Army believes it can defeat the initial invasion, there was very little prospect that Japan would surrender on terms acceptable to the U.S." And he concludes these opinions "carry more weight than those of Forrestal, Stimson or McCloy about the nearness of Japan's surrender."

The problem of this argument is the weak link that connects this analysis with the primary motivation behind Truman/Byrnes' decision. He attributes this lack of evidence to the extreme secrecy that surrounds these intelligence sources. He states: "far more often we are left to infer that the radio intelligence information shaped the decision making." In other words, we must engage in "conjecture," the very method Frank elsewhere denounces as not a legitimate historical method. Forrestal, Stimson, McCloy and Byrnes had no hesitation to reveal the supposedly classified information they obtained from the Magic Diplomatic Summary. Byrnes kept a copy of the Magic Diplomatic Summary. If the Magic Far Eastern Summary was delivered jointly with the Magic Diplomatic Summary, why didn't the Byrnes papers contain it together with the Magic Diplomatic Summary? The existence of Ultra and the Magic Far East itself is not sufficient to prove that Truman and Byrnes based their decision on the information supplied by them. When Stimson recommended the reinsertion of a constitutional monarchy in the ultimatum on his July 24 meeting with Truman, Truman did not reject Stimson's recommendation because his source indicated that this insertion would be rejected by the Japanese or that this promise would embolden the Japanese hardliners judging from the information he possessed. Instead, he merely stated that it was too late to change it, because he had already sent the draft to Chian Kai-shek. When Stimson further asked Truman to "watch carefully so that the Japanese might be reassured verbally through diplomatic channels if it was found that they were hanging fire on that one point," Truman did not reject Stimson's advice, but rather he said that this was exactly what he had in mind, and that he would take care of it. In this exchange the information allegedly given by the Magic Far East and Ultra was never raised.

2. The Potsdam Proclamation, the Atomic Bomb, and Soviet Entry into the War:

Frank questions my interpretation that Truman and Byrnes deliberately excised the promise of a constitutional monarchy from the Potsdam Proclamation because it provided a justification to use

the atomic bomb. He asks: "Where is there any documentation that either Truman or Byrnes ever directly stated this reasoning?" I do not have specific documentation to prove my point as much as Frank cannot prove the Magic Far Eastern Summary and Ultra radio intelligence were the decisive factor leading Truman's and Byrnes' decision to insist on unconditional surrender and use the atomic bomb.

But I can use inferences and plausible hypotheses based on circumstantial evidence. Let us recall that as early as July 17, Byrnes told Stimson that he and Truman had worked out a "timetable." The entry for July 18 of Walter Brown's diary reads: "JFB [Byrnes] had hoped Russian declaration of war against Japan would come out [of] this conference No[w] he think[s] United States and United Kingdom will have to issue [a] joint statement giving Japs two weeks to surrender or fac[e] destruction. (Secret weapon will be ready by [t]hat time)" (pp. 142-143). Let us also recall that when Byrnes read Togo's July 21 telegram, he immediately connected his rejection of unconditional surrender with the use of the atomic bomb and Soviet entry into the war. Especially, after they received Groves' report, the Potsdam Proclamation and the atomic bomb became more closely connected. Byrnes asked Stimson about the timing of the S-1 program on July 23. On the same day, Stimson visited Truman. In his diary, Stimson wrote: "He [Truman] told me that he had the warning message which we prepared on his desk, and had accepted our most recent change in it, and that he proposed to shoot it out as soon as he heard the definite day of the operation. We had a brief discussion about Stalin's recent expansions and he confirmed what I have heard. But he told me that the United States was standing firm and he was apparently relying greatly upon the information as to S-1" (p. 151). These passages clearly demonstrate the connection among the timing of issuing the Potsdam Proclamation, the timing of the atomic bomb, and the desire to prevent Soviet expansionism.

