

Harry S. Truman: Balancing Human Rights and Presidential Responsibilities in Warfare

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Historical Paper

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Process Paper

I chose my topic after learning about Harry S. Truman and the Atomic bomb in ELA. The topic caught my attention when we studied. We studied several primary sources, and they all seemed very interesting. While I remembered studying the bomb in elementary school, I wanted to learn more about it. National History Day was a great opportunity to do this. My topic relates to the theme because while Truman had the responsibility to end the war quickly and protect the American people, he did not have the right to drop two destructive atomic bombs that resulted in the deaths of innocent lives.

When I started my research, I looked primarily for background information, details of how he made the decision, and the impact of the decision. I started with the background and looked to understand what really led to the bomb. Next, I explored what led to Truman's decision and began to build my argument. I researched what people thought about the bomb, as well as what the president knew during the creation of the bomb. The last thing I researched was the impact of my topic. I looked into what the atomic bomb and its research have done for today's scientists and wartime laws and tactics.

As I completed my research, I began thinking about the type of project I wanted to create. Writing is one of my strengths, so the paper stuck out to me. When I started creating my project, I first went through my research and picked out the best information that supported my argument. We wrote a paper in English to help us organize our research, so I then began writing, and I looked at paper examples and used those to help me understand what I needed in my paper.

My historical argument relates strongly to the theme of Rights and Responsibilities.

Harry S. Truman had responsibilities as president to protect the country from more wars. These responsibilities also include protecting American lives and keeping the US from more damage. However, he also did not have the right to kill innocent civilians.

My topic had a huge impact on the history of war because the dropping of the atomic bomb was the end of nuclear war, not the beginning. Nuclear war is the most destructive and most dangerous war, and the dropping of the atomic bomb brought the bomb to the forefront of every country's mind. The bombs showed the destructive power that all countries could have if they could master atomic power. However, the way Japan was left and the destruction and devastation, along with the number of deaths and injuries, showed other countries how horrible this bomb was.

Historical Paper

When people are born, they are granted fundamental rights such as life, freedom, and equality. Leaders have the responsibility to protect those rights, but this can be challenging in times of war when they must balance national security with ethical considerations. One of the most well-known instances of this dilemma occurred in 1945, as World War II neared its end. Harry S. Truman, the 33rd President of the United States, faced the difficult decision of how to end the war without causing unnecessary loss of American lives. At the time Truman took office, the United States had been developing the atomic bomb through the Manhattan Project. Truman now had a powerful tool to force Japan to surrender. However, the development of the bombs created an ethical dilemma. Although using the bombs could quickly end the war, they would also cause significant loss of Japanese civilian lives. He chose to use the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, bringing the war to an end, but at the cost of destroying multiple Japanese cities and many lives. While Truman had the responsibility to end the war quickly and protect the American people, he did not have the right to drop two destructive atomic bombs that caused the deaths of innocent lives.

Background

Years before Harry Truman became the President of the United States and faced the decision to use the atomic bomb, America maintained a policy of neutrality in World War II. This stance changed following Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7th, 1941. Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR) responded to the attack by declaring war against Japan, stating, "With confidence in our armed forces- with the unbounding determination of our people- we will gain the inevitable triumph- so help us God" (Roosevelt). Even before America entered the war, the government had grown increasingly concerned that enemy nations might develop powerful new weapons, including atomic bombs. This fear prompted the launch of a top-secret initiative to develop nuclear weapons, known as the Manhattan Project. When

FDR passed away in April 1945, Harry Truman became President and inherited the completed Manhattan Project. At this point in the war, Americans had already faced many casualties, intensifying the urgency of Truman's decision-making.

Alternatives To the Bombs

Truman's main justification for using the atomic bombs was the belief that Japan would not surrender otherwise. However, historical evidence proves that alternative strategies could have ended the war without nuclear devastation. By 1945, Japan's resources were severely depleted due to the United States' blockades. According to Edward G. Lengel:

After the fact, some military historians argued that the United States might simply have starved Japan into surrender. By 1945, the Japanese merchant fleet had been reduced to 1.5 million tons, a mere quarter of its original strength. Supplying the home islands with adequate food and other necessities was becoming increasingly difficult. (Lengel)

This indicates that Japan would have fallen within the year, regardless of the bombings.

