

Source 1

Source Information: The Legacy of the Soviet Union Offensives of August 1945

<https://amti.csis.org/the-legacy-of-the-soviet-offensives-of-august-1945/>

THE LEGACY OF THE SOVIET OFFENSIVES OF AUGUST 1945

BY JEFF MANKOFF | AUGUST 13, 2015

JAPAN, RUSSIA, UNITED STATES

The Second World War was an unparalleled calamity for the Soviet Union. As many as 27 million Soviet soldiers and civilians died as a result of the conflict that started with the German invasion of Poland in September 1939 and ended with the Japanese surrender in August 1945.

Consumed by this existential struggle along its western border, the Soviet Union was a comparatively minor factor in the Pacific War until the very end. Yet Moscow's timely intervention in the war against Japan allowed it to expand its influence along the Pacific Rim.

With the breakdown of Allied unity soon heralding the onset of the Cold War, Soviet gains in Asia also left a legacy of division and confrontation, some of which endure into the present.

By the 1930s, Stalin's Soviet Union and Imperial Japan both viewed themselves as rising powers with ambitions to extend their territorial holdings. In addition to a strategic rivalry dating back to the 19th century, they now nursed an ideological enmity born of the Bolshevik Revolution and the ultraconservative military's growing hold on Japanese politics. In 1935, Japan signed the AntiComintern Pact with Hitler's Germany, laying the foundation for the creation of the Axis (Fascist Italy would join the following year).

The two militaries engaged in a series of skirmishes along the frontier between Soviet Siberia and Japanese-occupied Manchuria (Manchukuo) during the late 1930s. The largest, at Khalkin Gol in the summer of 1939, left more than 17,000 dead. Yet worried by growing tensions in Europe and Southeast Asia, both Moscow and Tokyo recognized that their respective ambitions in Manchuria were not worth the mounting costs and soon turned their attention to other theaters.

Just two days after the German Wehrmacht launched Operation Barbarossa in June 1941, Moscow and Tokyo signed a non-aggression pact. Freed from the danger of a two-front war, the Soviet Union was able to focus all its resources on resisting the German onslaught. The Red Army consequently played virtually no role in the Pacific war that was soon raging, at least until the very end.

While recognizing that Moscow had no resources to spare as long as its troops were tied down in Europe, U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt nonetheless sought to enlist Soviet assistance in the war against Japan once Germany had been defeated. Soviet leader Josef Stalin agreed, aiming to expand Soviet borders in Asia. Stalin began building up Soviet forces in the Far East once the tide of the war in Europe had turned following the Battle of Stalingrad.

At the February 1945 Yalta Conference, Stalin agreed that the Soviet Union would enter the war against Japan three months after Germany's surrender. The Yalta declaration gave Moscow back southern Sakhalin and the Kurile Islands, which Japan had seized during the Russo-Japanese War in 1904-05. Mongolia was also to be recognized as an independent state (it was

already a Soviet client), and Soviet interests in the naval base at the Chinese port of Port Arthur (Dalian) and the Manchurian railway that it had controlled before 1905 were to be respected.

Moscow subsequently declared war on Tokyo on August 8, 1945, two days after the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and one day before the second bomb fell on Nagasaki (though Western historiography has long emphasized the role of the nuclear attacks in compelling Japan's surrender, newly available Japanese documents emphasize the importance of the Soviet declaration of war in forcing Tokyo's hand).

A massive invasion of Manchuria began the day after the Soviet declaration of war. Soviet forces also conducted amphibious landings along Japan's colonial periphery: Japan's Northern Territories, on Sakhalin Island, and in the northern part of the Korean Peninsula.

Washington and Moscow had agreed in advance to set up a joint trusteeship in Korea with an eye towards establishing Korea, under Japanese colonial rule since 1910, as an independent state. As in Europe, the U.S. and Soviet Union each received an occupation zone, on either side of the 38th parallel. Unable to reach an agreement on a government for both zones, the U.S. and Soviet trustees presided over the establishment of competing Korean governments for the north (Pyongyang) and south (Seoul). The stage was set for the Korean War, which broke out in January 1950 when North Korean forces poured across the 38th parallel, by then an international border.

The Soviet landings in Sakhalin faced significant Japanese resistance, but gradually succeeded in consolidating control over the entire island. Until 1945, Sakhalin was usually divided between a Russian zone in the north and a Japanese zone in the south. Russia and Japan had struggled over this large, sparsely populated island for more than a century, with the 1855 Treaty of Shimoda specifying that Russians could live in the north of the island and Japanese in the south. Japan relinquished its claims in 1875, but then seized the island during the Russo-Japanese War before returning the northern half to Moscow's control in 1925. With the Treaty of San Francisco, which formally ended the war in the Pacific, Japan ceded all claims to Sakhalin, leaving the island under Soviet control even though Moscow had declined to sign the treaty.

The Soviet refusal to sign was more problematic with regard to a group of small islands northeast of Hokkaido and southwest of Russia's Kamchatka Peninsula: Iturup, Kunashir, Shikotan, and Habomai. These islands had also been subject of a Russo-Japanese quarrel dating back to the 19th century. Moscow regarded these islands as the southernmost part of the Kurile chain, which Japan had renounced at San Francisco. The treaty neither specified, however, which islands belonged to the Kurile chain, nor recognized Soviet control over them. Japan, backed up by the U.S. argued that the four islands do not belong to the Kuriles, and that the USSR was illegally occupying them.

The dispute over these islands has prevented an agreement formally ending hostilities between Japan and Russia (as the USSR's legal successor) up to the present. The issue is highly sensitive to nationalist factions in both Moscow and Tokyo, despite periodic efforts by diplomats on both sides to reach an agreement.

With both Russia and Japan increasingly wary of Chinese power in the Asia-Pacific, four sparsely populated outposts at the edge of the Sea of Okhotsk remain in many ways the biggest impediment to a rapprochement between Moscow and Tokyo that could reshape Asian

geopolitics.

Meanwhile, the division of Korea has already sparked one major war, along with an untold suffering inside totalitarian North Korea. With 30,000 American troops still stationed in South Korea across the DMZ from an increasingly paranoid, nuclear armed North Korea, the Korean Peninsula remains one of the world's most dangerous flashpoints.

Stalin's intervention in the war against Japan came late in the day, but in many ways it continues shaping the Asian security environment six decades later.

Using Source 1

Sourcing Questions	Is this a primary or secondary source? Does this source include citations for its statements and conclusions?
Contextualization Questions	When was this article written?
Corroboration Tasks	How does this view line up with the Compton article?
Close Reading Questions	How much influence would you say this author feels the Soviets had on the dropping of the bomb?

Source 2

Source Information: "If the Atomic Bomb Had Not Been Used" by Dr. Karl Compton, 1946

https://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/bomb/large/documents/bmb4-1.jpg

ATLANTIC, 178.646, Dec. 6, 1946.



IF THE ATOMIC BOMB HAD NOT BEEN USED

by KARL T. COMPTON

ABOUT a week after V-J Day I was one of a small group of scientists and engineers interrogating an intelligent, well-informed Japanese Army officer in Yokohama. We asked him what, in his opinion, would have been the next major move if the war had continued. He replied: "You would probably have tried to invade our homeland with a landing operation on Kyushu about November 1. I think the attack would have been made on such and such beaches."

"Could you have repelled this landing?" we asked, and he answered: "It would have been a very desperate fight, but I do not think we could have stopped you."

"What would have happened then?" we asked.

He replied: "We would have kept on fighting until all Japanese were killed, but we would not have been defeated," by which he meant that they would not have been disgraced by surrender.

It is easy now, after the event, to look back and say that Japan was already a beaten nation, and to ask what therefore was the justification for the use of the atomic bomb to kill so many thousands of helpless Japanese in this inhuman way; furthermore, should we not better have kept it to ourselves as a secret weapon for future use, if necessary? This argument has been advanced often, but it seems to me utterly fallacious.