Furthermore, when he brought Harrison's telegram about the timing of the atomic bomb deployment, Stimson noted in his diary entry for July 24: "I then showed him the telegram which had come last evening from Harrison giving the dates of the operations. He said that was just what he wanted, that he was highly delighted and that it gave him his cue for his warning" (p. 153). Walter Brown wrote in his diary on July 24: "JFB still hoping for time, believing after atomic bomb Japan will surrender and Russia will not get in so much on the kill, thereby being in a position to press for claims against China." Forrestal wrote: "Byrnes said he was most anxious to get the Japanese affair over with before the Russians got in with particular reference to Dairen and Port Arthur." When Forrestal told Byrnes that Truman had said "his principal objective at Potsdam would be to get Russia in the war," Byrnes responded that "it was most probable that the President's view had changed; certainly that was not now my view." Walter Brown's diary contains the following passage for July 26: "Joint message to Japan released. This was prelude to atomic bomb." Byrnes knew even before the Japanese responded to the Potsdam Proclamation that the document was prelude to the bomb (p. 158). Is it too far-fetched to connect the issuance of the Potsdam Proclamation with Truman/Byrnes' timetable where the use of the atomic bomb and the date of Soviet entry into the war were carefully mapped out?

Truman and Byrnes state in their memoirs that the decision to drop the atomic bomb was the most difficult decision and this decision greatly pained them. But if so, it seems reasonable to assume that they carefully monitored Japan's reaction. As I discussed in my book (p. 182), Togo's July 30 telegram to Sato mentioned that in Tokyo's negotiations with Moscow, "there is

a disposition to make the Potsdam Three Power Proclamation the basis of our study concerning terms.” The naval intelligence analysts underlined this passage as important.⁸

Frank maintains that Togo's July 30 telegram was negated by the July 27 Magic Far East Summary that described the hopeless division within the Japanese government. Frank concludes: “the men who really controlled Japan were absolutely bent upon one final decisive battle and would not surrender on terms acceptable to the U.S.” The problem here is that if the policy makers ever discussed how the Japanese government reacted to the Potsdam Proclamation, such evidence has never been discovered.

(3) *The Soviet Factor and the Atomic Bombings in Japan's Decision to Surrender:*

Where Frank and I further disagree is the assessment of the Soviet factor in Japan's decision to surrender. Frank believes that the Japanese military had written off Manchuria, and by implication the Soviet invasion of Manchuria was not as great a shock to the Japanese as the atomic bombings on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. To support this assertion, Frank cites the Kwantung army's revision of strategy abandoning “all but a small triangular redoubt in southeastern Manchuria along the Korean border.” But the new strategy was based on the general assumption that Japan would be able to keep the Soviets neutral. This assumption led the imperial general headquarters to extract sizable divisions from Manchuria for the homeland defense. The Ketsu-go strategy was predicated by Soviet neutrality. That was why when the Soviets attacked, it was a great shock to the Japanese military, and the entire strategy collapsed like a house of cards.

Since the shock that jolted the army with the news of the Soviet invasion is discussed fully in my book as well as in my forthcoming article in *Reinterpreting the End of the Pacific War*, I do not need to go into details here. Suffice to mention that one day before the Soviet invasion, the Army Military Bureau considered it imperative to keep Soviet neutrality, and that even after the invasion, the Army clung to the preposterous idea that it would be possible to negotiate with the Soviet Union to restore its neutrality.

To deal with the Soviet factor, Frank's argument is two-fold: to ignore the Soviet factor entirely in Japan's decision until August 15 and to acknowledge the Soviet factor merely as the means to implement surrender of troops. And this two-tier argument is to buttress his ultimate objective that it was the atomic bombings that were most decisive in Japan's decision to surrender.

Frank does not address my major arguments challenging the decisiveness of the atomic bombings on Japan's decision to surrender. This includes:

—There is no evidence to indicate the Togo or the emperor advocated the acceptance of the Potsdam Proclamation even after the atomic bombing on Hiroshima before the Soviet invasion of Manchuria.

—On the contrary, the government continued to seek the termination of the war through Moscow's mediation even after the Hiroshima bomb.

⁸ SRS1747, 2 Aug 45, pp. 2-3; SRH-088, pp. 7, 16.

—On August 7 Togo sent an urgent telegram to Sato urging him to meet Molotov immediately.

—Hasunuma Shigeru, emperor's Chief Aide de Camp, who was present whenever the emperor went, testified that the atomic bomb on Hiroshima did not influence the emperor's view.

—Only after the Soviet invasion did the Japanese government begin discussing seriously the possibility of accepting the Potsdam Proclamation.

