

# H-Diplo ROUNDTABLE XXIII-18

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 INTRODUCTION BY MARK A. STOLER, UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT
 

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For more than half a century now, the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as well as the ensuing Japanese surrender have been one of the most controversial issues in U.S. World War II historiography. Although there had been some early criticism of the American use of this new weapon against Japan, only with the 1965 publication of Gar Alperovitz's *Atomic Diplomacy* did a furious debate truly begin.<sup>1</sup> Directly contradicting the official and widely accepted belief that the bombs had been dropped to force Japanese surrender and save American lives, Alperovitz argued that the primary motive had been to intimidate the Soviet Union by exhibiting this new and awesome U.S. weapon. Alperovitz's thesis came under furious attack by President Harry S. Truman's defenders and, despite attempted syntheses in the 1970s and 1980s, the debate reached a crescendo of sorts in 1994-95 with the heated public controversy over the Smithsonian Institution's planned exhibition to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima and the end of the war in the Pacific. When attempts at compromise over the script broke down over the issue of projected casualties for a U.S. invasion of the Japanese home islands, the Smithsonian wound up showing only a section of the *Enola Gay* bomber that had dropped the first bomb, with no accompanying analysis or explanation at all—a result that appalled many historians and led to charges of 'politically correct' vs 'patriotically correct' censorship as well as a special roundtable in (and a special Tony Auth cartoon on the cover of) the December 1995 issue of *The Journal of American History*.<sup>2</sup>

The tone of the debate has somewhat calmed down since then, as a new generation of historians using recently declassified documents and multi-archival research has come up with innovative approaches that draw upon but greatly expand on the research and the conclusions of both sides in the original debate. Marc Gallicchio's *Unconditional: The Japanese Surrender in World War II* is one of the most recent of these new approaches. His emphasis is on the domestic debate amongst policymakers and their advisers in the United States over whether or not to modify the policy of unconditional surrender so as to allow the Japanese to keep their imperial system of government. In direct opposition to the left-right divide on this issue today, he finds that domestic conservatives pressed for modification so as to allow for retention of the emperor and thereby hopefully obtain a quick and conditional Japanese surrender as a way to limit or prevent Soviet territorial gains, while domestic liberals blamed the emperor as well as the Japanese militarists for the war and sought to remove him so as to totally remake the Japanese government and society.

Of the four scholars participating in this roundtable, three highly praise Gallicchio's book and find little to criticize. One, however, finds much to criticize and relatively little to praise.

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<sup>1</sup> Gar Alperovitz, *Atomic Diplomacy* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1965).

<sup>2</sup> For recent works on both this 1994-95 Smithsonian episode and the extensive historiography on the atomic bomb and Japanese surrender, see Mark A. Stoler, "Still Contested and Colonized Ground: Post-Cold War Interpretations of U.S. Foreign Relations during World War II," in Frank Costigliola and Michael J. Hogan, *America in the World: The Historiography of American Foreign Relations since 1941*, second ed., (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014): 57-82, here 64-67, and J. Samuel Walker, "Recent Literature on Truman's Atomic Bomb Decision: The Triumph of the Middle Ground?" in Costigliola and Hogan, *America in the World*, 83-104. Essays by Stoler and Walker in the first edition of *America in the World* trace the historiographical debates back to the Cold War years, as do their essays in the even older volume edited by Gerald K. Haines and J. Samuel Walker. See Stoler, "A Half Century of Conflict: Interpretations of U.S. World War II Diplomacy," in Michael J. Hogan, *America in the World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 166-205, and Walker "The Decision to Use the Bomb: A Historiographical Update," in Hogan, *America in the World*, 205-233; Stoler, "World War II Diplomacy in Historical Writing: Prelude to Cold War," in Gerald K. Haines and J. Samuel Walker, *American Foreign Relations: A Historiographical Review* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1981), 187-206, here 197-201; and Walker, "Historians and Cold War Origins: The New Consensus," in Haines and Walker, *American Foreign Relations*, 207-236, here 209-215 and 221-222. See also Walker's *Prompt and Utter Destruction: Truman and the Use of the Atomic Bombs against Japan*, third ed. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016).

In his comments, Jeremy A. Yellen twice labels *Unconditional Surrender* a “fantastic book.” He identifies four schools of thought on the war’s end and places Gallicchio’s work in the one that focuses on domestic politics. Yellen emphasizes, as does Gallicchio, the fascinating 180 degree political shift on the unconditional surrender policy that has taken place since the war ended, whereby conservatives today defend the policy that liberals pressed for in 1945 while liberals today attack the policy as conservatives did in 1945. Yellen does complain, however (as does Tsuyoshi Hasegawa in his comments,) that the Japanese side gets “short shrift” in Gallicchio’s book. And interestingly, Yellen cites Kenneth B. Pyle’s recent argument that unconditional surrender “provoked unconditional resistance” in Japan while the ensuing U.S. occupation suppressed true democratic revolution.<sup>3</sup>

Sayuri Guthrie-Shimizu praises Gallicchio’s “meticulous research and the author’s erudition,” a combination that results in “an illuminating probe” and “a venerable addition” to recent scholarship on how the Pacific war ended. The volume, she adds, also complements the award-winning *Implacable Foes* that Gallicchio co-authored with his late mentor Waldo Heinrichs.<sup>4</sup> In this new work, she notes, Gallicchio “painstakingly depicts this head-spinning messiness of the battlefield of policymaking into which Truman was suddenly thrust,” and also superbly weaves together domestic politics with the war. Her criticism centers not on Gallicchio’s book, but on U.S. policymakers for helping to create the postwar myth in Japan that it was “all the fault” of Japan’s military leaders—not the emperor. And a “startling discovery” for her was how little the Atlantic Charter figured in U.S. deliberations—something that left her “incredulous.”

Zachary Shore calls *Unconditional* “something all too rare; a compelling biography of a policy” and an “important contribution to the field.” He then identifies and explores three further questions, which he describes as “not a failing of the work, but rather a testament to how well the author has stimulated a conversation around such a pivotal affair.” Specifically, why did conservatives oppose unconditional surrender, why did Truman support it, and was it necessary? On this third question, Gallicchio concludes that it was in fact necessary but Shore is not as certain. Indeed, he notes that Japan’s surrender was in the end conditional after all regarding the status of the emperor; and in Shore’s opinion, if that had been made clear to the Japanese it could have saved “several hundred thousand lives” and thereby constituted “not only the sensible course, but the morally necessary course as well.”

Tsuyoshi Hasegawa is the author of *Racing the Enemy*, an important and controversial post-Cold War work of multi-archival research on Japanese surrender.<sup>5</sup> In a review longer than the first three combined, he is deeply critical of what he labels a lack of structure in Gallicchio’s book, a lack of clear definition of unconditional surrender, and a lack of non-U.S. sources that have not yet been translated—most notably a work by Iokibe Makoto.<sup>6</sup> Hasegawa also faults Gallicchio for underplaying the important role played by Japanese specialists in the State Department, and he disagrees with many of Gallicchio’s conclusions. In sum, while *Unconditional* is “based on a wide array of sources from U.S. archives,” Hasegawa argues, “Japanese, British and Russian sources are very thin.” The result is “a U.S. centric study that does not place the topic in an international context.” Beyond that, “the important connections between unconditional surrender, Soviet entry into the war, and the atomic bombs—are not examined in a logical and persuasive fashion.”

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<sup>3</sup> Kenneth B. Pyle, *Japan in the American Century* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2019), particularly chapters 2-4.

<sup>4</sup> Waldo Heinrichs and Marc Gallicchio, *Implacable Foes: War in the Pacific, 1944-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019).

<sup>5</sup> Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, *Racing the Enemy: Stalin, Truman, and the Surrender of Japan* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2005).

<sup>6</sup> Iokibe Makoto, *Beikoku no Nihon senryu seissaku* 2 vols (Tokyo: Chuokoronshma, 1985).

Rather than address the comments of the reviewers in serial fashion, Gallicchio organizes his response around three topics: a brief explanation of what he set out to do in this study; a discussion “of the limits of counterfactual thinking;” and the dilemma of what material to include and what to omit. His aim in writing *Unconditional* was to highlight a series of themes: that the debate was “filtered through domestic politics” and was an extension of the domestic debate over the New Deal; that opposition to Unconditional Surrender was “closely linked” to concern over the consequences of Soviet entry; that the partisan battle “continued into the Cold War era and became part of the toxic dispute over who lost China”; and that many of the critics of unconditional surrender at the time “seeded the historical record with ‘alternative facts,’ false testimony, and inaccurate recollections of their role in the debate over how to end the war.” His goal was to understand how unconditional surrender “was perceived *at the time*” rather than later, and his overall conclusion is that the debate was really over what constituted victory. In this regard, what both President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Truman wanted “was the authority to do what they deemed necessary to uproot Japanese militarism and reform Japanese society” without being bound by any negotiation with the Japanese. That is what happened, and as a result the Americans were able to “turn the monarchy into the powerless symbol” that U.S. conservatives incorrectly “claimed [that] it was” already in 1945. How the war could have ended without the use of atomic bombs, Gallicchio notes, is counterfactual thinking that, while often helpful, by its very nature is of limited use and “does not yield conclusions testable by empirical evidence.” Finally, he defends his decision not to engage the arguments in Hasegawa’s *Racing the Enemy* on the grounds that *Unconditional Surrender* “is a trade book, and ‘editors of these discourage referring to other authors in the text.’” But he did not ignore Hasegawa’s scholarship, and he left out on purpose much of what Hasegawa criticizes him for omitting. As to Hasegawa’s claim that *Unconditional* is “illogical and confusing,” Gallicchio concludes that he will “let others decide for themselves.”

Numerous issues stand out to me as meriting further discussion. To name but a few, what is the significance of the Atlantic Charter’s apparent lack of importance that Guthrie-Shimizu finds so shocking? Furthermore, how important for the entire issue of how the Pacific War ended are the untranslated documents and scholarship that Hasegawa cites and emphasizes in his lengthy critique? And just what are the possible uses and limits of counterfactual thinking in this debate that Shore emphasizes? Counterfactuals make for excellent science fiction stories, but if history is truly a ‘seamless web’ with all events interconnected, does not changing any one of them open literally endless, and thereby meaningless possibilities and conclusions? Finally, did the U.S. agreement to retention of the emperor mean the Japanese surrender was conditional after all, as Shore and others maintain, or unconditional as Gallicchio insists because the emperor was shorn of his powers, retained only as a figurehead, and made subject to the authority of the Allied occupation commander General Douglas MacArthur? Humorously related and in conclusion, since the emperor was considered a god, what did this arrangement make Douglas MacArthur?

#### **Participants:**

**Marc Gallicchio** is Professor of History and Chair of the Department of History at Villanova University. He is the author of *The African American Encounter with Japan and China: Black Internationalism in Asia, 1895-1945* (University of North Carolina Press, 2000) which was awarded the Robert H. Ferrell Prize by Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations. He is coauthor with Waldo Heinrichs of *Implacable Foes: War in the Pacific, 1944-1945* (Oxford University Press, 2017), which won the Bancroft Prize in History. He is currently working on a family history of the Japanese-American descendants of Benjamin Franklin from the Meiji Era to the late twentieth century

**Mark A. Stoler** is professor emeritus of history at the University of Vermont. He received his BA from the City College of New York (1966) and his MA and PhD from the University of Wisconsin-Madison (1967, 1971). He is the author or editor of numerous books in U.S. diplomatic and military history, including the award-winning *Allies and Adversaries: The Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Grand Alliance, and U.S. Strategy on World War II* (University of North Carolina Press, 2000) and volumes 6 and 7 of *The Papers of George Catlett Marshall* (The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013 and 2016). His current project is a new edition of his 1989 biography of Marshall. He is also a former president of the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations and a former trustee of the Society for Military History.

**Tsuyoshi Hasegawa** is Professor Emeritus at the University of California at Santa Barbara. He received his PhD in history from the University of Washington in 1969. His major publications include: *The Northern Territories Dispute and Russo-Japanese relations*, 2 vols (International and Area Studies Publications, 1998); *Racing the Enemy: Stalin, Truman, and the Surrender of Japan* (The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2005). The most recent publications include: *Crime and Punishment in the Russian Revolution: Mob Justice and Police in Petrograd* (Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2017); *The February Revolution Petrograd, 1917: The End of the Tsarist Regime and the Birth of Dual Power* (Leiden: Brill, 2017, Paperback edition, Haymarket Books, 2018). He is now working on the translation of *Racing the Enemy* into Russian to be published by Academic Studies Press in 2021.

**Sayuri Guthrie-Shimizu** is Dunlevie Family Professor of History at Rice University. She received her Ph. D. in US History from Cornell University. Her area of research is the history of US-East Asian relations, maritime environmental history and the global history of sports. Her works include *Creating People of Plenty: The United States and Japan's Economic Alternatives, 1950-1960* (2001) and *Transpacific Field of Dreams: How Baseball Linked the United States and Japan in War and Peace* (2012).

**Zachary Shore** is a Professor of history at the Naval Postgraduate School, a Senior Fellow at UC Berkeley's Institute of European Studies, and a National Security Visiting Fellow of Stanford's Hoover Institution. He is the author of *What Hitler Knew: The Battle for Information in Nazi Foreign Policy* (Oxford University Press, 2003); *Breeding Bin Ladens: America, Islam, and the Future of Europe* (The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006); *Blunder: Why Smart People Make Bad Decisions* (Bloomsbury, 2008); *A Sense of the Enemy: The High-Stakes History of Reading Your Rival's Mind* (Oxford University Press, 2014); and *Grad School Essentials: A Crash Course in Scholarly Skills* (University of California Press, 2016). His newest work, *This Is Not Who We Are: America's Struggle Between Vengeance and Virtue* (Cambridge University Press, forthcoming in 2022) deals with vengeance during and after WWII.

**Jeremy A. Yellen** is a historian of modern Japan at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. His research often grapples with questions of warfare, empire, diplomacy, and international order. He is the author of *The Greater East Asia Co-Prosperty Sphere: When Total Empire Met Total War* (Cornell University Press, 2019).

REVIEW BY SAYURI GUTHRIE-SHIMIZU, RICE UNIVERSITY

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World War II in the Asia-Pacific ended when the government of Japan accepted the Potsdam Declaration demanding the unconditional surrender of the nation's armed forces. On the face of it, the idea of 'unconditional surrender' appears straightforward enough: the surrender must happen without any strings attached by the vanquished; there is no negotiated end to the hostilities. The term's seeming definitude, however, belies the enormous complexities surrounding a fundamental question that stems from it: exactly what does 'unconditional surrender' entail, not only for the vanquished but for the victor as well? Marc Gallicchio's *Unconditional: The Japanese Surrender in World War II* ventures to solve this under-scrutinized puzzle, and it does so on the sturdy platform of meticulous research and the author's erudition regarding U.S.-East Asia relations in the twentieth century. The result is an illuminating probe into the conundrum faced by the U.S. government at the close of World War II: that the 'unconditional surrender' of the enemy was in truth conditional on myriad contingencies beyond U.S. control.

Well into the new millennium, the conclusion of World War II in Asia continues to inspire a steady stream of critical inquiries into how the conflict drew to a close and what factors were most decisive in bringing about Japan's decision to surrender. Robert B. Frank's *Downfall* (2001), Thomas Zeiler's *Unconditional Defeat* (2003), and Ronald Spector's *In the Ruins of Empire* (2008) readily come to mind.<sup>7</sup> In 2006, Tsuyoshi Hasegawa's *Racing the Enemy* garnered extensive critical accolades for its wide-angle view of the three-way diplomatic entanglement between the United States, Japan, and the Soviet Union in the war's final months.<sup>8</sup> *Unconditional* is a venerable addition to this pedigree of World War II scholarship, one that came out on the 75th anniversary of the end of the conflict. The book also complements *The Implacable Foes* (2019), a scholarly opus Gallicchio coauthored with Waldo Heinrichs, his former adviser and longtime collaborative partner.<sup>9</sup>

Unpacking the final phase of World War II in the Asia-Pacific, the book lays bare the paralyzingly tangled webs of political imperatives, ever-shifting strategic calculations, and vast unknowns against which President Harry Truman made a string of decisions shaping the fate of tens of millions military and civilian American and Japanese who were still mired in the deadly conflict. After assuming the presidency in April 1945, the former senator from Missouri and neophyte to diplomacy found himself the focal point of ferocious bureaucratic battles fought at multiple sites of the American wartime state. The political and ideological fault lines sprawled, not only across the military-civilian divide, but also among military branches, contending federal administrative units, and shifting coalitions of advisers, pundits, and influential journalists. Self-professed experts on Japan jostled each other to offer advice, solicited or not, on the nature of Japan's imperial institution and an appropriate U.S. policy response. The lines of communications within the U.S. government and with the enemy were frequently garbled, with many freelancing intermediaries operating on their own. Gallicchio painstakingly depicts this head-spinning messiness of the battlefield of policymaking into which Truman was suddenly thrust.