I had, perhaps, an unusual opportunity to know the pertinent facts from several angles, yet I was without responsibility for any of the decisions. I can therefore speak without doing so defensively. While my role in the atomic bomb development was a very minor one, I was a member of the group called together by Secretary of War Stimson to assist him in plans for its test, use, and subsequent handling. Then, shortly before Hiroshima, I became attached to General MacArthur in Manila, and lived for two months with his staff. In this way

A physicist and the first of three brothers to become college presidents, KARL T. COMPTON has been the head of Massachusetts Institute of Technology since 1930. During the war he served in a number of war projects in close association with Dr. Vannevar Bush and President James B. Conant of Harvard. He was a member of the National Defense Research Committee, Chief of the Office of Field Service of the OSRD, and an observer on General MacArthur's staff directly after V-J Day.

I learned something of the invasion plans and of the sincere conviction of these best-informed officers that a desperate and costly struggle was still ahead. Finally, I spent the first month after V-J Day in Japan, where I could ascertain at first hand both the physical and the psychological state of that country. Some of the Japanese whom I consulted were my scientific and personal friends of long standing.

From this background I believe, with complete conviction, that the use of the atomic bomb saved hundreds of thousands — perhaps several millions — of lives, both American and Japanese; that without its use the war would have continued for many months; that no one of good conscience knowing, as Secretary Stimson and the Chiefs of Staff did, what was probably ahead and what the atomic bomb might accomplish could have made any different decision. Let some of the facts speak for themselves.

Was the use of the atomic bomb inhuman? All war is inhuman. Here are some comparisons of the atomic bombing with conventional bombing. At Hiroshima the atomic bomb killed about 80,000 people, pulverized about five square miles, and wrecked an additional ten square miles of the city, with decreasing damage out to seven or eight miles from the center. At Nagasaki the fatal casualties were 45,000 and the area wrecked was considerably smaller than at Hiroshima because of the configuration of the city.

Compare this with the results of two B-29 incendiary raids over Tokyo. One of these raids killed about 125,000 people, the other nearly 100,000.

Of the 210 square miles of greater Tokyo, 85 square miles of the densest part was destroyed as completely, for all practical purposes, as were the centers of Hiroshima and Nagasaki; about half the buildings were destroyed in the remaining 125 square miles; the number of people driven homeless out of Tokyo was considerably larger than the population of greater Chicago. These figures are based on information given us in Tokyo and on a detailed study of the air reconnaissance maps. They may be somewhat in error but are certainly of the right order of magnitude.

Was Japan already beaten before the atomic bomb? The answer is certainly "yes" in the sense that the fortunes of war had turned against her. The answer is "no" in the sense that she was still fighting desperately and there was every reason to believe that she would continue to do so; and this is the only answer that has any practical significance.

General MacArthur's staff anticipated about 50,000 American casualties and several times that number of Japanese casualties in the November 1 operation to establish the initial beachheads on Kyushu. After that they expected a far more costly struggle before the Japanese homeland was subdued. There was every reason to think that the Japanese would defend their homeland with even greater fanaticism than when they fought to the death on Iwo Jima and Okinawa. No American soldier who survived the bloody struggles on these islands has much sympathy with the view that battle with the Japanese was over as soon as it was clear that their ultimate situation was hopeless. No, there was every reason to expect a terrible struggle long after the point at which some people can now look back and say, "Japan was already beaten."

A month after our occupation I heard General MacArthur say that even then, if the Japanese government lost control over its people and the millions of former Japanese soldiers took to guerrilla warfare in the mountains, it could take a million American troops ten years to master the situation.

That this was not an impossibility is shown by the following fact, which I have not seen reported. We recall the long period of nearly three weeks between the Japanese offer to surrender and the actual surrender on September 2. This was needed in order to arrange details of the surrender and occupation and to permit the Japanese government to prepare its people to accept the capitulation. It is not generally realized that there was threat of a revolt against the government, led by an Army group supported by the peasants, to seize control and continue the war. For several days it was touch and go as to whether the people would follow their government in surrender.

The bulk of the Japanese people did not consider themselves beaten; in fact they believed they were winning in spite of the terrible punishment they had taken. They watched the paper balloons take off and float eastward in the wind, confident that these were carrying a terrible retribution to the United States in revenge for our air raids.

We gained a vivid insight into the state of knowledge and morale of the ordinary Japanese soldier from a young private who had served through the war in the Japanese Army. He had lived since babyhood in America, and had graduated in 1940 from Massachusetts Institute of Technology. This lad, thoroughly American in outlook, had gone with his family to visit relatives shortly after his graduation. They were caught in the mobilization and he was drafted into the Army.

This young Japanese told us that all his fellow soldiers believed that Japan was winning the war. To them the losses of Iwo Jima and Okinawa were parts of a grand strategy to lure the American forces closer and closer to the homeland, until they could be pounced upon and utterly annihilated. He himself had come to have some doubts as a result of various inconsistencies in official reports. Also he had seen the Ford assembly line in operation and knew that Japan could not match America in war production. But none of the soldiers had any inkling of the true situation until one night, at ten-thirty, his regiment was called to hear the reading of the surrender proclamation.

Did the atomic bomb bring about the end of the war? That it would do so was the calculated gamble and hope of Mr. Stimson, General Marshall, and their associates. The facts are these. On July 26, 1945, the Potsdam Ultimatum called on Japan to surrender unconditionally. On July 29 Premier Suzuki issued a statement, purportedly at a cabinet press conference, scorning as unworthy of official notice the surrender ultimatum, and emphasizing the increasing rate of Japanese aircraft production. Eight days later, on August 6, the first atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima; the second was dropped on August 9 on Nagasaki; on the following day, August 10, Japan declared its intention to surrender, and on August 14 accepted the Potsdam terms.

On the basis of these facts, I cannot believe that, without the atomic bomb, the surrender would have come without a great deal more of costly struggle and bloodshed.

Exactly what role the atomic bomb played will always allow some scope for conjecture. A survey has shown that it did not have much immediate effect on the common people far from the two bombed cities; they knew little or nothing of it. The even more disastrous conventional bombing of Tokyo and other cities had not brought the people into the mood to surrender.

The evidence points to a combination of factors. (1) Some of the more informed and intelligent elements in Japanese official circles realized that they were fighting a losing battle and that complete destruction lay ahead if the war continued. These elements, however, were not powerful enough to sway the situation against the dominating Army organization, backed by the profiteering industrialists, the peasants, and the ignorant masses. (2) The atomic bomb introduced a dramatic new element into the situation, which strengthened the hands of those who sought peace and provided a face-saving argument for those who had hitherto advocated continued war. (3) When the second atomic bomb was dropped, it became clear that this was not an isolated weapon, but that there were others to follow. With dread prospect of a deluge of these terrible bombs and no possibility of preventing them, the argument for surrender was made con-



vincing. This I believe to be the true picture of the effect of the atomic bomb in bringing the war to a sudden end, with Japan's unconditional surrender.

If the atomic bomb had not been used, evidence like that I have cited points to the practical certainty that there would have been many more months of death and destruction on an enormous scale. Also the early timing of its use was fortunate for a reason which could not have been anticipated. If the invasion plans had proceeded as scheduled, October, 1945, would have seen Okinawa covered with airplanes and its harbors crowded with landing craft poised for the attack. The typhoon which struck Okinawa in that month would have wrecked the invasion plans with a military disaster comparable to Pearl Harbor.

These are some of the facts which lead those who know them, and especially those who had to base decisions on them, to feel that there is much delusion and wishful thinking among those after-

the-event strategists who now deplore the use of the atomic bomb on the ground that its use was inhuman or that it was unnecessary because Japan was already beaten. And 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.

If 500 bombers could wreak such destruction on Tokyo, what will 500 bombers, each carrying an atomic bomb, do to the City of Tomorrow? It is this deadly prospect which now lends such force to the two basic policies of our nation on this subject: (1) We must strive generously and with all our ability to promote the United Nations' effort to assure future peace between nations; but we must not lightly surrender the atomic bomb as a means for our own defense. (2) We should surrender or share it only when there is adopted an international plan to enforce peace in which we can have great confidence.

NUREMBERG IN RETROSPECT

by CHARLES E. WYZANSKI, JR.

