

Quest for United States of America's Diplomatic Apology to Japan over Hiroshima and Nagasaki: The Moral Arguments

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Abstract

The study posits that in spite of the strong and persuasive moral arguments of Atomic Bomb opponents who are emphatic that the United States of America was wrong to use the Atomic Bombs to end World War II with the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki considering that there were some credible alternatives which the United States could have pursued to still bring the war to an end, the United States may not in the foreseeable future tender a diplomatic apology to Japan as has been called for from many quarters. The reasons for this assumption includes United States realism posture by which she undertakes any measure necessary for her security and survival which adds to the fact that she does not apologies for any action properly thought out and executed in her national interest. The United States which pursues her foreign policy from a realist perspective believes that the end justifies the means. The end sought in dropping the Atomic Bombs , according to the United States, was to put to a stop the human misery which the war would have continue to inflict if it was allowed to linger.

Key Words: *Apology Diplomacy, Atomic Bombs, Conflict, Realism, World War II*

Introduction

The argument whether it was necessary to drop the Atomic Bombs on Japan to end World War II has raged since the end of the war. But how did the world come to this past? The tide of the war changed in 1943 when Italy surrendered and later switched sides by declaring war on Germany, her erstwhile comrade in arms. By June 6, 1944, the Allied Powers landed in Normandy beaches with Dwight Eisenhower, who later became the President of the United States, as the Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces. By the end of the same month, more than one million allied soldiers had landed in France and the German army were driven back, and Paris liberated. The allied soldiers headed to Holland, liberated it and move on to face German assault in Italy. By January 1945, Romania, Finland and Hungary had all surrendered. Russian army pressed through Poland and entered Germany from the East, while the American forces attacked Germany from the West. In late April, 1945, Berlin the capital of Germany was besieged and Hitler chose to commit suicide rather than being captured. It was his successor Admiral Doenitz who surrendered Germany unconditionally on May 7, 1945 (Watson, 1981). The Axis powers that started the war were Germany, Italy and Japan. Italy surrendered in 1943 and Germany on May 7, 1945. It must have dawned on Japan that the war which the three states could not win as a combined force could be won alone. Why then did Japan continue with the war despite the odds? Again, of what necessity was it to have dropped the Atomic Bombs at that period of the war? This study examined the arguments various scholars advanced on why

the United States of America should tender a diplomatic apology to Japan over the nuclear bombardments of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. As a consequence, it becomes imperative to examine the concept of diplomatic apology?

Conceptualisation of Diplomatic Apology

Different scholars have postulated theories on how the state came into existence. Appadorai (2004) explained that there is the Social Contract Theory as exemplified by the writings of Thomas Hobbes, John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who think that the state came into existence when man, who in his primitive nature was hitherto not bonded, but decided to come together and put their lot under a man or group of men; that is, an assembly, for the protection of their lives, liberty and property.

There is also the Theory of Divine Origin of State which holds that the state did not come into existence as a result of human effort but came about by divine providence. The exponents of this theory are St. Augustine and St. Aquinas. The theory maintains that God is the founder of state and the ruler is but the deputy of God or his vice-regent or viceroy on earth.

There is also the Patriarchal and Matriarchal Theories in which the existence of the state is traceable through male and female forebears respectively. The strongest proponent of the Patriarchal Theory is Sir Maine, while E. Jenks is the scholar of the Matriarchal Theory. Other theories on the origin of state include the Evolution Theory which argued that the state developed as a result of varied factors, while the Theory of Force claimed that the state evolved as a result of aggression which is underlined by the statement that war begot the king. The argument here is that the state emanated as a result of the subjugation of the weak by the strong and powerful (Appadorai, 2004). Irrespective of various theories on the evolution of the state, various factors have led to the emergence of many states especially since the end of World War II, with the states interacting at the international level on the basis of the Treaty of Westphalia. Nonetheless, the conduct of international relations has been, to a varying degree, cooperative, competitive or out-rightly conflictive (Ojo and Sesay, 1988).