Part of Gallicchio's genius is the effective way in which he weaves together the domestic politics of wartime America with the shifting landscape of war in far-flung Asia. V-E Day was the occasion for jubilation for the war-weary nation, but the victory in Europe presented the Truman administration with a new challenge; the need to negotiate the mounting popular demand for swift demobilization and reconversion to a peacetime economy. The American people demanded that they

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<sup>7</sup> Robert B. Frank, *Downfall: The End of the Imperial Japanese Empire* (New York: Penguin Books, 2001); Thomas W. Zeiler, *Unconditional Defeat: Japan, America and the End of World War II* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003); Ronald H. Spector, *In the Ruins of Empire: The Japanese Surrender and the Battle for Postwar Asia* (New York: Random House, 2008)

<sup>8</sup> Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, *Racing the Enemy: Stalin, Truman, and the Surrender of Japan* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006)

<sup>9</sup> Waldo Heinrichs and Marc Gallicchio, *The Implacable Foes: War in the Pacific, 1944-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019)

should now be allowed to enjoy the hard-earned dividends of victory and peace. These additional imperatives created new venues of bureaucratic infighting and potential minefields in electoral politics that were superimposed on the evolving military situation in the Far East.

Gallicchio deftly shows that the growing drumbeat for economic reconversion and return to ‘normalcy’ also reignited the smoldering conservative revolt against government regulations installed by the New Deal state. In his telling, the strangulating pressure of the military, political, and economic Gordian knot becomes almost palpable. Compounding these crosscurrents on the domestic front was uncertainty over the role to be played by the Soviet Union, still a nonbelligerent in the Far East, in actuating Japanese surrender and, in the longer term, reshaping the geopolitical topography of East Asia. The timing of its entry into the war against Japan promised to constrain, and perhaps even dictate, the strategic options that were available to the United States in postcolonial East Asia.

Portraying Japan’s desperate and thoroughly misguided attempt to enlist the Soviet Union’s diplomatic intercession in the final months of the war, Gallicchio exposes in glaring light the implosion of the Japanese militarist state, which at this stage exhibited unfathomable incompetency and incorrigible fanaticism. The symptoms of Tokyo’s terminal organizational pathology were plentiful: intelligence gathering barely distinguishable from wishful thinking; the absence of political leadership and accountability within the supreme decision-making apparatus; and, most critically, a total disregard for the human suffering that would be inflicted upon its own citizens by prolonging the war. The human toll among the subjected populations in its overextended empire was not even an afterthought.

In her 2015 book, Noriko Kawamura offered a nuanced view of Emperor Hirohito as a deeply conflicted figure, one who aspired to be a constitutional monarch on the British model. In doing so she delivered a useful counterpoise to Herbert Bix’s unabashedly dark portrayal of Japan’s prewar imperial sovereign.<sup>10</sup> Like Kawamura, Gallicchio successfully conjures the image of a conflicted but ultimately indecisive political figure who was hard put to overcome an obsession of his own: the preservation of the imperial institution under the current dynastic line. The unspeakable human toll of the U.S. island-hopping campaigns in the Pacific, culminating in the battle of Okinawa, was not intelligence confined to American military surveyors and their civilian superiors. Despite the layers of political protective shields built around him, Hirohito could not credibly claim ignorance of the same critical information that made American strategists shudder to imagine the cost of an invasion of the Japanese home islands. Indeed, the effects of the March firebombing that incinerated the nation’s capital literally reached the imperial compound. Millions of his subjects were killed, burned, or left homeless, some of the victims right across the moat around his palace. If ever there was a moment for an aspirational constitutional monarch to contemplate a surrender without regard for the protection of the institution he occupied, the spring of 1945 was it.

Gallicchio’s granular reconstruction of the morally bankrupt decision-making at the apex of Japan’s imperial polity quietly yet insistently compels the reader to confront anew the loaded question of responsibility for war. That rumination in turn forces the reader to ponder critically the role played by none other than the United States in creating a Japanese postwar myth in which all blame for Japan’s imperial transgressions was dumped on its discredited military leaders. *Unconditional* shows how political expediency, which motivated both sides during the war and the peacemaking, was the mother of a new, exculpatory national mythology built around the image of a fundamentally benevolent, peace-loving figurehead. Yukiko Toyoda titled her study of the postwar U.S.-Japanese military alliance and secret bilateral accords over U.S. nuclear weaponry *Kyōhan no Dōmeishi* (The Alliance of Complicity). The word *kyōhan* can also be aptly used to characterize this binational project of postwar mythmaking.<sup>11</sup>

I first became familiar with Gallicchio’s designation of Truman’s commitment to the elimination of Japanese militarism as ‘a New Deal for Japan’ and with the president’s fealty to President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s New Deal legacy in 2010. The

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<sup>10</sup> Noriko Kawamura, *Emperor Hirohito and the Pacific War* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2015).

<sup>11</sup> Yukiko Toyoda, *Kyōhan no Dōmeishi: Nichibei Mitsuyakuto Jiminōseiken* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2009)

occasion was the eighth conference on Truman's legacy, held in Key West, Florida. I also heard Gallicchio present his innovative interpretive framework to Japanese scholars at the annual conference of the Japan Society for International Politics a few years later. Since these early exposures to this emerging vein in Gallicchio's scholarship, I have eagerly awaited the publication of a monograph anchored on this theme. I am thus delighted to be part of this roundtable. I am also grateful for the opportunity to read and parse Professor Gallicchio's book for another reason.

One of the new insights I gained in reading *Unconditional* for this roundtable was a realization, quite simple but all the more telling for its very simplicity, of how little the Atlantic Charter figured in the deliberations among U.S. officials and military personnel charged with executing the war which was fought in the charter's name. Perhaps naively for a longtime student of U.S.-East Asian relations, I was incredulous. The Atlantic Charter, at least in theory, defined the official war aims of the Allied powers and visions for the postwar world. It was also the legal basis upon which the anti-fascist military alliance was constituted in January 1942. As such, all the Allied belligerents, including the United States, were supposedly fighting for these war aims. I learned from Gallicchio's methodical recounting of the bureaucratic maneuverings, public relations campaigns, and various policy justifications circulating within and out of the U.S. government, however, that the Atlantic Charter hardly came up in the debate over Japan's surrender terms in the spring and summer of 1945. Only Ellis Zacharias, deputy director of the Office of Naval Intelligence, bothered to invoke this foundational statement of the Allies' official war aims. Even that lone reference appeared in his propaganda tract targeting the Japanese, whose "obsequious almost lick-spittle attitude" towards the Japanese throne elicited widespread pushback and objection from the U.S. officialdom.<sup>12</sup>

Arguably, the Atlantic Charter, signed by Prime Minister Winston Churchill and Roosevelt in August 1941, merely spelled out broad objectives for which the war was to be fought and the postwar world to be reordered. As such, it was just a statement of general principles, nothing more and nothing less. Similarly, it is possible to argue that the Allied powers never intended their foes to benefit from the application of these principles. Granting these points, however, I was still stunned. Would not one hope that the Charter's provisions, which bound the Allies to "respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live," meant *something* to Americans making decisions on that war and a prospective peace?

Reading through Gallicchio's carefully documented book, I began asking such questions as these: Did the Atlantic Charter matter at all to people at the highest echelons of the American government as something that both constrained and empowered them? Did the Atlantic Charter figure in their minds at all, even in the limited sense that they would use the U.S. commitment to it as a rhetorical cover to mitigate public opinion that was clamoring for draconian revenge against Hirohito, or, to an even more limited extent, that American officials would invoke this cosigned principle as a rhetorical device with which to persuade the skeptical allies of the need for the United States to consider allowing Japan to keep its imperial institution? Even those Americans who were pushing for an explicit guarantee about the emperor to induce Japan's prompt surrender never seemed to enlist the Atlantic Charter in their rhetorical strategy. Nor did they use the charter's self-determination principle as a way to win converts to their position and counter opposition within the U.S. government. In short, the Atlantic Charter never seemed to count for anything in the epistemological universe of these Americans. That, to me, was a startling discovery.

Gallicchio's most recent contribution to the historiography of World War II-era U.S. foreign policy has thus opened my eyes to what I had not wrapped my head around previously—the sobering fact that the Atlantic Charter, under whose ideational banner millions of people were asked to fight and die, probably meant very little to the American officials who were spearheading the war, supposedly to achieve visions articulated in that proclamation. This revelation has led me to reflect further upon the deafening silence in the metaphysical world of American policymakers who would go on to launch a New Deal for the decolonizing world once the implacable fascist foes surrendered unconditionally as demanded. What an

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<sup>12</sup> Marc Gallicchio, *Unconditional: The Japanese Surrender in World War II* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020), 143.



unsettling portent that was. I belatedly came to this understanding thanks to Gallicchio's book, for which I am deeply grateful.

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REVIEW BY TSUYOSHI HASEGAWA, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA BARBARA

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In the conclusion to *Unconditional: The Japanese Surrender in World War II*, Marc Gallicchio argues that the three main findings of this book are: (1) that the debates on unconditional surrender were strongly influenced by ideological considerations, (2) that the push to modify unconditional surrender was closely tied to concern over the consequences of Soviet entry into the war, and (3) that “the chance for a negotiated peace in 1945 was exceedingly slim” since “before August 14, the Japanese never indicated they were willing to accept a dramatic change in their political structure that would reduce the emperor to a symbol without authority or power” (208).

The book portrays President Harry Truman as a sort of hero. Diverse opinions and advice from various quarters were given to him to revise or refine unconditional surrender. “He listened carefully and read diligently,” the author writes, “but mostly kept his own counsel. In the end ...this was the wisest course.” Truman steadfastly stood for the principles of unconditional surrender (209). Most of those who advocated revising unconditional surrender are portrayed as being conservative Republicans attempting to stick a knife in the New Deal, while the supporters of unconditional surrender are described as liberal Democrats (209).

Gallicchio argues that the heart of the debate on conditional surrender was “the role of Emperor Hirohito and the monarchy” (209). Truman sided with those who asserted that the emperor was supportive of the militarists, as opposed to those who argued that the emperor was merely a figurehead. He made several announcements clarifying unconditional surrender, culminating in the Potsdam Declaration. But each time he stopped short of pledging to preserve “Japan’s imperial system” for two reasons. First, American public opinion was heavily against the emperor. Second, the Japanese were determined to avoid unconditional surrender, and “Hirohito desired peace, but not surrender.” (209-210).

Gallicchio raises the question as to whether Japan would have surrendered before the atomic bombs and Soviet entry into the war, had Truman promised to preserve the monarchy, but argues that “focusing on the Japanese government’s response puts the cart before the horse.” The place to start is to ask what the Americans would be offering Japan. He notes the opinions offered by Under Secretary of State and former Ambassador to Japan Joseph Grew, Grew’s trusted assistant Eugene Doorman, Former President Herbert Hoover, and Secretary of War Henry Stimson on the monarchy as “all over the map on the subject” (210). The possibility of granting Japan “a constitutional monarchy” was frequently suggested, but there was no possibility that Japan would have accepted a constitutional monarchy before its surrender on August 14. (210-211).

Gallicchio praises Truman’s steadfast refusal to make concessions about the emperor’s role after the war even to the detriment to his popularity. In September 1945 Douglas MacArthur, Supreme Commander of Allied Powers, made the statement that “he needed fewer men than expected to accomplish the goals of the surrender because he would be using the Japanese government to maintain social order and a functioning economy” (172). Truman insisted that he would use as many men as were necessary to “assure the complete carrying out of the surrender” (173).

In his discussion of the historiography of the topic, the author argues that during the Cold War, the issue of conditional surrender was debated by conservatives as an alternative to achieving Japan’s surrender before Soviet expansion of influence in East Asia, and then later by the left as an alternative to the use of the atomic bombs. He argues that both sides in the debate were wrong, asserting that Japan’s transformation from a military dictatorship into a more democratic and peaceful nation was possible only “because Truman rejected the recommendations of his conservative advisors to preserve the monarchy, limit the occupation, and leave Japan in control of portions of its empire” (213). In short, the author maintains that the changes happened because of Truman’s resolve that Japan’s surrender would be nothing less than unconditional. It was thanks to his refusal to abandon the original purpose of unconditional surrender that Japan was transformed into a liberal democratic nation.

*Structure of the book*

These main arguments do not emerge clearly in the book, mainly because a multitude of unrelated issues appear in the chapters without logical consistency and deep analyses, which means that the book's chronology jumps back and forth. A whole host of organizations are introduced without proper identification and without explanation of the relationship with each other. Chapter 3, which is devoted to public opinion, also includes Swiss Director of the Office of Strategic Services Allen Dulles's backdoor negotiations in Bern, and Captain Ellis Zacharias's activities in the Office of War Information, neither of which were connected with public opinion. The views of MacArthur's Chief of Psychological Operations, Bonner Feller, though interesting, are irrelevant in the policymakers' discussions on unconditional surrender, and had no influence on public opinion.

### *Definition of Unconditional Surrender*

Gallicchio does not provide a clear definition of unconditional surrender. The notion of unconditional surrender, first enunciated by President Franklin D. Roosevelt at the Casablanca conference in 1943, was not merely unconditional surrender of the armed forces. Roosevelt stated that it meant "the destruction of the philosophies which are based on conquest and the subjugation of other people" (9). The novelty of Roosevelt's concept of unconditional surrender was to extend it to the state and society in order to eradicate completely the sources of militarism. The book does not make this distinction clear, and does not explain why the demand of unconditional surrender was limited only to the armed forces in Truman's May 8 statement and in the Potsdam Declaration.

Furthermore, there are three types of unconditional surrender. The first is when the victor rejects any negotiations and fights until it completely destroys the enemy. The second is when the surrender agreement between the victor and the defeated is limited only to technical aspects such as the time and place, and the victor has the right to impose any conditions on the defeated unilaterally. The third is when the victor imposes on the defeated the terms of surrender unilaterally without allowing the defeated any possibility of negotiation, but the terms are to be acceptable to the defeated; otherwise, the war will continue. Makoto Iokibe, who defined these three types of unconditional surrender, argues that with regard to Japan Roosevelt rejected the first, but wavered between the second and the third types of unconditional surrender.<sup>13</sup> Gallicchio does not discuss these distinctions and thus the particular type of unconditional surrender that Truman advocated is not made clear. If Truman stood for the third type of unconditional surrender, then the exact terms he intended to impose on Japan became an important issue. Did he reject the very idea of presenting the terms as the definition of unconditional surrender (the second type)? Or did he object to specific terms proposed by those whom Gallicchio labels 'the appeasers'? If so, the exact terms that satisfied his definition of unconditional surrender must be discussed. These questions, which are central to the definition of unconditional surrender, are not clearly delineated.

### *Sources*

The strength of this book is the use of a wide array of archival sources in the United States. Unfortunately, the use of Japanese sources is thin and spotty.<sup>14</sup> With few exceptions British sources are not used, and no Russian sources consulted.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Iokibe Makoto, *Beikoku no Nihon senryo seissaku*, 2 vols (Tokyo: Chuokoronshma, 1985): vol. 1, 103-104

<sup>14</sup> Gallicchio relies mostly Robert Butow's classical work, *Japan's (Decision to Surrender* (Stanford University Press, 1954) for Japanese policymaking. Gaimusho's *Shusen shiroku*, 6 vols (Tokyo: Hokoyosha, 1977) is sporadically used, but other important primary sources for instance, Kurihara Ken and Hatano Sumio, *Shusen kosaku no kiroku*, 2 vols (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1986); Boeicho senshishitsu, *Senshi sosho, Daihonei Rikuginbu (10)* (Tokyo: Asagumo shuppansha, 1975); Daihonei rikugunbu, *senso shidohan, Kimitsusenso nisshi*, 2 vols, (Tokyo: Kinseisha, 1998), Tanaka Nobumasa, *Dokuyumento Showa Tenno*, vol. 5, *Haisen*, Pt 2 (Tokyo: Ryokufu shuppan, 1988) are not used.

<sup>15</sup> One important omission is *Documents on British Policy Overseas*, edited by Rohan Butler and M. E. Perry, vol. 1, *The Conference at Potsdam, July-August 1941* (London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1984). Information derived from the British

*Iokibe Makoto, Japanese Specialists, and the State Department Committees*

Gallicchio ignores Iokibe Makoto's monumental study on U.S. policy toward Japan's occupation. Iokibe's two volume work, which is based on a wide array of U.S. archival materials, examines in detail how the State Department and the War Department conducted numerous studies of occupation policy from 1941 to 1945.

Gallicchio mentions only Joseph Grew, Eugene Dooman, and Joseph Ballantine (Director of the Office of Far Eastern Affairs of the State Department) as Japanese specialists who attempted to revise the policy of unconditional surrender, but he ignores the role played by other specialists on Japan, especially Hugh Borton (historian on Japan at Columbia University) and George Blakeslee (International history Professor at Clark University).<sup>16</sup> At first, Blakeslee and Borton worked in the Far Eastern Group within the Special Research Section in the State Department established in 1942. The Far Eastern Group later developed into a section of the Country and Area Committees (CAC) under the newly created Committee on Post-War Programs (PWC) that was created in January 1944. In the meantime, the Army established the Civil Affairs Bureau for the practical purpose of carrying out occupation in the areas liberated from the Japanese. Since the task of occupation was beyond the competency of the uniformed officers, the Army-Navy Civil Affairs Bureau sent a comprehensive list of questions to PWC for instructions, touching on, among others, the territories to be kept by Japan after the war, economic policy, the modality of occupation, the treatment of war criminals, and above all, the position of the emperor and the monarchy. In response, the CAC presented more than 30 reports to PWC. Finally, the PWC approved the document penned by Blakeslee, outlining the basic objectives of U.S. occupation in Japan in March 1944. It approved (1) the withdrawal of Japan from Manchuria, the Trustee Islands, Korea, and Formosa, (2) the elimination of militarism, (3) allowing Japanese non-military economic activity; (4) the establishment of a government that respected the rights of other nations and observes international law, (5) the change of Japan among the international community of nations as the ultimate goal.<sup>17</sup> It is important to point out that the specific terms that were later included in the Potsdam Declaration were contained in this document.