Another alternative was to begin a diplomatic negotiation with Japan for a surrender agreement. According to *Britannica*:

By early 1945, Japanese leaders recognized that the war was lost, and discussions were held about how to end it. In February 1945, the Japanese emperor met with senior statesmen to explore options, and by April, after the fall of Okinawa, the new premier, Admiral Suzuki Kantarō, sought a settlement with the Allies. (The Demise of Imperial Japan)

This shows that the Japanese government had already attempted to negotiate surrender. Truman had access to this information, but chose to ignore it in favor of asserting American power. Jacob G.

Hornberger, a lawyer and a former Law Professor, said, “It has long been pointed out that Japan had expressed a willingness to surrender. The only condition was that the Japanese emperor is not abused or executed” (Hornberger). Later in the article, he states, “The dark irony is that Truman ended up accepting the condition anyway, only after he pulverized the people in Hiroshima and Nagasaki with nuclear bombs” (Hornberger). If Truman’s true goal was to save lives and avoid further battles, he would have pursued a conditional surrender agreement rather than using atomic bombs. Truman had full authority, and if there were terms he disagreed with, he could have negotiated them.

What did Truman know?

A major question, when considering the ethical and legal impacts of Truman’s use of the bombs, is how much Truman understood about the bombs. When the Manhattan Project began, then Vice President Truman was given little information about the details of the weapon. Shortly after taking office, President Truman received a letter from Henry Stimson, Secretary of War, asking to meet about a “highly secret matter” (Truman Papers, see Appendix A). When he became the President, the project was almost complete. This meant that Truman had to assume the responsibility of the final decision. Many historians have argued that Truman lacked the experience necessary to make such a monumental decision. Edward G. Lengel wrote in an article for the Bill of Rights Institute, “Vice President Harry S. Truman, who succeeded Roosevelt as President, at first glance did not seem to possess the skills necessary for making major international or military policy decisions as World War II approached its end” (Lengel). This shows that the most consequential decision of World War II was made by a man with limited foreign policy experience.

Although he came into the presidency without understanding the project, he did have access to expert opinions. In a petition written by Manhattan Project scientists, they wrote:

In view of the foregoing, we, the undersigned, respectfully petition: first, that you exercise your power as Commander-in-Chief, to rule that the United States shall not resort to the use of atomic bombs in this war unless the terms which will be imposed upon Japan have been made public in detail and Japan knowing these terms has refused to surrender. (A Petition to the President of the United States)

This petition and internal briefings gave Truman an understanding of the weapon's capabilities. However, he ultimately chose to use the bomb in favor of a swift end to the war..

Did Truman want to use the bombs?

A lingering debate concerns whether Truman viewed the atomic bombs as unavoidable or an opportunity to demonstrate U.S. military superiority. There is strong evidence that growing tensions with the Soviet Union influenced the decision to use nuclear weapons. By highlighting its nuclear capabilities, the United States sent a powerful message about its post-war dominance.

Despite opposition from scientists, Truman proceeded with the decision to drop the bombs. In a *USA Today* article the author states, “On the one hand, for example, 87% of the anonymous respondents favored some sort of military use of the bombs, though just 15% of all of the scientists thought that the bombs should be dropped straight-away” (Deciding to Use the Bomb). While the scientists supported a demonstration rather than direct military use, Truman chose to target populated cities. Truman’s reflections on the bombings suggest that he did not experience remorse over his decisions. In 1946, Truman wrote a letter that described Robert Oppenheimer as, “... a ‘cry-baby scientist’ who had come to my office some five or six months ago and spent most of his time wringing his hands and telling me they had blood on them because of the discovery of atomic energy” (Melillo). This letter shows that Truman did not appear to worry about what he had done to the people of Japan or what he had done for the future of the war. Truman would comment about how he wanted to end the war swiftly and save American men,

but he also said that he cared for the lives of women and children of Japan. Later, he stated, “My object is to save as many American lives as possible, but I also have a humane feeling for the women and children in Japan” (Truman, Letter to Richard Russell). However, his decision contradicted this statement because he decided to drop the bombs on cities that were made up mostly of civilians. Although Nagasaki and Hiroshima were considered military targets, there were other locations with greater strategic value to the Japanese military. This suggests that he disregarded the lives of Japanese civilians, as the bombings targeted cities largely populated by women and children. Even when Truman gave permission to drop the bombs, he never showed any hesitation. When President Truman received a request from the Secretary of War, Henry Stimson, to provide approval for the bomb, he wrote, “Suggestion approved. Release when ready” (Cable Secretary of War, see Appendix B). According to *Digital History’s* annotation on President Truman’s diary, this note was written without hesitation by the President.

