

## Part V:

convince the Japanese to surrender was discussed over lunch and rejected. The bomb might be a dud, the Japanese might put American prisoners of war in the area, or shoot down the plane, and the shock value of the new weapon would be lost. These reasons and others convinced the group that the bomb should be dropped without warning on a dual target—a war plant surrounded by workers' homes. The meeting with the industrialists on June 1 further convinced the Interim Committee that the United States had a lead of three to ten years on the Soviet Union in production facilities for bomb fabrication.

On June 6 Stimson informed the President that the Interim Committee recommended keeping S-1 a secret until Japan had been bombed. The attack should take place as soon as possible and without warning. Truman and Stimson agreed that the President would stall if approached about atomic weapons in Berlin, but that it might be possible to gain concessions from Russia later in return for providing technical information. Stimson told Truman that the Interim Committee was considering domestic legislation and that its members generally held the position that international agreements should be made in which all nuclear research would be made public and a system of inspections would be devised. In case international agreements were not forthcoming, the United States should continue to produce as much fissionable material as possible to take advantage of its current position of superiority.

### Planning for Surrender

Strategies for forcing Japanese capitulation occupied center stage in June. Truman gained Chinese concurrence in the Yalta agreements by assuring T. V. Soong, the Chinese foreign minister, that Russia's intentions in the Far East were benevolent, smoothing the way for the entrance of the Red Army. Joseph C. Grew, acting secretary of state, clarified the definition of unconditional surrender. Japan need not fear total annihilation, Grew stated. Once demilitarized, Japan would be free to choose its political system and would be allowed to develop a vibrant economy. Grew hoped that a public statement to Japan would lead to surrender before a costly invasion would have to be launched. The Joint Chiefs of Staff continued to advocate the invasion of Kyushu, a plan identified as Operation Olympic. Stimson hoped that an invasion could be avoided, either by redefining the surrender terms or

by using the atomic bomb.

Indicative of the wide range of his responsibilities was Groves's position as head of a bomb target selection group set up in late April, a responsibility he shared with General Thomas Farrell, appointed Groves's military aide in February 1945. In late May the committee of scientists and Army Air Force officers listed Kokura Arsenal, Hiroshima, Niigata, and Kyoto as the four best targets, believing that attacks on these cities—none of which had yet been bombed by Curtis LeMay's Twentieth Air Force (which planned to eliminate all major Japanese cities by January 1, 1946)—would make a profound psychological impression on the Japanese and weaken military resistance. Stimson vetoed Kyoto, Japan's most cherished cultural center, and Nagasaki replaced the ancient capital in the directive issued to the Army Air Force on July 25.<sup>46</sup>

### The Franck Report and Its Critics

Meanwhile the Met Lab was beginning to stir. The Scientific Panel of the Interim Committee was the connection between the scientists and the policy makers, and Compton was convinced that there must be a high level of participation in the decision-making process. His June 2 briefing of the Met Lab staff regarding the findings of the Interim Committee led to a flurry of activity. The Met Lab's Committee on the Social and Political Implications of the Atomic Bomb, chaired by James Franck and including Seaborg and Szilard, issued a report advocating international control of atomic power as the only way to stop the arms race that would be inevitable if the United States bombed Japan without first demonstrating the weapon in an uninhabited area.

The Scientific Panel disagreed with the Franck Report, as the Met Lab study was known, and concluded that no technical test would convince Japan to surrender. The Panel concluded that such a military demonstration of the bomb might best further the cause of peace but held that such a demonstration should take place only after the United States informed its allies. On June 21 the Interim Committee sided with the position advanced by the Scientific Panel. The bomb should be used as soon as possible, without warning, and against a war plant surrounded by additional buildings. As to informing allies, the Committee concluded that Truman should mention that the United States was preparing to use a new kind of weapon against Japan when he went to Berlin in July. On July 2,