I

IN the April *Atlantic Monthly* I raised doubts as to certain aspects of the then uncompleted Nuremberg trial. Since that time I have had a chance to profit from comments of Mr. Justice Jackson, Professor Sheldon Glueck, Professor Max Radin, Professor Lon Fuller, an anonymous contributor to the July, 1946, *Law Quarterly Review*, and other writers; I have also read reports of the trial and have studied a summary of the judgment. This further investigation has led me to resolve some of my earlier doubts, and I hope that if I state my own change of views I may contribute to the thinking of others who are concerned about the great questions raised by this trial.

The doubt which seemed to critics of the Nuremberg trial most fundamental was whether the defendants could properly be held to answer a charge that they had engaged in "the crime of aggressive war." Was there any such substantive offense?

Many who replied affirmatively contended that "the crime of aggressive war" was no different from

the specific war crimes (such as killing a captured enemy civilian) that had been defined in the Hague Convention of 1907. That is, they argued that waging an aggressive war was a crime that had been outlawed by a specific treaty or treaties; and that individuals who engaged in such conduct, like individuals who engaged in the slaughter of captured civilians, were triable by any tribunal established for the occasion by a warring power, and were punishable by any penalty prescribed for the occasion by that power.

That argument seems to me unsound. It does not seem to me that an examination of the pre-war treaties, conference proposals, diplomatic correspondence, and juristic writings shows that there was a specific international covenant that individuals who waged an aggressive war were criminals in the same sense that there was a specific international covenant that individuals who killed captured civilians were criminals.

But it is not sufficient to stop with that purely analytical approach. There remains this inquiry: Is it just to declare, after hostilities have begun, that planners of an aggressive war are criminal?

Those who believe that it is, make a twofold contention. First, they say that when these defendants planned this war both they and everyone else would

In the *Atlantic* for last April CHARLES E. WYZANSKI, JR., Judge of the U.S. District Court for Massachusetts, expressed his doubts about the validity of the Nuremberg trial. In the interval his misgivings have been cleared away for reasons as forthright as they are conscientious.



December 16, 1946

My dear Doctor Compton:

I appreciated very much your sending me the article from The Atlantic Monthly - If The Atomic Bomb Had Not Been Used. It is the first sensible statement I have seen on the subject.

I have also asked the former Secretary of War, Henry L. Stimson, to assemble the facts and get them into record form and, I think, he is doing that.

Your statement in The Atlantic Monthly is a fair analysis of the situation except that the final decision had to be made by the President, and was made after a complete survey of the whole situation had been made. The conclusions reached were substantially those set out in your article.

The Japanese were given fair warning and were offered the terms, which they finally accepted, well in advance of the dropping of the bomb. I imagine the bomb caused them to accept the terms.

Sincerely yours,

HARRY S. TRUMAN

Dr. Karl T. Compton
President
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Cambridge 39, Massachusetts



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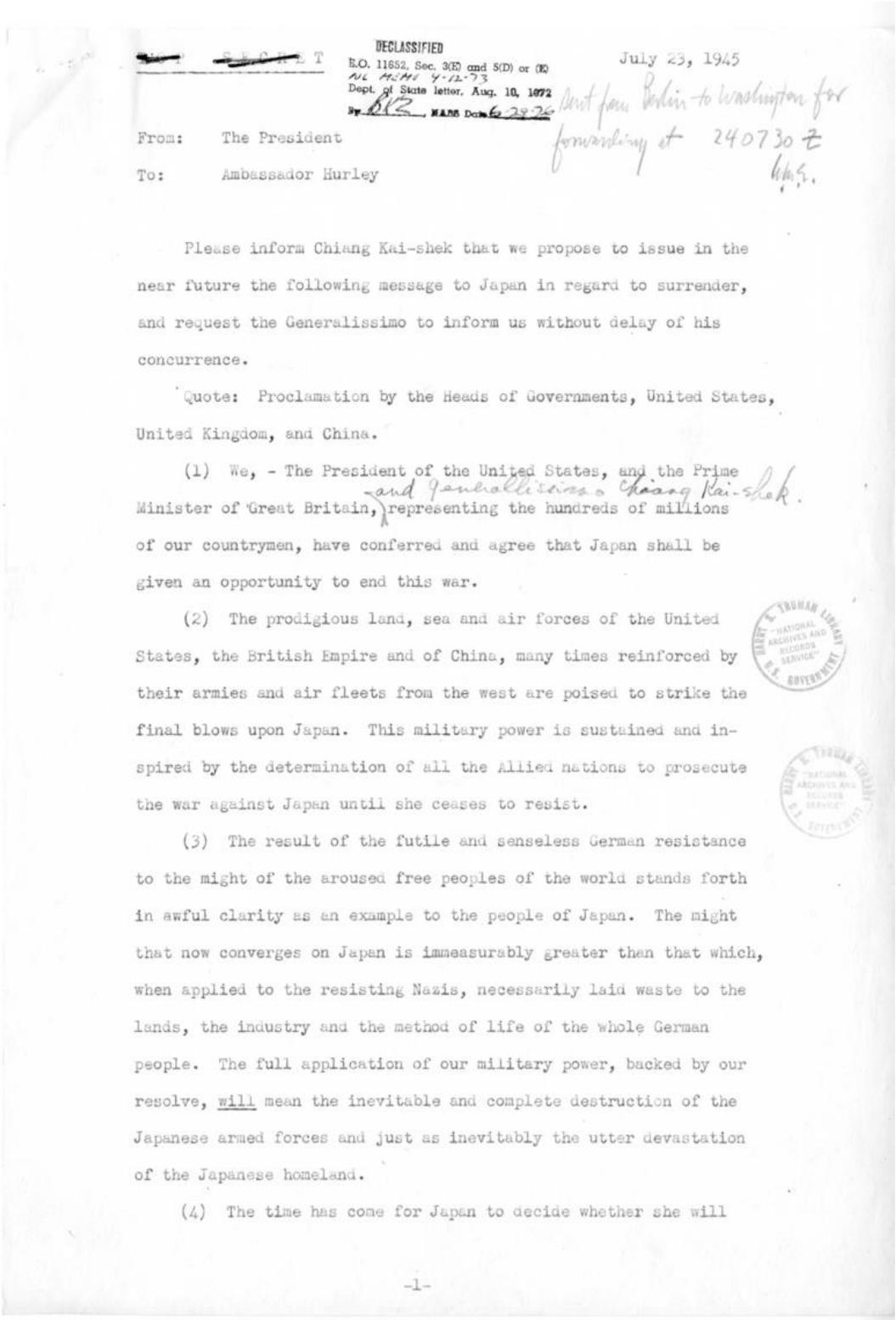
Using Source 2

Sourcing Questions	Is this a primary or secondary source? Does this source include citations for its statements and conclusions? Does the attached letter change its credibility?
Contextualization Questions	When was this article written?
Corroboration Tasks	How does this view line up with the Mankoff article?
Close Reading Questions	How much influence would you say this author feels the Soviets had on the dropping of the bomb?

Source 3

Source Information: Draft of Potsdam Declaration

https://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/naval/berlin/index.php?documentVersion=original&documentid=hst-naval_naid1701729-04&pagenumber=1



DECLASSIFIED
 E.O. 11652, Sec. 3(B) and 5(D) or (K)
 AUTHORITY 4-12-73
 Dept. of State letter, Aug. 10, 1972
 BY *ALS*, NARS Date *6-28-76*

July 23, 1945

Sent from Berlin to Washington for forwarding at 240730 Z W.S.

From: The President
 To: Ambassador Hurley

Please inform Chiang Kai-shek that we propose to issue in the near future the following message to Japan in regard to surrender, and request the Generalissimo to inform us without delay of his concurrence.

Quote: Proclamation by the Heads of Governments, United States, United Kingdom, and China.

(1) We, - The President of the United States, and the Prime Minister of Great Britain, *and Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek.* representing the hundreds of millions of our countrymen, have conferred and agree that Japan shall be given an opportunity to end this war.

(2) The prodigious land, sea and air forces of the United States, the British Empire and of China, many times reinforced by their armies and air fleets from the west are poised to strike the final blows upon Japan. This military power is sustained and inspired by the determination of all the Allied nations to prosecute the war against Japan until she ceases to resist.

