Submission Guidelines
Collaborate with your team on your case study presentation. When it is complete, the team leader is responsible for submitting it in the Assignment Lab, or for making sure that another team member submits it. Please note that all learners should visit the assignment lab and provide feedback on at least 2 other team presentations, before the deadline.

As a reminder, your presentation should:
1. Be limited to no more than 750 words
2. Engage the materials in the case studies, lectures, and text.
3. You are free to import material from outside the course, but this is not necessary and may detract you and teammates from the task. Don't go overboard!

Instructions

Step 1: Read the case study introduction, background information, and the primary sources below.
Step 2: Work with your team to answer the challenge question for this case study.
Step 3: Go to the Assignment Lab to post your response, and to read and comment on other learners' submissions.

Track C, Case study 8: War, Power, and Human Futures – the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki

STEP 1

Case Study Introduction

Our second-to-final case study for Track C, 'War,' examines the events of 1945 that both ended the Second World War and heralded the start of the nuclear age: international power relations were fundamentally changed, and the Cold War was begun. The nuclear superpowers that emerged in the wake of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the political and social philosophies that underpinned these powers, were to define the late twentieth century. The bombings in Japan changed human understandings on the limits of war and limits for human survival on the planet.

Background Information

The United States of America dropped two atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on August 6 and 9, 1945 respectively. 'Little boy' at Hiroshima was a gun-type uranium-235-based fission bomb, the first nuclear bomb used in warfare; 'Fat Man' was a complex plutonium-based nuclear implosion weapon deployed at Nagasaki, the last nuclear bomb used in conflict. Both had been produced through the Manhattan Project.

With fears that Germany could develop an atomic weapon, from 1939 on the United States brought together leading physicists, bureaucrats, and military leaders in a research program named the Development of Substitute Materials, soon known as the Manhattan Project. At the center of its work was the development of nuclear capability: the atom bomb.

In May of 1945, Secretary of War Henry Stimson had set up the Interim Committee to consider issues arising from the development of usable nuclear energy. This was chaired by Brigadier General Leslie Groves and J. Robert Oppenheimer, two leaders of the Manhattan Project. Among other things, the committee

considered whether and how the atomic bomb should be used. Despite the Germans' May 7, 1945 surrender, the Second World War raged on in the Pacific.

The Allied-powers were now focused on Japan. Military and political leaders wanted an unconditional surrender. The bombing campaign in Japan had exacted high civilian casualties and massive damage to infrastructure in Tokyo and elsewhere. Fighting in the Pacific continued to claim the lives of Allied soldiers, especially Americans. The Interim Committee's sub-committee, consisting of scientists involved in the bomb project, reported on the question of the use of a nuclear weapon on June 16, 1945, following the success of the Trinity Test in New Mexico, the first detonation of a plutonium bomb.

On June 21, the Interim Committee recommended to Henry Stimson "that the weapon be used against Japan at the earliest opportunity, that it be used without warning, and that it be used on a dual target, namely, a military installation or war plant surrounded by or adjacent to homes or other buildings most susceptible to damage." Subsequently Truman and other Allied leaders unsuccessfully demanded Japanese surrender in the Potsdam Declaration of July 26, 1945.

On August 6, 1945, the United States dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan. Three days later, the U.S. dropped a second atomic bomb on Nagasaki. August 9, 1945 was also the beginning of the Soviet–Japanese War: The Soviet Union's entry into war against Japan.

The surrender of Imperial Japan was announced by Emperor Hirohito on August 15 and formally signed on September 2, 1945 on the USS Missouri, ending the fighting of the Second World War.

After the first use of the nuclear bomb scientists who had worked on the Manhattan project expressed concern over the use and proliferation of atomic weapons.

The Case Study

In this case study we consider changes to power relations in the world and in war heralded by the advent of the nuclear age. The culmination of total war in Japan, the targets being entire cities, concurrently saw the beginnings of something new in the standoff between the US and USSR. We look at the setting of the Cold War stage through the end of World War II and the defeat of Japan by Allied powers. The focus of our study is the bombing of the city of Hiroshima, with a brief consideration of the aftermath of the bombing of Nagasaki three days later. Again, we consider the question of how technological and scientific advantage can entrench power, and how the coming of the nuclear age changed the world. We consider how the arrival of such weapons requires limiting their spread while the type of power they bestow fuels the desire and political will to acquire them.

Primary Sources

Here are the primary sources for this case study:

1. Primary Source One: Recommendations on the Immediate Use of Nuclear Weapons, The Scientific Panel of the Interim Committee, June 1945.
2. Primary Source Two: Statement by United States President Harry S. Truman on bombing of Hiroshima, August 6, 1945
3. Primary Source Three: Aftermath of the bombing of the city of Hiroshima
4. Primary Source Four: Ground view of the city of Nagasaki before and after the bombing

5. Primary Source Five: Hanson W. Baldwin, “End of War Against Japan Hastened but Destruction Sows Seed of Hate,” August 7, 1945; Burchett, “The Atomic Plague,” August 27, 1945, *The Daily Express*, September 5, 1945
6. Primary Source Six: From Henry Stimson, “The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb,” *Harper’s* 194 (February 1947): 97-107
7. Primary Source Seven: The USSR’s reaction to the bombing of Hiroshima: Minutes of meeting between W. Averell Harriman, George F. Kennan, Joseph Stalin, and Vyacheslav Molotov, August 8, 1945;
8. Primary Source Eight: “Russia publishes unique 1945 Soviet embassy report of Hiroshima bombing,” TASS Russian News Agency, TASS Russian News Agency, World, August 6, 2015.

Primary Source One: The Interim Committee, Scientific opinion, and the Manhattan Project

Background

The Interim Committee was established by US Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson in May 1945 to focus on the implications of the development of usable nuclear energy. Chaired by leaders of the Manhattan Project Brigadier General Leslie Groves and J. Robert Oppenheimer, the committee's mandate included making recommendations on the use of atomic weapons. A Sub-Committee comprised of scientists working on the atomic bomb reported on the matter on June 16, 1945. Five days later, the Interim Committee recommended to Stimson, "that the weapon be used against Japan at the earliest opportunity, that it be used without warning, and that it be used on a dual target, namely, a military installation or war plant surrounded by or adjacent to homes or other buildings most susceptible to damage."

Source: Memorandum from R. Gordon Arneson, Interim Committee Secretary, to Mr. Harrison, June 25, 1945, Top Secret, RG 77, Manhattan Engineering District (MED) Records, H-B files, folder no. 100 (copy from microfilm). Available through the National Security Archives, George Washington University.

Source One: Recommendations on the Immediate Use of Nuclear Weapons, The Scientific Panel of the Interim Committee, June 16, 1945

You have asked us to comment on the initial use of the new weapon. This use, in our opinion, should be such as to promote a satisfactory adjustment of our international relations. At the same time, we recognize our obligation to our nation to use the weapons to help save American lives in the Japanese war.