The Japanese specialists in the State Department acquired their leader in Grew when he was appointed Undersecretary of State and created the Office of the Far Eastern Affairs and in turn appointed Joseph Ballantine as its chief and Dooman as a member. Dooman was also sent to the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee (SWNCC) as the State Department's representative. Under SWNCC, the Committee to Prepare Occupation Policy in Japan was created with Dooman as its chair, and Blakeslee and Borton as its members. Thus the Japanese specialists positioned themselves in the key places in the decision-making process in the State Department. But they encountered strong opposition from Archibald McLeish and Dean Acheson, two new assistant secretaries of the State Department who strongly criticized the Japanese specialists' policy as "appeasement."<sup>18</sup> This information is not included in *Unconditional*.

*The Committee of Three and SWNCC*

The first reference to the Committee of Three appears on page 20 without its necessary identification. The Committee of Three was created at the initiative of Secretary of War Henry Stimson in December 1944 to coordinate the three secretaries (War, Navy, and State) in order to inject a more streamlined decision-making body into the chaotic and personalized decision-making process under Roosevelt. The committee met at 9:30 every Tuesday in Stimson's Office in the Pentagon.

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National Archive is given in Hasegawa, *Anto*, 2 vols, (Tokyo: Chuko bunko, 2011), which is a revised version of Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, *Racing the Enemy: Stalin, Truman, and the Surrender of Japan* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2005).

<sup>16</sup> Hugh Borton is mentioned only once in a note, and Blakeslee's name does not appear in this book.

<sup>17</sup> Iokibe, *Beikoku*, vol. 2, 25.

Iokibe, *Beikoku*, vol. 2, 103-104.

John McCloy, his deputy, attended the meeting as a recorder, and since Stimson's office was right next to that of General George Marshall, Army Chief of Staff, Marshall often attended the committee meeting. From February 1945 on, Grew began to attend the Committee of Three in the place of Secretary of State Edward Stettinius, Jr.<sup>19</sup> The Committee of Three was in some ways similar to the inner cabinet. The trio of Stimson, Grew, and Navy Secretary James Forrestal formed a powerful bloc attempting to persuade Truman to redefine unconditional surrender.

The SWNCC, consisting of assistant secretaries and the Joint Staff planners, is discussed for the first time on page 153 as the body created to address political-military issues arising from Japan's surrender. Although the book gives the impression that it was created only in August 1945, the SWNCC was created in December 1944. It was chaired by McCloy, giving the War Department a leading role. In February 1945, it decided to create a SWNCC subcommittee for the Far East (SFE). Its task was to draft the U.S. occupation policy in Japan after the war. Grew sent Dooman to chair the SFE, and Blakeslee and Borton as its members. Despite the fact that representatives from the Army and Navy comprised a majority, since they did not form a united front, the State department's Japan specialists exerted great influence.<sup>20</sup> This is not discussed in the book.

Gallicchio argues that Truman never instructed Stimson, Grew, and Forrestal to draw a draft for the ultimatum to Japan, and that their attempt to come up with the draft of the ultimatum was instead the unsolicited attempt initiated by the Committee of Three. (59, 68). This is a strange argument. After all, secretaries of war, state, and navy were responsible for formulating the policy on the war, and especially, the policy to end the war, as the war was winding down, and were in charge of sending policy recommendations, especially for the forthcoming Potsdam Conference. Regardless of whether Truman specifically instructed the three secretaries to write the draft of the ultimatum, not to have done so would have been a grave dereliction of their duties.

The role that these Japanese specialists played in formulating U.S. policy toward occupation in Japan is underestimated in the book. Gallicchio refers only to Grew and Dooman as the only leading conservative advocates to have put pressure on Truman to revise the policy of unconditional surrender. Gallicchio judges Dooman to have been an ineffectual spokesman of the State Department "whom the uniformed offices on the committee regarded ... as a hindrance and were happier when he was absent." (210).

According to Iokibe, it was Dooman who presented the most important document on U.S. policy on the occupation of Japan on April 12, 1945, a 12-page document outlining the occupation policy in Japan after the war. This was the culmination of the past two and half years of studies done by the Japanese specialists at CAC and PWC. Dooman's draft was distributed to other government and military agencies, which sent recommendations for revisions, and on June 11, 1945, SWNCC 150 was adopted. It became the prototype for the Potsdam Declaration. According to Iokibe, this important document envisaged that the Allies should assume the supreme power, and listed more than ten specific policies to be pursued during the occupation, and called for the implementation of democracy in Japan. The occupation force was to intervene actively in order to implement these policies to remove the sources of Japanese militarism. It is important to stress that the document envisaged the democratic reforms articulated on by the New Dealers. It was by no means a document for appeasement. Instead it argued that the occupation authority should exercise supreme power and suspend the emperor's and the government power at the highest level of the government, but it envisaged the implementation of these policies through Japanese government agencies.<sup>21</sup>

#### *The Committee of Three and the Draft of the Potsdam Proclamation*

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<sup>19</sup> Iokibe, *Beikoku*, vol. 2, 106-107.

<sup>20</sup> Iokibe, *Beikoku*, vol. 2, 111-112.

<sup>21</sup> Iokibe, *Beikoku*, vol. 2, 117-130.

I disagree with aspects of Gallicchio's treatment of the Yalta Agreement and his examination of Truman's policy toward the Soviet Union. Here I will limit myself to four issues that have direct bearing on unconditional surrender: (1) the process by which the draft of the Potsdam Declaration was adopted; (2) the process by which Stimson's July 2 draft was amended to become the final form of the Potsdam Declaration at the Potsdam Conference; (3) how the Japanese defined the *kokutai* and Japan's imperial system, and (4) the reason why Truman declined to define or refine the terms of unconditional surrender.

Gallicchio states that one of the book's theses is that "the push to modify unconditional surrender was closely tied to concern over the consequences of Soviet entry into the war" (208). He further lumps together Grew, Dooman, Hoover, and Stimson, whom I will term 'the gang of four,' as acting to subvert unconditional surrender by proposing to retain the emperor and the monarchical system. (210).

The gang of four were not unanimous on the role of the Soviet Union, and, in addition to these four, other players such as Forrestal, Chief of Staff Admiral William Leahy, and John McCloy played an important role for putting pressure on Truman to revise or refine unconditional surrender. The fear of Soviet influence in East Asia after its entry into the war was an important motivation for Hoover, Forrestal, and Grew, but Dooman, Stimson, and McCloy were more concerned, in my view, that without the possibility of retaining the emperor and monarchy, the Japanese would fight to the last man. Of the gang of four, in my view, Hoover did not play as important role as the rest, since Hoover's recommendation was dismissed by Stimson and the Strategic and Policy Group (S&P) of the War Department. Even Grew disagreed with Hoover on the territories to be retained by Japan.

The book portrays these four men as having polluted the purity of unconditional surrender. Truman, together with former Secretary of State Cordell Hull, McLeish, and Acheson are depicted as the heroes of the New Dealers who stood for retaining the undiluted unconditional surrender demand. This division between the New Dealers and the conservative Republicans with regard to their attitude to unconditional surrender is too schematic and at times incorrect. Stimson, the Army staff planners, and Marshall considered Soviet entry into the Pacific war necessary to help to hasten the termination of the war. Missing in Gallicchio's analysis is Secretary of State James Byrnes, who was a strong advocate of adhering to the principle of undiluted unconditional surrender, but was also concerned with the implications of Soviet entry into the war. Byrnes eclipsed Grew after he was appointed Secretary of State in influencing Truman, and in my view exerted stronger influence than anyone on Truman's views on unconditional surrender.

Gallicchio describes the recommendations of by the Gang of Four as being "all over the map on the subject" (210). But as far as the attempt to revise/refine the terms of unconditional surrender by clarifying the position of the emperor and the monarchy, there was a consistent thread running from Grew to Stimson, and eventually to the draft of the Potsdam Declaration. I have numerous disagreements with Gallicchio's portrayal of the process in which the Committee of Three, first led by Grew and then Stimson, came up with the recommendation to revise the terms of unconditional surrender to include the possibility of allowing the Japanese to retain the emperor and the monarchy, and here will include the most salient.

On May 12, Grew held a meeting with Averell Harriman (US ambassador to the Soviet Union), McCloy, Charles (Chip) Bohlen (State Department's Head of East European Division), and Forrestal, where he raised the question of the possibility of Soviet entry into the war. It was at this meeting that Grew learned for the first time about the Yalta secret agreement by which Roosevelt had promised to grant a series of war trophies to the Soviet Union in return for the Soviet pledge to enter the war against Japan three months after the German capitulation. This is not discussed in the book. Horrified by the agreement, Grew immediately raised the possibility of renegotiating the Yalta agreement, and wrote a letter of inquiry to the War and Navy Departments (21). But not only the Army but also the Navy rejected Grew's recommendation to renegotiate the Yalta Agreement. In fact, Stimson's letter, which is not cited in the book, stated: "Russian entry will have a profound

military effect in that almost certainly it will materially shorten the war and thus save American lives.”<sup>22</sup> This indicates that Stimson and Grew (and Hoover) disagreed on the implications of Soviet entry into the war.

Stimson wrote in his diary: “The question cut very deep and in my opinion are powerfully connected with our success with S-1 [the Manhattan Project]. He told McCloy that “the time now and the method now to deal with Russia was to keep our mouths shut and let our actions speak for words...I told him this was a place where we really held all the cards. I called it a royal straight flush and we mustn’t be a fool about the way we play it.” Stimson further noted: “The Japanese campaign involved therefore two great uncertainties; first, whether Russia will come in, though we think that will be all right; and second when and how S-1 [the atomic bomb project] will resolve itself.”<sup>23</sup> This is a clear indication of how the Soviet factor, unconditional surrender, and the atomic bomb development were integrally connected. Confusingly, Gallicchio refers to Stimson’s comments only later (31) in connection with the dispute over Poland, thus overlooking the connection between unconditional surrender and the development of atomic bomb.

Despite the differences in their views on the implications of Soviet entry into the war, there actually was consensus among the Gang of Four plus McCloy, Forrestal, Leahy, and Marshall about the need to modify the terms of unconditional surrender in order to hasten the end of the war.

Then there is the important issue of Dooman’s draft of the ultimatum that he presented to Grew on May 27, and Grew in turn presented to the president on May 28. Gallicchio states that Dooman’s four-and-a-half-page draft included the warning of the consequence of Japan’s continuing the war, occupation after the war, and a “road of hardships before Japan reentered the international community,” indicating that Dooman’s draft reflected the ongoing discussion on SWNCC 150 that demanded a series of reforms to eradicate militarism in Japan. But Gallicchio, who argues that the need for reforms was essential ingredients of unconditional surrender, criticizes that Dooman’s draft as so “stern and unyielding” that “the statement hardly seemed an attempt to entice Japan into surrendering.” (54) As for the crucial question of the monarchy, “the draft statement was mute,” and only hinted at the possibility of leaving the decision to the Japanese people. Gallicchio states: “The Japanese would have to be clairvoyant to know that the proposed statement contained a pledge to preserve the imperial system” (54-55).<sup>24</sup>

In fact, on May 28, Grew and Dooman presented Dooman’s draft at the State Department’s senior staff meeting, where it encountered violent criticisms from McLeish and Acheson.<sup>25</sup> The criticisms indicate that Dooman’s draft contained something about the position of the monarchy. If McLeish and Acheson thought that it allowed for the possibility of the Japanese retaining the monarchy, how was it possible that the Japanese had to be “clairvoyant” to see that they could retain the monarchy?

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<sup>22</sup> Joseph C. Grew, *Turbulent Era: A Diplomatic Record of Forty Years, 1904-1945* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1952), 1458-1459.

<sup>23</sup> Hasegawa, *Racing the Enemy*, 78, citing Henry Stimson Diary, Sterling Library, Yale University, 13 May 1945, 123-124, also see 14 May 1945, 126.

<sup>24</sup> Gallicchio and I disagree exactly when Grew presented Dooman’s draft to Truman, May 28 (my view) or June 15 (Gallicchio). In *Racing the Enemy*, I stated that Dooman draft called for the retention of a constitutional monarchy, but I now think I have to reexamine this assertion. Hasegawa, *Racing the Enemy*, 81.

<sup>25</sup> Although this meeting took place before Grew’s meeting with Truman on May 28, Gallicchio discussed this staff meeting ten pages later (34-35). Here, as elsewhere, chronological confusion makes it difficult to follow the progression of the story.

Gallicchio's discussion of the meeting Grew had with Truman on May 28 characterized Grew as "lecturing the president on Japanese history."<sup>26</sup> I argued otherwise:

Grew submitted Doorman's draft to the president. He explained that in waging the war against Japan, "nothing must be sacrificed." This meant that the United States should never compromise the American objectives of "the destruction of Japan's tools for war and of the capacity of the Japanese again to make those tools." Nevertheless, the Japanese were fanatic people, "capable of fighting...to the last man." Thus it was time, Grew insisted, that the United State consider steps, "which, without sacrificing in any degree our principles or objectives, might render it easier for the Japanese to surrender unconditionally now." Grew then came to his major objective: "The greatest obstacle to unconditional surrender by the Japanese is their belief that this would entail the destruction or permanent removal of the emperor and the institution of the throne. If some indication can now be given the Japanese that they themselves...will be permitted to determine their own future political structure, they will be afforded a method of saving face without which surrender will be highly unlikely."<sup>27</sup>

The key phrase in Doorman's draft and Grew's presentation seems to be leaving the future form of government to the decision of the Japanese, allowing them to have the possibility of retaining the monarchy. Truman did not question Grew's analysis. The president said he was interested in what Grew had said because his thoughts "had been following the same line," but he suggested that Grew discuss the matter with Stimson, Forrestal, Marshall, and King (26).

On May 29, Grew, accompanied by Dooman, had a meeting with Stimson, Forrestal, Elmer Davis (Head of the Office of War Information), and Marshall in Stimson's office.<sup>28</sup> At this meeting, Grew read Dooman's draft. Stimson praised the document, saying that his only criticism was that it did not go far enough in promising the retention of the monarchy. Stimson, Forrestal, and Marshall agreed with the principle of Dooman's draft, but "for certain military reasons, not divulged, it was considered inadvisable for the President to make such a statement now."<sup>29</sup> Grew's attempt to issue a statement was thus thwarted, because of the uncertainty of the development of the atomic bomb. But it is important to recognize that Grew, Stimson, Forrestal, and Marshall were unanimous in supporting the revision of unconditional surrender to preserve the monarchy. They were not "all over the map," as Gallicchio argues, but were on the same page.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Gallicchio's description of "this lecture" is, in my view, condescending, characterizing it as containing "glaring inaccuracies" and "open to question as to its logic." Behind Doorman's draft there existed a whole host of Japanese specialists such as Hugh Borton, Edwin Reischauer, Charles Fahs, and behind them, British historian George Sansom, perhaps the world's most distinguished authority on Japanese history, who was serving at the British embassy during the war, whose influence on American specialists, cannot be overemphasized. Gallicchio states that "Truman did not have a sophisticated understanding of the emperor's role in Japanese society. Few in the United States did." (209). This cavalier dismissal of the Japanese specialists who tirelessly worked in the State Department to find a balance between unconditional surrender and the formula that would be more acceptable to Japanese in light of their profound knowledge of Japanese history and tradition, is astounding.

<sup>27</sup> Hasegawa, *Racing the Enemy*, 81-82.

<sup>28</sup> Gallicchio refers to this meeting separately in two chapters (26, 36), again disrupting the chronological progression and the logical flow of the argument.

<sup>29</sup> Hasegawa, *Racing the Enemy*, 82.

<sup>30</sup> After describing the May 29 meeting, Gallicchio shifts gears and engages in a digression on the military's handling of unconditional surrender issue. (26-29). Again, this creates the problem of logical progression of the argument and chronological confusion.



Gallicchio does not discuss another Committee of Three meeting that was held on June 12, attended by Stimson, Grew, McCloy, and Forrestal. This meeting revisited the question of unconditional surrender. Stimson now took the firm stand that he had “no hesitation in abandoning” the unconditional surrender formula so long as the United States could “accomplish all of our strategic objectives without the use of this phrase.”<sup>31</sup>

Grew met Truman again on the morning of June 18 before the president convened a meeting with military leaders to discuss the invasion plan. Truman told Grew that he postponed the decision to issue a statement to Japan at the Big Three meeting at Potsdam (56).<sup>32</sup>

A detailed discussion on the White House meeting on June 18 that decided to launch Operation Olympic is not necessary here. Gallicchio correctly notes that Stimson obliquely and Admiral Leahy directly suggested the revision of unconditional surrender to allow the Japanese to retain the monarchy (57). According to McCloy, at the end of the meeting Truman asked his opinion, and McCloy “advocated warning the Japanese about the atomic bomb but also assuring them that they could retain the emperor and a form of government of their own choosing” (58). Gallicchio argues, unconvincingly in my opinion, that McCloy’s recollection is not accurate, and it did not take place. I also do not quite understand why McCloy’s story “led to an important misunderstanding in how the warning to Japan known as the Potsdam Declaration was written” (58).

