

Appendix IV

Possible Diplomatic and Military Rationales Involved in the U.S. Decision to Drop
Nuclear Weapons on Hiroshima and Nagasaki

Following are a number of questions and alternative answers concerning the U.S. decision to drop nuclear weapons on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Of course, some of the questions have more than one valid answer. To help sort out your thoughts and feelings on this issue, express your preference for the various alternatives by filling in the blanks at the beginning of each one. Choose your favorite alternative and put the number "1" by it; put "2" by your next favorite, ...etc. An extra blank has been left at the end of each question for you to choose your own alternative.

1. What terms of Japanese surrender should have been acceptable to the U.S.?

_____ (a) Complete cessation of hostilities, U.S. occupation of Japan, removal of the Emperor from any public position, imposition of a democratic form of government (subject to the Supreme Commander of the Allied forces, Gen. MacArthur for a number of years), imposition of a free enterprise economy, and withdrawal of Japanese troops from those foreign lands specified by the victors.

_____ (b) Same as (a), but allow the Emperor to stay on as head of state, subject to Gen. MacArthur.

_____ (c) Complete cessation of hostilities, withdrawal of Japanese forces from all occupied foreign territory; no Allied occupation, Japanese continue to manage their

internal affairs as they desire.

_____(d)

2. How might the U.S. have avoided using the A-bomb?

_____(a) Encourage the Soviets to mediate in negotiations with Japan in an effort to strengthen those Japanese interested in peace.

_____(b) Compromise on the Emperor issue before deciding to use the bomb.

_____(c) Wait to see if Soviet entrance into the war would force Japan to surrender on acceptable terms.

_____(d) Simply mount an invasion of Japan prior to when the A-bombs were available and before the Soviet invasion of Japan was planned--beat the Soviets to the punch.

_____(e) Place a naval blockade around Japan, since Japan is almost totally dependent on the outside world for raw materials.

_____(f)

3. What considerations might have persuaded the U.S. to use the A-bomb?

_____(a) The experience of the U.S. invasion of Okinawa in April, 1945, where 12,000 American and about 100,000 Japanese lives were lost, pointed up the need to save half a million American lives by avoiding an invasion of Japan.

_____(b) Same as (a), but only 20,000 American lives would have been saved by avoiding an invasion.

_____(c) There was a need to end the war before the Soviets came in; the Soviets were interested in having a zone of occupation in Japan, just as they already had in Germany.

_____ (d) There was a need to demonstrate the power of the A-bomb to Stalin.

_____ (e) U.S. leaders found it necessary to pander to vengeful attitudes of the U.S. public and politicians. After all, it was the U.S. government which promoted the idea of "unconditional surrender."

_____ (f) U.S. leaders believed that the Soviet invasion would not end the war; only the A-bomb could do it.

_____ (g) Dropping the bomb gave the Emperor and the Japanese "Peace Faction" an added argument for surrendering.

_____ (h) President Truman and other U.S. leaders were afraid that if they didn't use the bomb, then they would be blamed for unnecessarily causing the death of every U.S. soldier killed after the bomb became available.

_____ (i)

4. What reasons did the U.S. have for nuking Nagasaki too?

_____ (a) The Nagasaki bomb used plutonium, unlike the Hiroshima bomb which used uranium.

_____ (b) Nagasaki was hilly, Hiroshima flat.

_____ (c) The Japanese hadn't surrendered after the Hiroshima attack; it was thought although another one would do it.

_____ (d) It was important to convey to the Japanese the impression that we had a stockpile of such bombs (even though we didn't).

_____ (e) It was important to convey to the Soviets the impression that we had a stockpile of such bombs (even though we didn't).

_____ (f)

5. Why didn't the U.S. offer to retain the Emperor before dropping the A-bombs?

_____ (a) This concession was incompatible with the official U.S. position of "unconditional surrender," which the U.S. public was so strongly in favor of.

_____ (b) The Emperor was believed to be behind the die-hard attitude of the Japanese in their losing war effort. If not removed, he would start up the Japanese war effort again in the near future.

_____ (c) Justice demanded that the Emperor be deposed.

_____ (d) This concession might have prompted the Japanese to surrender, thus eliminating the opportunity to use the bomb to impress the Soviets.

_____ (e)

6. Why did the U.S. finally agree to let the Emperor stay on (but subject to the Supreme Commander, Gen. MacArthur)?

_____ (a) The Emperor's prestige was needed to keep the die-hard military fanatics in place once surrender was made.

_____ (b) To the U.S.'s surprise, the Japanese refused to surrender even after the two A-bombs were dropped on Japan. The U.S. wished to demonstrate the power of the A-bomb in ending the war, but no more A-bombs were immediately available. So to make it appear as if the war ended because of the A-bombs, they secretly made the concession on the Emperor issue which led to an immediate Japanese surrender.

_____ (c) To help insure that the Japanese people would comply with the surrender decision.

_____ (d)