(1) To accomplish these ends we recommend that before the weapons are used not only Britain, but also Russia, France, and China be advised that we have made considerable progress in our work on atomic weapons, and that we would welcome suggestions as to how we can cooperate in making this development contribute to improved international relations.

(2) The opinions of our scientific colleagues on the initial use of these weapons are not unanimous: they range from the proposal of a purely technical demonstration to that of the military application best designed to induce surrender. Those who advocate a purely technical demonstration would wish to outlaw the use of atomic weapons, and have feared that if we use the weapons now our position in future negotiations will be prejudiced. Others emphasize the opportunity of saving American lives by immediate military use, and believe that such use will improve the international prospects, in that they are more concerned with the prevention of war than with the elimination of this specific weapon. We find ourselves closer to these latter views; we can propose no technical demonstration likely to bring an end to the war; we see no acceptable alternative to direct military use.

(3) With regard to these general aspects of the use of atomic energy, it is clear that we, as scientific men, have no proprietary rights. It is true that we are among the few citizens who have had occasion to give thoughtful consideration to these problems during the past few years. We have, however, no claim to special competence in solving the political, social, and military problems which are presented by the advent of atomic power.

Source: Recommendations on the Immediate Use of Nuclear Weapons, The Scientific Panel of the Interim Committee, June 16, 1945, "The Atomic Bomb and the End of World War II," *National Security Archive* from Michael B. Stoff Et Al., Eds., *The Manhattan Project: A Documentary Introduction To The Atomic Age* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991), 150.

Primary Source Two: Statement by United States President Harry S. Truman on bombing of Hiroshima

Background

This statement explaining the bombing of Hiroshima to the public was released in Washington. It had been drafted before American President Harry S. Truman had left for Germany in early July, 1945. Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson was authorized to release it after the bombing of Hiroshima. Truman, aboard the *U.S.S. Augusta*, was informed of the August 5 bombing on August 6, while returning from the Potsdam Conference.

THE WHITE HOUSE, Washington, D.C.

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

August 6, 1945

SIXTEEN HOURS AGO an American airplane dropped one bomb on Hiroshima, an important Japanese Army base. That bomb had more power than 20,000 tons of T.N.T. It had more than two thousand times the blast power of the British "Grand Slam" which is the largest bomb ever yet used in the history of warfare.

The Japanese began the war from the air at Pearl Harbor. They have been repaid many fold. And the end is not yet. With this bomb we have now added a new and revolutionary increase in destruction to supplement the growing power of our armed forces. In their present form these bombs are now in production and even more powerful forms are in development.

It is an atomic bomb. It is a harnessing of the basic power of the universe. The force from which the sun draws its power has been loosed against those who brought war to the Far East.

Before 1939, it was the accepted belief of scientists that it was theoretically possible to release atomic energy. But no one knew any practical method of doing it. By 1942, however, we knew that the Germans were working feverishly to find a way to add atomic energy to the other engines of war with which they hoped to enslave the world. But they failed. We may be grateful to Providence that the Germans got the V-1's and V-2's late and in limited quantities and even more grateful that they did not get the atomic bomb at all.

The battle of the laboratories held fateful risks for us as well as the battles of the air, land and sea, and we have now won the battle of the laboratories as we have won the other battles.

Beginning in 1940, before Pearl Harbor, scientific knowledge useful in war was pooled between the United States and Great Britain, and many priceless helps to our victories have come from that arrangement. Under that general policy the research on the atomic bomb was begun. With American and British scientists working together we entered the race of discovery against the Germans.

The United States had available the large number of scientists of distinction in the many needed areas of knowledge. It had the tremendous industrial and financial resources necessary for the project and they could be devoted to it without undue impairment of other vital war work. In the United States the laboratory work and the production plants, on which a

substantial start had already been made, would be out of reach of enemy bombing, while at that time Britain was exposed to constant air attack and was still threatened with the possibility of invasion. For these reasons Prime Minister Churchill and President Roosevelt agreed that it was wise to carry on the project here. We now have two great plants and many lesser works devoted to the production of atomic power. Employment during peak construction numbered 125,000 and over 65,000 individuals are even now engaged in operating the plants. Many have worked there for two and a half years. Few know what they have been producing. They see great quantities of material going in and they see nothing coming out of these plants, for the physical size of the explosive charge is exceedingly small. We have spent two billion dollars on the greatest scientific gamble in history-and won.

But the greatest marvel is not the size of the enterprise, its secrecy, nor its cost, but the achievement of scientific brains in putting together infinitely complex pieces of knowledge held by many men in different fields of science into a workable plan. And hardly less marvelous has been the capacity of industry to design, and of labor to operate, the machines and methods to do things never done before so that the brain child of many minds came forth in physical shape and performed as it was supposed to do. Both science and industry worked under the direction of the United States Army, which achieved a unique success in managing so diverse a problem in the advancement of knowledge in an amazingly short time. It is doubtful if such another combination could be got together in the world. What has been done is the greatest achievement of organized science in history. It was done under high pressure and without failure.

We are now prepared to obliterate more rapidly and completely every productive enterprise the Japanese have above ground in any city. We shall destroy their docks, their factories, and their communications. Let there be no mistake; we shall completely destroy Japan's power to make war.

It was to spare the Japanese people from utter destruction that the ultimatum of July 26 was issued at Potsdam. Their leaders promptly rejected that ultimatum. If they do not now accept our terms they may expect a rain of ruin from the air, the like of which has never been seen on this earth. Behind this air attack will follow sea and land forces in such numbers and power as they have not yet seen and with the fighting skill of which they are already well aware.

...

The fact that we can release atomic energy ushers in a new era in man's understanding of nature's forces. Atomic energy may in the future supplement the power that now comes from coal, oil, and falling water, but at present it cannot be produced on a basis to compete with them commercially. Before that comes there must be a long period of intensive research.

It has never been the habit of the scientists of this country or the policy of this Government to withhold from the world scientific knowledge. Normally, therefore, everything about the work with atomic energy would be made public.

But under present circumstances it is not intended to divulge the technical processes of production or all the military applications, pending further examination of possible methods of protecting us and the rest of the world from the danger of sudden destruction.

I shall recommend that the Congress of the United States consider promptly the establishment of an appropriate commission to control the production and use of atomic power within the United States. I shall give further consideration and make further recommendations to the Congress as to how atomic power can become a powerful and forceful influence towards the maintenance of world peace.

Source: Statement by the President Announcing the Use of the A-Bomb at Hiroshima, August 6, 1945, Harry S. Truman Library and Museum. Public domain.