It is on the conflictive nature of international relations that states come to hurt other states through their actions or inactions. Some of these actions or inactions may and do normally have grievous and disastrous consequences, sometimes leaving the whole world astounded and dumbfounded. When peace and normalcy eventually return, the psychological and traumatic upheaval of those hurt does not go away. There could be a silent build up that would erupt into a volcano if past grievances are not addressed and redressed. This redressing may come as soothing words, show of regret for past actions and commitment that such actions will not be allowed to repeat. This is the purview of Apology Diplomacy. Diplomatic Apology is also known as Political Apology. Apology to Tavuchis (1991) is an expression of regret, remorse, or sorrow for having insulted, failed, injured, said or done something that wronged or harmed another party. He continued that in such instance, one could say "What he said really hurt my feelings, but his apology sounded so sincere that I couldn't help, but forgive him." An apology to Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy (2015) is "the act of declaring one's regret, remorse, or sorrow for having insulted, failed, injured or wronged another".

An apology should not be seen as perfunctory. This is to say that it should not be done just as a duty or habit without any show of real interest or feeling. It should convey repentance that comes from within. This is because, apology is not done as a lip service but rather performs important social functions which include the diffusion of conflict, avoidance of retaliation, facilitation of reconciliation and very importantly in the conduct of interstate relations, the reaffirmation of the value of rules and obligation (Bilder, 2006). Apology diffuses edgy social and political situations.

Political Apology is when apology is tender at the state level, that is, when the president or the head of state or his representative tenders an apology on behalf of the state for a wrongful act.

This show of regret or remorse may be done verbally or in writing. Apology is not the act of the weak. It does not show weakness but rather depicts strength of character. Apologies are not only for current issues but could be publicly issued to those that have been wronged in the past. It may not really undo what has been done, especially when it had led to the death of its victims, but it has the power to soothe the psyche of victims or their relatives. According to the Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy (2015) some of the crimes and issues on which apologies could be made include personal betrayals and insults, enslavement, violations of medical ethics, land displacement, violations of treaties or international law, systemic discrimination, wartime casualties, cultural disruptions, or political conflicts. Conflict is endemic in human interactions whether at personal, communal or state levels. It is important to recognise human shortcomings with a view to remedy them. Lazare (2004:1) states that:

One of the most profound human interactions is the offer and acceptance of apologies. Apologies have the power to heal humiliations and grudges, remove the desire for vengeance and generate forgiveness on the part of the offended parties. For the offender, they can diminish the fear of retaliation and relieve the guilt and shame that can grip the mind with persistence and tenacity that are hard to ignore. The function of the apology process, ideally, is the reconciliation and restoration of broken relationships.

It must be noted that apologies are unacceptable if they are deemed not to be genuine; the addressee may not be willing to accept it. So what elements must be available for an apology to be deemed genuine and acceptable? Bilder (2006:438) contends that the elements include:

- i. Admitting one's fault or blameworthiness without excuse or justification.
- ii. Expressing sincere remorse and regret for the injurious action or inaction on the other's injury.
- iii. Offering appropriate reparation and promising that the wrong done will not occur in the future.

The issues that necessitate apology could be social or political. When it is political other set of elements may be called to bear. Bilder notes that James (2004) suggests that an authentic political apology must:

- i. Be recorded officially in writing
- ii. Clearly name the wrong in question
- iii. Accept responsibility;
- iv. State regret;
- v. Promise non-repetition;
- vi. Not demand forgiveness;
- vii. Not be hypocritical and arbitrary; and
- viii. Be undertaken through measures of publicity, ceremony, and concrete reparation - both to morally engage those in whose name apology is made and to assure the wronged group that the apology is sincere.

One could not but agree with both Bilder (2006) and James (2004). For apology to be meaningful, the show of remorse or regret has to be clear and glaring, if not, it will be an exercise in futility. Moreover, apology must not be demanded before it is given. As a matter of fact, apology is more profound and deep-seated when it is freely given without demand or coercion.

Objectives of the Study

The Objectives of this study are as follows:

- (1) To determine the importance of Apology Diplomacy in the conduct of international relations.

- (2) To ascertain the merit or otherwise of the arguments for United States diplomatic apology to Japan over Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The Argument for United States' apology on Hiroshima and Nagasaki

Even though successive United States of America's governments have not found it expedient to apologies to Japan over the 1945 nuclear bombardment and devastations of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, calls have come from many quarters for this apology. The arguments of these callers which many think is morally justified are presented below.

The Political Intrigue

Hume (2013:2) quotes an American government's own Strategic Bombing Survey Report which states that:

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 1943, and in all probability prior to 1, November 1945, Japan would have surrendered even if the atomic bombs had not entered the war and even if no invasion had been planned or contemplated.