The Committee of Three met on June 19, the day after the White House military meeting, and agreed that the U.S should issue a warning, clarifying the terms of unconditional surrender. Gallicchio correctly states that the leadership on this question shifted from Grew to Stimson (60). The Committee of Three met again on June 26, where Stimson read the draft of a letter he planned to give to Truman. Gallicchio does not indicate as such, but this draft, which was written by McCloy, did not contain the guarantee of the monarchy. In the margin of this draft, Stimson wrote: “I personally think that if in saying this we should add that we do not exclude a constitutional monarchy under the present Dynasty, it would substantially add to the chances of acceptance.”<sup>33</sup>

The Committee of Three accepted Stimson’s ideas in principle, but decided to have the subcommittee work on the details of the terms of the ultimatum. Gallicchio’s description of the subcommittee’s deliberations (60-63) fundamentally agree with my understanding, and add some new information that I did not include in my book. I would like to make several points, however, on the work of the subcommittee.

The task assigned to the subcommittee was not only the relationship between unconditional surrender and the status of the emperor and the monarchy; there were other issues involving the timing, modality, and signatories to the ultimatum.

Gallicchio accurately depicts that it was the S&P of the War Department’s Operation Division (OPD) that took the lead in drafting the proposed declaration that Stimson eventually handed to Truman on July 2. Both Ballantine and Dooman (the State Department’s representatives) did not advocate the retention of the monarchy. Why did Dooman retreat from the previous position and even from the position that Grew had advocated? Was this because of the backlash, engineered by McLeish and Acheson, that they encountered in the State Department? Or did he consider that the farthest he could go was what SWNCC 150 determined about the monarchy? Perhaps Stimson and McCloy were prepared to go one step further than Grew and Dooman were willing to go? I myself wondered about this issue, but *Unconditional* does not weigh in.

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<sup>31</sup> Hasegawa, *Racing the Enemy*, 98, see note 20, 324.

<sup>32</sup> Truman invited Grew to attend the June 18 White House meeting on invasion plan, and Grew asked the president if he could bring Dooman, and Truman agreed. Gallicchio does not explain why Grew and Dooman did not attend the White House meeting on military strategy on June 18.

<sup>33</sup> Hasegawa, *Racing the Enemy*, 111.

Stimson's idea of clarifying unconditional surrender by spelling out the possibility of allowing the Japanese to maintain a constitutional monarchy was faithfully followed by the military staffers in the subcommittee under the chairmanship of McCloy. Gallicchio writes that the most controversial part of the draft warning was "its assurance that following the occupation, the Japanese would be able to have a constitutional monarch under the present dynasty" (64). McCloy noted that the State Department was divided on this issue, and there might be repercussions at home, but McCloy concluded: "without it those who seem to know most about Japan feel there would be very little likelihood of acceptance."<sup>34</sup> In fact, the promise to allow the Japanese to maintain "a constitutional monarchy under the current dynasty" was one of the two fundamental pillars of the draft warning.

The second fundamental pillar of the draft proposal was the Soviet factor, which Gallicchio touches on, but does not adequately assess. The Soviet factor was directly connected with the timing and signatories of the ultimatum. The final form of the draft declaration was supposed to be issued by the heads of the U.S., Britain, and China, but the Soviet Union was added in parenthesis, with the anticipation of Soviet entry into the war. Accordingly, the implication of Soviet participation in the war was added in parenthesis in Point 2 of the draft proposal. As for the timing of when the ultimatum was to be issued, the subcommittee considered the best time to be immediately after the Soviets entered the war. It should be noted that no one in the subcommittee except McCloy knew about the atomic bomb development.

On July 2, five days before Truman's departure for Potsdam, Stimson handed the draft of the ultimatum to the president with a memorandum.<sup>35</sup> Gallicchio describes the fierce debate within the State Department about Stimson's draft ultimatum. Violent attacks from McLeish and Acheson led to the amendment of article 12 to eliminate the reference to a constitutional monarchy. This backlash resulted in the State Department's amendment of crucial Article 12 to: "When the people of Japan have convinced the peace-loving nations of the world that they are going the follow peaceful lives they shall be given an opportunity to control their destinies along peaceful lines" (68). This was to deny the essential point that Stimson, McCloy and the S&P had attempted to accomplish. The battle for Article 12 at the Potsdam Conference began.

#### *The Potsdam Conference and the Unconditional Surrender Issue*

Let me begin here by drawing the big picture of where Truman stood on the question of unconditional surrender. When Truman went to the Potsdam Conference, he faced two dilemmas: first, whether or not he should accept the revision of unconditional surrender. He was committed to unconditional surrender, and bringing Japan to its knees. But he also wanted to save the lives of American soldiers by ending the war as quickly as possible, and his advisors counseled him to revise the terms of unconditional surrender to allow the Japanese to retain the monarchy in the form of a constitutional monarchy in order to hasten the termination of the war. I do not believe that he had made up his mind on this issue and that he kept his true intentions to himself, as Gallicchio argues. On the contrary. In my view, Truman was conflicted.

He also faced the second dilemma: whether he should seek Soviet participation in the war or attempt to prevent the Soviets from entering the war. The War Department (Stimson, Marshall, the S&P) insisted that Soviet entry into the war would hasten the termination of the war, but others (Harriman, Hoover, Grew, Forrestal) were concerned with the expansion of Soviet influence in East Asia. The president wanted to avoid Soviet entry into the war, but knew that it might be necessary in order to hasten the termination of the war.

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<sup>34</sup> John McCloy, "Memorandum for Colonel Stimson," 29 June 1945, ABC Historical Draft Documents—JAP Surrender, 1945, RG 165, National Archive; Hasegawa, *Racing the Enemy*, 114.

<sup>35</sup> According to Gallicchio, when Stimson and Truman met, Stimson discussed a statement drafted by the Interim Committee (for the atomic bomb project), and recommended that the president should approach Russia with information about the bomb. This information is new to me, but Gallicchio does not cite his source for this information. (64). If Stimson and Truman discussed the topic of the atomic bomb, as Gallicchio suggests, then I would like to know exactly what they discussed.

The news of the successful detonation of the atomic bomb just prior to the Potsdam Conference gave Truman the weapons to resolve these two dilemmas.

Soviet leader Joseph Stalin also wanted unconditional surrender of Japan. Exploiting Japan's unwise choice to terminate the war through Moscow's mediation, Stalin attempted to prolong the war long enough to enter it so that the Soviet Union could gain the fruits of the war trophies promised at Yalta. A race between the atomic bomb and Soviet entry into the war began at the Potsdam Conference.

Gallicchio notes that "the atomic bomb and Soviet entry into the war now had to be factored into the president's calculation on ending the war" (96). The book's presentation of this argument, however, does not persuasively draw connections among three important issues: unconditional surrender, Soviet entry into the war, and the atomic bomb.

Gallicchio appropriately takes up the July 17-18 Joint Chiefs of Staff discussions on Point 12 on the Stimson draft (97-99). Stimson's draft had been sent to the Joint Strategic Survey Committee (JSSC), "an interservice group of senior officers."<sup>36</sup> Gallicchio writes:

Unlike the Secretary's Staff Committee, the uniformed elder statesmen of the JSSC were not worried about appearing to appease the Japanese. Instead, they criticized the clause's ambiguity. One problem with the phrase "under the present dynasty" was that the Japanese might infer that the Allies planned to depose the current emperor and replace him with someone else. Conversely, they worried that Japanese radicals, primarily communists and socialists, might object to having the monarchy reserved in any form. To avoid misinterpretation the JSSC recommended that the provision be rewritten to read that "subject to suitable guarantees against further acts of aggression, the Japanese people will be free to choose their own form of government (97).

The JSSC's recommendation was to strike out the sentence that allowed the Japanese to maintain "a constitutional monarchy under the present dynasty." On this question, I made the following argument in the book I published in 2005:

JSSC's recommendation made little sense. A promise to keep a constitutional monarchy could hardly be interpreted as a measure "to depose or execute the present emperor." On the contrary, a constitutional monarchy "under the present dynasty" was more likely to be perceived as a modification of unconditional surrender on one crucial point: whether or not Japan would be able to maintain the monarchy. Moreover, there were hardly any "radical elements in Japan" (except for a handful Communists in jail) violently opposed to the preservation of the institution of the emperor. It is difficult to fathom where the JSSC obtained information that a group opposing the emperor system was growing in strength.<sup>37</sup>

The sentence that the JSSC recommended to delete constituted one of the most important points in Stimson's draft. As Gallicchio recognizes, the S&P writers of the Stimson draft, responded and offered a further amendment to read: "The Japanese people will be free to choose their own form of government whether they shall retain their Emperor as a constitutional monarch."<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> I was the first historian to call attention to the JCS's July 17-18 discussion in my book, *Racing the Enemy*, 146-148, but Gallicchio does not make any attribution to my book, and ignores my argument on this issue.

<sup>37</sup> Hasegawa, *Racing the Enemy*, 146-147.

<sup>38</sup> Hasegawa, *Racing the Enemy*, 147.

Thus, on July 17, JCS had two amendments. Gallicchio then refers to Leahy's statement: "this matter had been considered on a political level and consideration had been given to the removal of the sentence in question" (98). I state in my book: "His statement strongly suggests that Truman and Byrnes had discussed this issue and that they had already decided to remove the promise of a constitutional monarchy from the ultimatum."<sup>39</sup> Gallicchio writes: "Leahy's statement...was a way of telling the Joint Chiefs that the question had been decided by Truman. The Chiefs may also have concluded from their reading of the intercepted Japanese messages over the previous several weeks that no proclamation, regardless of what it said about the emperor, would induce Japan to surrender" (98). I agree with the first sentence, but disagree with the second. The way in which American policymakers read the Japanese diplomatic dispatches is a complicated issue that cannot be discussed in detail here, but suffice it to say that it is erroneous to assume that they concluded that no proclamation would induce Japan to surrender. If that were the case, what was the point of issuing an ultimatum? Did the American policymakers know that any ultimatum would be rejected by Japan in advance, as Gallicchio argues here, but issued it anyway? If so, the purpose of issuing the ultimatum they anticipated would be rejected must be examined. It should be pointed out that Stimson, McCloy, and Forrestal drew a totally different conclusion from the Japanese diplomatic dispatches. The dispatches indicated Japan's willingness to end the war, and therefore, they were convinced that it was all the more necessary to send Japanese leaders the signal that unconditional surrender was not to exclude the possibility of maintaining a constitutional monarchy.<sup>40</sup>

In my book, I raised a series of questions on the July 17-18 JCS meetings. Who exactly was in the JSSC? Who proposed the amendment and why? Why did Marshall, Leahy, and the JCS, who had supported Stimson's draft, accept the committee's revision over the objections of the S&P? Why did Stimson and McCloy accept defeat without any protest? Gallicchio does not answer these questions in this book. To his credit, though, he points out the similarity between JSSC's recommendation and the State Department's recommendation written by State Department's legal adviser, Green Hackworth, and Assistant Secretary of State James Dunn, a point I did not include in my book (97). This seems to indicate that the State Department's hawks and the JSSC communicated with each other, but Gallicchio does not pursue this subject further.

Stimson brought the news of the successful detonation of the atomic bomb in New Mexico to Truman on July 16 and 17. Did this news play an important role in Truman's decision to delete the sentence? On July 17, Byrnes told Stimson that he and the president had worked out a 'timetable' for the end of the Pacific War.<sup>41</sup> Gallicchio writes that the timing of when the ultimatum was to be issued remained undecided at this point (99-100), but does not address the crucial question of the relationship between the news of the atomic bomb and the deletion of the crucial sentence.

One theme that comes out from Gallicchio's description of the Potsdam Conference is Truman's attitude toward Soviet entry into the war. The author writes: "At this early point in the conference, we simply can't be sure whether Truman was worried about Soviet designs on Manchuria and therefore contemplated ending the war before the Soviets entered" (111). I disagree with this statement. Truman wrote in his memoirs: "By the time [the ultimatum was issued], also, we might know more about two matters of significance for our future effort: the participation of the Soviet Union and the atomic bomb. We knew that the bomb would receive its first test in mid-July. If the test of the bomb was successful, I wanted to afford Japan a clear chance to end the fighting before we made use of this newly gained power. If the test should fail, then it would be even more important to us to bring about a surrender before we had to make a physical conquest of Japan."<sup>42</sup> Contrary to Gallicchio's contention, Truman's objective vis-à-vis the Soviets was to end the war before the Soviets entered it. The date Stalin gave Truman for the Soviet attack on Japan—August 15—gave Truman and Byrnes a definite deadline to work toward;

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<sup>39</sup> Hasegawa, *Racing the Enemy*, 148.

<sup>40</sup> Hasegawa, *Racing the Enemy*, 134.

<sup>41</sup> Hasegawa, *Racing the Enemy*, 148.

<sup>42</sup> Harry S Truman, *Memoirs*, Vol. 1, *Years of Decision* (Garden City, Doubleday, 1955), 417; Hasegawa, *Racing the Enemy*, 139.

if they were to force Japan to surrender without Soviet help, they would have to do so before that date. The timing of when the atomic bombs became ready for use became the crucial issue for Truman and Byrnes. This was the meaning of the ‘timetable’ that Byrnes talked about when he met Stimson. All this is missing in the book.

The chronology of what happened between July 21, when Truman received Head of the Manhattan Project Brigadier-General Leslie Groves’s detailed report on the successful test of the atomic bomb and July 26, when the Potsdam Declaration<sup>43</sup> was issued is crucial to understand the relationship of three fundamental issues: unconditional surrender, Soviet entry into the war, and the atomic bombs. But the discussion of these events on pages 112 to 122 is rather muddled, jumping from one topic to another, without logical connections, and going back and forth chronologically.

In order to understand the sequence of events, I outline below the chronological order, and comments on Gallicchio’s descriptions.

On July 21, Truman received Groves’ detailed report on the atomic bomb test. Gallicchio accurately records Truman’s impression of this news. On July 22, Stimson received a telegram sent by his special assistant, George Harrison, in Washington, which reported: “Complicated preparations for use are proceeding so fast we should know not later than July 25 of any change in plans.” Gallicchio does not include this information. On the morning of July 23, Byrnes called Stimson and asked him about the timing of the atomic bomb program. Upon Byrnes’s request, Stimson sent a telegram to Harrison, asking him when precisely the atomic bombs would become available. Stimson met Truman, and told him that he had sent a telegram to Harrison to give him the exact day when the first atomic bomb would be ready to use. Stimson wrote in his diary:

He [Truman] told me that he had the warning message [Potsdam Declaration] which we prepared on his desk and had accepted our most recent change in it, and that he proposed to shoot it out as soon as he heard the definite day of the operation. We had a brief discussion about Stalin’s recent expansion and he confirmed what I have heard. But he told me that the United States was standing firm and he was apparently relying greatly upon the information as to S-1.<sup>44</sup>

The timing of the ultimatum, Soviet entry into the war, and the atomic bombs became closely connected in Truman’s mind. This vital information directly related to unconditional surrender is not included in the book.

Also, on the morning of July 23, the president instructed Stimson to have a meeting with Marshall to find out: “Whether we needed the Russians in the war or whether we could get along without them.” Gallicchio writes: “Like Marshall, Truman appears to have surmised that there was no way to keep the Russians out of Manchuria.” (113). But what mattered was not whether the Russians could be kept out of Manchuria, but rather ending the war before the Soviets entered it. Stimson met Marshall that afternoon. To Truman’s question conveyed by Stimson, Marshall answered that the original purpose of the Soviet help, that is, to pin down the Japanese forces in Manchuria, had been already accomplished, since the Soviets were amassing forces along the Manchurian border, and further that even if U.S. compelled the Japanese to surrender, that would not prevent the Russians from marching into Manchuria. Gallicchio accurately describes Stimson’s meeting with Marshall (113), but omits to mention that Stimson wrote in the diary: “Marshall felt as I felt sure he would, that now with new weapon we would not need the assistance of the Russians to conquer Japan.”<sup>45</sup> On the following day, July 24, Stimson told the president that Marshall believed that the Russians were not needed. Stimson most likely conveyed the information Truman wanted to hear, misrepresenting what Marshall had really said. Referring to the implications of what Stimson

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<sup>43</sup> Officially it was called “Potsdam Proclamation” to be distinguished from the other “Potsdam Declarations” covering Europe, but here I stick to the term “Potsdam Declaration,” as used by Gallicchio.

<sup>44</sup> *Stimson Diary*, 23 July 1945.

<sup>45</sup> *Stimson Diary*, 23 July 45, also quoted in *FRUS: Potsdam*, vol. 2, 1324; Hasegawa, *Racing the Enemy*, 153.

reported on his meeting with Marshall (three pages later), Gallicchio writes: “Truman was losing interest in obtaining the Soviet Union’s timely entry into the war” (116). In my view, this is off the mark. Truman did not lose interest in Soviet entry into the war; his entire goal during the conference was directed to end the war before the Soviets marched into Manchuria.