COMPASS POINTS

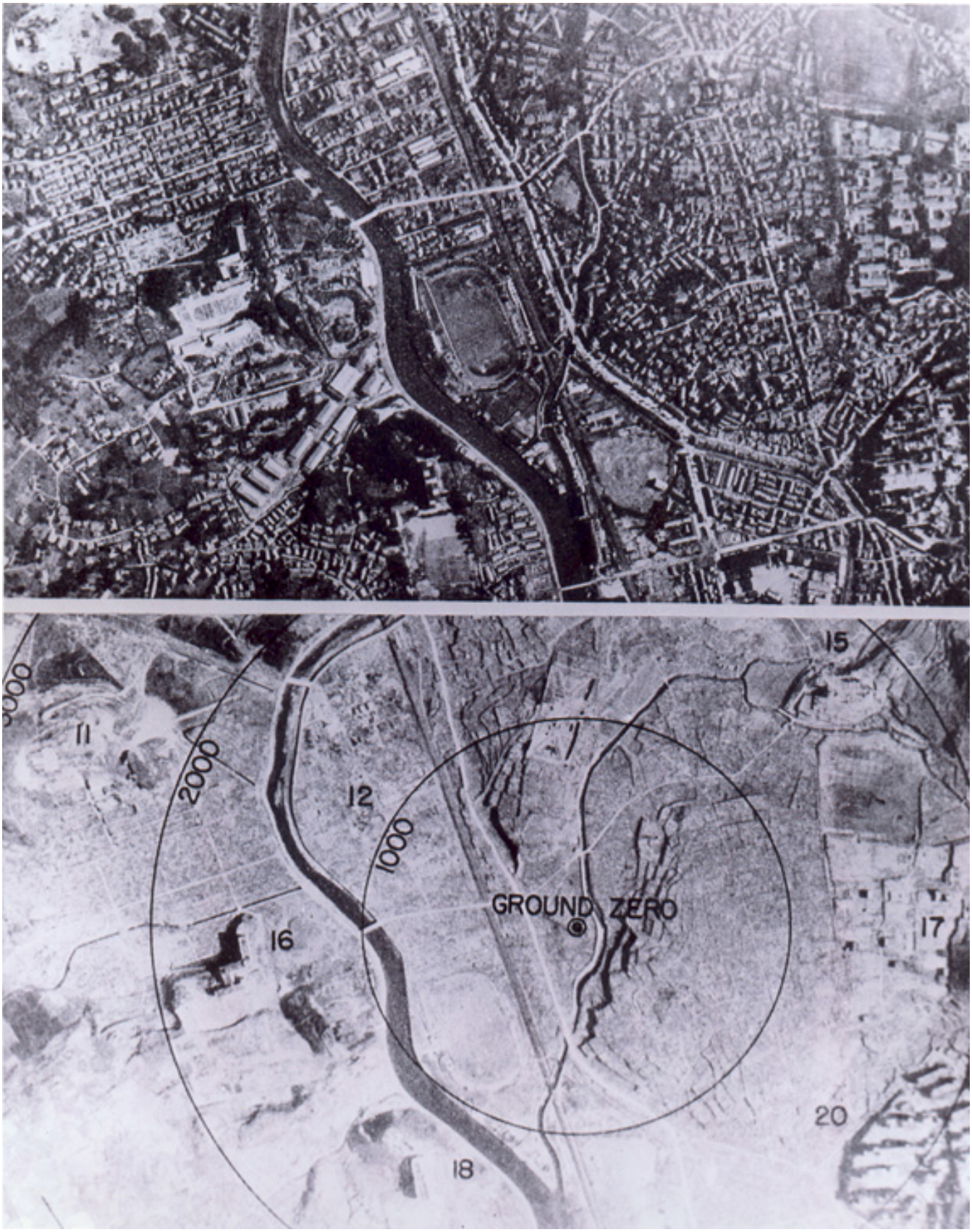
- Note how Hiroshima is referred to as "an important Japanese Army base" in the opening paragraph. Think about how that would have shaped the public response in contrast to an emphasis on the large civilian population, which constituted most casualties.
- Pay attention to how nuclear research and atomic power is discussed and its roles imagined.
- Look at the closing paragraph, particularly the last sentence. Note how the press statement on the bombing of Hiroshima also sets the terms for a post-war world.

Primary Source Three: Aftermath of the bombing of the city of Hiroshima

Source:. Aftermath of the bombing of Hiroshima, September 1945. Public domain image.

Primary Source Four: The bombing of the city of Nagasaki

Ground view of Nagasaki before and after the bombing; 1,000 foot circles are shown.



Source: U.S. National Archives, RG 77-MDH, available through National Security Archive, George Washington University.

Primary Sources Five: Hanson W. Baldwin, "End of War Against Japan Hastened but Destruction Sows Seed of Hate," August 7, 1945,; Wilfred Burchett, "The Atomic Plague," August 27, 1945, *The Daily Express*, September 5, 1945

Background

Wilfred Burchett was one of a number of journalists given accreditation by the American army to cover the signing of the Japanese surrender. Whilst other journalists proceeded to the USS Missouri as expected, early on September 2, 1945, Burchett boarded a train for Hiroshima. Burchett's Morse code dispatch was carried by London's *Daily Express* newspaper under the title, "The Atomic Plague."

An earlier article by Hanson Baldwin had highlighted the new type of war and "chapter in human history" heralded by the use of a nuclear weapon at Hiroshima, and America's new role in the world.

The issue remained topical: in August 1946, the *New Yorker*, dedicated an entire issue to journalist John Hersey's article, "Hiroshima," based on interviews with six survivors of the bombing of Hiroshima the previous year.

The Atomic Weapon

End of War Against Japan Hastened But Destruction Sows Seed of Hate

By HANSON W. BALDWIN

The date, Aug. 6, 1945, and the name, Hiroshima, Japan, will long live in the sanguinary history of war.

Yesterday man unleashed the atom to destroy man, and another chapter in human history opened, a chapter in which the weird, the strange, the horrible becomes the trite and the obvious. Yesterday we clinched victory in the Pacific, but we sowed the whirlwind.

The dropping on Japan of an atomic energy bomb, developed by frantic and intensive work in secret American laboratories, comes as another and by far the greatest step in the campaign of military obliteration and political and psychological ultimatums that started soon after V-E Day.

The broadcasts by Capt. E. M. Zacharias of the Navy, the Potsdam declaration, and the announcements of Japanese cities to be bombed are now followed by a warning forecast of what may come if enemy resistance continues. We are trying to break the enemy will to fight without invasion.

Result Is Unpredictable

The result is unpredictable because the forces unleashed yesterday are outside human experience. The atomic energy explosive now in use in the Pacific is a derivative of uranium, U-235. The bomb dropped—the size of which was not specified—is said to be equivalent in explosive force to 20,000 tons of TNT.