The bombs were dropped because Japan refused to an unconditional surrender as demanded by the Allied Powers. Certain question arises from the above postulations. Firstly, why did Japan refused to an unconditional surrender? Why did the Allied Powers refuse Japan's request if the acceptance would have led to Japan's surrender and subsequent ending of the war? The answer is not far-fetched. When Germany surrendered on May 7, 1945, Japan knew that the game was up, and it started to make moves for soft landing. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) was the only major country with which Japan still had a neutrality pact, and as such, had been Japan's main hope of negotiating a peace with something better than unconditional surrender. Japan was on this score requesting the USSR's mediation to end the war in response to Emperor Hirohito's request of June 22, 1945 (Long, 2006). The United States, the leader of the Allied Powers was well aware of this and also aware that while she was demanding an unconditional surrender that Japan was afraid of what will happen to the throne of their emperor. Japan's Prime Minister Suzuki clearly stated that if unconditional surrender meant the abolition of the emperor system, such scenario meant that the Japanese people would lose all reason for existence. The Japanese Prime Minister was emphatic that unconditional surrender would lead to the death of millions of Japanese who would fight to the last man (Long, 2006). There is no denying that the Allied Powers realised from this statement that the throne was the primary issue for Japan. Again Long (2006:6) states that:

Foreign Minister, Togo, one of the leaders of Japan's doves noted in a July 12, 1945 message to Sato, Japans Ambassador to Moscow, "as long as America and England insist on unconditional surrender, our country has no alternative but to see (the war) through in an all-out effort". The telegram was intercepted by the U.S., decoded, and sent to President Truman.

According to Long (2006), the United States' government was not unaware of the primacy of the emperor's throne to the Japanese people. Long (2006) further states that Robert Butow aptly portrayed the feelings of the Japanese people for their emperor when he noted that, the one thing the Japanese people could not do was sign a death warrant for the imperial house, and if it appeared that the Allied Powers would take steps against the Emperor, then even the most ardent advocates of peace would fall behind those who call for war.

There is even stronger evidence that the United States government was not ignorant of the importance of the emperor to Japanese surrender (Grew, 1952). Joseph Grew, the United States' Under Secretary writes that he had informed and explained this to President Truman in person on May 28, 1945. Grew was experienced in Japan's affairs as he had been U.S. Ambassador to Japan for ten years before the attack on Pearl Harbor. He was therefore the most knowledgeable on Japan with regards to any other U.S. government official. With his experience about Japan, he informed President Harry S. Truman that the greatest obstacle to unconditional surrender by the Japanese was their belief that it would entail the destruction or permanent removal of the Emperor and the institution of the throne.

Again on June 18, 1945, at a meeting with President Truman and his military advisers, Assistant Secretary of War, John McCloy, was of the opinion that Japan should be permitted to retain the Emperor and be given a warning of the Atomic Bomb in order to bring an earlier and less deadly surrender (Giovannitti & Freed, 1965). In the same vein, Secretary of War, Henry Stimson and President Truman reviewed a proposal by Stimson to call for Japan's surrender. Stimson's proposal to the President stated, "I personally think that if in saying this, we should add that we do not exclude a constitutional monarchy under her present dynasty, it would substantially add to the chances of acceptance" (Stimson, 1945). According to Long (2016), the proposed reformed Japanese government to be formed may include a constitutional monarchy under the present dynasty. But unfortunately, this well thought out line was not part of the surrender demand that was broadcasted on July 26, 1945 despite all the effort made by Stimson that it be included (Stimson, 1945). Long (2016:10) quotes Akira Iriye, a Pacific war historian as saying that:

One reason for this change (the removal of the emperor retention) was the growing influence within the State Department of men like (Sec. of State) Byrnes, Acheson, and MacLeish – with no expertise on Japanese affairs but keenly sensitive to public opinion – and the president's tendency to listen to them rather than Grew and other experts.

However, it must be noted that as it concerns his disagreement with Grew on the issue of allowing Japan to retain the throne and the emperor, Dean Acheson later admitted and said "I very shortly came to see that I was quite wrong" (Acheson, 2015). Japan's desire to end the war was not in doubt. Long (2016) avers that some of Japanese peace messages which were intercepted by the United States make this clear. Some of the peace messages are as follows: July 11, 1945 – "Make clear to Russia... we have no intention of annexing or taking possession of the areas which we have been occupying as a result of the war; we hope to terminate the war".

