Document 1 "I had then set up a committee of top men and had asked them to study with great care the implications the new weapons might have for us. It was their recommendation that the bomb be used against the enemy as soon as it could be done. They recommended further that it should be used without specific warning I had realized, of course, that an atomic bomb explosion would inflict damage and casualties beyond imagination. On the other hand, the scientific advisors of the committee reported that no technical demonstration they might propose, such as over a deserted island, would be likely to bring the war to an end. It had to be used against an enemy target. The final decision of where and when to use the atomic bomb was up to me. Let there be no mistake about it. I regarded the bomb as a military weapon and never doubted it should be used."

*President Harry S. Truman*

Document 2 "The use of this barbarous weapon at Hiroshima and Nagasaki was of no material assistance in our war against Japan. The Japanese were already defeated and ready to surrender... "In being the first to use it, we . . . adopted an ethical standard common to the barbarians of the Dark Ages. I was not taught to make war in that fashion, and wars cannot be won by destroying women and children."

*Admiral William E. Leahy, President Truman's Chief of Staff, in his memoirs "I Was There"*

Document 3 "The face of war is the face of death; death is an inevitable part of every order that a wartime leader gives. The decision to use the atomic bomb was a decision that brought death to over a hundred thousand Japanese. "But this deliberate, premeditated destruction was our least abhorrent alternative. The destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki put an end to the Japanese war. It stopped the fire raids, and the strangling blockade; it ended the ghastly specter of a clash of great land armies. In this last great action of the Second World War we were given final proof that war is death."

*Secretary of War Henry Stimson*

Document 4 A PETITION TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES We feel, however, that such attacks on Japan could not be justified, at least not unless the terms which will be imposed after the war on Japan were made public in detail and Japan were given an opportunity to surrender…. …if Japan still refused to surrender our nation might then, in certain circumstances, find itself forced to resort to the use of atomic bombs. Such a step, however, ought not to be made at any time without seriously considering the moral responsibilities which are involved. …. Thus a nation which sets the precedent of using these newly liberated forces of nature for purposes of destruction may have to bear the responsibility of opening the door to an era of devastation on an unimaginable scale ….If after this war a situation is allowed to develop in the world which permits rival powers to be in uncontrolled possession of these new means of destruction, the cities of the United States as well as the cities of other nations will be in continuous danger of sudden annihilation. On July 17, 1945, Leo Szilard and 69 co-signers at the Manhattan Project

*"Metallurgical Laboratory" in Chicago petitioned the President of the United States.*

Document 5 "The day was August 6, 1945. I was a G.I. who had weathered the war in Europe and now awaited my place in the storming of Japan's home islands. On Truman's orders, the first atomic bomb ever wielded in war exploded over Hiroshima. For Americans in uniform and those who waited for them to come home, outrageous as this might appear from the moral heights of hindsight, it was a sunburst of deliverance."

*Lester Bernstein, New York Times, 10/24/65*

Document 6 “…seeing that it was impossible to conduct our air, sea, and ground operations on Iwo Jima toward ultimate victory, it was decided that in order to gain time necessary for the preparation of the Homeland defense, our forces should rely solely upon the established defensive equipment in that area, checking the enemy by delaying tactics. Even the suicidal attacks by small groups of our Army and Navy airplanes, the surprise attacks by our submarines, and the actions of parachute units, although effective, could be regarded only as a strategic ruse on our part. It was a most depressing thought that we had no available means left for the exploitation of the strategic opportunities which might from time to time occur in the course of these operations.”

*USA, FEC, HistDiv, "Operations in the Central Pacific"--Japanese Studies in World War II (Japanese Monograph No. 48, OCMH), p. 62.; cited in George W. Garand and Truman R. Strobridge (1971). History of U.S. Marine Corps Operations*

Document 7 “When the atom bombs were dropped and the news began to circulate that we would not be obligated in a few months to rush up the beaches near Tokyo assault-firing while being machine-gunned, mortared and shelled we broke down and cried with relief and joy. We were going to live. We were going to grow to adulthood after all.”

*“Thank God for the Atom Bomb” by Prof. Paul Fussell*

Document 8 “…It is the Survey’s opinion that certainly prior to 31 December 1945, and in all probability prior to 1 November 1945 (well before the date of the [proposed] invasion) Japan would have surrendered even if the atomic bombs had not been dropped.” -United States Army Air Force Strategy Bombing Survey, 1946 “It is my opinion that the use of this barbarous weapon at Hiroshima and Nagasaki was of no material assistance in our war against Japan. The Japanese were already defeated and ready to surrender because of the effective sea blockade and the successful bombing with conventional weapons…My own feeling was that being the first to use [the atomic bomb], we adopted an ethical standard common to the barbarians of the Dark Ages. I was not taught to make wars in that fashion, and that wars cannot be won by destroying women and children”

*Admiral William D. Leahy, President Truman’s Chief of Staff, in his memoir “I Was There” (Whittlesey, 1950)*

Document 9 In 1995, on the 50th anniversary of the Hiroshima bombing, Tibbets was asked how he felt about his role in the world altering events of August 1945: “I was anxious to do it… I wanted to do everything that I could to subdue Japan. I wanted to kill the bastards. That was the attitude of the United States in those years…I have been convinced that we saved more lives than we took. It would have been morally wrong if we’d have had that weapon and not used it and let a million more people die.”

*“The Men Who Brought the Dawn: The Atomic Missions of Enola Gay and Bock's Car”, Smithsonian Channel (1995)*