TNT itself has long been surpassed in this war by explosives of more devastating force, RDX, Hexonite, Torpex and others. But these later explosives had a bursting effect only 20 to 60 per cent greater than TNT; the atomic explosive is many thousand times more destructive.

The blast effect of the bomb dropped yesterday, according to President Truman's announcement is equivalent to 2,000 times that of the largest bomb now known. One of the largest bombs ever used in war, the British 12,000 pound blockbuster, spreads its blast effect over sixteen and one-half acres.

The atomic energy bomb dropped on Hiroshima yesterday probably had the same effect, therefore— if the scientists' calculation is correct—as a number of Halifax explosions rolled into one. In Halifax, N. S., on Dec. 6, 1917, 3,000 tons of ammunition aboard a ship in the harbor blew up, killing 1,500 persons, injuring 4,000 and wrecking two and one-half square miles of the city.

This may mean, if the bomb dropped yesterday functioned according to calculations, that a great part of Hiroshima, a city of 318,000 persons, has been destroyed. Man has released unknowable forces.

We Raced Axis Scientists

Exactly what the atomic bomb did yesterday and exactly what it can be expected to do, no man can now say. It has long been known that we were engaged in a race with the Germans and perhaps other nations to develop such a practicable, workable, explosive, and in one sense yesterday's blow was only a partly kept secret in that such an attack had been anticipated by some observers.

But the means and methods by which the explosive is developed, its formula, the process of manufacture, of bomb loading and of detonation are all carefully guarded secrets, known in their entirety to only a few men. Nor can the bomb's effects be stated. But it is possible that in addition to the direct destructive effects of the blast —terrific in their consequences— there may be secondary and perhaps later effects. Those within a certain radius who escape death may be marred or maimed, blinded, deafened, diseased.

It is probable that the Japanese, as well as the Germans, were working intensively on the development of atomic energy explosives, for we now know that liaison between the Germans and the Japanese was considerably closer than we once believed. But it is unlikely that Japanese scientists had solved the problem. Even if they had, they have now lost the lethal race, for Japanese industries and productive facilities are in no sense a match for our own, and Japan has virtually no means—now that her air power and her navy are so clearly outmatched — to launch atomic energy explosives upon this country.

The dropping of yesterday's bomb was accompanied and followed by an unprecedented "war of words"; our psychological warfare agencies are now going "all out" in attempts to persuade Japan that she must surrender quickly or be destroyed.

In war—particularly this war—it is almost useless to talk of the "rules" of war. And quite clearly our development of an atomic explosive was in the nature of a race for survival. Its use will probably save American lives, may shorten the war materially, may even compel Japanese surrender.

Seeds of Hate Sowed

Yet when this is said, we have sowed the whirlwind. Much of our bombing throughout this war—like the enemy's — has been directed against cities, and hence against civilians. Because our bombing has been more effective and hence more devastating, Americans have become a synonym for destruction. And now we have been the first to introduce a new weapon of unknowable effects which may bring us victory quickly but which will sow the seeds of hate more widely than ever. We may yet reap the whirlwind.

Certainly with such God-like power under man's imperfect control we face a frightful responsibility. Atomic energy may well lead to a bright new world in which man shares a common brotherhood, or we shall become—beneath the bombs and rockets—a world of troglodytes.

The New York Times
Published: August 7, 1945

Source: Hanson W. Baldwin, "End of War Against Japan Hastened but Destruction Sows Seed of Hate," August 7, 1945, *The New York Times*. Copyright material.

Peter (*sic* – Wilfred) Burchett, "The Atomic Plague," *The Daily Express*, September 5, 1945 - excerpts

…

The Atomic Plague

'I Write This as a Warning to the World' Doctors Fall as They Work
Poison gas fear: All wear masks

Express Staff Reporter Peter Burchett [*sic*] was the first Allied staff reporter to enter the atom-bomb city. He travelled 400 miles from Tokyo alone and unarmed carrying rations for seven meals – food is almost unobtainable in Japan – a black umbrella, and a typewriter. Here is his story from –

HIROSHIMA, Tuesday.

In Hiroshima, 30 days after the first atomic bomb destroyed the city and shook the world, people are still dying, mysteriously and horribly – people who were uninjured by the cataclysm – from an unknown something which I can only describe as atomic plague.

Hiroshima does not look like a bombed city. It looks as if a monster steamroller had passed over it and squashed it out of existence. I write these facts as dispassionately as I can in the hope that they will act as a warning to the world. In this first testing ground of the atomic bomb I have seen the most terrible and frightening desolation in four years of war. It makes a blitzed Pacific island seem like an Eden. The damage is far greater than photographs can show.

When you arrive in Hiroshima you can look around and for 25, perhaps 30, square miles you can hardly see a building. It gives you an empty feeling in the stomach to see such man-made devastation.

I picked my way to a shack used as a temporary police headquarters in the middle of the vanished city. Looking south from there I could see about three miles of reddish rubble. That is all the atomic bomb left of dozens of blocks of city streets, of buildings, homes, factories and human beings.

Still They Fall

…

The police chief of Hiroshima welcomed me eagerly as the first Allied correspondent to reach the city. With the local manager of Domei, a leading Japanese news agency, he drove me through, or perhaps I should say over, the city. And he took me to hospitals where the victims of the bomb are still being treated.

In these hospitals I found people who, when the bomb fell, suffered absolutely no injuries, but now are dying from the uncanny after-effects.

For no apparent reason their health began to fail. They lost appetite. Their hair fell out. Bluish spots appeared on their bodies. And the bleeding began from the ears, nose and mouth.

At first the doctors told me they thought these were the symptoms of general debility. They gave their patients Vitamin A injections. The results were horrible. The flesh started rotting away from the hole caused by the injection of the needle.

And in every case the victim died.

That is one of the after-effects of the first atomic bomb man ever dropped and I do not want to see any more examples of it. But in walking through the month-old rubble I found others.

The Sulphur Smell

My nose detected a peculiar odour unlike anything I have ever smelled before. It is something like sulphur, but not quite. I could smell it when I passed a fire that was still smouldering, or at a spot where they were still recovering bodies from the wreckage. But I could also smell it where everything was still deserted.

They believe it is given off by the poisonous gas still issuing from the earth soaked with radioactivity released by the split uranium atom.

And so the people of Hiroshima today are walking through the forlorn desolation of their once proud city with gauze masks over their mouths and noses. It probably does not help them physically. But it helps them mentally.

From the moment that this devastation was loosed upon Hiroshima the people who survived have hated the white man. It is a hate the intensity of which is almost as frightening as the bomb itself.

'All Clear' Went

The counted dead number 53,000. Another 30,000 are missing, which means 'certainly dead'. In the day I have stayed in Hiroshima – and this is nearly a month after the bombing – 100 people have died from its effects.