(3) The result of the futile and senseless German resistance to the might of the aroused free peoples of the world stands forth in awful clarity as an example to the people of Japan. The might that now converges on Japan is immeasurably greater than that which, when applied to the resisting Nazis, necessarily laid waste to the lands, the industry and the method of life of the whole German people. 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.

(4) The time has come for Japan to decide whether she will

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E.O. 11652, Sec. 3(E) and 5(D) or (E)
NL 11240 4-12-73
Dept. of State letter, Aug. 10, 1972

By _____, NARS Date 2-27-76

continue to be controlled by those self-willed militaristic advisers whose unintelligent calculations have brought the Empire of Japan to the threshold of annihilation, or whether she will follow the path of reason.

(5) Following are our terms. We will not deviate from them. There are no alternatives. We shall brook no delay.

(6) There must be eliminated for all time the authority and influence of those who have deceived and misled the people of Japan into embarking on world conquest, for we insist that a new order of peace, security and justice will be impossible until irresponsible militarism is driven from the world.

(7) Until such a new order is established and until there is convincing proof that Japan's war-making power is destroyed, points in Japanese territory to be designated by the Allies shall be occupied to secure the achievement of the basic objectives we are here setting forth.

(8) The terms of the Cairo Declaration shall be carried out and Japanese sovereignty shall be limited to the islands of Honshu, Hokkaido, Kyushu, Shikoku and such minor islands as we determine.

(9) The Japanese military forces, after being completely disarmed, shall be permitted to return to their homes with the opportunity to lead peaceful and productive lives.

(10) We do not intend that the Japanese shall be enslaved as a race or destroyed as a nation, but stern justice shall be meted out to all war criminals, including those who have visited cruelties upon our prisoners. The Japanese Government shall remove all obstacles to the revival and strengthening of democratic tendencies among the Japanese people. Freedom of speech, of religion, and of thought, as well as respect for the fundamental human rights shall be established.

(11) Japan shall be permitted to maintain such industries as



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E.O. 11652, Sec. 3(E) and 5(D) or (F)

ALM 4-12-73

Dept. of State letter, Aug. 10, 1972

By ALM, NARS Date 6-22-76

will sustain her economy and permit the exaction of just reparations in kind, but not those ^{industries} which would enable her to re-arm for war. To this end, access to, as distinguished from control of, raw materials shall be permitted. Eventual Japanese participation in world trade relations shall be permitted.

(12) The occupying forces of the Allies shall be withdrawn from Japan as soon as these objectives have been accomplished and there has been established in accordance with the freely expressed will of the Japanese people a peacefully inclined and responsible government.

(13) We call upon the Government of Japan to proclaim now the unconditional surrender of all the Japanese armed forces, and to provide proper and adequate assurances of their good faith in such action. The alternative for Japan is prompt and utter destruction. Unquote.




HARRY S. TRUMAN

Using Source 3

Sourcing Questions	Is this a primary or secondary source?
Contextualization Questions	What does the annotation throughout the document tell us about the process of public documents? What does this document tell us about the Soviet entry into the war against Japan?
Corroboration Tasks	
Close Reading Questions	What do the allies call for from Japan for peace? (see section 13)

Source 4

Source Information: Cairo Conference Declaration Appendix

https://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/naval/berlin/index.php?documentVersion=original&documentid=hst-naval_aid1701679-68&pagenumber=4

~~TOP SECRET~~

APPENDIX

THE CAIRO CONFERENCE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT
CHINA: GENERALISSIMO CHIANG KAI-SHEK
UNITED KINGDOM: PRIME MINISTER CHURCHILL

Statement Released December 1, 1943

The several military missions have agreed upon future military operations against Japan. The Three Great Allies expressed their resolve to bring unrelenting pressure against their brutal enemies by sea, land, and air. This pressure is already rising.

The Three Great Allies are fighting this war to restrain and punish the aggression of Japan. They covet no gain for themselves and have no thought of territorial expansion. It is their purpose that Japan shall be stripped of all the islands in the Pacific which she has seized or occupied since the beginning of the first World War in 1914, and that all the territories Japan has stolen from the Chinese, such as Manchuria, Formosa, and the Pescadores, shall be restored to the Republic of China. Japan will also be expelled from all other territories which she has taken by violence and greed. The aforesaid three great powers, mindful of the enslavement of the people of Korea, are determined that in due course Korea shall become free and independent.

With these objects in view the three Allies, in harmony with those of the United Nations at war with Japan, will continue to persevere in the serious and prolonged operations necessary to procure the unconditional surrender of Japan.



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Using Source 4

Sourcing Questions	Is this a primary or secondary source?
Contextualization Questions	Was this released before or after the Potsdam conference?
Corroboration Tasks	
Close Reading Questions	Who were the signatories to this document?

Source 5

Source Information: Telegram from Tojo to Sato, July 21, 1945

http://www.nuclearfiles.org/menu/library/correspondence/togo-sato/corr_togo-sato.htm

*The Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs (Togo) to the
Japanese Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Sato)*

[Translation]

[Tokyo,] July 21, 1945--9:30 p.m.

Secret

Urgent

932. Re my telegram No. [931](#).

1. We cannot accept unconditional surrender (understood fully your telegram No. [1416](#)) in any situation. Although it is apparent that there will be more casualties on both sides in case the war is prolonged, we will stand united as one nation against the enemy if the enemy forcibly demands our unconditional surrender. It is, however, our intention to achieve, with Soviet assistance, a peace which is not of unconditional nature, in order to avoid such a situation as mentioned above in accordance with His Majesty's desire. It will be necessary for us to exert our utmost efforts to have the United States and Great Britain understand thoroughly this intention. Thus, it is impossible at this time to ask the Soviet Union unconditionally for assistance in obtaining peace; at the same time, it is also impossible and to our disadvantage to indicate the concrete conditions immediately at this time on account of internal and external relations. Under such delicate circumstances, we hope to have Prince Konoye transmit to the Soviet Union our concrete intentions based on the Emperor's wishes and following a conference to have the Soviets deal with the United States and Great Britain, while considering the Soviet demands in Asia.

2. Taking into consideration the fact that this matter is a negotiation of the utmost importance which may determine the fate of our country, I request that you take full measures to grasp the true intentions of the Soviet Union by seeking sufficient explanations, for instance, even with respect to the Soviet reply transmitted in your telegram No. [1417](#).

3. It is a matter of course that the special envoy has the responsibility of advising the Government; but please explain to the Soviets, if necessary, that the envoy is to be dispatched as a special envoy in accordance with the wishes of the Emperor, whose chief aim is benevolence. Please take care to fully impress the other party with the facts regarding his Majesty's trust in Prince Konoye and the prominent position held by the Prince in the political circles in our country.

4. If the proposal at the beginning of my telegram No. [1427](#) is not absolutely necessary, please avoid making a written proposal.

Using Source 5

Sourcing Questions	Is this a primary or secondary source? Is this an original source?
Contextualization Questions	What does this tell us about the thinking of the Japanese government in late July 1945?
Corroboration Tasks	
Close Reading Questions	What was Prince Konoye to do?

Source Information: Strategic Bombing Survey, 1946

https://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/bomb/large/documents/index.php?documentid=24&pagenumber=28

President's Secretary's Files

26

war. With the loss of Saipan, it was possible to build up sufficient pressure to force Tojo's retirement.

The government of General Koiso, who was chosen by the ever-cautious Kido to head the succeeding cabinet, did not have the strength to stand up to the military and was a disappointment to the more enthusiastic peace makers. In spite of original instructions to give "fundamental reconsideration" to the problem of continuing the war, his only accomplishment in that direction was the creation of a Supreme War Direction Council, an inner cabinet which supplied the mechanism through which the problem of surrender was eventually resolved.

The conviction and strength of the peace party was increased by the continuing Japanese military defeats, and by Japan's helplessness in defending itself against the ever-growing weight of air attack on the home islands. On 7 April 1945, less than a week after United States landings on Okinawa, Koiso was removed and Marquis Kido installed Admiral Suzuki as premier. Kido testified to the Survey that, in his opinion, Suzuki alone had the deep conviction and personal courage to stand up to the military and bring the war to an end.