July 12, 1945 – "It is His Majesty's heart's desire to see the swift termination of the war".

July 13, 1945 – "I sent Ando...to communicate to the (Soviet) Ambassador that His Majesty desired to dispatch Prince Konoye as special envoy, carrying with him the personal letter of His Majesty stating the Imperial wish to end the war"

July 21 – "Special Envoy Konoye's mission will be in obedience to the Imperial will. He will request assistance in bringing about an end to the war through the good offices of the Soviet Government". The July 21 Communication from Togo also noted that a conference between the Emperor's emissary, Prince Konoye, and the Soviet Union was sought in preparation for contacting the U.S. and Great Britain.

July 25 – "It is impossible to accept unconditional surrender under any circumstances, but we should like to communicate to the other party through appropriate channels that we have no objection to a peace based on the Atlantic Charter (Long, 2016:9).

Long (2016) states that in passing up this possible opportunity for an earlier and less deadly peace, Truman was not deliberately trying to prolong the war so that the Atomic Bomb could be used on Japan to intimidate the Soviets as some have suggested, but rather, it was likely that Truman believed the use of Atomic Bomb on Japan was necessary for the reasons he often gave which was: “we have used it in order to shorten the agony of war, in order to save lives of thousands and thousands of young Americans”. Bomb opponents argue that the argument by Long does not sound right. How does it make sense that Truman passed up a possible opportunity for an earlier and less deadly peace only to use the Atomic Bombs on Japan as a necessity to shorten the agony of war in order to save lives of thousands and thousands of young Americans.

The scholars argue that from all indications, especially arising from the intercepted messages, America was well aware that Japan was willing to surrender and end the war, the only problem being the issue of the status of their emperor in the scheme of things. If so, what were the factors that made offering of retention of the Emperor a difficult choice for President Truman? Some in the United States believed that such a concession would have emboldened Japan to keep on fighting. That may not make much sense, from the point of view of bomb opponents, since Japan was still fighting anyway. Another reason was that unconditional surrender was the American public opinion and this included punishment of the Emperor. So making an exception in the unconditional surrender to allow Japan retain the Emperor would have been politically incorrect at that time. In line with American public opinion, both Truman and his main foreign policy adviser, Secretary of State, James Byrnes showed concern over publicly appearing soft on Japan (Long, 2016).

In spite of the United States’ demand and emphasis on Japan’s unconditional surrender, the Potsdam Proclamation included in its unconditional surrender terms the provision that the Japanese people would be allowed to establish their own government. Bomb opponents therefore wondered why the Proclamation did not go a step further to clearly state that the Japanese people could retain the Emperor. In the end, after the devastation of two Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Emperor was allowed to remain. This is why these scholars think that there was more to this than meets the eye.

The Top Military Hierarchy Objection

Many arguments have been made concerning the US Atomic Bombs on the Japanese cities. General Dwight Eisenhower who later became the President of the United States had this to say when the issue of dropping of the Atomic Bomb on Japan was muted to him in July 1945:

In (July) 1945...Secretary of War, Stimson, visiting my headquarters in Germany, informed me that our government was preparing to drop an atomic bomb on Japan. I was one of those who felt that there were a number of cogent reasons to question the wisdom of such an act...the Secretary, upon giving me the news of the successful bomb test in New Mexico, and of the plan for using it, asked for my reaction, apparently expecting a vigorous assent (Washington’s Blog, 2012:1).

Eisenhower went on to state that during his discussion with Stimson, he had been conscious of a feeling of depression and so voiced his misgiving to the whole idea of dropping the Atomic Bomb. This was firstly on the basis of his belief that Japan was already defeated, hence dropping the bomb was completely unnecessary, and secondly, because he thought that America should avoid shocking world opinion by the use of a weapon whose employment was, he thought, no longer mandatory as a measure to save American lives. Eisenhower was of the belief that Japan was, at that very moment, seeking some way to surrender with a minimum loss of face.

Admiral William Leahy who was the first de facto Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the highest ranking member of the United States military from 1942 until his retirement in 1949, and at the centre of all major American military decisions in World War II, wrote:

It is my opinion that the use of this barbarous weapon at Hiroshima and Nagasaki was of no material assistance in our war against Japan. The Japanese were already defeated and ready to surrender because of the effective sea blockade and the successful bombing with conventional weapons. The lethal possibilities of atomic warfare in the future are frightening. My own feeling was that in being the first to use it, we had adopted an ethical standard common to barbarians of the Dark Ages. I was not taught to make war in that fashion, and wars cannot be won by destroying women and children (Washington's Blog, 2012:2).