In later years, Truman never showed any regret over his decision and has gone on record and said, “I never lost any sleep over my decision” (Janos). This quote shows that this decision never made him think about the destruction he caused. In a letter to Richard Russel on August 9th 1945, Harry Truman said, “I know that Japan is a terribly cruel and uncivilized nation in warfare but I can’t bring myself to believe that, because they are beasts, we ourselves act in the same manner” (Truman, Letter to Richard Russell). This reveals that Truman did not believe that dropping the bombs made America worse than Japan. This creates the idea that Truman did not care about the impact of the bombs on the Japanese people, only that the bombs showed America’s power. With this idea, an article published by the Office of Scientific and Technical Information states, “In fact, Truman and his advisors used the bomb only in an effort to intimidate the Soviet Union” (Manhattan Project). This was an abuse of power because he used his authority as commander-in-chief to kill innocent people to send a message to the Soviets.

Presidential Responsibilities vs Civilian Rights

As Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces, the President is responsible for making critical military decisions, leading the nation during conflicts, ensuring national security, and protecting America and its citizens.

According to Article II, Section II of the Constitution:

The President shall be Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, and of the Militia of the several States, when called into the actual Service of the United States; he may require the Opinion, in writing, of the principal Officer in each of the executive Departments, upon any Subject relating to the Duties of their respective Offices, and he shall have Power to grant Reprieves and Pardons for Offences against the United States, except in Cases of Impeachment. (U.S. Const., art. II, sec. 2)

As Commander-in-Chief during World War II, Harry Truman had the responsibility of ending World War II as quickly as possible. His decision to authorize the use of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki accomplished this but sparked ethical concerns regarding civilian casualties.

Voices of Hiroshima and Nagasaki

Over the years, there have been a few interviews with survivors of these deadly bombs. One of these interviews was with Yoshitaka Kawamoto. He was 13 years old at the time and was only 0.8 : kilometers away from the hypocenter. In his interview, he said:

But those who were still alive were singing the school song for as long as they could. I think I joined the chorus. We thought that someone would come and help us out. That's why we were singing a school song so loud. But nobody came to help, and we stopped singing one by one. In

the end, I was singing alone. Then I started to feel fear creeping in. I started to feel my way out, pushing the debris away little by little, using all my strength. Finally, I cleared the things around my head. And with my head sticking out of the debris, I realized the scale of the damage.

(Kawamoto)

This story shows the destruction and suffering that this caused. He had to lie stuck in the debris, hearing his classmates stop singing as they died. Another survivor, Akira Onogi, was 16 years old when the bomb was dropped. He was at home 1.2 km away from the center of the explosion. In the interview, he said:

I'd just dug out red soil and roof tiles by hand to help my family; my mother, my three sisters, and a child of one of my sisters. Then, I looked next door and I saw the father of the neighboring family standing almost naked. His skin was peeling off all over his body and was hanging from fingertips. I talked to him, but he was too exhausted to give me a reply. He was looking for his family desperately. (Onogi, Akira)

This shows the trauma he and many others had to face. He went to help his neighbors and was forced to see that horrifying scene. This trauma would follow him—and countless others—for the rest of their lives, a haunting reminder of the unimaginable human cost of the atomic bomb.

