

in August 1945. With Stalin aware of the successful bomb test, Ham writes that Russia did not want the war to end without their involvement and so brought forward the attack. This suggests that if the Allies had involved Russia from the beginning in the Pacific war Japan would have conceded without needing the Atomic bombs. This is backed up by Gar Alperovitz;

[It is important to note] that speaking privately to top Army officials on August 14 the Japanese Emperor stated bluntly: "The military situation has changed suddenly. The Soviet Union entered the war against us. Suicide attacks can't compete with the power of science. Therefore, there is no alternative..." And the Imperial Rescript the Emperor issued to officers and soldiers to make sure they would lay down their arms stated: "Now that the Soviet Union has entered the war, to continue under the present conditions at home and abroad would only result in further useless damage... Therefore...I am going to make peace."²

With this evidence from the Emperor himself, it seems likely that the Allies were determined to use the bomb without consideration for alternative, less destructive solutions. Ham also mentions Sato, Japan's ambassador to Moscow, wrote a proposal to Tokyo, urging them to surrender; "Now that we are being scored with fire...it becomes necessary to act with all the more speed". This message was intercepted by the Americans, but ignored by Washington, Ham says. This is definitive proof that America had little appetite to make peace with Japan and instead wanted to make themselves the central powerhouse of the world by creating 'chronic psychological conflict' between Russia and Japan. General D. Eisenhower reacted with disbelief to the news that the bomb would be used;

During his recitation of the relevant facts, I had been conscious of a feeling of depression and so I voiced to him my grave misgivings, first on the basis of my belief that Japan was already defeated and that dropping the bomb was completely unnecessary, and secondly because I thought that our country should avoid shocking world opinion by the use of a weapon whose employment was, I thought, no longer mandatory as a measure to save American lives.³

Ham discusses the non-military nature of Hiroshima and Nagasaki targets. His argument is that throughout the war, civilian casualties were a crucial part of the bombing strategy as they were instruments of diplomacy. Stimson wrote in his *Harper's Magazine* article; "It should be used on a dual target...a military installation or war plant...surrounded by...buildings most susceptible to damage." Ham argues that the short list of locations discussed by the target committee were conveniently largely untouched through the war, such as Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Originally, Kokura had been the primary target, one which perhaps made more sense from a military perspective due to it holding Japan's largest arsenal of weapons. The fact it was overlooked meant Washington wanted a civilian target. Although he does also mention that Stimson wanted to save Kyoto as he liked it aesthetically.

Ham's use of extreme evidence to shock the reader about how the politicians came to use the bombs lends his argument impact. The Americans misrepresented Hiroshima as a military target that would avoid the killing of civilians. Alperovitz agrees in his book, saying that an urban city was attacked, with insufficient warning for the civilians. Stimson wrote this article with hindsight to explain the thought process behind the bomb, Ham is sometimes one-sided when explaining his evidence. His narrative explains the chain of events clearly but lacks reflection and hindsight. Although his argument is clear he is very biased and that shines through.

In the final few chapters, Ham's describes the destruction of the bomb graphically. His use of real life accounts is effective in putting aside the military and economic effects of the war and showing that

² (Alperovitz, 2011: online)

³ (Alperovitz, 2011: online)

⁴ Stimson, H. (1947). 'The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb.' *Harper's Magazine*, February. (194), pp.98-101.