General Douglas MacArthur, an American five-star general, Chief of Staff of the United States Army during the 1930s and prominent player in the Pacific theater during World War II said that the war might have ended weeks earlier if the United States had agreed, as it later did anyway, to the retention of the institution of the emperor. In the light of the foregoing, bomb opponents argue that since the top American officers were of the opinion that the dropping of the atomic bombs was not necessary for the defeat and surrender of Japan, and coupled with all the intercepted messages showing that Japan was willing to surrender if the retention of the institution of the throne was assured, why then did President Truman order the dropping of the Atomic Bombs?

The argument against the dropping of the atomic bomb was that it was unnecessary, given the United States' knowledge of Japan's willingness to surrender. One of the reasons deduced for the dropping of the Atomic Bombs was the need to justify the \$2 Billion spent on the Manhattan Bomb Project (Young, 2008). This argument was buttressed by Barnes (2013) when he states that one of the arguments in support for the dropping of the Atomic Bombs on Japan was that it was used to justify the Manhattan project expenses. He recalls that the Manhattan project had been initiated by Roosevelt back in 1939, five years before Truman was asked to be on the Democratic ticket. By the time Roosevelt died in April 1945, almost 2 billion dollars of tax payer's money had been spent on the project. The Manhattan project was the most expensive United States' government project in history at that time. The President's Chief of Staff, Admiral Leahy, said "I know FDR would have used it in a minute to prove that he had not wasted \$2 billion".

Therefore, the use of the bomb, according to Barnes (2013), was to honour the legacy of President Franklin Roosevelt who had been in office for so long that many Americans could hardly remember any other person being President. The bomb was therefore dropped to avert the political consequences that would have followed if Americans thought that the Manhattan Project was a waste of public expenditure. Following on the heels of this was the pressure from the American Congress for the Manhattan Project to prove that it really created a successful Atomic Bomb. Although there was an explosion in New Mexico, the incidence does not prove it could devastate a real situation like a live city. Therefore, the dropping of the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima, the bomb opponents argue, was to prove the point (Barnes 2013).

Alternatives to Bombing

Opponents of the dropping of the Atomic Bombs on Japan maintain that the United States should have taken alternative options. Barnes (2013) for example lays down some of the options which opponents of the bomb believed were available to President Truman, which at the very least should have been tried before resorting to the bomb. These are:

Alternative 1: A Demonstration of the Bomb

One alternative might have been to arrange a demonstration of the bomb. Although the U.S. and Japan had no diplomatic relations after Pearl Harbor, a demonstration might have been arranged discretely through some back channel, perhaps through the Russians. It was already known in Washington that the Japanese had reached out to the Russians earlier to mediate with the U.S. After the war, the United States did conduct numerous Atomic Bomb tests on small volcanic atolls in the Pacific. Such a site could have been prepared in 1945. If representatives of the Japanese government, military and scientific community had seen the bomb, it might be enough to convince them of the foolishness of continued resistance; at least, the U.S. could claim to have made attempts to maintaining moral high standard.

Alternative 2: Wait for the Russians

Military analysts working for the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC) in 1945 believed that two conditions could have led to Japan's surrender. First, there had to be acceptance of the inevitability of defeat. Secondly, a clarification from the Americans that "unconditional surrender" did not imply national annihilation. The JIC believed that as early as April 11, 1945, a Soviet declaration of war on Japan would satisfy the first necessity:

By the autumn of 1945, we believe that the vast majority of Japanese will realize the inevitability of absolute defeat regardless of whether the USSR has actually entered the war against Japan. If at any time USSR should enter the war Japanese will realize that absolute defeat is inevitable (Barnes, 2016:6).

A Strategy and Policy Group with the War Department arrived at the same conclusion in June 1945, and their work was discussed between General Marshall and Secretary Stimson. The Americans also knew what the Japanese were thinking on this subject. Having long broken the Japanese diplomatic code, the United States eavesdropped on conversations between the Japanese Foreign Minister in Tokyo and Japanese Ambassador to the Soviet Union in Moscow. In a cable sent on June 4, the Foreign Minister wrote:

It is a matter of utmost urgency that we should not only prevent Russia from entering the war but should also induce her to adopt a favourable attitude toward Japan. I would therefore like you to miss no favourable opportunity to talk to the Soviet leaders (Barnes, 2016:6).