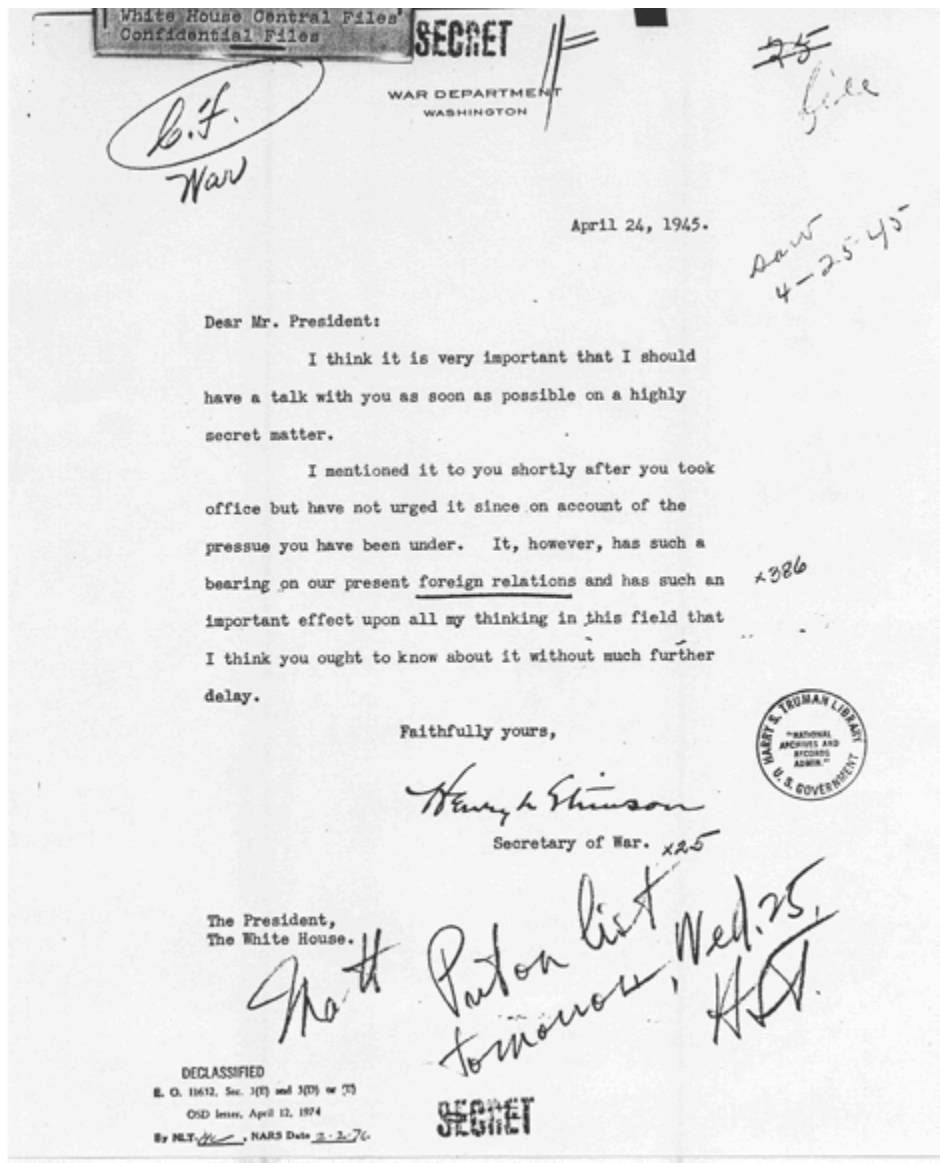
While Truman upheld his responsibility to the American people, he violated the rights of Japanese civilians. As a result of his actions, new laws were established. One of these was civilian immunity, meaning that if an attack deliberately kills civilians, it is considered a war crime. According to a legal analysis by Amnesty International, war crimes include “serious violations of international humanitarian law that include willful killings, direct attacks on civilians” (Amnesty International). While this concept had been a general understanding during World War II it had not yet become a law. Although Truman did not directly break any rules of war during his time, his actions sparked significant questions about the legal and ethical justification of his decision, which later led to the development of these rules

to protect citizens from any actions like Truman's again. This conflict is an example of the balance between presidential responsibility and the rights of civilians. It illustrates how even decisions made in the interest of national security must be weighed against the fundamental rights of individuals, reinforcing the need for legal frameworks that both empower leaders and protect humanity.

Conclusion

Truman's decision to use the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki remains one of the most controversial actions in American history. While his responsibility was to end World War II and protect American lives, his actions resulted in civilian casualties, raising ethical concerns about the use of nuclear weapons. In addition, Truman sacrificed Japanese civilians for the sake of military objectives and his desire to demonstrate U.S. military superiority to the Soviet Union. The bombings raised ethical and legal questions about the balance between military necessity and human rights. Although alternative options were available, Truman chose a path that reshaped global warfare and set the stage for the nuclear arms race in the Cold War. In hindsight, the decision highlights the enduring tension between leadership responsibilities and the fundamental rights of all people, regardless of nationality. Truman's decision set a precedent for nuclear warfare and highlighted the dilemma of balancing the leadership responsibilities of a president and the fundamental rights of all people.

