



War of the Worlds

“Civilians should never be forced to pay for the offensive or criminal actions of their military.”

Sean W. Gallegos
Osaka, Japan

IF THE A-BOMB HAD NOT BEEN DROPPED, it is quite possible many of the people crying out against it would never have been born [Aug. 7]. The invasion of Japan would have cost an untold number of lives on both sides. Many of those who died could have been the parents of the group of people now asking that the U.S. apologize for dropping the A-bomb.

Edgar S. Spizel
La Jolla, California

THE BOMBINGS WERE NOT JUST THE END of a merciless clash of cultures but also the beginning of a human crisis called the nuclear age, beyond the differences in cultures and nationalities.

Hisashi Yukimoto
Yokosuka, Japan

THE ATOM BOMBINGS OF HIROSHIMA AND Nagasaki 50 years ago stand as a dark episode in the history of this century. They are a stain of disgrace on the U.S., and I find it sad that official America still refuses to recognize the bombings as a mistake. The aggressive Japanese imperialism had to be opposed with power, no doubt, but this did not justify the use of the most gruesome weapon ever known to mankind. Aug. 6 must be remembered as the day when man finally became able to destroy himself utterly and untold horrors were unleashed.

Ulrik Hansen
Odense, Denmark

ON SEPT. 27, 1945, AS AN 15-YEAR-OLD member of the 98th Division, I was among many who made a beach landing close to the city of Wakayama, Japan. From there we were transported by rail to Osaka, where I began a year of Occupation duty. The propriety of the use of the atom bomb to bring about the surrender of the Japanese will be debated endlessly. But one thing was clear: we encountered no resistance as occupiers because the Japanese, a people of great discipline and national pride, responded to the dictates of their Emperor. Had the

Emperor asked the Japanese people to resist to the death the invasion of their homeland, they would have done so. And countless numbers on both sides would have died. Perhaps I am alive today because the use of the atom bomb brought the war to a speedy conclusion.

Conrad G. Follansbee Jr.
Wayne, Pennsylvania

THE ARGUMENT OVER WHETHER THE USE of the atom bomb, as opposed to a full-scale invasion of Japan, actually saved Japanese lives is completely irrelevant. After 3½ years of war, President Truman's duty as Commander in Chief was very clear: end the war quickly and save as many lives as possible.

Thomas E. Tall Jr.
Somerville, New Jersey

IN THE MIDDLE OF MEDIA OVERKILL ON the Bomb, your articles stand out as models of evenhandedness. I congratulate you on covering both sides.

John Safranski
Livonia, Michigan

I REMEMBER MY GRANDMOTHER TELLING me that after the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor they made passes over the city several times before flying back out to sea. She said, "They could have easily dropped bombs on us too, but they didn't." Civilians should never be forced to pay for the offensive or criminal actions of their military.

Sean W. Gallegos
Osaka, Japan

WHILE THE INNOCENT PEOPLE WHO PERISHED in Hiroshima and Nagasaki have my heartfelt sympathy, I cannot help wondering how different history would be if President Truman had decided not to drop the Bomb. The hundreds of thousands who would then have died could have been Indonesians, Koreans or other Asians killed in a Japanese invasion. Hiroshima and Nagasaki remind us how

innocent people become casualties of war—a war they may not want to support. At least the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki helped prevent what could have been the obliteration of humans on an even larger scale.

Chandra Dewi Kumia
Jakarta, Indonesia

I ONLY PRAY THAT THIS WILL NEVER HAPPEN again.

Shigenobu Nagataki
Nagasaki, Japan

The Bosnian War Widens

THE RECENT EVENTS IN BOSNIA HAVE seriously disgraced the United Nations, as well as every country that stands for the democratic free world [Aug. 7]. It is sickening to see the atrocities committed by the Serbs while the U.S. and the rest of the international community watch. Has the entire world embraced a policy of "hear no evil, see no evil"? What happened to the protection of human rights and the new world order? As of now, they are being made a laughingstock by the Serbs. A whole generation is being wiped off the face of the earth, and no one seems to care. Is it because the West tends to see this conflict as strictly Muslim vs. Christian? Religion is not the main issue here. Instead a group of people is seeking independence and is being condemned to death for it. In 1945 the world said "never again" to "ethnic cleansing," genocide and other horrible tactics committed by the Nazis. Unfortunately, little is being done to uphold that commitment in regard to the Bosnian civilians.

Norman el-Bakri
Amman, Jordan

IT IS OBVIOUS THAT WHAT YOU ARE CALLING the new world order is unfair. Comparing what is happening today in Bosnia with what happened in Kuwait suggests that something is wrong in the world. In Kuwait the U.S. gathered to defend this small, rich emirate as if it were defending its own land. Meanwhile, it has taken weeks just to discuss whether or not to give Muslims arms to defend themselves on their own land. I think it is better to name our earth the new world disorder and call the U.S. "the big brother of the gang."

Ahmad Hafez
Safat, Kuwait

IN MY VIEW THE PRESENT DIRE SITUATION in the former Yugoslavia is in part due to the creation of republics by the communist dictator Tito. Recognition of these internal borders has rendered the problem all but insolvable. Those who insist