On that day, after the president received Stimson’s report on his meeting with Marshall, Truman revealed to Stalin that the U.S. now possessed “a powerful weapon” with destructive capacity without revealing that it was the atomic bomb. About this important exchange between Truman and Stalin, Gallicchio simply notes that “Satisfied that he had fulfilled his obligations, the president said no more on the subject” (117). The significance of this episode is the discrepancies between what Truman and other witnesses thought (Stalin did not comprehend the significance of this information) and what Stalin learned (he clearly understood that Truman was talking about the atomic bomb). Gallicchio’s discussion of this important episode is in need of expansion.<sup>46</sup>

The book does not note that on this day, Stimson and Marshall approved the order to drop the atomic bomb, nor does it discuss Stimson’s diary entry for this day: “I then showed him the telegram which had come last evening from Harrison giving the dates of the operations. He [Truman] said that was just what he wanted, that he was highly delighted and that it gave him his cue for his warning.” The president revealed that that he had sent the draft warning to Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, and “as soon as that was cleared by Chiang Kai-shek, he, Truman, would release the warning and that would fit right in time with the program we had received from Harrison.”<sup>47</sup>

Stimson’s last-minute attempt to revive the original idea of allowing a constitutional monarchy in the ultimatum is also not discussed in the book. Stimson wrote in the diary: “I then spoke of the importance which I attributed to the reassurance of the Japanese on the continuance of their dynasty, and I had felt that the insertion of that in the formal warning was important and might be just the thing that would make or mar their acceptance.” Truman told him that since he had sent the draft to Chiang Kai-shek, it was impossible to change it.<sup>48</sup>

Stimson’s diary clearly revealed that by July 24 the president and Byrnes had revised Stimson’s draft, and came up with the final version of the Potsdam Declaration. The process of how Stimson’s draft was transformed into the final form is crucial to Gallicchio’s central theme of unconditional surrender, but is not explored in the book. According to Byrnes, “The copy in my files indicates that several suggestions made by [British Prime Minister Winston] Churchill were incorporated, and the President inserted one or two with his pen.”<sup>49</sup> Specifically, what amendments did the president offer? In fact, the British had been fully consulted on Stimson’s draft early on. The British wanted to maintain the provision on the preservation of the monarchical system, but in view of the strong opposition from Truman and Byrnes, Churchill and Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden dropped their demand.<sup>50</sup> This too does not appear in the book.

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<sup>46</sup> Gallicchio cites my book for this incident without examining what conclusions the Soviets drew from this exchange and how Truman’s half-truth piqued Stalin’s suspicion. David Holloway’s important article on this issue is not discussed in the book. David Holloway, “Jockeying for Position in the Postwar World,” in Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, ed., *The End of the Pacific War: Reappraisals* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007), 145-188.

<sup>47</sup> *Stimson Diary* 24 July 1945; Hasegawa, *Racing the Enemy*, 153-154.

<sup>48</sup> *Stimson Diary*, 24 July 1945, Hasegawa, *Racing the Enemy*, 157.

<sup>49</sup> James F. Byrnes *All in One Lifetime* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1958). 296; Hasegawa, *Racing the Enemy*, 156.

<sup>50</sup> Hasegawa, *Racing the Enemy*, 156.

The book's narrative moves from Truman's revelation of "the powerful weapon" to Stalin on July 24, to Truman's meeting with Marshall and Lord Louis Mountbatten, the British commander of the Southeast Asia Command, on July 25. Gallicchio describes that the "lack of coordination between the Allies on incorporating the bomb into their plans" was "striking," and suggests that Mountbatten suggested that "it would be best if the timing of the bombs could be arranged so that the field commanders were ready to occupy Japanese-held areas as soon as Japan surrendered." Gallicchio goes on to write: "Truman demurred on this point, explaining that he did not want the war to continue a day longer than necessary. In his diary entry, Mountbatten acknowledged the soundness of the president's thinking but he added that an early surrender of Japan 'is clearly going to present the wretched commanders with extremely difficult problems'" (117). A number of issues are scattered in this one paragraph without sufficient analysis. First, how did or did not the atomic bombs become incorporated into operational plans, not merely in the coordination of the Allied military plans, but also in U.S. military plans and strategy itself? Second, how was the atomic bomb factored into Truman's plan to end the war? Third, how should the field commanders have dealt with the Japanese army in the occupied areas after Japan's surrender? Each one of these issues deserves closer, more detailed examination, and all of them were also connected with each other. Gallicchio does not provide any analysis on each of these issues nor the connections among them.

The discussion then moves on to Marshall's post-Potsdam briefing paper on demobilization, and explains how the occupation was to be conducted after Japan's surrender. He writes: "Although the briefing paper scrupulously refrained from mentioning the emperor, the reference to ministries and the Imperial Headquarters tacitly reinforced the Joint Chiefs' previous recommendation that nothing be done to prevent the U.S. forces from using the emperor to facilitate the surrender and occupation" (118). The whole idea of Byrnes's and Truman's amendment of the Stimson's draft was to reject the idea of preserving a constitutional monarchy. But this statement suggests that the emperor should be maintained for the purpose of facilitating the surrender and occupation. This contradiction is not addressed.

The book does not mention that on July 25, Deputy Chief of Staff General Thomas Handy gave General Carl Spaatz, commander of the Army Strategic Air Forces, the order to use the atomic bomb.<sup>51</sup> It should be stressed that the order to drop the bomb was issued one day before the Potsdam Declaration was issued. In my book I questioned Truman's argument that (1) the Potsdam Declaration was first issued, (2) Japan rejected this ultimatum, and (3) therefore, he ordered to drop the atomic bomb. The actual sequence of events was (1) Handy gave the order drop the atomic bomb (July 25), (2) the Potsdam Ultimatum was issued (July 26), (3) Prime Minister Kantaro Suzuki made the famous 'mokusatsu' statement, and (4) the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima (August 6). Why did the order to drop the atomic bomb precede the issuance of the ultimatum? This is the crucial question that Gallicchio's book does not address.

On July 26, the Potsdam Declaration was issued. Gallicchio discusses the differences between the Stimson draft and the final text of the declaration (119-120). He of course points out the deletion of the phrase "a constitutional monarchy" in Point 12. (120), but does not mention other equally important differences. One huge difference was the deletion of any references to the Soviet Union that were included in parenthesis in Stimson's draft. Another important difference is Point 13.

First, on the deletion of "a constitutional monarchy" in Point 12, Gallicchio argues: "Without question, possession of the atomic bomb reinforced Truman's decision against modifying unconditional surrender. It did not, however, determine it" (120). This argument is not clear. In order to resolve the dilemma the president faced, it appears to me that the atomic bomb played not merely a reinforcing role but was a decisive factor for Truman's decision to reject the provision to preserve the monarchy. Second, Gallicchio argues that Truman saw no indication that "Japan's decision whether to surrender was hanging on the fate of the emperor." I disagree. Both the Japanese peace party and the war party were unanimous about the minimal condition, the preservation of the emperor and the imperial system and they equated unconditional surrender with the destruction of the emperor and the imperial system. Contrary to Gallicchio's assertion, Japanese diplomatic messages, especially the 11-12 July exchanges between Foreign Minister Shigenori Togo and Japanese Ambassador to the Soviet

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<sup>51</sup> Hasegawa, *Racing the Enemy*, 151-152, see note 40 for the sources, 334.

Union, Naotake Sato clearly showed that the Japanese decision was “hanging on the fate” of the emperor and the imperial system.

These sentences are immediately followed by another sentence: Japanese diplomatic messages “showed that they were seeking an alternative to surrender” (120). There is no apparent logical connection between the previous sentences and the sentence that followed them. Furthermore, while one may fault the Japanese decision to seek Moscow’s mediation as strategic stupidity, as I do, the decision to seeking ‘peace’ itself through the mediation of the country that maintained neutrality cannot be condemned as a rejection of surrender. Gallicchio’s statement that since the Japanese were seeking “peace,” but not accepting “surrender” the Japanese move was a proof that Japan was not accepting unconditional surrender is a spurious argument. The Japanese of course would not offer to ‘surrender’ to a country with which they were not at war. Third, according to Gallicchio, in view of the Japanese preparations for the homeland defense against the U.S. operation in Kyushu, the promise to preserve the monarchy would have “encourage[d] the Japanese to think that additional concessions were possible” (120). On the contrary, the possibility of maintaining the monarchy would have caused the peace party and the emperor to seek more actively to terminate the war. This is not a theoretical possibility, but that was the argument advocated by Stimson, Forrestal, and McCloy after they read the diplomatic dispatches. Gallicchio then concludes somewhat contradictorily that “the bomb provided the president a way out of his dilemma” (120). It is not clear what Truman’s dilemma was. Does this not indicate that the atomic bomb played not merely a ‘reinforcing’ role, but a decisive role in the president’s decision to strike out the provision on a constitutional monarchy?

As for the deletion of any references to the Soviet Union, Gallicchio writes that Byrnes showed the text to Commissar of Foreign Affairs Viacheslav Molotov as a courtesy. He further states: “The Russians requested time to study the document, but it had already gone to the press by the time they received it. Byrnes unconvincingly explained that he did not ask for Soviet input because they were not in the war yet and he ‘did not wish to embarrass them’” (119). One page later he writes: “He [Truman] did not change his mind about unconditional surrender at Potsdam even though his experience with Stalin made him more wary of Soviet intentions. That wariness led Truman to be less forthcoming with the Russians, but it did not translate into concessions toward Japan. The president made only the barest of gestures in telling Stalin about the atomic bomb and excluded the Russians completely from consultation on the Potsdam Declaration. At the same time, the president deleted from the warning the concession on the monarchy” (120).

These descriptions of how the Soviets reacted to the Potsdam Declaration are inadequate. They vastly underestimate the importance Stalin attached to appending his signature to the joint ultimatum. Hopkins had already promised in May that the joint ultimatum would be placed at the Potsdam Conference. To Stalin it was important to join the joint ultimatum, since it would justify the war against Japan in violation of the Neutrality Pact. To Truman and Byrnes, the atomic bomb provided the means to end the war before Soviet entry into the war. It was not his ‘wariness’ but his major objective that led the president to exclude the Soviets entirely from the deliberations of the ultimatum. More than Truman’s revelation of the ‘powerful weapon’ to Stalin, the Soviets were stunned and felt betrayed by Truman/Byrnes’s outmaneuvering them and exclusion of the Soviet Union from the ultimatum. Stalin offered to append his signature to the joint ultimatum on July 29, but Truman and Byrnes rejected this offer. This triggered Stalin to hasten the attack on Japan. The race between the atomic bomb and Soviet entry into the war began in earnest.<sup>52</sup>

The atomic bomb was indeed the factor that connected Truman’s refusal to make concessions on a constitutional monarchy and his decision to exclude the Soviet Union entirely in the deliberations of the ultimatum. Gallicchio notes this connection. He quotes from Byrnes’ aide Walter Brown’s diary: “the secretary was hoping for time, ‘believing that after [the] atomic bomb Japan will surrender and Russia will not get in so much on the kill, thereby being in a position to press for claims against China.” He also quotes Forrestal, who stated: “he [Byrnes] was most anxious to get the Japanese affair over

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<sup>52</sup> This is the argument I presented in my book, *Racing the Enemy*, but Gallicchio does not comment on my argument, which is puzzling since he presents “concern over the consequences of Soviet entry into the war” as one of three major conclusions of the book. (208).



with before the Russians got in” (121). But this compelling evidence is not connected in the book with the big picture of the major objective of Truman and Byrnes to end the war with the atomic bomb before the Soviets entered the war.

The following exchange between Forrestal and Byrnes is not addressed in the book. When Forrestal told Byrnes that Truman had said “his principal objective at Potsdam would be to get Russia in the war,” Byrnes responded that “it was most probable that the President’s views had changed; certainly that was not now my view.”<sup>53</sup> By July 24, Byrnes became aware of Japan’s peace overtures to Moscow. Togo’s dispatch to Sato, intercepted by MAGIC played an important role in Byrnes’s thinking. According to Byrnes, “the emperor had said they would fight to the last man unless there was some modification of unconditional surrender”.<sup>54</sup> Stimson, McCloy, and Forrestal read this telegram, and concluded that the Japanese were close to surrender, if the United States revised unconditional surrender. But Byrnes and Truman drew a totally different conclusion: “It meant using the atomic bomb.”<sup>55</sup> They knew that the ultimatum that demanded unconditional surrender without any promise of a constitutional monarchy would be rejected by Japan. This rejection would give them justification to use the atomic bomb, which would lead Japan’s decision to surrender before the Soviet entry into the war. Another equally important point should have been mentioned. Stalin was outwitted by Truman and Byrnes, but this triggered Stalin’s decision to hasten the attack on Japan. The atomic bomb on Hiroshima on August 6 did not immediately lead to Japan’s surrender. Moving the day of attack by 48 hours, Stalin ordered the Red Army to attack the Japanese forces in Manchuria while the Japanese were waiting for his answer to their request for mediation. The Soviets managed to enter the war in the nick of time, contrary to the expectations of Truman and Byrnes. Gallicchio’s book ignores all this.

There was another important difference between Stimson’s draft and the final text of the Potsdam Declaration. Stimson’s draft stipulated: “We call upon those in authority in Japan to proclaim now the unconditional surrender of all the Japanese armed forces under the authority of the Japanese Government and High Command, and to provide proper and adequate assurances of their good faith in such action.” This was changed to: “We call upon those in authority in Japan to proclaim now the unconditional surrender of all the Japanese armed forces, and to provide proper and adequate assurances of their good faith in such action. The alternative for Japan is prompt and utter destruction.” The Stimson draft referred to “the unconditional surrender of the armed forces,” and this expression was retained in the final text. Why did Stimson demand the unconditional surrender of the armed forces,” and not that Japan accept “unconditional surrender?”<sup>56</sup> I would argue that in the original Stimson draft, the demand of unconditional surrender of the armed forces was integrally connected with the promise of a constitutional monarchy. The retention of a constitutional monarchy under the current dynasty, coupled with the limitation of unconditional surrender merely to the armed forces, signaled the Japanese that the United States did not intend to destroy the monarchical system. But the absence of this promise in Point 12 raised the question about the meaning of unconditional surrender, leading the Japanese policymakers to wonder what would be the fate of the emperor and the emperor system. In fact, Foreign Minister Togo raised precisely this point to the emperor.

The final text included one sentence that was not included in Stimson’s draft: “The alternative for Japan is prompt and utter destruction.” Was this meant to be a warning about the atomic bombing? Who added this sentence and for what purpose? Although he refers to the last sentence, Gallicchio does not provide any answer, merely faulting Togo for not heeding this warning.

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<sup>53</sup> Hasegawa, *Racing the Enemy*, 157, 158.

<sup>54</sup> Hasegawa, *Racing the Enemy*, 137

<sup>55</sup> Hasegawa, *Racing the Enemy*, 137

<sup>56</sup> The Japanese foreign ministry caught the difference, and argued that since unconditional surrender was demanded merely to the armed forces, the Potsdam Declaration was not as severe as it feared.

I would like to make one last point in this section: the role of the emperor in the capitulation of Japanese armed forces. On July 16, the U.S. and British chiefs held a Combined Chiefs of Staff meeting. At this meeting British Chief of Staff Field Marshall Sir Alan Brooke commented on the position of the emperor in Stimson's draft ultimatum. To the British, whose soldiers were fighting in the outlying areas, the emperor's authority to order a cease-fire was of vital importance. Brooke therefore suggested that the Allies make it clear to the Japanese that the emperor might be preserved "shortly after Russian entry into the war." Leahy commented that this question had already been discussed "at a political level, and suggested that Churchill should convey his concerns to Truman."<sup>57</sup> This issue was taken up by Mountbatten on July 25, on which Gallicchio notes (117). Later, on August 10, when U.S. the policymakers were discussing how to respond to Japan's initial, conditional acceptance of the Potsdam Declaration, Stimson took up the issue that the British had raised. He said that even if the question had not been raised by the Japanese, the United States would have needed to keep the emperor in order to ensure that the many scattered Japanese armies would surrender and "in order to save us from a score of bloody Iwo Jimas and Okinawas all over China and the New Netherlands."<sup>58</sup> In fact, the emperor's rescript to officers and soldiers, issued on August 17, to lay down arms and surrender without resistance, played an immensely important role. The most recent work on the Soviet-Japanese War in Manchuria by Takeshi Tomita clearly demonstrates that without the emperor's order, the Japanese units overseas would have committed countless desperate suicidal attacks on the Allied forces.<sup>59</sup> The Allies needed the emperor to implement the orderly capitulation of Japanese forces. Despite Gallicchio's argument that Truman wisely stuck to unconditional surrender without succumbing to the pressure to preserve the emperor and the monarchy, the United States had to rely on the emperor to force Japanese forces to capitulate. Contrary to Gallicchio's argument, Truman's intransigent adherence to unconditional surrender was not implemented. Had Truman adhered to unconditional surrender as it had been insisted on by McLeish and Acheson, the United States would have experienced "a score of Iwo Jimas and Okinawas."<sup>60</sup>

#### *The Kokutai and the Emperor*

I have numerous critical comments on Gallicchio's analysis of Japan's reactions to the Potsdam Declaration, the Byrnes Note, the Soviet-Japanese War, the MacArthur-Truman disagreement on Japan's occupation, and the post-war debate on unconditional surrender. But I will not make them here for economy of space. I will make two more comments on unconditional surrender.

Gallicchio argues that at the heart of the argument on unconditional surrender was "how to perceive the role of Hirohito and the monarchy (209). I agree, but I find the book's treatment of this crucial issue unsatisfactory. He writes:

Propagandists worked tirelessly to inculcate a spirit of selfless loyalty to the emperor, who presided as head of the national family. That made him indispensable as the embodiment of *kokutai*, which is usually translated as "national structure" or "national polity." The authority vested in the monarchy made its bulwark against reform from below. Subjects had many obligations but few rights under the [Meiji] constitution. Dissent was equated to disloyalty. In 1937, ultranationalists took the imperial idea to its extreme conclusion and declared the emperor divine. That was the system that survived into the war (25-26).

Therefore, the emperor and the emperor system were the very source of Japan's militarism, and without destroying the imperial emperor system, the American objective of the war would not be accomplished. Left-wing scholar who worked in

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<sup>57</sup> Hasegawa, *Racing the Enemy*, 145-146. Gallicchio does not mention anything about this.

<sup>58</sup> Hasegawa, *Racing the Enemy*, 219.