Appendix A



Henry Stimson to Harry S. Truman, April 24, 1945. Truman Papers, Confidential File. War Department

Appendix B

W

HQ US FORCES EUROPEAN THEATER
 STAFF MESSAGE CONTROL
 INCOMING ~~TOP SECRET~~ MESSAGE

URGENT

FROM: AGMAR Washington
 TO : Tripartite Conference Malabar, Germany
 NO : WAR 41011 30 July 1945.

To the President from the Secretary of War.

The time schedule on Groves' project is progressing so rapidly that it is now essential that statement for release by you be available not later than Wednesday, 1 August. I have revised draft of statement, which I previously presented to you, in light of

- (A) Your recent ultimatum;
- (B) Dramatic results of test and
- (C) Certain minor suggestions made by British of which Groves is aware.

While I am planning to start a copy by special courier tomorrow in the hope you can be reached, nevertheless in the event he does not reach you in time, I will appreciate having your authority to have White House release revised statement as soon as necessary.

Sorry circumstances seem to require this emergency action.

ACTION: Gen. Vandenberg

VICTORY-IN-733 (31 July 1945) 3082172 800

RECLASSIFIED
 E.O. 11652, Dec. 8, 52 and 5173 or 5174
 CSD later, May 3, 1972
 147-116, MAR 20 1972 517-29

~~TOP SECRET~~

THE MAKING OF AN EXACT COPY OF THIS MESSAGE IS FORBIDDEN

1 NO

EISEN

Sec War

Reply to your 41011 suggestions approved Release when ready but not sooner than August 2.

HST

1

Memorandum from Secretary of War Henry Stimson asking permission to announce the use of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan. Page two contains President Truman's handwritten response.

Annotated Bibliography

Primary Sources

Amnesty International. "Armed Conflict." *Amnesty International*,

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/what-we-do/armed-conflict/>. Accessed 14 January 2025

This article helped me understand what qualifies as a war crime and gave me a good quote that helped me show what crimes Truman committed. This helped me understand how people are charged with war crimes as well.

The Constitution of the United States. art. II, sec. 2. Legal Information Institute, Cornell Law

School, www.law.cornell.edu/constitution/articleii#section3 . Accessed 14 January 2025

An excerpt of the US constitution that says what the can and cannot do as commander-in-chief of the military. This allowed me to explain what Truman was allowed to do and what he wasn't allowed to do. This helped me understand if Truman broke any laws at the time.

The Constitution of the United States. art. II, sec. 3. Legal Information Institute, Cornell Law

School, www.law.cornell.edu/constitution/articleii#section3 . Accessed 14 January 2025

This is an excerpt of the US Constitution that speaks on what the president can do with immunity. This allowed me to research other presidents based on this and compare them to Harry Truman. This helped me also think deeper into why he used that massive amount of power in a country that was very weak and consider other reasons.

"Japanese planes destroy US fleet at Pearl Harbor." *Chronicles of World War II* [Honolulu], 8

December 1941,

https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/sites/default/files/BombDecision_DocumentSet.pdf.

Accessed 22 November 2024.

A newspaper article that talks about the attack on Pearl Harbor and explains what happened. This article helped me get an understanding of what happened and gave me background info to help understand why the bombs could have been necessary.

Kawamoto, Yoshitaka. "Testimony of Yoshitaka Kawamoto." *Voice of Hibakusha*. Produced by the Hiroshima Peace Cultural Center and NHK, translated by Yumi Kodama, Junko Kato, Junko Kawamoto, Masako Kubota, Chiharu Kimura, and Kumi Komatsu, advised by Laurence Wiig, compiled by Andrew Mossberg, August 8, 1990, updated September 29, 1999. Accessed 16 January 2025. <https://www.inicom.com/hibakusha/yoshitaka.html>

This interview helped me understand even more about what the bombs really did to the citizens of Hiroshima. The interview created a scary scene in your mind and scared you when you put yourself in that situation. This really helped me feel how the citizens would feel and it just seems like an unnecessary bombing.

Letter from Luis Alvarez to His Son; 1945; General Records of the Department of Energy, Record Group 434. [Online Version, <https://www.docsteach.org/documents/document/letter-from-luis-alvarez-to-his-son>, January 10, 2025]

A letter from a former Manhattan Project scientist to his son says that he regrets creating the bombs because of the destruction. I used this to help strengthen my argument and show the scientist's perspective on what they wanted the bomb to be used for or not used for.

