



Prompt and Utter Destruction: Truman and the Use of Atomic Bombs against Japan, Revised Edition

By J. Samuel Walker

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In this concise account of why America used atomic bombs against Japan in 1945, J. Samuel Walker analyzes the reasons behind President Truman's most controversial decision. Delineating what was known and not known by American leaders at the time, Walker evaluates the roles of U.S.-Soviet relations and of American domestic politics. In this new edition, Walker takes into account recent scholarship on the topic, including new information on the Japanese decision to surrender. He has also revised the book to place more emphasis on the effect of the Soviet invasion of Manchuria in convincing the emperor and his advisers to quit the war. Rising above an often polemical debate, Walker presents an accessible synthesis of previous work and an important, original contribution to our understanding of the events that ushered in the atomic age.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Walker's book is the most useful layman's synthesis of the debate in print." - Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists; "The author's ability to cover the most important issues with economy... make[s] this an excellent addition to the literature, particularly useful for beginning students." - Foreign Affairs"

From the Inside Flap

In this updated edition of his balanced and concise look at the still-controversial decision to use atomic bombs against Japan, Walker takes into account more recent scholarship on the topic, including new findings on the Japanese decision to surrender.

From the Back Cover

More than fifty years later, the decision that brought prompt and utter destruction to the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki continues to generate enormous interest and controversy. In this concise and balanced account, J. Samuel Walker offers a new look at the events and circumstances that lay behind President Truman's use of atomic bombs against Japan. Combining extensive documentary research with a critical reading of both American and Japanese scholarship, Walker examines the popular mythology about how the decision was made, delineating what was known and not known by American leaders at the time and evaluating the role of U.S.-Soviet relations and American domestic politics. Rising above an often polemical debate, he presents an accessible synthesis of previous work and an important, original contribution to our understanding of the events that ushered in the atomic age.

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