<sup>59</sup> Tomita Takeshi, *Nisso senso* (Tokyo: Misuzu shobo, 2020).

<sup>60</sup> See note 43.

the Office of War Information, Owen Lattimore, also argued. “What was needed was to puncture the myth of the divinity of Mikado... The best way to do that is to exile Hirohito and all males eligible for the throne to China under United Nations supervision” (35).

In my view, the Japanese debate on the nature of the *kokutai* deserves more nuance than it receives in the book. Rear Admiral Sokichi Takagi’s group, which engaged in careful study of how to end the war, gave two definitions of the *kokutai*, first, the preservation of the imperial house, the narrowest definition, and second, the preservation of the emperor’s prerogatives to rule under the Meiji Constitution, and recommended that Japan might be forced to accept only the first definition.<sup>61</sup> The Foreign Ministry also advocated the position that the *kokutai* should be defined narrowly as the preservation of the imperial house, rejecting the mythical notion of the emperor as divine and associating the *kokutai* as the essence of the nation that transcended politics. The definition of the *kokutai* became the subject of intense discussion among the policymakers, including the emperor and his most trusted advisor, Koichi Kido (Lord Keeper of Privy Seal). Eventually, Japan’s acceptance of the Potsdam terms was the tacit approval of the narrow definition of the *kokutai* as the preservation of the imperial house.<sup>62</sup>

Gallicchio does not discuss the draft proposal that Prince Fumimaro Konoe was supposed to bring to Moscow, had the Soviets accepted the mediation. This draft, written by Koji Sakai, Konoe’s trusted advisor, emphasized the importance of preserving the *kokutai*, focusing on the preservation of the imperial house and the emperor’s right to rule. Most important in this draft was that it took the position that the emperor’s rule was compatible with the introduction of democracy. Furthermore, it allowed for the possibility of Hirohito’s abdication in the worst case scenario.<sup>63</sup>

Gallicchio accepts the view expressed by McLeish, Acheson, and Latimore that the emperor and the imperial system were the very source of Japanese militarism, and without destruction of the imperial system, the objective of the U.S. war against Japan would not be accomplished. Gallicchio dismisses the views of Grew, Stimson, Dooman, and other Japanese specialists who insisted that the preservation of the monarchical system could be compatible with the ultimate goal of eradication of militarism as a pipe dream. His assertion that no one had any clear idea what a constitutional monarchy meant is inaccurate. There was common ground between Stimson and his group on the U.S. side and the moderate advocates for peace on the Japanese side, and a constitutional monarchy could be a term on which both sides could agree to terminate the war. But that kind of peace is what Gallicchio rejects as the violation of the principle of unconditional surrender, since this would be a “negotiated peace,” not “surrender.”

#### *Why did Truman Insist on Unconditional Surrender?*

Finally, I would like to touch on the crucial question of why Truman insisted on adhering to unconditional surrender and rejected all proposals to preserve the emperor and the monarchy. Gallicchio explains Truman’s reluctance to espouse the preservation of the monarchy from the point of view of domestic politics, arguing that this would be unpopular among the Americans, and that there was a need to preserve the New Deal policy against the conservative detractors.

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<sup>61</sup> Ito Takashi, ed., *Takagi Sokichi: Nikki to jobo*, 2 vols. (Tokyo: Misuzu shobo, 2000). Gallicchio uses the English translation of Takagi’s book, and I am surprised that that these definitions escaped his attention.

<sup>62</sup> The definition of the *kokutai* became the subject of intense debate in the process through which the Japanese policymakers accepted the “termination” of the war from August 6 to August 14. I devoted considerable space on this question in Chapter 5 and 6 of *Racing the Enemy*. Unfortunately, my argument on this issue has completely escaped Gallicchio’s attention.

<sup>63</sup> Hasegawa, *Racing the Enemy*, 122-123.

Although these explanations may be partially true, this misses the most important reason for Truman's intransigent adherence to unconditional surrender. I believe that Truman's policy came from his conviction and his profound sense of mission he felt he was obligated to fulfill as a national mission.

After the United States dropped the second atomic bomb on Nagasaki on August 9, Truman announced: "We have used it [the atomic bomb] against those who attacked us without warning at Pearl Harbor, against those who have starved and beaten and executed American prisoners of war, against those who have abandoned all pretense of obeying international laws of warfare."<sup>64</sup> On September 2, when the Japanese delegation signed the surrender documents on *The Missouri* in Tokyo Bay, Truman announced, "Four years ago the thoughts and fears of the whole civilized world were centered on another piece of American soil—Pearl Harbor...As the President of the United States, I proclaim Sunday, September 2, 1945, to be V-J Day—the day of formal surrender by Japan...It is a day which we Americans shall always remember as a day of retribution—as we remember that other day, the day of infamy."<sup>65</sup>

Above anything else, Truman was motivated by the profound sense of revenge against the Japan that attacked Pearl Harbor and committed numerous atrocities during the war. He sought retribution by insisting on unconditional surrender. In that sense, he was the product of the "war without mercy," eloquently described by John Dower.<sup>66</sup> Unconditional surrender was necessary to bring this retribution to Japan, but as for exactly what Truman wanted to achieve by unconditional surrender, other than to bring Japan to its knees, Truman never clarified. For that matter neither does this book.

### *Conclusion*

As noted, this book is based on a wide array sources from of U.S archives, but Japanese, British, and Russian sources are very thin, and the result is a U.S centric study that does not place the topic in an international context. The lack of engagement with Iokibe's book and my own, as well as the work of Japanese specialists is problematic. The chronology of the book is not clear, nor is the relationship of many of the subjects discussed to the larger issue of unconditional surrender. To his credit, Gallicchio brings the domestic political context and the question of demobilization and economic reconstruction into the calculation of unconditional surrender, but these issues could be better developed and situated in the decision to push for unconditional surrender. Above all, the connections among three issues—unconditional surrender, Soviet entry into the war, and the atomic bombs—are not examined in a logical and persuasive fashion.

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<sup>64</sup> Hasegawa, *Racing the Enemy*, 201-202.

<sup>65</sup> Hasegawa, *Racing the Enemy*, 286.

<sup>66</sup> John Dower, *War without Mercy: Race & Power in the Pacific War* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1986).

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REVIEW BY ZACHARY SHORE, NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

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Marc Gallicchio has crafted something all too rare: a compelling biography of a policy. He chronicles the birth, development, impact, and legacy of unconditional surrender. Because lives and nations hinged on this policy, the battles over it were fierce. The author takes us on a deep dive into the murky realm where those fights occurred, spotlighting the players, their views, and their motives. His exploration raises many crucial questions, which demand answers, if we are to understand whether America's wartime policy was wise.

The book's strengths are many. The author highlights the divisions within the Truman administration over the soundness of the unconditional surrender policy. He points out that many conservatives favored what was labeled as appeasement because they urged the retaining of the Japanese emperor. Liberals, in contrast, took the hard line against a 'soft' peace, believing that democracy could only flourish by extirpating the poisonous roots of imperial rule (85). Gallicchio also draws out the role that domestic politics and public opinion played in President Harry Truman's thinking on the matter. And, most provocatively, he concludes that unconditional surrender was necessary in order for Japan to become the stable democracy that it is today. The book has other strengths as well, especially the critical analysis of the policy's contentious historiography, all of which make this an important contribution to the field. And just as with any good biography, the more we learn about the subject, the more complex it appears. Precisely because the author unearthed so much nuance about unconditional surrender, I am left still wondering about several key points. This is not a failing of the work, but rather a testament to how well the author has stimulated a conversation around such a pivotal affair.

Three questions stand out in this investigation. First, why exactly did so many officials oppose unconditional surrender? Second, why did Truman support it? And third, was the policy truly necessary, as the author contends?

1. Why did conservatives oppose unconditional surrender?

Why did Secretary of War Henry Stimson push so hard for modifying the hardline policy of unconditional surrender? It may be helpful to think about the available options at the time by use of a mnemonic shorthand, labeling them as Options A through D. At first, Stimson found himself caught between two unappealing options. Option A, the atomic bomb, was painful for him to accept. A man of deep Christian principles, Stimson wrestled daily (and nightly, being a chronic insomniac) with the horror of its effects: the murder of unknown thousands of innocent civilians. After the war, John McCloy, the Assistant Secretary of War, who was closer to Stimson than any other colleague, remarked that the thought of using the bomb tortured Stimson. "I knew Stimson as well as any man alive. And while after the war he wrote an article for *Harper's* defending his decision, I know in his soul there were doubts."<sup>67</sup>

There is no reason to doubt McCloy's comments on this score. Stimson's feelings about the bomb were ambiguous. He recognized the bomb's benefits, wanted to end the war quickly, and saw its value as a signal to the Soviets. But he also shuddered at its use, just as he recoiled at the fire bombings. He urged his generals to stop those incendiary attacks, but his generals ignored him, as they often did.<sup>68</sup> The nuclear option struck Stimson as a terrible choice – although one which might be necessary. He deeply wished that there was another option.

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<sup>67</sup> Kai Bird, *The Chairman: John J. McCloy, The Making of the American Establishment* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992), 263.

<sup>68</sup> Stimson recorded in his diary that he was pressing the Air Corps to stick to precision bombing. His torn feelings about the A-Bomb are evident. "I did not want to have the United States get the reputation of outdoing Hitler in atrocities; and second, I was a little fearful that before we could get ready the Air Force might have Japan so thoroughly bombed out that the new weapon would not have a

The problem was that Option B, blockade and invade, would also likely result in tremendous casualties, mostly American, and Stimson wanted to avoid this course as well. He needed a third way. Option C, conditional surrender, served that end. For Stimson, allowing Japan to retain the emperor appeared to be an elegant solution. Naturally, no one knew for certain whether Japanese leaders would accept surrender on this one condition, but given the expected agony of the other options, it seemed worth a try. Most military leaders agreed; if Japan accepted this modification, the war might end without further loss of life, and they could finally bring the boys home. Framed in this light, when we account for Stimson's difficult position between unpalatable options, his decision to press hard for conditional surrender becomes easier to grasp.

Other conservatives like Stimson viewed the issue in similar fashion. Gallicchio's treatment of them, particularly of President Herbert Hoover, is perhaps a bit harsh. A vain man who was desperate to resurrect his reputation, Hoover nonetheless was also a committed Quaker, equally anxious to save lives. His memo to Truman suggested that Japan be allowed to maintain control over Korea and Taiwan, which sounded to the former Secretary of State Cordell Hull as pure appeasement.<sup>69</sup> Hoover surely knew that there would be push-back on this idea. In any negotiation, one asks for more than is reasonable, knowing that the first bid will be met with a counter-offer. By proposing multiple concessions to Japan along with retention of the emperor, Hoover may have been attempting to reframe the debate from *whether* Japan should receive conditions in exchange for its surrender, to *which* conditions should be granted. I am not certain that Hoover's suggestions should be taken at face value. Similarly, his memo stated that an invasion of the Japanese home islands, Option B, would result in 500,000 to one million casualties<sup>70</sup> – a remarkably un-Hoover-like estimate. A gifted mining engineer and successful corporate executive, Hoover usually spoke in precise figures. Such an imprecise and highly inflated casualty estimate was almost certainly intended to scare Truman away from the invasion plan. Hoover, like Stimson, Acting Secretary of State Joseph Grew, and many others within the government, wanted to move Truman toward conditional surrender in order to avoid what they believed to be the needless sacrificing of lives, both military and civilian. And, as Gallicchio notes, they also feared Soviet influence in the Pacific, and saw a quick end to the war as a way of blunting Russian power. The book portrays conservatives as naïve for having believed that Japan would surrender if it had simply been permitted to retain the emperor,<sup>71</sup> but this judgement seems to reflect what we know today about Japan's leaders. Based on what the conservatives knew then, their position appears not foolhardy, but humane. Gallicchio himself concludes: "This does not mean that no one should question the wisdom of seeking Japan's unconditional surrender. The bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki demands that it remain open" (213). On this point, I fully agree.

## 2. Why did Truman support unconditional surrender?

Given that the majority of his top advisors, both military and civilian, favored Option C, conditional surrender, why did Truman choose unconditionality? Gallicchio rightly identifies multiple factors influencing the president's thinking. He feared domestic backlash if he went soft on Japan, flouting public opinion, or at least what he believed public opinion to be. He shuddered at being labeled an appeaser. He may have been concerned about how America's allies would react as well, he

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fair background to show its strength." See Diary of Henry L. Stimson, 1-6 June 1945. Yale University Library holds the original Stimson diary and related papers, and microfiche versions of the diary are available to scholars through other university libraries.

<sup>69</sup> Gallicchio cites Secretary of State Cordell Hull's note to Truman in which Hull called the Hoover memo, Hoover's "appeasement proposal," 56. For the memo, see Michael Kort, *The Columbia Guide to Hiroshima and the Bomb* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), "Hoover Memorandum to Truman," 29 or 30 May 1945 (undated), Document A-19/B.

<sup>70</sup> Michael Kort, *The Columbia Guide to Hiroshima and the Bomb* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), "Hoover Memorandum to Truman," 29 or 30 May 1945 (undated), Document A-19/B.

<sup>71</sup> See for example the author's discussion of Stimson's arguments to Truman against unconditional surrender. Writing about one of Stimson's points that Japan had previously been a stable, financially responsible member of the international community before the militarists seized power, the author writes: "While it might have mattered to a conservative lawyer from a white shoe firm, it seems difficult to imagine how Japan's ability to balance its books would outweigh fifteen years of aggression throughout Asia" (64).

may have lent some weight to the argument that modifying unconditional surrender might embolden Japan's leaders to fight on with even greater vigor, and he may have been inclined to believe that Japan's leaders had no intention of surrendering, based on intercepted cable traffic (120). The supporters of conditional surrender also had access to those intercepts, yet this did not dissuade them. They understood that all governments contain individuals with divergent viewpoints – hardliners and, in Japan's case, slightly less hardliners – who often pursue contradictory aims simultaneously. Signs that some within Japan's hierarchy were resisting surrender did not mean that all of them objected. All of these factors surely played some part in Truman's thinking, but it seems to me that one other factor which the author does not address may have been even more significant than the rest. Truman very likely feared paving the way for World War III.

By July 1945, Harry Truman found himself in the lonely position of being the only person on the planet with the power to authorize a nuclear attack. He knew that he would not be lonely forever. Most estimates predicted that the Soviets would have the bomb in between four and ten years. Truman is sometimes cited as having said that the Russians would never develop the bomb, but it is doubtful that he actually believed this. Truman had to assume that a future war could involve the exchange of nuclear strikes, and thus all of humanity was at risk. There is no question that he understood the weight of this decision. No issue was of greater importance.

Truman often reasoned by analogy.<sup>72</sup> He probably shared the view that the Allies had failed to impose unconditional surrender on Germany in WWI, and WWII was the result. Failure to insist on unconditional surrender again might lead to a third, even more horrific war. First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt spoke for many when she wrote in June 1944: "We gave up unconditional surrender the last time, and now we have sacrificed thousands of lives because we did not do a thorough job."<sup>73</sup> This concern had to rise above all others: don't repeat the mistakes of the past. For Truman, unconditional surrender may have looked like the best way to prevent a third world war. Of course, the analogy was shallow. Japan under Emperor Hirohito was not like Germany under the Kaiser. Nor was it reasonable to assume that the failure to impose unconditional surrender on Germany in 1918 led ineluctably to World War II. Countless other factors had to intervene to make that possible, not least the emergence of Adolf Hitler. But the fear had to hang over Truman. It was a perfectly reasonable concern, and he made it explicit in his memoir: "In spite of the turmoil and pressure of critical events during the years I was President, the one purpose that dominated me in everything I thought and did was to prevent a third world war."<sup>74</sup>

### 3. Was unconditional surrender necessary?

Ultimately, was the policy of unconditional surrender necessary? Gallicchio confidently asserts that it was, stating in the final sentences of his book that the transformation of Japan into a democracy was possible "only because Truman rejected the recommendations of his conservative advisors to preserve the monarchy, limit the occupation, and leave Japan in control of portions of its Empire. In short, the changes happened because Truman insisted that Japan's surrender be nothing short

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<sup>72</sup> We can see evidence of Truman reasoning by analogy in his speeches, particular regarding the Korean War. In his farewell address, for example, Truman explained his decision to intervene in Korea by use of historical analogy: "I turned the problem over in my mind in many ways, but my thoughts kept coming back to the 1930's--to Manchuria, to Ethiopia, the Rhineland, Austria, and finally to Munich. Here was history repeating itself. Here was another probing action, another testing action. If we let the Republic of Korea go under, some other country would be next, and then another. And all the time, the courage and confidence of the free world would be ebbing away, just as it did in the 1930's." Harry S. Truman, *Farewell Address*, January 15, 1953. <https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/presidential-speeches/january-15-1953-farewell-address>. For more on reasoning by analogy, see the classic study by Yuen Foong Khong, *Analogies at War: Korea, Munich, Dien Bien Phu, and the Vietnam Decisions of 1965* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992).

<sup>73</sup> Albert Baime, *The Accidental President: Harry S. Truman and the Four Months That Changed the World* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2017), 250.

<sup>74</sup> Raymond H. Geselbracht, ed., Harry S. Truman, *The Memoirs of Harry S. Truman: A Reader's Edition* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2019), 38.

of unconditional” (213). I would like to believe this, but I’m not so sure. The book did not persuade me, but perhaps the author’s response will. I am not an expert on Japan’s decision making, but numerous issues give me pause, two of which are primary among them.