Mikami, Yosaku. "Testimony of Yosaku Mikami." *Voice of Hibakusha*. Produced by the Hiroshima Peace Cultural Center and NHK, translated by Yumi Kodama, Junko Kato, Junko Kawamoto, Masako Kubota, Chiharu Kimura, and Kumi Komatsu, advised by Laurence Wiig, compiled by Andrew Mossberg, August 8, 1990, updated September 29, 1999. <https://www.inicom.com/hibakusha/yosaku.html> Accessed 15 January 2025

This interview with a survivor of Hiroshima helped me get a better understanding of what happened. This also let me learn even more about the horrific aftermath of the bombs. I used this source to show what Harry Truman did when he dropped the bomb.

“Minutes of Meeting held at the White House, June 18, 1945.” *Miscellaneous Historical*

Documents Collection 736, 18 June 1945. *Truman Library*,

https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/sites/default/files/BombDecision_DocumentSet.pdf.

Accessed 4 November 2024.

A transcript of a meeting between US generals and President Harry Truman, helped me see the conversations had with his generals. This allowed my argument to be stronger because of the different details that are shown in this meeting.

Onogi, Akira. "Testimony of Akira Onogi." *Voice of Hibakusha*. Produced by the Hiroshima

Peace Cultural Center and NHK, translated by Yumi Kodama, Junko Kato, Junko

Kawamoto, Masako Kubota, Chiharu Kimura, and Kumi Komatsu, advised by Laurence

Wiig, compiled by Andrew Mossberg, August 8, 1990, updated September 29, 1999.

Accessed January 16 2025. <https://www.inicom.com/hibakusha/akira.html>.

This interview with Akira Onogi creates a horrifying image of a 16-year-old boy seeing destruction all through his homeland and seeing people dead and dying. This interview scares me with the description of seeing these things and he was only two years older than me. This helped prove my point because he was 16 and had not ever done anything against America and he had to live with all this in his mind.

Oppenheimer, Robert. “Oppenheimer Interview.” *CBS News*, 1965,

www.youtube.com/watch?v=AdtLxltrHg . Accessed 25 Oct. 2024.

This interview with Robert J Oppenheimer in 1965 is a first-hand look at the thinking of the leader of the Los Alamos group’s Atomic Bomb project on the use of the bomb. This helped me see how the US was thinking at the time and understand why they were adamant about using the bomb.

“A Petition to the President of the United States.” *Miscellaneous Historical Documents*

Collection 345, 17 July 1945. Truman Library,

https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/sites/default/files/BombDecision_DocumentSet.pdf.

This petition to not use the bomb that was sent to Harry Truman from many scientists in the Los Alamos lab was one of the most important documents because this shows that he ignored the scientists. This document was the biggest piece of evidence that help complete my claim and created my essay.

Roosevelt, Franklin D. *Speech by Franklin D. Roosevelt, New York (Transcript)*. 1941,

https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/sites/default/files/BombDecision_DocumentSet.pdf

.Accessed 4 November

The speech by Franklin D Roosevelt was an important document to my research because it gave me an idea of the promises made by the former president that Harry Truman was trying to fulfill. This speech contains very harsh words about the Japanese and let me see what Harry Truman was trying to live up to.

Saeki, Toshiko. "Testimony of Toshiko Saeki." *Voice of Hibakusha*. Produced by the Hiroshima

Peace Cultural Center and NHK, translated by Yumi Kodama, Junko Kato, Junko

Kawamoto, Masako Kubota, Chiharu Kimura, and Kumi Komatsu, advised by Laurence

Wiig, compiled by Andrew Mossberg, August 8, 1990, updated September 29, 1999.

Accessed January 17 2025. <https://www.inicom.com/hibakusha/toshiko.html>.

This is a sad story from an interview with a Mother who survived but ended up losing her children in the bomb. This is such a sad story about how she woke up and realized, after a few minutes, that she had lost her kids. This helped me get a stronger argument for my paper because these people were innocent.

Sawachika, Hiroshi. "Testimony of Hiroshi Sawachika." *Voice of Hibakusha*. Produced by the Hiroshima Peace Cultural Center and NHK, translated by Yumi Kodama, Junko Kato, Junko Kawamoto, Masako Kubota, Chiharu Kimura, and Kumi Komatsu, advised by Laurence Wiig, compiled by Andrew Mossberg, August 8, 1990, updated September 29, 1999. <https://www.inicom.com/hibakusha/hiroshi.html>. Accessed 14 January 2025

A first-hand account of the Hiroshima bomb. This interview helped give me a better idea of the destruction and horrific injuries that these bombs caused. This description let me understand how horrible this was and made me so sad because of the amount of innocent people he describes dying.

