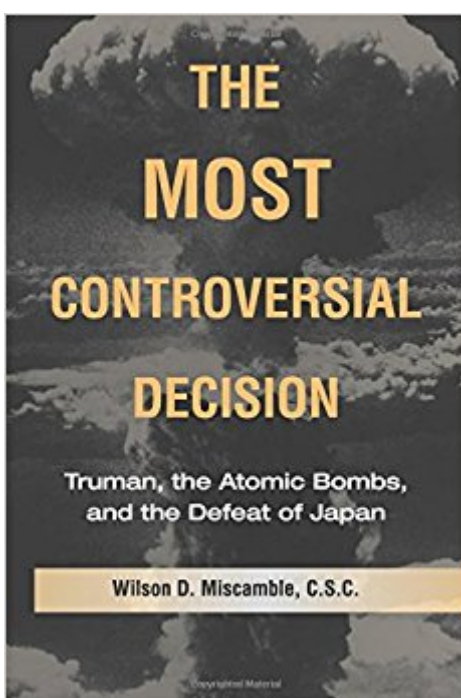


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The Most Controversial Decision: Truman, The Atomic Bombs, And The Defeat Of Japan (Cambridge Essential Histories)



Synopsis

This book explores the American use of atomic bombs, and the role these weapons played in the defeat of the Japanese Empire in World War II. It focuses on President Harry S. Truman's decision making regarding this most controversial of all his decisions. The book relies on notable archival research, and the best and most recent scholarship on the subject to fashion an incisive overview that is fair and forceful in its judgments. This study addresses a subject that has been much debated among historians, and it confronts head-on the highly disputed claim that the Truman administration practiced "atomic diplomacy." The book goes beyond its central historical analysis to ask whether it was morally right for the United States to use these terrible weapons against Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It also provides a balanced evaluation of the relationship between atomic weapons and the origins of the Cold War.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Father Miscamble is a history professor at the University of Notre Dame and thus is at home with the theological and moral aspects surrounding the decision to unleash the world's first atomic bombs. He is also familiar with the political and military exigencies of the decision. He takes the reader carefully through the genesis of the bomb-building Manhattan Project, as planned by Churchill and Franklin Roosevelt originally for the bomb's use against Nazi Germany, and through the calculations of the key Allied decision makers, including Gen. George C. Marshall, the U.S.

Army chief of staff, and Adm. William Leahy, the head of the Joint Chiefs." -Wall Street Journal" This book, by the priest and cold war historian Wilson D. Miscamble, is a volume in the Cambridge Essential Histories series, which is (according to its statement of purpose) 'devoted to introducing critical events, periods or individuals in history ... through thesis-driven, concise volumes.' Concise The Most Controversial Decision certainly is: it packs into its 150 pages discussions that other scholars have spent careers grappling with." -Barry Gewen, The New Republic" In writing this book, Father Miscamble has done us a great service." -The Rev. Michael P. Orsi, The Washington Times" Notre Dame professor Wilson Miscamble has previously written about the blindly unforeseen handoff of the American government from Roosevelt to Truman on April 12, 1945, during the endgame of World War II. He now brings his wise and wide-ranging knowledge of the complicated decisions left for the American president at that time to one specific major decision: whether to drop the atomic bomb on Japan." -Jay Pasachoff, The Key Reporter" Recommended." -Choice

This book asks and answers a number of key questions. Why were the atomic bombs used against Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945? What role did they play in Japan's surrender? The book also explores the morality of the bombs' use and asks if it was right for the United States to use these powerful weapons.

This is a deliberately short book, in the Cambridge Essential Histories, written by an expert in Truman and the transition from Roosevelt to Truman, but self-avowedly dependent on other experts for the subject. It is also admittedly written by a proponent of the traditional position on the decision to drop the atomic bomb. The summary is a good one, although like some critics I have found in journals, the chapter on "Necessary, but was it Right?" is at the least too short, at the most contradictory of his own tradition. I agree that the author, although a Catholic priest, fails to deal with the morality issue well. It may be that the chapter is like the book, a summary. And certainly, quoting Machiavelli almost approvingly is bothersome. But most certainly, the author does not deal with the moral tradition of the Church at all. The series is intended to be a textbook in college courses, intended to raise issues. The book does do that well.

As an American, I have always struggled to comprehend the circumstances surrounding the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. This book does a noble job helping to explain the thought process that went into the planning and execution of these bombings. Although finding justification for this measure can be elusive, the author accomplishes the task of bringing the reader back in

time to offer a perspective that helps to better understand the motivation for what took place.

Great book. Debunked all of the anti-nuke crowd who even today would have preferred that we put millions of our guys at risk and continue to kill 100,000 Japanese nightly with carpet bombing as opposed to use of a nuclear weapon to stop the madness. I know there are those who will disagree (I guess it wouldn't be controversial if they didn't), but we know it worked and ended the war. What else is important?

Very thoughtful review of the events and situations that lead to Harry Truman's decision to drop the Atomic bomb. I purchased the book because, given that it is written by a member of the church, I expected more discussion on the moral aspects. The author does a very good job in gathering the facts, analysing them and reaching an appropriate conclusion.

This is a very balanced and insightful review of the decision to use the atomic bombs in World War II

Excellent short history on the decision making to use the weapon. I recommend the book and seller.

This is a great book and an important one in these days of PC, where whole generations have disassociated themselves from the reality of WWII and what was needed to win. Extremely important to realize that in spite of the propaganda it is close to a certainty that FDR would have dropped the bomb on Germany had we had it in time, which puts the lie to the idea put forward by nay sayers that it was a racist action against the Japanese - which is only one of many misconceptions about the war. Recommended to everyone who is PC, and those who aren't who wish to clarify their arguments. Like Ike, it gets five stars.

This is a very important book that sets the ideas of the bomb in order regarding truth and falsehood. The fact that it was written by a Catholic Priest makes it all the more important. Ronald Turco, Former Major, USAF (MC).

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