The Ambassador cabled back that there wasn't much reason to hope for, as he had received reports of substantial Soviet troop and supply movements heading to the East. He continued:

If Russia by some chance should suddenly decide to take advantage of our weakness and intervene against us with force of arms, we would be in a completely hopeless situation. It is clear as day that the Imperial Army in Manchukuo would be completely unable to oppose the Red Army which has just won a great victory and is superior to us on all points (Barnes, 2016:6&7).

In the World War II, the United States and the Soviet Union put aside their ideological differences to form alliance against Nazi Germany which was an uneasy alliance. Joseph Stalin believed that the Americans and British had purposely delayed opening a second front in Europe (D-Day – June 6, 1944) so that the Russians would bear the brunt of defeating the Nazis. Nevertheless, in a secret meeting between President Roosevelt and Stalin in Yalta, the Soviet leader had promised that, three months after the end of the European campaign, he would declare war on Japan and move against Japanese forces in China. In July, when President Truman travelled to Germany to meet his Allied leaders for the first time, pinning down Stalin on the exact date was at the top of his agenda. When Truman and Stalin met on the 17th, the Soviet leaders confirmed they would declare war on Japan on August 15. Later that night, Truman wrote in the diary, "Most of the big points are settled. He'll be in the Jap war on August 15th. Fini Japs when that comes about" (meaning, Japan will be finished). Some bomb

supporters point out that according to post-war interviews of Japanese leaders, none of the high-ranking officials were sure that a Soviet attack alone would have convinced them to surrender. However, this is irrelevant if Truman believed it would, and if intelligence information at the time suggested it would. So, by July 17, 1945, the American military, the President, and at least some Japanese were of a mind that a Soviet intervention in the war would prove decisive and a date for this intervention had been set. Bomb opponents thus question why the United States used Atomic Bombs on August 6 and 9, when they knew the Russians were coming a week later. Why did America refuse to wait?

Alternative 3: Let the Japanese keep their Emperor.

The third and perhaps the most important alternative to bomb and land invasion was to modify the demand for unconditional surrender and allow the Japanese to keep their emperor. Of course, the emperor would have to be demoted to a powerless figurehead (much like the royal family in Great Britain), but it was possible that this condition alone might have been enough to satisfy the American War Department's conclusion that it was necessary to convince the Japanese that they would not be "annihilated" if they surrendered. The American government clearly understood that if they harmed the emperor, whom the Japanese revered as a god, the Japanese would resist forever. The key to this argument lies in the fact that the American government already planned on letting the emperor stay. According to bomb opponents all they needed was to find a way to hint their intentions to the Japanese hearing. On June 13 1945, in a memorandum to President Truman from Acting Secretary of State Joseph Grew (former American Ambassador to Japan), Grew wrote:

Every evidence, without exception, that we are able to obtain of the views of the Japanese with regard to the institution of the throne indicates that the non-molestation of the person of the present emperor and the preservation of the institution of the throne comprise irreducible Japanese terms...they are prepared for prolong resistance if it be the intention of the United States to try the present emperor as a war criminal or to abolish the imperial institution...failure on our part to clarify our intentions in this regard...will insure prolongation of the war and cost a large number of human lives (Barnes, 2016:8).

Secretary of War Stimson also argued that American intentions regarding the emperor should be made clearer. General Marshall referred to this as "giving definition to unconditional surrender" (ultimately resulting in the Potsdam Declaration). On the Interim Committee, he was joined in this point by Undersecretary of the Navy, Ralph A. Bard. In a June 27 memo to Stimson, Bard wrote:

During recent weeks, I have also had the feeling very definitely that the Japanese government may be searching for some opportunity which they could use as a medium of surrender. Following the three-power conference, emissaries from this country could contact representatives from Japan somewhere on the China Coast and make representations with regard to Russia's position and at the same time give them some information regarding the proposed use of atomic power, together with whatever assurances the President might care to make with regard to the Emperor of Japan and the treatment of the Japanese nation following unconditional surrender. It seems quite possible to me that this presents the opportunity which the Japanese are looking for (Barnes, 2016:8).