Early in May 1945, the Supreme War Direction Council began active discussion of ways and means to end the war, and talks were initiated with Soviet Russia seeking her intercession as mediator.

The talks by the Japanese ambassador in Moscow and with the Soviet ambassador in Tokyo did not make progress. On 20 June the Emperor, on his own initiative, called the six members of the Supreme War Direction Council to a conference and said it was necessary to have a plan to close the war at once, as well as a plan to defend the home islands. The timing of the Potsdam Conference interfered with a plan to send Prince Konoje to Moscow as a special emissary with instructions from the cabinet to negotiate for peace on terms less than unconditional surrender, but with private instructions from the Emperor to secure peace at any price. Although the Supreme War Direction Council, in its deliberations on the Potsdam Declaration, was agreed on the advisability of ending the war, three of its members, the Prime Minister, the Foreign Minister and the Navy Minister, were prepared to accept uncondi-

tional surrender, while the other three, the Army Minister, and the Chiefs of Staff of both services, favored continued resistance unless certain mitigating conditions were obtained.

On 6 August the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, and on 9 August Russia entered the war. In the succeeding meetings of the Supreme War Direction Council, the differences of opinion previously existing as to the Potsdam terms persisted exactly as before. By using the urgency brought about through fear of further atomic bombing attacks, the Prime Minister found it possible to bring the Emperor directly into the discussions of the Potsdam terms. Hirohito, acting as arbiter, resolved the conflict in favor of unconditional surrender.

The public admission of defeat by the responsible Japanese leaders, which constituted the political objective of the United States offensive begun in 1943, was thus secured prior to invasion and while Japan was still possessed of some 2,000,000 troops and over 9,000 planes in the home islands. Military defeats in the air, at sea and on the land, destruction of shipping by submarines and by air, and direct air attack with conventional as well as atomic bombs, all contributed to this accomplishment.

There is little point in attempting precisely to impute Japan's unconditional surrender to any one of the numerous causes which jointly and cumulatively were responsible for Japan's disaster. The time lapse between military impotence and political acceptance of the inevitable might have been shorter had the political structure of Japan permitted a more rapid and decisive determination of national policies. Nevertheless, it seems clear that, even without the atomic bombing attacks, air supremacy over Japan could have exerted sufficient pressure to bring about unconditional surrender and obviate the need for invasion.

Based on a detailed investigation of all the facts, and supported by the testimony of the surviving Japanese leaders involved, it is the Survey's opinion that certainly prior to 31 December 1945, and in all probability prior to 1 November 1945, Japan would have surrendered even if the atomic bombs had not been dropped, even if Russia had not entered the war, and even if no invasion had been planned or contemplated.

BB-1110

Using Source 6

Sourcing Questions	Is this a primary or secondary source?
Contextualization Questions	What do we learn about the Japanese government from this source?
Corroboration Tasks	
Close Reading Questions	When does this survey think the war would have ended without the atomic bombs?

Source 7

Source Information: Letter from Harry S. Truman to Bess W. Truman, July 20, 1945. Truman Papers - Family, Business, and Personal Affairs Papers.

https://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/trumanpapers/fbpa/index.php?documentVersion=both&documentid=HST-FBP_14-83_01&pagenumber=2

Letter from Harry S. Truman to Bess W. Truman, July 20, 1945. Family, Business, and Personal Affairs Papers.

Truman Papers

Berlin July 20, 1945

Dear Bess:

It was an experience to talk to you from my desk here in Berlin night before last. It sure made me homesick. This is a hell of a place--ruined, dirty, smelly, forlorn people, bedraggled, hangdog look about them. You never saw as completely ruined a city. But they did it. I am most comfortably fixed and the palace where we meet is one of two intact palaces left standing.

Jim Blair came to see me yesterday and had breakfast with me this morning. He is a Lt. Col. and is in charge of food and clean up for American forces here. Said it was the filthiest place he ever saw when he arrived--but it's clean now.

We had a tough meeting yesterday. I reared up on my hind legs and told 'em where to get off and they got off. I have to make it perfectly plain to them at least once a day that so far as this President is concerned Santa Claus is dead and that my first interest is U.S.A., then I want the Jap War won and I want 'em both in it. Then I want peace--world peace and will do what can be done by us to get it. But certainly am not going to set up another foil here in Europe, pay reparations, feed the world, and get nothing for it but a nose thumbing. They are beginning to awake to the fact that I mean business.

It was my turn to feed 'em at a formal dinner last night. Had Churchill on my right, Stalin on my left. We toasted the British King, the Soviet President, the U.S. President, the two honor guests, the foreign ministers, one at a time, etc. etc. ad lib. Stalin felt so friendly that he toasted the pianist when he played a Tskowsky (you spell it) piece especially for him. The old man loves music. He told me he'd import the greatest Russian pianist for me tomorrow. Our boy was good. His name is List and he played Chopin, Von Weber, Schubert, and all of them.

The ambassadors and Jim Byrnes said the party was a success. Anyway they left in a happy frame of mind. I gave each of them a fine clock, specially made for them, and a set of that good, navy luggage. Well I'm hoping to get done in a week. I'm sick of the whole business--but we'll bring home the bacon.

Kiss Margie, lots and lots of love, Harry.

Using Source 7

Sourcing Questions	Is this a primary or secondary source? Do you think a private letter would be more or less reliable as a source?
Contextualization Questions	Where is Truman when he writes this letter? Who was Bess?
Corroboration Tasks	
Close Reading Questions	Whom did he have a dinner party with?

Source 8

Source Information: Notes by Truman on Potsdam Conference Page 1 (Soviet Invasion planned August 15)

https://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/bomb/large/documents/B04_01-02_01.jpg



July 17, '45

Just spent a couple of hours with Stalin. Joe Davis called on Maiski and made the date last night for noon today. Promptly a few minutes before twelve I looked up from the desk and there stood Stalin in the doorway. I got to my feet and advanced to meet him. He put out his hand and smiled, I did the same we shook I greeted Molotov and the interpreter and we sat down. After the usual polite remarks we got down to business. I told Stalin that I am no diplomat but usually said yes or no to questions after hearing all the argument. It pleased him. I asked him if he had the agenda for the meeting. He said he had and that he had some more questions to present. I told him to fire away. He did and it is dynamite - but I have some dynamite too which I do not exploding now. He wants to give France, to which I wouldn't object and divide up the Italian colonies and other mandates, some no doubt that the British have. Then he got on the Chinese situation told us what agreements had been reached and what was in abeyance. Most of the big points are settled. He'll be in the Jap War on August 15th. Finish Japs when that comes about. We had lunch talked liberally put on a real show drinking toasts to everyone then had pictures made in the back yard. I can deal with Stalin. He is loath - but honest as hell.