To prove that the atomic bombings were decisive factor on the emperor's decision, Frank continues to rely on Takeshita's account of the August 10 imperial conference, which is the only source that refers to the emperor's alleged reference to the atomic bomb for his decision to accept surrender. Takeshita did not attend the conference, but none of the participants (Suzuki, Togo, Toyoda, Sakomizu, Hoshina, and Ikeda) mention that the emperor referred to the atomic bomb.

Frank further proposes that the only evidence we should rely on to reach conclusions about the motivation behind Japan's decision to surrender are Hirohito's statements alone, since the emperor represented the only legitimate authority that could decide on surrender. But it is not clear to what extent Hirohito's statements at the imperial conferences and on other occasions reflected his own thinking and to what extent the ideas of other advisers (such as Kido, Shigemitsu through Kido, and Takagi's group) were filtered into the emperor's statements. The absence of record of crucial meetings between Kido and the emperor makes it impossible to detect what was really in the emperor's mind. And here Frank admits that he has to rely on speculations. Frank's methodology could make sense only if we assume that these statements accurately reflected his thinking, an assumption that can hardly be entertained.

Furthermore, Frank considers Hirohito's two imperial rescripts a reflection of his own thinking. But the imperial rescript to accept unconditional surrender was composed by Sakomizu, and it was revised at the cabinet meeting. The imperial rescript to the soldiers and officers was composed by Kihara Michio, assistant to the cabinet. They were both approved by the emperor, but it is misleading to think that they accurately reflected Hirohito's personal view. There is little to reason to distinguish the imperial rescripts from the statement issued by the cabinet and Suzuki's statement. All were written by the same writers.

As for the imperial rescript to the soldiers and officer, where there was no reference to the atomic bomb but it specifically referred to the Soviet entry into the war, Frank shifts to the second tier of argument: it was necessary to stress the Soviet entry in order to convince the Japanese troops overseas to accept surrender. But why the Soviet entry into the war, not the atomic bombings, was more persuasive for the soldiers to accept surrender is not explained. It must be remembered that this rescript was issued not only to the soldiers and officer fighting against the Soviets, but also all the soldiers overseas. If the atomic bombs rendered the defense of the homeland hopeless, as Frank argues, then why didn't the rescript say so? Isn't the importance of the Soviet entry into the war to persuade the soldiers to accept surrender telling evidence that it also provided a powerful motivation behind Japan's decision to surrender?

Finally, Frank makes an argument that the Japanese military did not take the possibility of the Soviet invasion of Japan's homeland seriously because the Soviets lacked the capability to land on Japan's homeland.

The problem for the Hokkaido defense was its size, which was as big as the entire Tohoku prefectures plus Niigata Prefecture combined. The Fifth Area Army, responsible for the defense of Hokkaido, had to disperse 114,000 troops into three possible points of attacks: one division in the Shiribetsu-Nemuro area in the east, one division in the Cape of Soya in the north, and one brigade in the Tomakomai area in the west. The fortification of the Shibetsu area was not completed, and the defense of the Nemuro area was considered hopeless because of the flat terrain. The defense of the north was concentrated on the Cape of Soya, but nothing was prepared for Rumoi, where the Soviets intended to land. The military planners had no confidence about the Army's ability to repulse the Soviet invasion of Hokkaido. In *Downfall*, this is what Frank himself wrote: "the Soviet Navy's amphibious shipping resources were limited but sufficient to transport the three assault divisions in several echelons. The Red Army intended to seize the northern half of Hokkaido. If resistance proved strong, reinforcements would be deployed to aid the capture of the rest of Hokkaido. Given the size of Hokkaido, the Japanese would have been hard pressed to move units for a concerted confrontation of the Soviet invasion. The chances of Soviet success appeared to be very good."⁹ I tend to agree with Frank's view expressed in *Downfall*.

III. Holloway's Comments

Holloway makes three valuable comments on my interpretation of Stalin's actions, one very interesting addition from Russian sources, and two criticisms.

First, he introduces the materials from the transcripts of Soviet interrogations of captured Kwantung army officers. These are comparable to "Interrogations" and "Statements" (U.S. Army, Far East Command, Military History Section), and U.S. Strategic Bombing survey's Interrogations, although the number of these transcripts published in *Velikaia otechestvennaia*, vol. 7, pt. 2, are miniscule in quantity compared with the American "interrogations" and "statements." Nevertheless, it is interesting to see what the Kwantung Army officers said about the reasons for Japan's surrender.