But by the time Stimson pushed on this issue, the President was very much under the influence of former Senator James Byrnes, who had become Truman's personal adviser and later named the new secretary of state. Byrnes argued that the President would be crucified politically by the Republicans for "making a deal" with the Japanese. Byrnes won the argument and eliminated crucial language in the Potsdam Declaration about the Emperor. Truman, bomb

opponents argue, gave a less-than-convincing excuse that Congress did not seem interested in modifying unconditional surrender, and the Japanese were left in the dark with regards to American intentions toward the Emperor. Although there was certainly no guarantee that taking this action would bring about Japanese surrender, bomb opponents argue that it was at least worth a try (although bomb supporters counter – argue that doing so could have been misinterpreted by the Japanese military leadership and may actually emboldened the Japanese to fight on). Instead, the Japanese ignored the Potsdam Declaration, the Atomic Bombs were dropped, the Japanese surrendered, and the Americans as planned, allowed the emperor to stay on the throne (where he remained until his death in 1989). This is the one area where Secretary of War, Stimson had regrets. His biographer later wrote, “Only on the question of the Emperor did Stimson take, in 1945, a conciliatory view; only on this question did he later believe that history might find that the United States, by its delay in stating its position, had prolonged the war”.

Alternative 4: Continue Conventional Bombing

Some military analysts were convinced in the summer of 1945 that Japan was near surrender. They believe that the bombings resulting from conventional weapons would soon convince the Japanese cabinet on the futility of further resistance. That position was bolstered when, after the war, Secretary of War, Stimson, commissioned a board to perform a detailed investigation into the effectiveness of Allied bombings during the war. They subsequently interrogated 700 Japanese military, government and industrial officials, recovered and translated documents related to the war effort. Their report, the Strategic Bombing Survey, makes the obvious observation that Japan might have surrendered earlier if they had had a different government. But it goes on to express a more startling opinion:

Nevertheless, it seems clear that, even without the atomic bomb 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, 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 (Barnes, 2016:9).

Bomb supporters are extremely critical of this alternative. Specifically, they charged that information, counter to the Survey's conclusion was left out of the report, and that inter-service wrangling resulted in the Air Force over exaggerating its role in the war so as to secure a large post-war budget. They also point out that even if the Survey's evidence and conclusions were accurate, it is illogical to criticize the Truman administration for not pursuing an alternative to the bomb that was based on information obtained only after the war was over. The President could not have made his choice based on information obtained only after the war was over. The President had to make his choice based on information known to him at the time. More importantly, bomb supporters are critical of this alternative because, despite the overwhelming naval and air superiority enjoyed by the US forces at the end of the summer of 1945; those forces were still suffering significant losses. Kamikazes were still attacking American vessels. The USS Indianapolis, after delivering the Hiroshima bomb materials to Tinian Island in the Marianas, was sunk on July 30. Of 1,196 crewmen aboard, approximately 300 went down with the ship. Of the remaining 900 men who went into the water, only 317 survivors were picked up when the wreckage was discovered four days later. The rest died from exposure, dehydration, and shark attacks. It was the single greatest loss of life in the entire history of the US Navy. Meanwhile, Allied casualties were still averaging about 7,000 per week. As war veteran and writer Paul Fussell later pointed out, “Two weeks more means 14,000 more killed

and wounded, three weeks more, 21,000. Those weeks mean the world if you're one of those thousands or related to one of them". And Allied losses continued even after the atomic bombing. Between August 9 and the actual surrender on the 15th, eight American prisoners of wars were executed through beheadings, the US submarine Bonefish was sunk with the loss of its entire crew, and the destroyer, Callaghan and the USS Underhill were lost (Barnes, 2013). Some authors agree entirely with Barnes' (2013) alternatives to the dropping of the bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as argued by the bomb opponents. They argue that, the Alternative 4, which bomb supporters vigorously criticise would not have been an alternative if the first three alternatives especially the third were pursued by the United States government.

The second alternative, which is on the need to wait for the Russia did not appeal to America. If anything, it is believed that the American government discountenanced the wait for the Russians as an alternative because they were already thinking about the post-war world and how they could best limit Soviet gains when they redrew the map of Europe. Barnes (2013) states that the Americans believed that the shock – and – awe effect of using the Atomic Bombs against Japan would make the Soviet Union more manageable in post-war negotiations. Barnes (2013:10) further states that:

There are certain reasons to be concerned about the Soviet Union when Germany collapsed; the Russians had made huge advances. Russians troops moved into Hungary and Rumania and showed no inclination to leave there or the Balkans. But was it an acceptable trade-off to annihilate several hundred thousand civilians just so the Russians wouldn't be able to get in on the kill of Japan, and so the U.S. might have the upper-hand in the post-war world? Bomb opponents are abhorred by the moral implications.