Transcript

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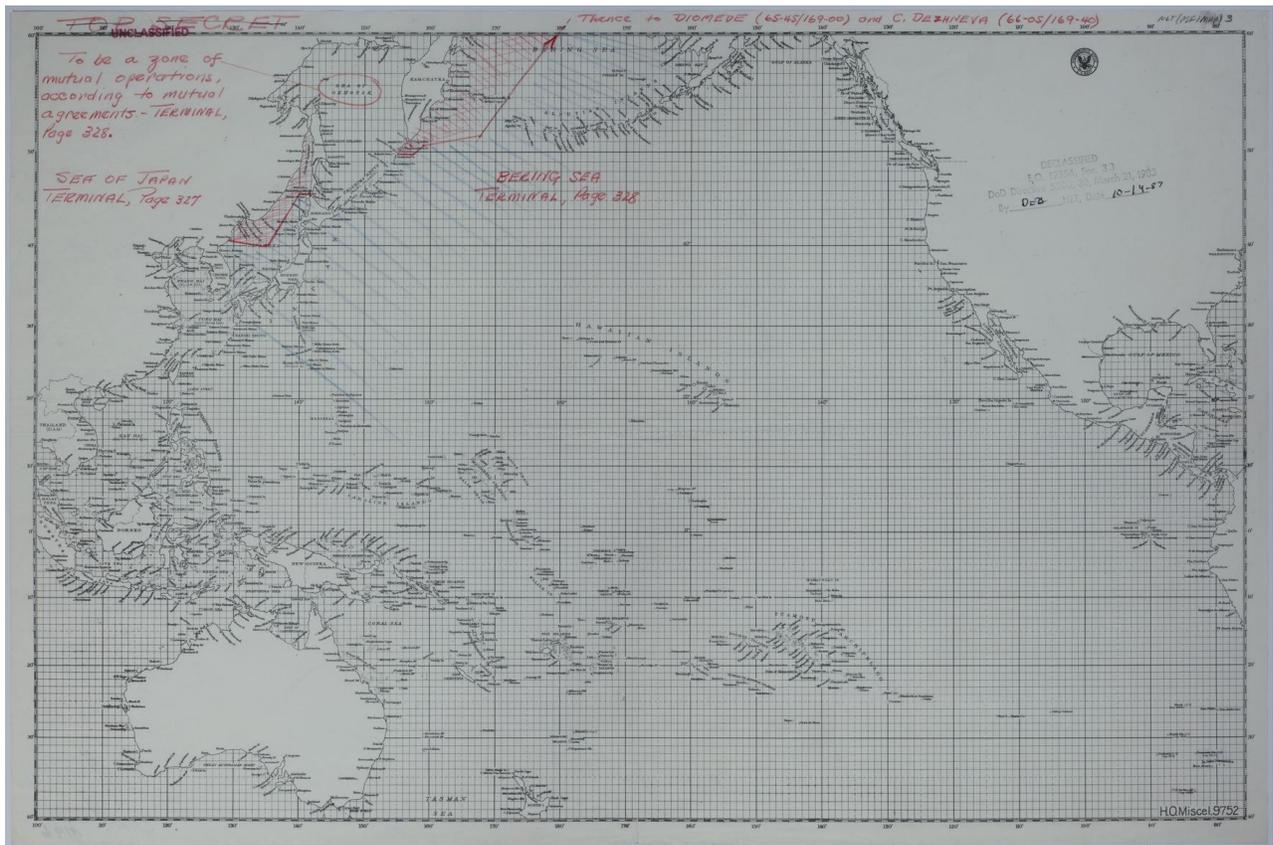
Using Source 8

Sourcing Questions	Is this a primary or secondary source? Do you think that personal diary or notes make better or worse sources?
Contextualization Questions	Where was Truman when he wrote this? Who does he meet with in this letter?
Corroboration Tasks	
Close Reading Questions	What do you think Truman's dynamite was?

Source 9

Source Information: Map of American and Soviet Zones of Operation

<https://www.trumanlibrary.org/maps/view/printRecord.php?id=628>

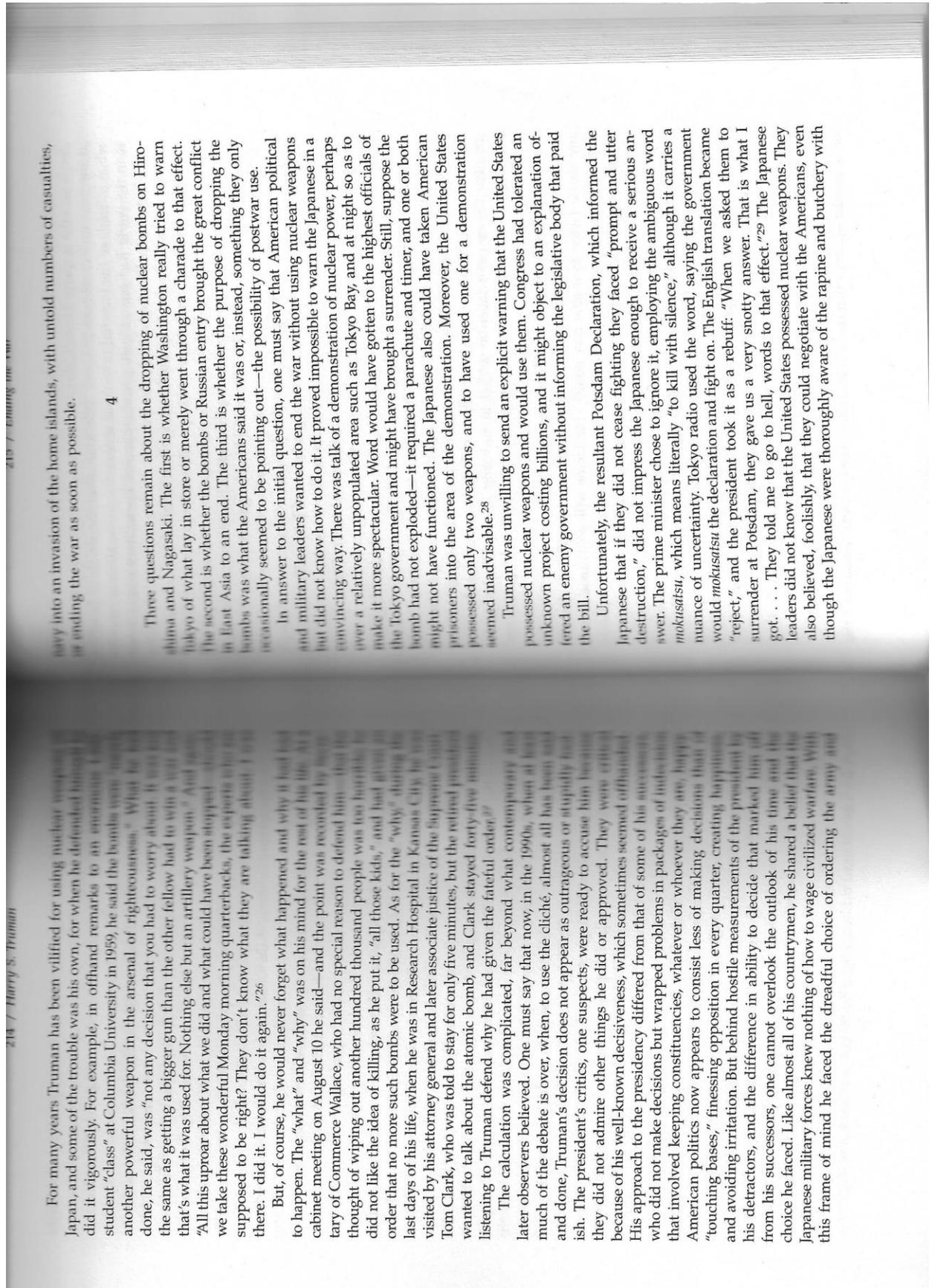


Using Source 9

Sourcing Questions	Is this a primary or secondary source?
Contextualization Questions	What does this map show? What does the blue indicate? The red?
Corroboration Tasks	
Close Reading Questions	What classification does this map have?

Source 10

Source Information: Ferrell, Robert H., *Harry S. Truman: A Life*, 1994, Columbia, MO, pages 215-217.



which their nation's troops had fought across East Asia. Involved in those deeds was the emperor himself, about whose complicity the West knew little at the time and continued to know little until after the death of Hirohito, when officials of the imperial household revealed a quite different emperor than the world had seen: the emperor supported his military commanders and often gave political advice. As the war was coming to an end the Allies were saying publicly that they would arraign war criminals, and Tokyo officials deluded themselves that it would be possible to bargain to save the skins of people involved; they had in mind an arrangement that would put the matter delicately, in terms of preserving the imperial institution, so that Japanese authorities rather than the Allies would hold any war-crimes trials.

Nothing less than a shock was necessary to jar the regime out of its complacency. A terrible shock it proved to be, involving tens of thousands of people who had nothing to do with the self-serving schemes of Tokyo officialdom.