Sivard, Ruth Leger. "Twentieth Century Atlas - World War Two Casualty Statistics."

Necrometrics, 1999, <https://necrometrics.com/ww2stats.htm> . Accessed 4 November 2024.

This is a document that shows all casualty statistics between multiple countries. I used it to look at the differences between the US's casualties and Japan's casualties. This allowed me to get a basic understanding of how many people both countries had lost and then I was able to get a simple understanding of what could have happened if the war had gone on.

Stimson, Henry L. *Cable, Secretary of War Henry Stimson to President Truman [re atomic bomb] with Truman's handwritten reply*. 1945. *National Archives and Records Administration*, NAID 200665. *National Archives Catalog*, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/200665>. Accessed November 4 2024.

This document gave me a good primary source showing how decisively he made his decision.. This document was also a very good addition to my appendix.

Stimson, Henry. *Truman Papers, Confidential File*. 24 April 1945. *Truman Library*, War Department,

https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/sites/default/files/BombDecision_DocumentSet.pdf.

Accessed 4 November 2024.

This source is a letter written by Henry Stimson and was given to Harry Truman, and it mentions that before Harry Truman became the president he didn't know about the Atomic bomb. This helped make my argument stronger because I was able to use this to explain why he didn't know enough to make this decision.

Takahashi, Akihiro. "Testimony of Akihiro Takahashi." *Voice of Hibakusha*. Produced by the Hiroshima Peace Cultural Center and NHK, translated by Yumi Kodama, Junko Kato, Junko Kawamoto, Masako Kubota, Chiharu Kimura, and Kumi Komatsu, advised by Laurence Wiig, compiled by Andrew Mossberg, August 8, 1990, updated September 29, 1999. Accessed January 17 2025. <https://www.inicom.com/hibakusha/akihiro.html>.

A sad story of a survivor named Akihiro Takahashi during an interview. This story truly makes you feel so bad because these innocent kids had to feel the pain for something that they didn't have anything to do with. This story truly helped me understand what these bombs did to the survivors and what they have to live like now.

"Translation of Leaflet dropped on the Japanese (AB-11)." *Miscellaneous Historical Documents Collection 258*, 6 August 1945. *Truman Library*,

https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/sites/default/files/BombDecision_DocumentSet.pdf.

Accessed 4 11 2024.

This leaflet talks about the atomic bomb and tells the Japanese what type of weapon they had and it helped me see what type of message and warning the US gave. What this allowed me to understand better about my topic is what kind of warning the US tried to give the Japanese. This also made me question why they didn't demonstrate the bomb on an island instead of this small piece of paper.

Truman, Harry S. *Letter to Richard Russell*. 9 August 1945. *Truman Library*,

https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/sites/default/files/BombDecision_DocumentSet.pdf.

Accessed 4 11 2024.

This letter is an important source because it shows you that Truman thinks what he did was okay which made my argument strong. This was also important because it let me understand Truman more and that helped me understand my claim better as well.

Truman, Harry S., et al. *Potsdam Proclamation*. 26 July 1945. *Truman Library*,

https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/sites/default/files/BombDecision_DocumentSet.pdf.

This proclamation was an important piece of evidence because it is directly from Truman and it also has multiple things that he later goes against. This made my argument very strong because it helps me see what he lies about and how much he lies about in this one proclamation.

Truman, Harry S. "Truman's Diary on the Atomic Bomb ." *Digital History*,

https://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/dispatch_textbook.cfm?smtID=3&psid=1186. Accessed 6

November 2024.

This piece of Truman's diary is another important piece of evidence because it lets you see that Truman went against his word which makes my claim stronger. This evidence also let me understand what really happened which allowed me to truly know that my topic was a good argument.

United States, Congress. *Constitution of the United States: Analysis and Interpretation*. Article

II, Section 2. *Constitution Annotated*,

https://constitution.congress.gov/browse/essay/artII-S2-C1-1-3/ALDE_00013465/ .

Accessed February 3 2025.

This is an excerpt from the Constitution that explains what the president can do as commander in chief. This let me understand more of the president's power and look at how Harry Truman used them. This made me understand my argument more and let me explain it better.