They were some of the 13,000 seriously injured by the explosion. They have been dying at the rate of 100 a day. And they will probably all die. Another 40,000 were slightly injured.

These casualties might not have been as high except for a tragic mistake. The authorities thought this was just another routine Super-Fort raid. The plane flew over the target and dropped the parachute which carried the bomb to its explosion point.

The American plane passed out of sight. The all-clear was sounded and the people of Hiroshima came out from their shelters. Almost a minute later the bomb reached the 2,000 foot altitude at which it was timed to explode – at the moment when nearly everyone in Hiroshima was in the streets.

Hundreds upon hundreds of the dead were so badly burned in the terrific heat generated by the bomb that it was not even possible to tell whether they were men or women, old or young.

Of thousands of others, nearer the centre of the explosion, there was no trace. They vanished. The theory in Hiroshima is that the atomic heat was so great that they burned instantly to ashes – except that there were no ashes.

If you could see what is left of Hiroshima you would think that London had not been touched by bombs.

Heap of Rubble

The Imperial Palace, once an imposing building, is a heap of rubble three feet high, and there is one piece of wall. Roof, floors and everything else is dust.

Hiroshima has one intact building – the Bank of Japan. This in a city which at the start of the war had a population of 310,000.

Almost every Japanese scientist has visited Hiroshima in the past three weeks to try to find a way of relieving the people's suffering. Now they themselves have become sufferers.

For the first fortnight after the bomb dropped they found they could not stay long in the fallen city. They had dizzy spells and headaches. Then minor insect bites developed into great swellings which would not heal. Their health steadily deteriorated.

Then they found another extraordinary effect of the new terror from the skies.

Many people had suffered only a slight cut from a falling splinter of brick or steel. They should have recovered quickly. But they did not. They developed an acute sickness. Their gums began to bleed. And then they vomited blood. And finally they died.

All these phenomena, they told me, were due to the radio-activity released by the atomic bomb's explosion of the uranium atom.

Water Poisoned

…

The scientists told me they have noted a great difference between the effect of the bombs in Hiroshima and in Nagasaki.

Hiroshima is in perfectly flat delta country. Nagasaki is hilly. When the bomb dropped on Hiroshima the weather was bad, and a big rainstorm developed soon afterwards.

And so they believe that the uranium radiation was driven into the earth and that, because so many are still falling sick and dying, it is still the cause of this man-made plague.

At Nagasaki, on the other hand, the weather was perfect, and scientists believe that this allowed the radio-activity to dissipate into the atmosphere more rapidly. In addition, the force of the bomb's explosion was, to a large extent, expended into the sea, where only fish were killed.

To support this theory, the scientists point to the fact that, in Nagasaki, death came swiftly, suddenly, and that there have been no after-effects such as those that Hiroshima is still suffering.

[*The Daily Express*, London, 5 September 1945.]

Source: William Burnett "The Atomic Plague [1945]," in *Rebel Journalism: The Writings of Wilfred Burchett*, eds. John Pilger, George Burchett and Nick Shimmin. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

COMPASS POINTS

- Think about what is new about the type of war that these journalists bear witness too: how is it different from past bombings?

- Think about the type of impact these news articles would have had on the public, on the military, on the perspectives of other countries, and on the future of nuclear war.

Primary Source Six: From Henry Stimson, "The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb," *Harper's* 194, February, 1947.

Background

Following a negative public response to the use of the atomic bomb, influenced in large part by the news stories coming out of Japan, and at the urging of James Conant, President of Harvard University, U.S. Secretary of War Henry Stimson wrote an article published by Harper's magazine in 1947. In it he explained to the American public the rationale for the bombing of Hiroshima and of Nagasaki.

The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb – Henry Stimson

In recent months there has been much comment about the decision to use atomic bombs in attacks on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. This decision was one of the gravest made by our government in recent years, and it is entirely proper that it should be widely discussed. I have therefore decided to record for all who may be interested my understanding of the events which led up to the attack on Hiroshima on August 6, 1945, on Nagasaki on August 9, and the Japanese decision to surrender on August 10. No single individual can hope to know exactly what took place in the minds of all of those who had a share in these events, but what follows is an exact description of our thoughts and actions as I find them in the records and in my clear recollection.

...

The extraordinary story of the successful development of the atomic bomb has been well told elsewhere. As the time went on it became clear that the weapon would not be available in time for use in the European Theater, and the war against Germany was successfully ended by the use of what are now called conventional means. But in the spring of 1945 it became evident that the climax of our prolonged atomic effort was at hand.

...

The principal political, social, and military objective of the United States in the summer of 1945 was the prompt and complete surrender of Japan. Only the complete destruction of her military power could open the way to lasting peace. Japan, in July 1945, had been seriously weakened by our increasingly violent attacks. It was known to us that she had gone so far as to make tentative proposals to the Soviet government, hoping to use the Russians as mediators in a negotiated peace. These vague proposals contemplated the retention of Japan of important conquered areas and were therefore not considered seriously. There was as yet no indication of any weakening in the Japanese determination to fight rather than accept unconditional surrender. If she should persist in her fight to the end, she had still a great military force.

In the middle of July 1945, the intelligence section of the War Department General Staff estimated Japanese military strength as follows: in the home islands, slightly under 2,000,000; in Korea, Manchuria, China proper, and Formosa, slightly over 2,000,000; in French IndoChina, Thailand, and Burma, over 200,000; in the East Indies area, including the Philippines, over 500,000; in the bypassed Pacific islands, over 100,000. The total strength of the Japanese Army was estimated at about 5,000,000 men. These estimates later proved to be in very close agreement with official Japanese figures. The Japanese Army was in much better condition than the Japanese Navy and Air Force. The Navy had practically ceased to exist except as a harrying force against an invasion fleet. The Air Force had been reduced mainly to reliance upon Kamikaze, or suicide, attacks. These latter, however, had already inflicted serious damage on our seagoing forces, and their possible effectiveness in a last ditch fight was a matter of real concern to our naval leaders.

As we understood it in July, there was a very strong possibility that the Japanese government might determine upon resistance to the end, in all the areas of the Far East under its control. In such an event the Allies would be faced with the enormous task of destroying an armed force of five million men and five thousand suicide aircraft, belonging to a race which had already amply demonstrated its ability to fight literally to the death.

The strategic plans of our armed forces for the defeat of Japan, as they stood in July, had been prepared without reliance upon the atomic bomb, which had not yet been tested in New Mexico. We

were planning an intensified sea and air blockade, and greatly intensified strategic air bombing, through the summer and early fall, to be followed on November 1 by an invasion of the southern island of Kyushu. This would be followed in turn by an invasion of the main island of Honshu in the spring of 1946. The total U.S. military and naval force involved in this grand design was of the order of 5,000,000 men; if all those indirectly concerned are included, it was larger still.