Gallicchio details the conservatives’ failed efforts to include conditionality in the Potsdam Declaration. Truman overrode them, sticking to the unconditional demand. But there is another part of the Declaration that probably held greater salience for Japan’s leaders. The Allies stated that the authority and influence of those who had misled Japan into a drive for world conquest must be “eliminated for all time.”<sup>75</sup> It did not require much imagination for Japan’s leaders to conclude that they were the ones who would be eliminated. The Declaration more famously warned that if Japan continued to fight, it would face prompt and utter destruction. In other words, the Allies gave Japan’s leaders a choice: surrender and be hanged, or resist and be destroyed. Given such a choice, most people would probably have chosen to resist, in hope of wearing down the enemy enough to negotiate for better terms. That is the course that War Minister Anami and his military colleagues pursued by massively building up defensive forces on Kyushu in preparation for the Allied landings.<sup>76</sup>

Based on the evidence at our disposal, Gallicchio argues that Japan’s leaders had no intention of surrendering. And from that fact he concludes that conditional surrender would have failed. But this assumes that Japan’s leaders would have held the same views if conditional surrender had been offered. Since it never was put forward, how can we be certain that none of their positions and actions would have changed? We cannot prove a negative – that what did not happen would not have happened if things had been different. The moment we alter a variable, such as extending an offer to preserve the emperor, we cease to be able to know how history would have unfolded differently.

But there is a second reason to suspect that the unconditional surrender policy was not necessary. Even after Japan’s leaders understood the extraordinary devastation wrought by two nuclear attacks, they still insisted on preservation of the emperor before surrendering. This strongly suggests that Stimson, the conservatives, the Japan experts, and the military leaders were right all along. Protecting the emperor did represent an irreducible term. And as we know, the Americans agreed, meaning that Japan’s actual surrender was, in the end, conditional.

Gallicchio states that there is no evidence that the Japanese would have subordinated themselves and their emperor to American rule prior to the use of atomic bombs and Soviet entry in the war (213). The author might be correct that the unconditional surrender policy was necessary, but there is enough ambiguous evidence that any confident assertion seems unwarranted. I do not believe that we can assert with certainty that Japan’s leaders, meaning the six men in the Supreme War Council plus the emperor, absolutely would have rejected conditional surrender earlier in 1945. Three of them appear to have been willing to fight to the bitterest of ends. Three others might have accepted surrender if the emperor were retained. Hirohito might have intervened sooner than he did (before the atomic bombs), if the safety of his person and position had been guaranteed. We also do not know what would have happened if Truman and the Interim Committee had pursued Option D: a demonstration of the atomic bomb on a deserted island, as Undersecretary of the Navy Ralph Bard proposed. This might have dramatically reoriented the Supreme Council’s views. Nothing concentrates the mind like a mushroom cloud. In short, we simply cannot know for certain what Japan’s leaders would have done, if the Americans had pursued Options C or D. But ultimately that is not what mattered.

What mattered was what American decision makers believed at the time. Gallicchio concedes that “divining Japanese intentions about surrender was mainly guesswork and supposition” (211). Because America’s leaders could not know with certainty that Japan’s leaders would have rejected the offer to retain the emperor, it seems to me that the sensible course was to extend the offer (and perhaps combine it with a demonstration of the bomb), simply because it was worth a try. If

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<sup>75</sup> Potsdam Declaration, July 26, 1945, Clause 6. [https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Potsdam\\_Declaration](https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Potsdam_Declaration).

<sup>76</sup> See Michael Kort, *The Columbia Guide to Hiroshima and the Bomb* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), digital edition.



conditional surrender had been accepted, several hundred thousand lives would have been spared. Conditional surrender therefore seems to have been not only the sensible course, but the morally necessary course as well.

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 REVIEW BY JEREMY A. YELLEN, THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
 

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Today, more than seventy-five years since the end of World War II in Asia, debates still rage over the way it ended. Every year Japan commemorates the anniversaries of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima (August 6) and Nagasaki (August 9) with events that feature calls for a world free of nuclear weapons. Questions remain as to whether the use of atomic bombs were necessary. Was Japan already on the verge of surrender? Did the United States purposefully ignore Japanese peace feelers? Would Japan have surrendered early had the Allies guaranteed the position of the emperor? Would Japan have surrendered early if leaders knew about the impending Soviet entry into the war? These and other questions have driven a fierce debate on wartime diplomacy, the use of atomic weaponry, and their relationship to Japan's surrender. As Mark Gallicchio shows in his fantastic new book, unconditional surrender was at the epicenter of debates in both the United States and Japan not only in the final days of war in Asia, but also in the decades after the Japanese surrender.

*Unconditional* makes an important intervention into the divisive scholarship on the war's end. At the risk of vast oversimplification, this scholarship can be boiled down into four main schools of thought. Given the dramatic conclusion to the war, and the fact it was U.S. scholars who served as the vanguard historians of war's end, much of this historiography is tied to the Japanese surrender to the decision (or lack thereof) to use the atomic bombs. The first school of thought, the orthodox school, was originally the U.S. policymakers' view of history, spearheaded by former Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson's defense of the decision to use the bomb. Stimson and historians who support this view argue that the atomic bombs not only compelled Japan's surrender, but saved U.S. lives.<sup>77</sup> By the 1960s, however, the emergence of distrust of U.S. foreign policy among the Vietnam War generation led to the emergence of a second school of thought—the revisionist school. Revisionists argue that Japan was ready to surrender, and that U.S. policymakers ignored Japanese peace feelers and dropped the atomic bombs to intimidate the Soviet Union and to assert U.S. ascendancy in global politics.<sup>78</sup>

A third school of thought might be termed the domestic politics school. Authors in this school emphasize the constellation of issues that influenced U.S. policy near the war's end—popular opinion, domestic policy, cultures of masculinity and racism, the vast expense of the Manhattan Project—or note that the very fact that the bomb was built overdetermined its use.<sup>79</sup> The final, and most recent school of thought explores the situation on the ground in Japan. Largely pursued by historians of Japan, this school focuses most directly on the issues influencing Japanese policymakers' decisions at the end of the war.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Henry L. Stimson, "The Decision to Use the Bomb," *Harper's Magazine* (Feb. 1947). See also McGeorge Bundy, *Danger and Survival: Choices about the Bomb in the First Fifty Years* (Random House, 1988). For an excellent, updated version of this orthodox view, see Richard B. Frank, *Downfall: The End of the Imperial Japanese Empire* (New York: Penguin, 2001).

<sup>78</sup> For the classic yet deeply problematic work, see Gar Alperovitz, *Atomic Diplomacy: Hiroshima and Potsdam. The Use of the Atomic Bomb and the American Confrontation with Soviet Power* (New York: Vintage, 1965). Alperovitz expanded his view in *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb* (New York: Vintage, 1996). For the best and most updated view, which highlights the importance of the Soviet entry in ending the war, see Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, *Racing the Enemy: Stalin, Truman, and the Surrender of Japan* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2006).

<sup>79</sup> Works in this group include, among many others, Leon V. Sigal, *Fighting to a Finish: The Politics of War Termination in the United States and Japan, 1945* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988); Barton J. Bernstein, "The Atomic Bombings Reconsidered," *Foreign Affairs* 74:1 (Jan.-Feb. 1995), 135-152; and Ronald Takaki, *Hiroshima: Why America Dropped the Atomic Bomb* (Back Bay Books, 1996).

<sup>80</sup> The classic work here is Robert J.C. Butow, *Japan's Decision to Surrender* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1954). More recent works include Sadao Asada, "The Shock of the Atomic Bomb and Japan's Decision to Surrender—A Reconsideration," *Pacific Historical Review* 67:4 (1998), 477-512; Herbert P. Bix, "Japan's Delayed Surrender: A Reinterpretation," *Diplomatic History* 19:2 (Spring 1995), 197-225; Jeremy A. Yellen, "The Specter of Revolution: Reconsidering Japan's Decision to Surrender," *The International History Review* 35:1 (2013), 205-226; Yukiko Koshiro, *Imperial Eclipse: Japan's Strategic Thinking about Continental Asia before August 1945*

*Unconditional* fits squarely in the domestic politics school. Gallicchio uses the unconditional surrender policy as window into the weighty policy debates that flared up in 1945 and in the decades that followed. The final chapter even explodes the reductionist historiography I just outlined above. Mea culpa.

The unconditional surrender policy was President Franklin D. Roosevelt's idea. Roosevelt introduced it in January 1943 in remarks that "seemed almost off the cuff" (8). Yet, as Gallicchio notes, was something to which the president had given considerable thought. For Roosevelt, unconditional surrender served multiple ends. Most importantly, it highlighted the fact that the United States would not seek or support a separate peace, and that preventing future conflicts necessitated the transformation of the societies that caused the war. The U.S. commitment to the policy would be severely tested by Roosevelt's death in April 1945. In the months after Harry S. Truman assumed the presidency, unconditional surrender became the focal point of a domestic battle over how to end the war in Asia.

Within government, the battle lines took on a partisan character. Political conservatives and Republicans led the charge to modify the policy of unconditional surrender. Former President Herbert Hoover lobbied for a negotiated end to the war, arguing that Japan should be allowed to retain the emperor and part of its empire. Doing so would save American lives and preempt the Soviet Union from joining the war and expanding its influence across Asia. Henry L. Stimson, Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal, Undersecretary of State Joseph Grew, and other 'Japan hands' shared such concerns. They called for a statement that would "clarify the meaning of unconditional surrender and assure them that they could preserve the monarchy" (59). Doing so, they hoped, might empower Japanese moderates to end the war.

New Dealers and liberals derided those who held such views as "emperor worshippers" and "soft peace boys" (127). New Deal Democrats cared far more about subduing the Japanese threat than they did about any imagined Soviet advance in Asia. More pointedly, they judged that peace in Asia was possible only if Japan were remade into a vibrant democracy. Unconditional surrender, for them, implied unlimited aims for Japan's future.

Public attitudes shifted as well, in ways that were not perceived by earlier scholarship. Gallicchio highlights a public debate over unconditional surrender that mirrored the debate in government. Polls and letters "showed a public decidedly uneasy about the human costs of subduing Japan." Whereas Republicans wanted to forestall a Soviet advance in Asia, many Americans wanted to save U.S. soldiers from risking their lives in a war they already viewed as having been won. "The more Americans learned about conditions in the war," Gallicchio notes, "the more insular they became" (79).

Were the Republicans and the 'Japan hands' correct? Would clarifying unconditional surrender in July 1945 (before the atomic bombs and the Soviet entry) have led to an earlier end to the war? Gallicchio says no. Any pledge to preserve the monarchy "would almost certainly confirm the views of Japanese officials who detected a weakening of American resolve" (103). In this sense, one important lesson here is that ambitious policies, once stated, can shackle policymakers and limit freedom of action. Perceptions of power and prestige may require following through with stated policies, no matter how ambiguous and all-encompassing they may be. Roosevelt saddled the tiger of unconditional surrender, and Truman was wise enough to recognize that riding it was safer than dismounting.

Truman emerges here as a remarkably savvy leader. He navigated the ideological battle over Roosevelt's war aims by remaining open to advice while keeping his own counsel. Truman received reports with appreciation, noting how helpful they were or how they mirrored his own thoughts (without ever specifying how). Slippery and shrewd, the president listened to his advisors but revealed little. In the end, he refused to make any concessions over the emperor. Instead, with the Potsdam Declaration he reminded Japan that delay would bring only devastation. Why did Truman refuse to make any concessions? Perhaps, Gallicchio argues, Truman worried about how the public and U.S. allies might react. More importantly, he rejected the argument that Japan's emperor was a mere figurehead who had no role in his nation's

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(Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2013); and Noriko Kawamura, *Emperor Hirohito and the Pacific War* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2015). In Japanese, the best recent work is 鈴木多聞『「終戦」の政治史 1943—1945』(東京大学出版会、2011).

aggression. And Truman refused to do anything “that might cost the United States the opportunity to achieve its postwar aims for Japan” (151).

Gallicchio sidesteps the divisive question of why Japan surrendered, though the book implies that the atomic bombings and the Soviet entry were of equal importance. What is more important to his analysis is that unconditional surrender gave the Americans a chance to remake Japan from root to branch. Here, too, Gallicchio provides useful correctives about the Occupation and the role of Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers Douglas MacArthur, who is often portrayed as having supreme authority and a ‘leave it to me, I know best’ attitude. But in Gallicchio’s telling, far from MacArthur being a force unto himself, his role was defined by Washington. Unconditional surrender gave MacArthur the power to make decisions about Japan’s future, but for the most part he “fell in line with the policies drawn up in Washington” (179).

In his most fascinating chapter, Gallicchio considers the long afterlife of unconditional surrender. After World War II and amid the burgeoning Cold War, conservatives remained highly critical of unconditional surrender. They argued that Roosevelt’s policy prolonged the war, victimized Japanese civilians, and benefitted the Soviet Union. Strikingly, this conservative revisionism was replaced in the 1960s by a progressive revisionism of the New Left, symbolized by Gar Alperovitz’s highly influential yet controversial book, *Atomic Diplomacy*. “It is telling,” Gallicchio notes, “that *Atomic Diplomacy* was instantly labeled revisionist, as if the conservative critics of unconditional surrender and the use of the atomic bombs had never existed” (204). In 1995, unconditional surrender emerged yet again at the center of firestorm over the *Enola Gay* exhibit at the Smithsonian. Conservative critics launched an attack against the exhibit, defending the atomic bombings of Japan. In the topsy-turvy world of historical argumentation, conservatives were now arguing the *exact opposite* of the traditional conservative position.

*Unconditional* is largely a story of the ideological divisions and debates that had longer-term impacts within U.S. domestic politics. Readers get a clearer sense of the political battles happening in the United States than of those occurring in Japan. Granted, Gallicchio employs numerous sources in translation, and makes use of secondary works written by Robert J.C. Butow, Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, Richard B. Frank, and Herbert P. Bix, among others.<sup>81</sup> But the Japanese story unfortunately gets short shrift.

I agree with Gallicchio’s basic arguments about Japan. He shows how the military amassed forces for a desperate, final battle for the homeland, while diplomats sought to convince Moscow to broker a negotiated end to the war. Gallicchio correctly notes that unconditional surrender was not a tolerable option to Japanese leaders before the atomic bombings and the Soviet entry into the war. Even Admiral Toyoda Soemu, the chief of staff of a navy without a fleet, sought to fight on despite lacking the wherewithal to do so. But I wish that the author had further explored the fine-grained details about the nature and workings of Japanese politics.

Take, for instance, the fascinating discussion of the fear of social upheaval as a factor affecting Japanese domestic politics. Gallicchio mentions the June 1945 intervention by Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal Kido Kōichi, who advocated Soviet negotiation to forestall a possible social revolution from destroying the imperial institution (42-43). He further alludes to fears of domestic morale held by Japanese ambassador to the Soviet Union Satō Naotake, former prime minister Konoe Fumimaro, and Privy Council president Hiranuma Kiichirō (139-140, 147). Was Japan on the verge of revolution? Gallicchio dismisses this idea. He notes instead that mass protests or rebellion were unlikely in 1945. This is a clear and accurate assessment.

But perception and reality are different beasts. Perception can influence political outcomes. It is thus useful to question whether Japan’s leadership *perceived* a revolutionary potential of the masses, and whether that perception was a factor motivating them to action. This was certainly the case with Konoe, Kido, Satō, and Hiranuma. It was also the case with

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<sup>81</sup> Butow, *Japan’s Decision to Surrender*; Hasegawa, *Racing the Enemy*; Frank, *Downfall*; and Herbert P. Bix, *Hirohito and the Making of Modern Japan* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2001).

former diplomat and postwar prime minister Yoshida Shigeru's famous anti-war group, which engaged in various backstage politicking to end the war before an imagined social revolution came to pass. Moreover, various elites, from the emperor to military leaders, referred to the 'domestic situation' as an important reason to quit the war. What was the 'domestic situation'? Did it imply the *perceived* possibility of social revolution and collapsing morale, or was this a reference to the state of military preparedness? Did it refer to dwindling war materiel, or the inability to protect the *kokutai*, Japan's national polity? Whatever the case, it is clear that the heightened focus of the domestic situation was exacerbated by the U.S. commitment to unconditional surrender.

I also wish *Unconditional* had dug deeper into the Japanese response to the unconditional surrender policy. Gallicchio uses MAGIC intercepts and the English-language scholarship noted above (fn. 5) to show the determination of Japanese leaders to avoid unconditional surrender via a final, devastating battle for the homeland. Gallicchio further spotlights ambassador Satō's failed attempt to convince foreign minister Tōgō Shigenori of the need to surrender unconditionally. But what about other groups across the conservative elite, from Diet members to the Privy Council, influential research groups, bureaucrats, intellectuals, industrialists, and journalists? What were commonly held attitudes before the summer of 1945? Is it possible to argue that unconditional surrender hardened Japanese attitudes well before 1945, empowering hardliners before the U.S. counterattack was anywhere near the home isles?

In fact, historian Kenneth B. Pyle makes this provocative argument in a recent book, *Japan in the American Century*.<sup>82</sup> He contends that unconditional surrender provoked unconditional resistance, and that Japan's unconditional resistance required American authorities to take the most extreme measures they had—firebombing civilians and unleashing atomic weaponry. Pyle then takes this argument one step further, maintaining that the outcome of unconditional surrender—total occupation—may have stymied a swelling progressive politics from taking root in Japan. In Pyle's telling, unconditional surrender and the U.S. Occupation's short-lived revolution from above suppressed the possibility of Japan experiencing a true democratic revolution. Far from asking whether the United States should have modified unconditional surrender, he implies that Roosevelt should never have chosen such a policy in the first place.