I would like to add a few words to Holloway's useful commentaries to these transcripts. First, although the Kwantung army officers mentioned both the atomic bombings and the Soviet entry into the war as two crucial events, as Holloway indicates, they considered the Soviet entry a more important cause for Japan's surrender than the atomic bombings. General Uemura's interrogation, quoted by Holloway, clearly indicates this, but even General Kita Seiichi's statement reveals that he attached more importance to the Soviet entry (the Emperor decided) than the atomic bombings (the Emperor considered it hard for Japan to fight on). Second, I would add that the General Hata Hikosaburo stated in the interrogation: "We did not think that the Soviet Union would, clear out of blue [vnezapno], declare war against Japan this year. Therefore, there is no doubt that the beginning of the military actions between Japan and the

⁹ Frank, *Downfall*, p. 323.

Soviet Union had tremendous influence on the entire Japanese people.”¹⁰ Third, we must keep in mind that these transcripts, as all interrogations and statements conducted by the American side, reflected certain points of view of the interrogators. Some statements were response to interrogators' questions. For instance, General-Lieutenant Shimizu Noritsune's statement on the atomic bomb as the cruel and inhuman weapon that aimed at the total extermination of the Japanese people might reflect the point of view of the interrogator more than the general's view.¹¹

The second point Holloway makes is his criticism of my treatment of the impact that the information on the atomic bomb had on Stalin at Potsdam. Holloway believes that I exaggerated the importance of the information given by Truman to Stalin about the successful test of the atomic bomb. Holloway is the world's foremost authority on Soviet nuclear weapons. Although definitive evidence about Stalin's reaction to the news that the United States succeeded in possessing the atomic bomb is lacking, perhaps Holloway is correct in his interpretation: Stalin did not believe that the Americans would use the atomic bomb on Japan so soon.

Holloway agrees, however, with my interpretation that Stalin was anxious to enter the war, before Japan surrendered. If we discount the atomic bomb as a factor, it makes the importance of the Potsdam Proclamation without Stalin's signature a more compelling reason to hasten the date of attack on Manchuria.

The third valid, and very important point Holloway makes is the issue of the date of Soviet attack on Japan. In my book, I stated that the previously agreed date of attack was set for sometime between August 22-25, and after Stalin's request to append his signature to the Potsdam Proclamation was turned down by Truman, Stalin ordered Vasilevskii to move up the date of attack for 10 to 14 days. Holloway states that on July 16, Stalin telephoned Vasilevskii to advance the planned date of attack by ten days, to August 1, but Vasilevskii replied that the Soviet forces would not be ready by then and asked that August 11 date remain in effect. Relying on Shtemenko, Holloway asserts that “Stalin gave no new orders during the Potsdam Conference.” He continues: “On August 3 Vasilevskii recommended to Stalin that the offensive against Japanese forces in Manchuria begin on August 9-10. Stalin accepted this advice and sent an order that the attack be launched on August 10 at 18.00 hours (Moscow time or 24.00 hours (Trans-Baikal time).”

Holloway's criticism made me go back to the sources. Then I realized that I did not pay sufficient attention to Shtemenko's memoirs. In his article published in *Voенно-istoricheskii zhurnal*, he cites what seems to me to be the same August 3 telegram published in *Velikaia otechestvennaia*, vol. 7, pt. 1, which I quoted in my book (pp. 177-178). Shtemenko states that Vasilevskii attempted to change the date of attack from August 11, as previously set, to August 9-10. According to Shtemenko, based on the information that the Japanese were reinforcing troops from 19 divisions to 23 divisions and increased the number of airplanes from 450 to 850, a postponement of the attack would not serve Soviet interests. The Stavka carefully examined

¹⁰ V. V. Vartanov et al, ed., *Velikaia otechestvennaia*, vol. 1, pt. 2, *Sovietsko-iaponskaia voika 1945 goda: istoriia voенно-politicheskogo protivobordsva dvukh derzhav v 30-40-e gody: dokumenty i materially* (Moscow, Tera-Terra, 2000), p. 321.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 323.