We estimated that if we should be forced to carry this plan to its conclusion, the major fighting would not end until the latter part of 1946, at the earliest. I was informed that such operations might be expected to cost over a million casualties, to American forces alone. Additional large losses might be expected among our allies, and, of course, if our campaign were successful and if we could judge by previous experience, enemy casualties would be much larger than our own.

It was already clear in July that even before the invasion we should be able to inflict enormously severe damage on the Japanese homeland by the combined application of "conventional" sea and air power. The critical question was whether this kind of action would induce surrender. It therefore became necessary to consider very carefully the probable state of mind of the enemy, and to assess with accuracy the line of conduct which might end his will to resist.

...

There was much discussion in Washington about the timing of the warning to Japan. The controlling factor in the end was the date already set for the Potsdam meeting of the Big Three. It was President Truman's decision that such a warning should be solemnly issued by the U.S. and the U.K. from this meeting, with the concurrence of the head of the Chinese government, so that it would be plain that *all* of Japan's principal enemies were in entire unity. This was done in the Potsdam ultimatum of July 26, which very closely followed the above memorandum of July 2 with the exception that it made no mention of the Japanese Emperor. On July 28 the Premier of Japan, Suzuki, rejected the Potsdam ultimatum by announcing that it was "unworthy of public notice." In the face of this rejection we could only proceed to demonstrate that the ultimatum had meant exactly what it said when it stated that if the Japanese continued the war, "the full application of our military power, backed by our resolve, will mean the inevitable and complete destruction of the Japanese armed forces and just as inevitably the utter devastation of the Japanese homeland."

For such a purpose the atomic bomb was an eminently suitable weapon. The New Mexico test occurred while we were at Potsdam, on July 16. It was immediately clear that the power of the bomb measured up to our highest estimates. We had developed a weapon of such a revolutionary character that its use against the enemy might well be expected to produce exactly the kind of shock on the Japanese ruling oligarchy which we desired, strengthening the position of those who wished peace, and weakening that of the military party.

Because of the importance of the atomic mission against Japan, the detailed plans were brought to me by the military staff for approval. With President Truman's warm support I struck off the list of suggested targets the city of Kyoto. Although it was a target of considerable military importance, it had been the ancient capital of Japan and was a shrine of Japanese art and culture. We determined that it should be spared. I approved four other targets including the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Hiroshima was bombed on August 6, and Nagasaki on August 9. These two cities were active working parts of the Japanese war effort. One was an army center; the other was naval and industrial. Hiroshima was the headquarters of the Japanese Army defending southern Japan and was a major military storage and assembly point. Nagasaki was a major seaport and it contained several large industrial plants of great wartime importance. We believed that our attacks had struck cities which must certainly be important to the Japanese military leaders, both Army and Navy, and we waited for a result. We waited one day.

Many accounts have been written about the Japanese surrender. After a prolonged Japanese cabinet session in which the deadlock was broken by the Emperor himself, the offer to surrender was made on August 10. ... These terms were accepted on August 14 by the Japanese, and the instrument of surrender was formally signed on September 2, in Tokyo Bay. Our great objective was thus achieved, and all the evidence I have seen indicates that the controlling factor in the final Japanese decision to accept our terms of surrender was the atomic bomb.

The two atomic bombs which we had dropped were the only ones we had ready, and our rate of production at the time was very small. Had the war continued until the projected invasion on November 1, additional fire raids of B-29s would have been more destructive of life and property than the very limited number of atomic raids which we could have executed in the same period. But the atomic bomb was more than a weapon of terrible destruction; it was a psychological weapon. In March 1945 our Air Force had launched its first great incendiary raid on the Tokyo area. In this raid more damage was done and more casualties were inflicted than was the case at Hiroshima. Hundreds of bombers took part and hundreds of tons of incendiaries were dropped. Similar successive raids burned out a great part of the urban area of Japan, but the Japanese fought on. On August 6 one B-29 dropped a single atomic bomb on Hiroshima. Three days later a second bomb was dropped on Nagasaki and the war was over. So far as the Japanese could know, our ability to execute atomic attacks, if necessary by many planes at a time, was unlimited. As Dr. Karl Compton has said, "it was not one atomic bomb, or two, which brought surrender; it was the experience of what an atomic bomb will actually do to a community, *plus the dread of many more*, that was effective."

The bomb thus served exactly the purpose we intended. The peace party was able to take the path of surrender, and the whole weight of the Emperor's prestige was exerted in factor of peace. When the Emperor ordered surrender, and the small but dangerous group of fanatics who opposed him were brought under control, the Japanese became so subdued that the great undertaking of occupation and disarmament was completed with unprecedented ease.

In the foregoing pages I have tried to give an accurate account of my own personal observations of the circumstances which led up to the use of the atomic bomb and the reasons which underlay our use of it. To me they have always seemed compelling and clear, and I cannot see how any person vested with such responsibilities as mine could have taken any other course or given any other advice to his chiefs.

Source: Henry Stimson, "The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb," *Harper's* 194 (February 1947): 97-107.