This is not so with bomb supporters, chief among which is Bill Clinton, the former president of the United States. In 1995, Bill Clinton was quoted by Reuters as saying that the United States owed Japan no apology for dropping Atomic Bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the end of the World War II, and that President Harry S. Truman had made the right decision to use the bombs (Hume, 2013).

Brigadier General Paul W. Tibbets was among the strong supporters of the bombing. He was the pilot of Enola Gay, the plane that dropped the first Atomic Bomb. He argued that "we saved more lives than we took". This assertion is of course in reference to the lives that both sides of the war would have lost had the war continued. Lind (2010) quotes Tibbets as saying that "it would have been morally wrong if we would have had that weapon and not use it". Tibbets' son, Gene Tibbets was angry with anyone who opposes the dropping of the bomb by stating that "They (Japan) hit Pearl Harbor, they struck us. We did not slaughter the Japanese – we stopped the war" (Lind, 2010).

Arguing along this line, Kaiser (2016) believes that Japan had no intention of surrendering and ending the war efforts. He states that even though the United States objective in the war had been laid down publicly by President Roosevelt at the Casablanca Conference in 1943: the unconditional surrender of all its enemies, allowing both for occupation of their territory and the imposition of such new political institution as the Allied Powers saw fit, Japan was not really abiding by it even though Germany had earlier accepted those terms and have surrendered.

Apology Diplomacy and United States' Realism Posture

The United States of America, right from its inception has pursued realism in her international relations. Before the actual birth of the country in 1789, the colonies that eventually came to be known as the United States of America had to fight a war of independence with her colonial overlord, the Great Britain, and in the face of all odds, came out triumphant. In that war of

independence, the Americans held no bars even though they were fighting their not too distant relations. They had a mission that needed to be accomplished and they did accomplish it.

At the birth of the nation, the United States knew that they had to consolidate the new nation without external distractions, and for a long period of time, they pursued a policy of isolationism. Isolationism, according to Chaturvedi (2006), is a doctrine which propounds that; a state may best promote its own interest by keeping clear of international politics. The United States pursued this policy for a long time but was practical enough to know when her national interest was threatened from the happenings outside to warrant the policy of interventionism rather than isolationism. The most important issue was to protect her national interest, and this is the purview of realism.

The United States despite her policy of isolationism realised that international society and by extension international politics is anarchic, and that self-preservation requires the abandonment of moral inhibitions. In line with this, Russett, Starr and Kinsella (2006:269) state that in realism

“... rightness in foreign affairs depends solely on the ends sought rather than on the means employed to obtain those ends: It is possible to distinguish between legitimate and illegitimate goals in world politics, but if a state’s goals are just, then they ought to be pursued by whatever methods are available”.

The United States pursue her foreign policy in line with this. The question as to who determines what is just and unjust in the international system is justified by the pursuance of cause or course that protects a state’s national interest. Political realism is power politics. Political realists, according to Eze (2017), believe that if you seek first the kingdom of power, every other thing will be added unto you. Power, to the realist, is the capacity of a state to use its tangible and intangible resources in such a way as to control the behaviour of other states. Eze (2007) went further to state that:

Political realism argues that moral principles which apply to local or domestic life cannot be considered in international political actions – that if an action increases national power, it is moralistic, if not, it is amoral or unethical (Eze, 2017:35).

So in line with political realism, the United States does not see anything wrong with using the Atomic Bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki to bring an end to World War II thereby putting an end to the human misery it had engendered.

Conclusion

The arguments of bomb opponents are very persuasive. But how do these moral arguments factor into United States of America’s realism posture? The United States pursues her foreign policy from a strong realist perspective which thrives on a state’s use of everything within her disposal to pursue her national interest which ultimate goal is security and survival. In the realist perspective, the end justifies the means. The arguments of bomb supporters as exemplified by President Bill Clinton and Paul W. Tibbets sum up the United States’ stance on this political apology. Even though some think that a United States ‘diplomatic apology to Japan may help bury the ghosts of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the United States may not tender this diplomatic apology the persuasive moral arguments notwithstanding. After all it is seventy-five years since this incident.

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