Vasilevskii's recommendations and the conditions of preparedness of deployed troops. Shtemenko writes that the Stavka agreed with "Vasilevskii's recommendations about the timing of the beginning of military actions," but did not accept his proposal to make the entire troops of the First Far Eastern Front move to offensive action, since "no matter how strong they might be, the advanced detachment alone could hardly take up the battle in 5-7 days." The Stavka favored the united military action involving the main forces of the front.¹²

Holloway's criticism prompted me to change my view: the date of attack was set for August 11 rather than August 22-25. Nevertheless, the issue of the date of attack is not as simple and straightforward as Holloway seems to indicate. Shtemenko's memoirs cited above is very ambiguous about what was decided: whether or not the Stavka accepted Vasilevskii's alternative date attack of August 9-10. On the face of it, Shtemenko seems to suggest that the Stavka accepted Vasilevskii's proposal, but his reasoning seems to repudiate Vasilevskii's strategy. Moreover, the editor of *Velikaia otechestvannia* notes in his commentary that despite Vasilevskii's recommendation, "the precise date and the time of the beginning of the military action had to be set by the Stavka. The timing was determined for all the forces of the Far East: August 10, 18.00, Moscow time." This must mean that despite Shtemenko's ambiguous statement, the Stavka must have turned down Vasilevskii's recommendation.

I do not entirely agree with Holloway's contention that Stalin did not issue any new order on the date of attack during the Potsdam Conference. Vasilevskii's August 3 telegram strongly suggests that he was responding to Stalin's previous telegram. (Otherwise, what prompted him to change his mind when he had turned down Stalin's previous request to advance the date of attack?) After suggesting that the Stavka advance date of attack to August 9-10, he requested, at the end of the telegram, that Stavka give him final instructions for the precise time that military action should begin, as well as instructions regarding questions of a "political and diplomatic nature" (p. 178). It is possible to argue, although no evidence exists, that as I argued in the book, Stalin requested from Potsdam that Vasilevskii move up the date of attack because of "political and diplomatic" reasons. Considering Stalin's shock at Truman's issuing the Potsdam Proclamation without Stalin's signature and Truman's rejection of Stalin's request to join the Potsdam Proclamation, it makes sense to assume that Stalin made the request to Vasilevskii to advance the date of attack. If this hypothesis is correct, it is likely that Stalin made this request either on July 30, when he unveiled the appointment of Vasilevskii as the commander in chief of the Soviet Army in the Far East, or on August 2 on the day when he ordered the creation of three fronts.

IV. Conclusion:

I am sure that not all the contributors agree with all my responses. I also regret that I do not have space to cover such important issues as Japan's "rejection" of the Potsdam Proclamation, the impact of the Nagasaki bomb, the factor of revenge in Truman's decision, and the connection between foreign policy and domestic policy. But this rebuttal is already too long. I hope this exchange serves as the beginning of a meaningful and productive dialogue that will elevate the scholarship on the ending of the Pacific War to a higher level.

¹² S. Shtemenko, "Iz istorii razgroma Kvantunskoi armii," *Voенно-istoricheskii zhurnal*, No. 5, 1967, p.54.

Tsuyoshi Hasegawa
University of California, Santa Barbara

Tsuyoshi Hasegawa is professor of history and co-director of the Center for Cold War Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara. He is the author of *The February Revolution: Petrograd 1917* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1981); *Roshia kakumeika petrogurado no shimin seikatsu* (Tokyo: Chuokoronsha, 1989); *The Northern Territories Dispute and Russo-Japanese Relations*, 2 vols., Volume 1, *Between War and Peace*, Volume 2, *Neither War Nor Peace* (Berkeley: International and Area Studies Publications, University of California, Berkeley, 1998); *Hopporyodo mondai to nichiro kankei* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 2000); *Racing the Enemy: Stalin, Truman, and the Surrender of Japan* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2005). *Racing the Enemy* will be revised and translated into Japanese and will be published as *Anto: Sutarin, Toruman to nihonno kohuku* (Tokyo: Chuokoron shinsha).

He is currently editing a book, *Reinterpreting the End of the Pacific War: Atomic Bombs and Soviet Entry into the War* (Stanford University Press, forthcoming).

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