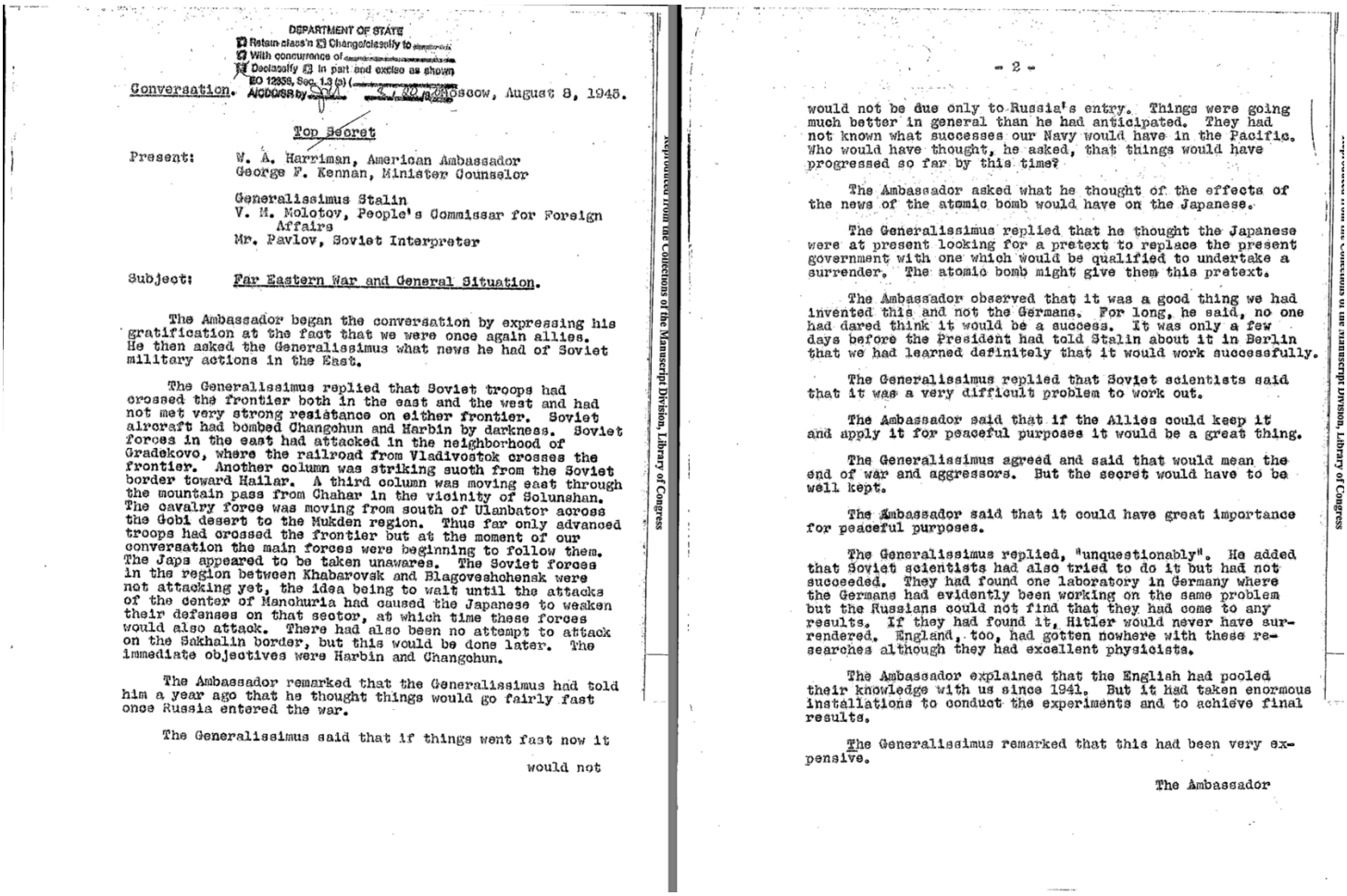
COMPASS POINTS

- Note how Stimson's article documents the refusal of the Japanese to surrender.
- Note Stimson's argument that the atomic bomb was a "psychological weapon." Think about how this signals a shift from earlier forms of warfare, and how it might shape the future of war and international relations.
- How convincing are Stimson's estimates that an Allied invasion of Japan would have entailed one million American and even more Japanese deaths?

Primary Source Seven: The USSR's reaction to the bombing of Hiroshima: Minutes of meeting between W. Averell Harriman, George F. Kennan, Joseph Stalin, and Vyacheslav Molotov, August 8, 1945;

Background

The minutes of a meeting on August 8, 1945, between the U.S. ambassador to the Soviet Union W. Averell Harriman, American diplomat George F. Kennan, and Joseph Stalin and his foreign minister, Vyacheslav Molotov, sheds some light on the Soviet position communicated to the United States following the bombing of Hiroshima.



DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Retain class'n Change/classify to
With concurrence of
Declassify in part and excise as shown
EO 12356, Sec. 1.3 (a)
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Conversation. Moscow, August 8, 1945.

Top Secret

Present: W. A. Harriman, American Ambassador
George F. Kennan, Minister Counselor

Generalissimus Stalin
V. M. Molotov, People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs
Mr. Pavlov, Soviet Interpreter

Subject: Far Eastern War and General Situation.

The Ambassador began the conversation by expressing his gratification at the fact that we were once again allies. He then asked the Generalissimus what news he had of Soviet military actions in the East.

The Generalissimus replied that Soviet troops had crossed the frontier both in the east and the west and had not met very strong resistance on either frontier. Soviet aircraft had bombed Changchun and Harbin by darkness. Soviet forces in the east had attacked in the neighborhood of Gradekovo, where the railroad from Vladivostok crosses the frontier. Another column was striking south from the Soviet border toward Hailar. A third column was moving east through the mountain pass from Chahar in the vicinity of Solunshan. The cavalry force was moving from south of Ulanbator across the Gobi desert to the Mukden region. Thus far only advanced troops had crossed the frontier but at the moment of our conversation the main forces were beginning to follow them. The Japs appeared to be taken unawares. The Soviet forces in the region between Khabarovsk and Blagoveshchensk were not attacking yet, the idea being to wait until the attacks of the center of Manchuria had caused the Japanese to weaken their defenses on that sector, at which time these forces would also attack. There had also been no attempt to attack on the Sakhalin border, but this would be done later. The immediate objectives were Harbin and Changchun.

The Ambassador remarked that the Generalissimus had told him a year ago that he thought things would go fairly fast once Russia entered the war.

The Generalissimus said that if things went fast now it would not

would not be due only to Russia's entry. Things were going much better in general than he had anticipated. They had not known what successes our Navy would have in the Pacific. Who would have thought, he asked, that things would have progressed so far by this time?

The Ambassador asked what he thought of the effects of the news of the atomic bomb would have on the Japanese.

The Generalissimus replied that he thought the Japanese were at present looking for a pretext to replace the present government with one which would be qualified to undertake a surrender. The atomic bomb might give them this pretext.

The Ambassador observed that it was a good thing we had invented this and not the Germans. For long, he said, no one had dared think it would be a success. It was only a few days before the President had told Stalin about it in Berlin that we had learned definitely that it would work successfully.

The Generalissimus replied that Soviet scientists said that it was a very difficult problem to work out.

The Ambassador said that if the Allies could keep it and apply it for peaceful purposes it would be a great thing.

The Generalissimus agreed and said that would mean the end of war and aggressors. But the secret would have to be well kept.