A second question is whether the bombs or Russian entry brought Japan's surrender. Prior to Hiroshima the civilians and the military divided over continuing the war. The Hiroshima bomb was dropped on August 6, Russian entrance occurred August 8, and Nagasaki was bombed on August 9. Until Nagasaki the cabinet remained deadlocked, civilians against the military. On the evening of August 9-10, the emperor unconstitutionally (under the Meiji constitution he did not have the right to express an opinion, only preside over his councillors) forced a decision for peace. On August 11 Washington offered a condition for what it still described as unconditional surrender, that the emperor must be subject to authority of the Allied supreme commander, which condition the emperor accepted by breaking a second deadlock on August 14.

The truth is that it is impossible to come to a conclusion about this question. In such a welter of events and decisions it is not possible to describe any single factor as a *sine qua non*.³⁰ One factor will point in a certain direction, another in the opposite. Soviet entry greatly surprised Japanese officials, even shocked them; Tokyo had counted on using Moscow as a mediator with Washington; the Japanese had no inkling that the Russians were about to enter the war. But, then, against the Soviets' claim that their nation's resort to war persuaded the Tokyo regime to surrender was the date on which the Soviets came in. During preceding months—and they repeated the promise at Potsdam—they had said they would come in three months after the close of the European war. But at Potsdam they gave as the date of their entry August 15. After Hiroshima they clearly jumped the gun, entering six days earlier. Otherwise, with the war about to end on August 14, they would not have had opportunity to share in the spoils.

The final question over the nuclear bombings has been a contention about the very purpose of dropping the bombs. Twenty years after the war a young scholar asserted that the administration used nuclear weapons on the

Japanese to impress the Russians. This was an extraordinary claim, raising doubts about the bona fides of American officials, suggesting they would do anything to confound the Soviet Union. The awkwardness, the sticking point, of such a claim, however, is its lack of proof. Members of the Interim Committee, the advisory group that considered whether to use the bomb, never considered dropping bombs on the Japanese to impress the Russians. Secretary Stimson did write in his diary that when the bomb was ready the Americans could play a master card, whatever that meant—probably ending the war. Byrnes told three nuclear scientists, when they visited him in Spartanburg, South Carolina, that the bomb would impress the Russians. Truman may have said privately to Leahy, "If it explodes as I think it will I'll certainly have a hammer on those boys," perhaps meaning the Russians as well as the Japanese. But the only known public talk about the bomb by an American official was just after the war, between Molotov and Byrnes, during a foreign ministers' conference in London. At a reception in the House of Lords, Byrnes went over to Molotov and jokingly inquired when the Russian foreign minister was going to get his sightseeing completed and "let us get down to business." Molotov, presumably thinking of how Byrnes might force him to cease the sightseeing, asked the secretary of state if he had an atomic bomb in his side pocket. Coming close upon the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the remark was tasteless. So was the response of Byrnes: "You don't know the world. We carry our artillery in our hip pocket. If you don't cut out all this stalling and let us get down to work, I am going to pull an atomic bomb out of my hip pocket and let you have it." Molotov laughed, as did the interpreter. Some days later Byrnes made a speech and included a plea that the world was looking to the foreign ministers to write a lasting peace. He waxed so eloquent that Molotov paid a tribute to him and said he was more gifted than was he, the Soviet foreign minister, and in addition Byrnes had an atomic bomb.³¹

Although these issues may never be resolved, we do know that on August 14, 1945, reporters thronged the oval office to overflowing, standing so close they could hardly write. It was 7:00 P.M. when the president gave out the news, and reporters rushed for the doors to reach the telephones outside. The president and his wife followed, and went out to the fountain on the north lawn where a vast crowd had assembled beyond the gates. Harry Truman made a "V" sign, and a great cheer went up. He and Bess remained a few minutes, and then they went back into the White House where the president called his mother in Grandview.

Using Source 10

Sourcing Questions	Is this a primary or secondary source?
Contextualization Questions	When was this written?
Corroboration Tasks	
Close Reading Questions	Why would the U.S. want to prepare the Japanese for what is in store for them prior to dropping the bomb?

Source 11

Source Information: Document: Memorandum, "Third Meeting" of Harry Hopkins and other American diplomats with Marshal Joseph Stalin, the Kremlin, May 28, 1945

~~TOP SECRET~~

THIRD MEETING

KREMLIN - 8 p.m., May 28, 1945.

Present: Mr. Harry L. Hopkins
Ambassador W. A. Harriman
Mr. Charles E. Bohlen

Marshal Stalin
Mr. V. M. Molotov
Mr. Pavlov

MR. HOPKINS then said that he thought they might begin today by exploring the Far Eastern questions and the war against Japan. He said that the other night he had indicated to Marshal Stalin that General Marshall and Admiral King would find it most helpful if they could know the approximate time of Soviet entry into the Pacific War.

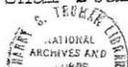
MARSHAL STALIN replied that it had been agreed at Yalta that the Soviet armies would be ready within two to three months after the surrender of Germany. He said that in the main the Soviet armies would be in a sufficient state of preparedness and in position by August 8, 1945.

MARSHAL STALIN replied that it will be necessary to have serious talks in regard to the Far Eastern problems, particularly in regard to Japan, including such questions as the zone of operations for the armies and zones of occupation in Japan. He said it would also be necessary to discuss the question of unconditional surrender in regard to Japan.

MARSHAL STALIN said he thought it was better to apply that principle to Japan also. He said he had heard rumors of talks between the British and Japanese regarding conditional surrender. He felt it would be wise to occupy the island but that their treatment would be somewhat softer than in the case of Germany and that they should be left something to live on. He said from the point of view of immediate interests there were arguments for accepting a conditional surrender but that from the point of view of basic interest then unconditional surrender which would destroy the military potential of Japan would be better. He said he personally favored unconditional surrender.

MR. HOPKINS inquired whether the Marshal thought the Japanese would surrender unconditionally before they were utterly destroyed to which Marshal Stalin replied in the

negative.



negative.

MR. HOPKINS then asked whether the Marshal had any views concerning the Emperor and whether he thought Hirohito was closely linked up with the military caste.

MARSHAL STALIN said he did not think Hirohito as a person was important; he was not a leader but merely a figurehead. He added, in reply to Mr. Hopkins's question concerning the institution of the Emperor that he felt it would be better to do away with the post of Emperor since while the present incumbent was not an energetic leader and presented no great problem he might be succeeded at some time in the future by an energetic and vigorous figure who could cause trouble. He therefore felt it would be wiser to do away with the institution of the Emperor. Marshal Stalin said that in regard to the occupation of Japan he had no definite plans. He said, however, that Japan should be occupied. Japan was doomed and they knew it and already so-called Republican movements were beginning to arise behind the scenes which were attempting to play up to the Soviet Union in the hope that they could split the Allies. He said according to his information the Japanese would not accept unconditional surrender which would involve their giving up their military and naval establishments and personnel which would put their political leaders at the mercy of the Allies. He said he thought they might attempt conditional surrender in order to retain intact their military cards and, as Germany had done, prepare for future aggression. He said the Japanese had been much impressed with what had happened to Germany and their one desire was to preserve a future nucleus in order to obtain revenge.

MARSHAL STALIN said that war such as the present could only happen once in a hundred years and it was better to take advantage of it and utterly defeat Japan and cope with the military potential and in that manner assure fifty to sixty years of peace. He said the Japanese military were infected with anti-European and anti-American jingoism and that they would never rest until they could take revenge on those who had defeated them. He said there was one other possibility and that would be to accept a conditional surrender and then subsequently to impose in stages successively harsher terms which would cope with the Japanese military potential. In other words unconditional surrender by stages. He said he did not exclude this latter possibility.

AMBASSADOR HARRIMAN said the Marshal had been most kind to answer so clearly and frankly the questions which had been put to him and he wished to state in regard to Japan that President Roosevelt had adopted the principle of unconditional surrender and that there was no intention on our part as far as he knew to change this principle.

MARSHAL STALIN said he was glad to hear that and he agreed with it.

Using Source 11

Sourcing Questions	Is this a primary or secondary source?
Contextualization Questions	Who were Harry Hopkins and W. Averell Harriman? Who was Molotov?
Corroboration Tasks	
Close Reading Questions	What does the information in the memorandum above give us as historians regarding the entry of the Soviet's in the Pacific Theater?