United States, Office of the President. *Statement by President Harry S. Truman*. White House

Press Release, 6 Aug. 1945. National Archives and Records Administration, NAID:

310987460. Textual Records. January 13 2025

A press statement from Harry S Truman about dropping the atomic bomb. This helped me get a better understanding of what Truman knew or had at least been told. With these statements it let me get a better argument because it made my points stronger and helped me prove one of my most important points.

Secondary Sources

“Debate over the Bomb - Nuclear Museum.” *Atomic Heritage Foundation*,

<https://ahf.nuclearmuseum.org/ahf/history/debate-over-bomb/>. Accessed 6 November 2024.

The article is an article explaining what the argument about Truman is. This article helped me better understand my topic because it shows both arguments and lets you see what kinds of things people believe about what happened. This allowed me to find things that were made up about Truman that made sure I was using the correct information so that my paper was accurate.

“*Deciding to Use the Bomb.*” *The Science Bookstore*, Aug. 2008,

<https://longstreet.typepad.com/thesciencebookstore/2008/08/deciding-to-use.html>.

Accessed May 13 2025

This website gave me better information on the polls that they did on the scientists. This helped me with my appendix as well because it gave me my photo. This also gave me the statistics on the scientists and their thoughts on the bomb.

"The Demise of Imperial Japan." *Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica,

<https://www.britannica.com/place/Empire-of-Japan/The-demise-of-imperial-Japan>.

Accessed November 4 2024

This article from Britannica gave me a deeper understanding of what caused Japan's downfall. It lets me get better quotes for my argument to prove my understanding. The evidence from this source gave me more information to prove my point and create a good argument.

Hamby, Alonzo L. "The decision to use the atomic bomb | WWII, Hiroshima & Nagasaki."

Britannica,

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Trumans-decision-to-use-the-bomb-712569>. Accessed

4 November 2024.

This article from Britannica goes into detail about every reason that the bombs could have been dropped and what went on during the decision. This article was a good site for my paper because it let me get an understanding of what else was a factor in the bombs usage.

Hornberger, Jacob G. "Truman's War Crimes at Hiroshima and Nagasaki – The Future of

Freedom Foundation." *The Future of Freedom Foundation*, 5 August 2020,

<https://www.fff.org/2020/08/05/trumans-war-crimes-at-hiroshima-and-nagasaki/>.

Accessed 13 November 2024.

This was my most important piece of evidence from an argumentative point of view because it allowed me to get new perspectives on the argument that I hadn't seen before and they all made sense. This article allowed me to understand what I was arguing about and because the article was about the argument and a little of both perspectives it let me get better reasons for my argument.

Janos, Betts. "What *Oppenheimer* Misses About the Decision to Drop the Bomb." *Inkstick*

Media, 26 July 2023,

<https://inkstickmedia.com/what-oppenheimer-misses-about-the-decision-to-drop-the-bom>

[b/](#). Accessed 11 November 2024

This article gave me good information on the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. This article also gave me more information that many people don't know about. I got multiple good quotes that also help explain my argument.

Lengel, Edward G. "Manhattan Project Hiroshima Nagasaki." *Bill of Rights Institute*,

<https://billofrightsinstitute.org/essays/dropping-the-atomic-bomb>. Accessed 11

November 2024.

This article goes into depth about some of the more hidden details about what went down with the President and others in the white house. This article was able to help me understand Truman's perspectives a bit better and that made me understand my claim better.

"Manhattan Project: Potsdam and the Final Decision to Use the Bomb, July 1945." *OSTI.GOV*,

https://www.osti.gov/opennet/manhattan-project-history/Events/1945/potsdam_decision.

[tm](#). Accessed 4 December 2024.

This article written by the Office of Scientific and Technical Information gave me multiple quotes that gave my paper a better explanation. I used this article to give me a little bit of background information but I also got good details on the bomb and other things.

Melillo, Wendy. "How Einstein, Oppenheimer and Other Scientists Failed to Convince

Americans About Controlling Nuclear Weapons." *Smithsonian Magazine*, 31 August

2023,

[https://www.smithsonianmag.com/blogs/smithsonian-books/2023/08/31/Atomic-Energy-](https://www.smithsonianmag.com/blogs/smithsonian-books/2023/08/31/Atomic-Energy-Campaign/)

[Campaign/](#). Accessed 1 November 2024

This article talks about the scientist's perspective, and it let me get a better understanding of one of my reasons and it allowed me to get an understanding of what ways the scientists tried to stop the bomb. With this evidence, it made my argument very strong and helped create a better claim.