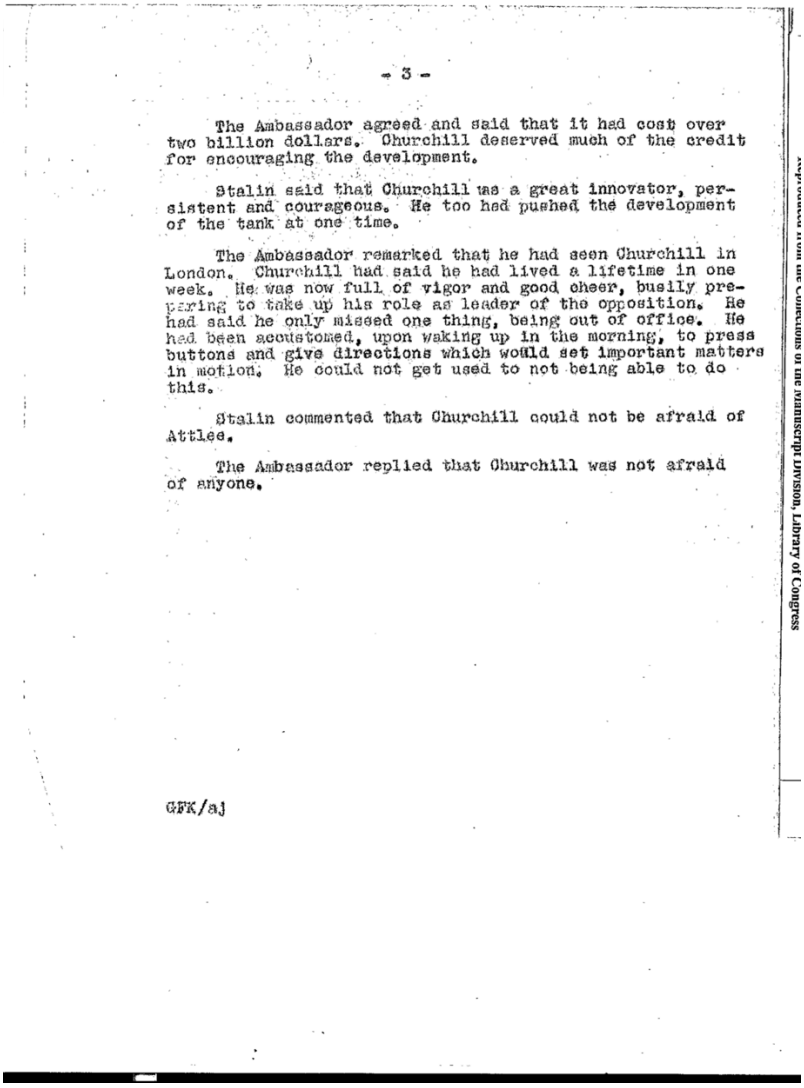
The Ambassador said that it could have great importance for peaceful purposes.

The Generalissimus replied, "unquestionably". He added that Soviet scientists had also tried to do it but had not succeeded. They had found one laboratory in Germany where the Germans had evidently been working on the same problem but the Russians could not find that they had come to any results. If they had found it, Hitler would never have surrendered. England, too, had gotten nowhere with these researches although they had excellent physicists.

The Ambassador explained that the English had pooled their knowledge with us since 1941. But it had taken enormous installations to conduct the experiments and to achieve final results.

The Generalissimus remarked that this had been very expensive.

The Ambassador



- 3 -

The Ambassador agreed and said that it had cost over two billion dollars. Churchill deserved much of the credit for encouraging the development.

Stalin said that Churchill was a great innovator, persistent and courageous. He too had pushed the development of the tank at one time.

The Ambassador remarked that he had seen Churchill in London. Churchill had said he had lived a lifetime in one week. He was now full of vigor and good cheer, busily preparing to take up his role as leader of the opposition. He had said he only missed one thing, being out of office. He had been accustomed, upon waking up in the morning, to press buttons and give directions which would set important matters in motion. He could not get used to not being able to do this.

Stalin commented that Churchill could not be afraid of Attlee.

The Ambassador replied that Churchill was not afraid of anyone.

GFK/aj

Source: Minutes of meeting between W. Averell Harriman, George F. Kennan, Joseph Stalin, and Vyacheslav Molotov, August 8, 1945, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

COMPASS POINTS

- Note how the use of the nuclear bomb does not seem to be the priority of the meeting: the successful and ongoing military campaigns and alliance between the United States and the USSR are discussed first.
- Think about the diplomatic value of Harriman reminding Stalin of Stalin's confidence in ending the war once Russia entered it, rather than focusing on impact of the atomic bomb.
- Think about the focus of this discussion of the nuclear bomb, three days after Hiroshima was bombed: the nuclear program and its control rather than the bomb's effects.

Primary Source Eight: "Russia publishes unique 1945 Soviet embassy report of Hiroshima bombing," TASS Russian News Agency, TASS Russian News Agency, World, August 6, 2015

Background
TASS, the Russian News Agency, ran this article on August 6, 2015, the seventieth anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima. It is important that we consider why the Russian government would consider it important to release such a report in 2015, and how the issue of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki continues to animate international debate and shape international relations.

"Russia publishes unique 1945 Soviet embassy report of Hiroshima bombing," TASS Russian News Agency, TASS Russian News Agency, World, August 6, 2015

After the atom bombing Hiroshima was a scorched plain with the ruins of 15-20 ferroconcrete buildings left

TOKYO, August 6. /TASS/. Russia has published a unique report, dispatched to Moscow by staff of the Russian embassy in Japan following the atom bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. The report was placed on the website of the Russian Historical Society following instructions from the society's chairman, State Duma Speaker Sergey Naryshkin.
After the atom bombing Hiroshima was a scorched plain with the ruins of 15-20 ferroconcrete buildings left, says the report authored by Soviet embassy staff and TASS correspondent Anatoly Varshavsky, who took the risk of visiting the area of the bombardment in September 1945.
In the early morning of August 6, 1945 the Japanese air defense noticed a small group of US warplanes approaching Hiroshima. The command decided against intercepting the group. US B-29 bomber Enola Gay piloted by Colonel Paul Tibbets flew over the city's center without any problems to drop the four-tonne uranium bomb Little Boy. Its explosion instantly killed an estimated 70,000 to 100,000 people. Many of those who survived the attack eventually died an early death from radiation sickness. As at August 6, 2014 the overall number of casualties from the atom bombing reached 292,325.
According to a medical doctor who was among those providing first aid to the victims the effects of the blast reduce the number of leucocytes in blood drastically, in some cases, by a factor of four. "The nose, throat and eyes bleed heavily. Those affected run a temperature of up to 39, 40, 41 degrees Celsius. As a rule such people die in three to four days' time," the witness said.
"The atom bomb's blast hit an area with a radius of 6-8 kilometers. Within a distance of 6-7 kilometers from the Hiroshima railway station to the Koi station we saw not a single building unaffected to this or that extent," the report runs.

"Those who had dared drink water or wash themselves in the area of the bomb's fall on the day of the explosion died instantly," doctors said.
As the head of the Japan section at the Russian Foreign Ministry's third, Asian department, Aleksandr Ilyshev-Vvedensky, said the report was the first eye-witness account of the horrors of bombardments and of what was rightly called a crime against humanity.
"It had never been published before, wholly or in part. In our opinion it deserves to be published on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the atom bombings of Japanese cities," the diplomat said.
For the United States the atom bombing of Hiroshima and of Nagasaki that followed three days later was part and parcel of a systematic policy of terror against the civilian population lying beyond the bounds of morality and international law.

Source: "Russia publishes unique 1945 Soviet embassy report of Hiroshima bombing," TASS Russian News Agency, World, 6 AUG 2015, 08:09. Public domain.

Case study challenge question

Please answer the following question (750-word response):

How did the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki introduce ‘cold’ war into international power relations?