

Dr. Karl Compton



The Question: With the U.S. locked in a deadly war against Imperial Japan, should the United States use an experimental atomic bomb or force a surrender through a conventional invasion?

My Life: (Deliver like a college professor or a kid who is interested in using a new toy. Consider bringing a clipboard of equations as a prop.)

- Welcome to this briefing, I will keep my introduction short because we have much to discuss. I am the President of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
- Along with my friend Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer, I have played a major role in the **Manhattan Project:** a top secret military research project to develop an atomic bomb.
- I am also the science advisor for both Presidents Roosevelt and Truman.

My Point of View and Personality:

- I am an upper class white male with a radical agenda.
- This war is a complicated equation and the atomic bomb is the necessary variable to solve it.

My Argument: The atomic bomb SHOULD be used against Japan because...

We Can Gain Leverage Over the Japanese:

- *We have only two atomic bombs at this point and they both need to be used.* If we only use one bomb, they'll think we only have one. If we use both, we can convince them that we have a full nuclear arsenal... which we don't really have, yet. But they don't need to know that.
- By vaporizing **both** Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Japanese will "live in dread of many more (bombs)" (my exact words in a briefing) that could vaporize their entire country.
- If the Japanese fear that their entire culture could be reduced to ash in a second, they will surrender after the second one goes off. They won't dare call our bluff.
- If they do call our bluff, God help us all because...

An invasion would kill more people because of Ketsu-Go:

- Imperial Japan has adopted a strategy of **ketsu-go** or "decisive battle" where civilians as young as eight years old are trained to be soldiers to defend the Emperor.
- Three million Japanese civilians and military personnel have already died.
- **The closer we get to Japan, the dirtier they fight.**
- This means Japanese child suicide bombers could throw themselves at tanks while we invade. I don't think anyone here wants that on their conscience.

(SAVE FOR ACT 2) (**To Pauling**) Who are you calling unethical? You have a nation of millions of people willing to kill themselves if they're ever invaded. Instead I'm saying, we bomb two cities and they'll surrender. (**To his response about freedom. Consider using the blackboard for an ad-lib**) We're both scientists, Dr. Pauling so let's work out an equation: which is better? Ending the war today with only 225,000 enemy casualties or ending the war six months from now with **potentially millions of casualties on both sides!** The solution is obvious!

(**To Bard**) Don't forget Mr. Secretary, atomic science is still new. There's no guarantee our other atomic bombs will work. If we make a big deal about the bomb and it turns out to be a dud, we lose the advantage. If we hide the atomic bomb with other bombs and it doesn't work. We can

save face. (***To his response about sleeping at night***) I will sleep well knowing this terrible war will be over in two weeks instead of six months from now if we do an invasion.