It is difficult to assess Pyle's arguments. They rest on the counterfactual assumption that with no unconditional surrender policy a negotiated peace may have been achieved and a more authentic democratic governance might have arisen in Japan. At times Pyle's analysis also makes use of conservative voices dismissed as partisan and even dishonest in Gallicchio's analysis. Whatever the case, Pyle's provocative arguments can be read productively alongside *Unconditional*, which stresses the triumph of unconditional surrender in the remaking of Japan. Unconditional surrender, Gallicchio concludes, "was the first step in a process that transformed Japan from a military dictatorship into a peaceful nation" (213).

Unconditional surrender also played an important role in another political change in Japan: the end of the right of supreme command. Even with the pressures for Japan to remilitarize from the early 1950s, the end of the right of supreme command stamped out the logical basis of a military that was unaccountable to civilian authority. Without the right of supreme command and the divine emperor as the titular head of the army and navy, it is difficult to envision a return to the militarism of the 1930s. As much as some conservative members of the Liberal Democratic Party have sought to revise Article 9 and other aspects of the Japanese constitution, they have never sought to bring back the right of supreme command. This is perhaps one of the most understated yet enduring legacies of Japan's unconditional surrender.

*Unconditional* is, quite simply, a fantastic book. It is also deeply political. It highlights the unique circumstances that led to total victory and total occupation in the wake of global war. It offers a useful reminder that history provides lessons, not models, and that policymakers are prone to take the wrong lessons from dramatic historical events. And it reveals how important political debates of the past can live on in the politics of the present.

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<sup>82</sup> Kenneth B. Pyle, *Japan in the American Century* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2019), particularly chapters 2-4.

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RESPONSE BY MARC GALLICCHIO, VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY

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When I accepted the editors' invitation to this roundtable, I was reminded of the comment by baseball great Mike Schmidt regarding his career in Philadelphia. The City of Brotherly Love, Schmidt observed, was the only place where you could enjoy the thrill of victory one day and the agony of reading about it the next. In my case, I was pleased that my book was considered important enough to merit inclusion in this forum, but I was also apprehensive because I knew that H-Diplo's online format provides reviewers with the digital equivalent of a wagonload of ink with which to express themselves. Those apprehensions faded after reading the reviews by the participants in this roundtable. I appreciate the care they took in reading *Unconditional* and the many thoughtful and interesting questions they pose. Rather than address them in serial fashion, I will loosely organize my response around three topics. The first is a brief explanation of what I set out to do by studying the politics of unconditional surrender. That is followed by a brief discussion of the limits of counterfactual thinking in telling that story. The third deals with every writer's dilemma of deciding what material they must include and what they should omit.

In writing *Unconditional*, I sought to highlight several themes. The first is that unconditional surrender was filtered through domestic politics. During the summer of 1945, the American debate over unconditional surrender was part of a larger partisan contest about the meaning of victory that extended the ideological battleground of the New Deal into the realm of international affairs. The second theme is that in the U.S., opposition to unconditional surrender was closely linked to growing concern over the potential consequences of Soviet entry into the war. The third is that the partisan battle continued into the Cold War era and became part of the toxic dispute over who lost China. I also show throughout the book that many of the critics of unconditional surrender seeded the historical record with 'alternative facts,' false testimony, and inaccurate recollections of their role in the debate over how to end the war.

Unconditional surrender was destined to be controversial because it was President Franklin D. Roosevelt's policy. A quintessentially New Deal program, its goal was the creation of economically broad-based democracies in societies that had formerly been predicated on conquest and the subjugation of other people. Conservatives, who had long battled the New Deal at home, saw little reason to extend it to Japan. Following Roosevelt's death in April and Germany's surrender in May 1945, Republicans in Congress, conservative editors and commentators, as well as some of the president's top advisors, waged a campaign to convince President Harry S. Truman to modify unconditional surrender. That is the story that I sought to tell. In doing so, my goal was to help us understand how this controversial policy was perceived *at the time*, in contrast to how it has been viewed in the shadow of the Cold War, Vietnam, and the Global War on Terror.

In his review, Zachary Shore argues there are many questions we must answer "if we are to understand whether America's wartime policy was wise." That was not my goal. I was not attempting to prove the wisdom of unconditional surrender. I was concerned with explaining the ideological and partisan divisions at the heart of the dispute over the policy. In a similar vein, Tsuyoshi Hasegawa says that I make President Truman out to be "sort of a hero." In truth, I am just mild about Harry.

I do think, however, that any attempt to explain Truman's decisions during the summer of 1945 must begin by acknowledging the extraordinary circumstances that existed when he was thrust into the presidency. Truman took command during a moment of deteriorating political conditions at home and mounting challenges abroad. He faced a resurgent Congress, a restive public, and a cohort of senior advisors seeking to revise the publicly announced war aim of unconditional surrender. Truman made missteps along the way, but he diligently sought and evaluated as much information as he could obtain from diverse sources before he acted, and he remained focused on achieving America's war aims during the final months of the war.

Shore's search for lessons in the wreckage of the war's end is understandable. I was more interested in why Truman, despite the urging of his advisors, did not abandon unconditional surrender. Hasegawa believes it was because Truman wanted revenge for Pearl Harbor. I did not find that explanation persuasive when I reviewed his book more than ten years ago and I

do not find it persuasive now.<sup>83</sup> A lot of people, including Truman, wanted revenge for Pearl Harbor as well as the countless other atrocities committed by the Japanese military. But that was not his primary motive for sticking to the policy. To understand Truman's refusal to modify the policy, it is important to recall that Roosevelt remained committed to unconditional surrender until his death. Truman inherited that policy when he inherited the presidency. It is also important to understand that Truman did not agree with those advisors who insisted that Emperor Hirohito was a blameless figurehead with no influence over Japan's policies (151-153). Moreover, the new president understood that unconditional surrender was the necessary precondition for the reform of Japan into a peaceful nation. Truman held to that position even when it meant locking horns with the politically popular General Douglas MacArthur in the first stage of the occupation of Japan (173-175).

The debate over unconditional surrender was a struggle to define what constituted victory for the United States. Secretary of War Henry Stimson, Undersecretary of State, former ambassador to Japan Joseph Grew, and Admiral William D. Leahy, military advisor to both Roosevelt and Truman, argued that a negotiated settlement would serve American interests better than unconditional surrender. They counseled Truman that Japan had been a cooperative U.S. partner during the 1920s and could become one again. They were joined by former president Herbert Hoover, who likewise urged Truman to abandon unconditional surrender. Leahy, Stimson, and Hoover questioned the need for a full-scale occupation of Japan and, consistent with their conservative approach to governance, predicted that American efforts to reform Japanese society would create chaos and turmoil, and make the country ungovernable. And, as Shore notes, these critics of unconditional surrender increasingly worried that by prolonging the war, the policy would facilitate Soviet expansion in northeast Asia.

The fate of the emperor was the key issue in the conservatives' argument. Hoover, Grew, and Stimson viewed the emperor as a figurehead, but one who could helpfully stabilize Japanese society in defeat. They argued that once the militarists who had hijacked the government were eliminated, the prewar leaders, who had been misnamed 'moderates' or 'liberals,' would steer Japan back onto a civilized path. Stimson, Hoover, and especially Grew earnestly lectured Truman on Japanese history. The Grew-Stimson-Hoover version of Japanese history downplayed the role of imperialism in the rise of modern Japan, ignored the autocratic structure of the Meiji Constitution, and betrayed little understanding of how Japan's ruling class wielded power. In contrast, New Dealers saw the monarchy as a bastion of reaction that enabled Japan's business and military leaders to oppress the country's workers and peasants. They believed the sources of Japanese militarism, beginning with the monarchy, had to be torn out by the roots. Conservatives thought some careful pruning would do the trick.

To get their way, Stimson and Grew engaged in behind the scenes maneuvering. Following Stimson's lead, a committee in the War Department drafted a warning to Japan that contained a pledge to preserve the monarchy and, implicitly, Hirohito's place on the throne, if Japan promptly surrendered. Hasegawa says that it would have been a dereliction of duty if Stimson had not prepared for all possible contingencies. Perhaps, but that does not explain why Stimson, Grew, and Assistant Secretary of War John McCloy later claimed they had instructions from Truman to prepare the warning when they did not. Nor does it explain why a member of the committee attempted to pressure Truman into releasing the warning by leaking the document to the press accompanied by commentary that accused 'liberals and New Dealers' of prolonging the war so they could destroy Japan's religious and political systems. What Hasegawa calls duty looks more like bureaucratic maneuvering to me.

Shore states that Japan's surrender was conditional because the Americans allowed Hirohito to remain on the throne. This is the same mistake that many critics of unconditional surrender made after the war. Neither Roosevelt nor Truman was bound by a legalistic definition of unconditional surrender. What they sought was the authority to do what they deemed

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<sup>83</sup> Marc Gallicchio, *Racing the Enemy: Stalin, Truman, and the Surrender of Japan* (review), *Journal of Cold War Studies* 9:4 (Fall 2007): 168-170. Barton Bernstein believes Truman was motivated by a "quest for American-defined justice, and appropriate punishment, not revenge, with a desire to root out Japanese totalitarianism, which Truman linked to Hirohito and the emperor system." Commentary by Barton J. Bernstein, Stanford University on Tsuyoshi Hasegawa. *Racing the Enemy: Stalin, Truman, and the Surrender of Japan* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005); H-Diplo Roundtable VII:2 (2016) on *Racing the Enemy*, <http://www.h-net.org/~diplo/roundtables/PDF/Bernstein-HasegawaRoundtable.pdf>, Commentary by Richard Frank on *Racing the Enemy*.

necessary to uproot Japanese militarism and reform Japanese society. The essential point was that the Americans would be free to decide what they wanted to do and not be bound by any negotiation with the Japanese. That is what happened. Once Japan surrendered, the Americans were able to change Japan's constitution and turn the monarchy into the powerless symbol that Hoover, Stimson, and Grew claimed it was.

The catastrophic finale of the Pacific War has long impelled observers to consider how the war could have ended without the horrific attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Historians who ruminate on those lost opportunities must engage in counterfactual thinking to demonstrate that a different end was possible. There is nothing inherently wrong with counterfactual analysis, providing one appreciates its limits. Counterfactual analysis can be helpful in isolating causes and speculating about the relative importance of different variables. But it does not yield conclusions that are testable by empirical evidence.

As Jeremy A. Yellen perceptively notes, I sidestepped the question of which was more decisive in forcing Japan's surrender, the atomic bombs or Soviet entry into the war. I found it difficult to disentangle those events because they happened in such rapid succession and Japanese decision-making was so unpredictable as to give me little confidence that I could safely say what would have happened if Russia had not entered the war or if Russia had come in before the atomic bombs were used. One can speculate of course, but to treat one's observation as anything more definite than speculation is to commit the fallacy of fictional questions.<sup>84</sup>

Counterfactual history can be problematic even if one avoids that fallacy. Shore states that it was always possible that the Japanese would have changed their position if the Americans softened their demand for unconditional surrender. Logically, that is true.<sup>85</sup> Rather than dwell on that hypothetical situation, however, it is more instructive to note that the reason we do not know what the Japanese would have done is because they never told the Americans what they wanted. At no point before August 10 did the Japanese government attempt to negotiate with the Americans. Nevertheless, Truman made several attempts to bolster the so-called moderates in Tokyo. In his May 8 speech, he called for the unconditional surrender of Japanese armed forces as opposed to the Japanese government and he assured the Japanese that unconditional surrender did not mean the enslavement of the Japanese people. On July 26, the Potsdam Declaration offered Japan generous terms in exchange for surrender and obliquely held out the possibility that the emperor would be spared if he cooperated (90, 125-127).<sup>86</sup>

The Japanese militarists, as well as the supposedly 'moderate' Prime Minister Suzuki Kantaro, viewed those efforts as evidence that American morale was cracking and that the threat of protracted war would soon compel the Americans to

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<sup>84</sup> See for example, Hasegawa, *Racing the Enemy*, 296-297. Richard Frank avoids this fallacy by carefully explaining how the atomic bombs were decisive for Hirohito, but that Russian entry was essential for compelling Japanese field commanders to obey the emperor's order to surrender. Richard B. Frank, "Ending the Pacific War: The New History," in Thomas W. Zeiler and Daniel DuBois, eds., *A Companion to World War II* (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013) 1: 387-401. On the fallacy of fictional questions, see David Hackett Fischer, *Historians Fallacies: Toward a Logic of Historical Thought* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1970), 15-21.

<sup>85</sup> I allow for that remote possibility when I state in the conclusion that the chances that Japan would accept any offer that would involve dramatic changes in their governing system were "exceedingly slim" (208). Coincidentally, this is one point that Hasegawa and I agree on. Hasegawa, *Racing the Enemy*, 132.

<sup>86</sup> As Guthrie-Shimizu notes, the Americans, even those who supported a compromise with Japan rarely mentioned the Atlantic Charter as a model for the terms that the Japanese could expect if they surrendered. The Potsdam Declaration did, however, offer Tokyo the same basic terms contained in the charter, without mentioning it, if they surrendered. The Potsdam Declaration also promised Japanese freedom of religion, which was not mentioned in the Atlantic Charter. Akira Iriye, *Power and Culture: The Japanese-American War, 1941-1945* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982), 253-258. The Atlantic Charter, 14 August 1941, The Avalon Project, Yale Law School, <https://avalon.law.yale.edu/wwii/atlantic.asp>; "Proclamation by the Heads of Governments, United States, China and the United Kingdom," (Potsdam Declaration), 26 July 1945, National Diet Library, <https://www.ndl.go.jp/constitution/e/etc/c06.html>



accept an end to the war on Japan's terms. "They will yield before we do," Suzuki told a group of businessmen (124-125). As Sayuri Guthrie-Shimizu notes, those in control of Japan's government, including the emperor, were more concerned with preserving their prerogatives than with the lives of Japanese subjects. After years of waging total war across Asia that killed millions of noncombatants, Japanese leaders hoped to evade the consequences of their actions by negotiating peace, as opposed to surrender, on limited unspecified terms. Truman chose not to oblige them.

There have been numerous critics of unconditional surrender since the policy was announced in 1943. The historian Kenneth Pyle, cited by Yellen, is one of the most recent. Pyle makes the familiar charge that unconditional surrender strengthened the position of Japan's militarists and undermined the peace party in Tokyo. Pyle expands on that position to argue that the American occupation was unnecessary and counterproductive. Japan would have been better off, he argues, if the Americans had negotiated with Tokyo and left the Japanese free to develop a democratic society without foreign interference.<sup>87</sup>

Given his eminence among scholars of modern Japanese history, Pyle's views are sure to prompt discussion and debate on both sides of the Pacific. I think, however, that historians are on firmer ground when they focus on discussing what happened. And what happened in Japan during the occupation was significant. The American-led occupation implemented a sweeping land reform program, guaranteed new rights for labor, revised the civil and penal codes, reformed educational institutions, and, of course, mandated the adoption of a new constitution which renounced war as a tool of the state and, as Yellen notes, abolished the principle of supreme command, thereby erecting a bulwark against the revival of Japanese militarism that remains in place today. The occupation was far from flawless. One of its more troubling outcomes, notes Guthrie-Shimizu, was the fostering of the myth of the peace-loving blameless emperor. Nevertheless, no less an authority than John Dower has concluded that the "remarkable success" of the occupation's liberal program was facilitated by Japan's unconditional surrender, which resulted in a "nonnegotiable" grant of authority to the victors (207).<sup>88</sup>

At the conclusion of his lengthy review, Hasegawa takes me to task for not engaging the arguments in his book *Racing the Enemy*. If by engagement he means that I do not directly discuss his book in my narrative, he is correct. *Unconditional* is a trade book. Editors of trade books discourage authors from referring to other authors in the text because they believe those references leave the reader thinking that the author is not writing for them. That does not mean that I ignored Hasegawa's book. In fact, I cited it twenty-four times in the footnotes. In his 12,000-word review Hasegawa criticizes me for not discussing the various interdepartmental planning and policy making committees in the Roosevelt and Truman administrations in the book. This is another instance where I had to decide what to include and what to leave out. Because I was primarily concerned with the information that Truman received, I did not delve into the labor-intensive operations of those committees. I have written about them elsewhere, however, and that familiarity with the committees and their personnel convinced me that I did not need to discuss them at length to tell the story I was writing.<sup>89</sup> In other places, Hasegawa chides me for discussing some officials he deems unimportant and overlooking others he believes were essential. His overall assessment is that the narrative is illogical and confusing. Rather than address those comments I will leave it to others decide for themselves by reading *Unconditional* and coming to their own conclusions, as the authors of these four reviews did with such care and insight. I appreciate their comments as well as Mark Stoler's thoughtful introduction.

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<sup>87</sup> Considering Japan's history up to 1945, it is difficult see how democratic institutions would have flourished while the same ruling groups retained power in an unconquered unoccupied Japan.

<sup>88</sup> Dower's comments are from John W. Dower, "Lessons from Japan about War's Aftermath," *New York Times*, October 27, 2002, 13C. See also. Dower, *Cultures of War: Pearl Harbor / Hiroshima / 9-11 / Iraq* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2011), 241.

<sup>89</sup> Gallicchio, "American East Asia Policy and the fall of the Japanese Empire, 1945," PhD dissertation, Temple University, 1985, 1-40.