Source 12

Source Information: Transcript of Emperor Hirohito's speech announcing the acceptance of the unconditional surrender demands of the Allies.

<https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/hirohito.htm>

Emperor Hirohito, Accepting the Potsdam Declaration, Radio Broadcast.

Transmitted by Domei and Recorded by the Federal Communications Commission, 14 August 1945

To our good and loyal subjects: After pondering deeply the general trends of the world and the actual conditions obtaining in our empire today, we have decided to effect a settlement of the present situation by resorting to an extraordinary measure.

We have ordered our Government to communicate to the Governments of the United States, Great Britain, China and the Soviet Union that our empire accepts the provisions of their joint declaration.

To strive for the common prosperity and happiness of all nations as well as the security and well-being of our subjects is the solemn obligation which has been handed down by our imperial ancestors and which we lay close to the heart.

Indeed, we declared war on America and Britain out of our sincere desire to insure Japan's self-preservation and the stabilization of East Asia, it being far from our thought either to infringe upon the sovereignty of other nations or to embark upon territorial aggrandizement.

But now the war has lasted for nearly four years. Despite the best that has been done by everyone--the gallant fighting of our military and naval forces, the diligence and assiduity of our servants of the State and the devoted service of our 100,000,000 people--the war situation has developed not necessarily to Japan's advantage, while the general trends of the world have all turned against her interest.

Moreover, the enemy has begun to employ a new and most cruel bomb, the power of which to do damage is, indeed, incalculable, taking the toll of many innocent lives. Should we continue to fight, it would not only result in an ultimate collapse and obliteration of the Japanese nation, but also it would lead to the total extinction of human civilization.

Such being the case, how are we to save the millions of our subjects, nor to atone ourselves before the hallowed spirits of our imperial ancestors? This is the reason why we have ordered the acceptance of the provisions of the joint declaration of the powers.

We cannot but express the deepest sense of regret to our allied nations of East Asia, who have consistently cooperated with the Empire toward the emancipation of East Asia.

The thought of those officers and men as well as others who have fallen in the fields of battle, those who died at their posts of duty, or those who met death [otherwise] and all their bereaved families, pains our heart night and day.

The welfare of the wounded and the war sufferers and of those who lost their homes and livelihood is the object of our profound solicitude. The hardships and sufferings to which our nation is to be subjected hereafter will be certainly great.

We are keenly aware of the inmost feelings of all of you, our subjects. However, it is according to the dictates of time and fate that we have resolved to pave the way for a grand peace for all the generations to come by enduring the [unavoidable] and suffering what is unsufferable.

Having been able to save *** and maintain the structure of the Imperial State, we are always with you, our good and loyal subjects, relying upon your sincerity and integrity.

Beware most strictly of any outbursts of emotion that may engender needless complications, of any fraternal contention and strife that may create confusion, lead you astray and cause you to lose the confidence of the world.

Let the entire nation continue as one family from generation to generation, ever firm in its faith of the imperishableness of its divine land, and mindful of its heavy burden of responsibilities, and the long road before it. Unite your total strength to be devoted to the construction for the future. Cultivate the ways of rectitude, nobility of spirit, and work with resolution so that you may enhance the innate glory of the Imperial State and keep pace with the progress of the world.

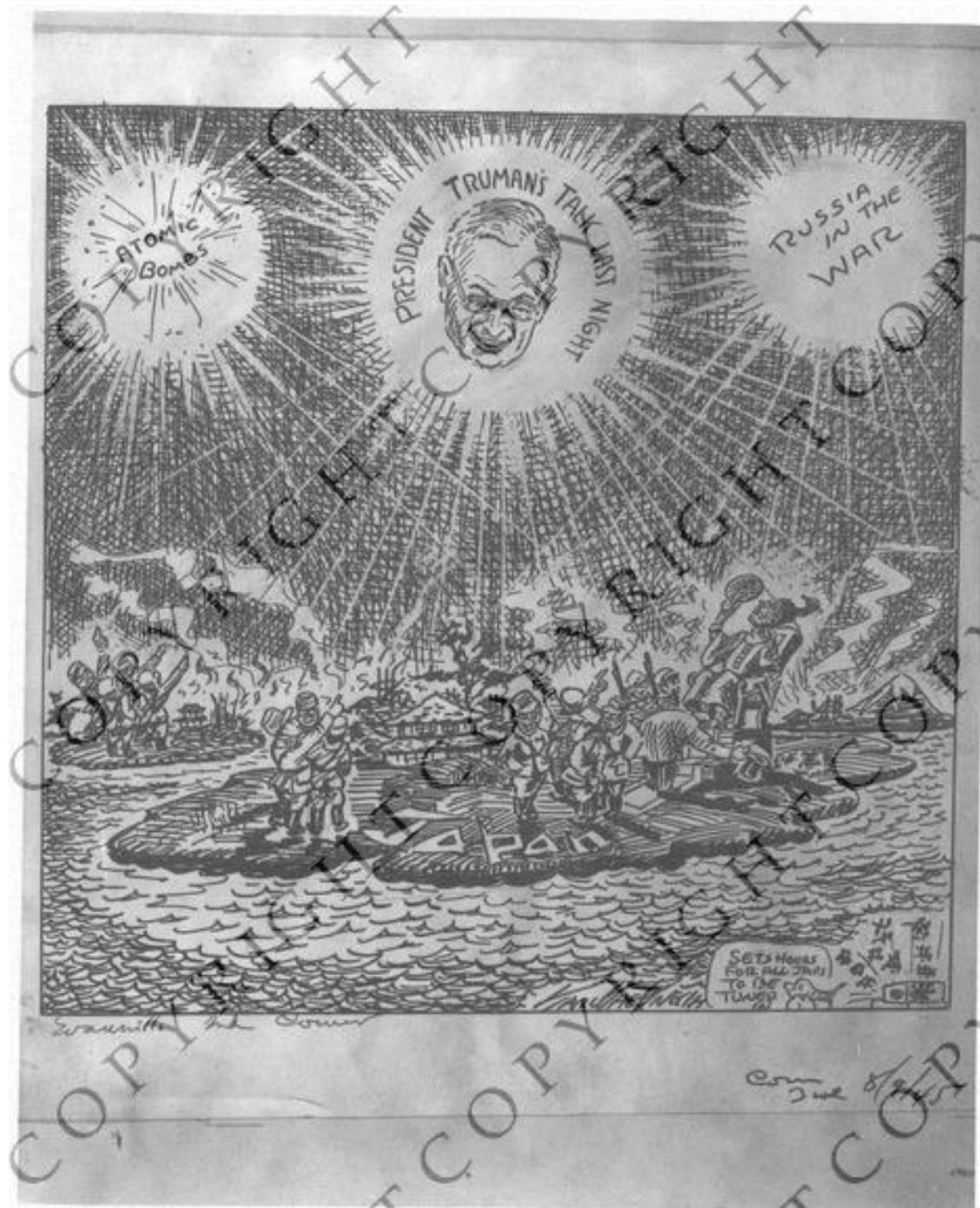
Using Source 12

Sourcing Questions	Is this a primary or secondary source?
Contextualization Questions	Under what circumstances did the Emperor of Japan decide to accept the conditions of the Potsdam Declaration?
Corroboration Tasks	
Close Reading Questions	Why do the Japanese declare war on the Europeans and Americans?

Source 13

Source Information: Political Cartoon: "Truman's Talk Last Night"

<https://www.trumanlibrary.org/photographs/64-510.jpg>



In this political cartoon, President Harry S. Truman (upper center) looms over the islands of Japan, as do the atomic bombs and the Soviet Union's declaration of war against Japan. All three are surrounded by halos. The Japanese on the islands - all soldiers - look up at the three halos. This political cartoon by Karl Kae Knecht appeared in the Evansville, Indiana Courier on August 9, 1945. The original drawing of this cartoon is in the museum collection of the Truman Library.

Using Source 13

Sourcing Questions	Is this a primary or secondary source?
Contextualization Questions	Why is there a question of dropping the bomb or having the Russians invade?
Corroboration Tasks	
Close Reading Questions	What specific information can you see from the image that could be used in the decision?