

ABSTRACT

Augustine's Just War and Nuclear Weapons: From Hiroshima to Today's Nuclear Arsenal

Miller Carbaugh

Director: Peter Campbell, Ph.D.

President Truman's decision to drop two nuclear weapons on Japan to end World War II is one of the most contentious decisions in the 20th century. Those who abhor his decision argue that the use of nuclear weapons is inherently unethical and unjust. Augustine of Hippo is one of the earliest thinkers to write on the justice of war, particularly on *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello*. His arguments for the justice to go to war and justice in war, though centered on his Christian faith, have influenced innumerable international agreements on the conduct of war. This thesis analyzes some of Augustine's arguments surrounding the justice of war and then applies them to both Truman's decision as well as the post-Cold War nuclear revolution, where the United States has sought nuclear primacy through low-yield, precision guided nuclear weapons. This thesis finds that Augustine's conception of the just war would likely have found Truman's decision justified under the circumstances. It also evaluates the highly advanced nuclear arsenal of the United States today. It finds that this arsenal, opposed by theorists of nuclear deterrence, enables a degree of ethical decision-making surrounding nuclear weapons that is more consistent with the just war than Cold War nuclear deterrence.

APPROVED BY DIRECTOR OF HONORS THESIS:

Dr. Peter Campbell, Department of Political Science

APPROVED BY THE HONORS PROGRAM:

Dr. Elizabeth Corey, Director

DATE: _____

AUGUSTINE'S JUST WAR AND NUCLEAR WEAPONS: FROM HIROSHIMA TO
TODAY'S NUCLEAR ARSENAL

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of
Baylor University
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Honors Program

By
Miller Carbaugh

Waco, Texas

May 2019

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	iii
Introduction	1
Chapter One: Augustine and the Just War Tradition	5
Chapter Two: Truman's Use of Atomic Bombs	28
Chapter Three: The New Nuclear Age	58
Conclusion	75
Bibliography	77

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to first and foremost express my sincerest gratitude to Dr. Peter Campbell for giving of his time and agreeing to take on this project with me. This thesis would not have been possible without his immeasurable guidance, encouragement, and support. I also would like to thank my professors in both the Political Science Department and the Honors College for encouraging and challenging me these past four years of my undergraduate studies. Finally, I would like to thank my friends and family for enthusiastically supporting me from the beginning through the end of this thesis, I would not have been able to complete it without their advice and constant encouragement these past two years.

INTRODUCTION

The question of the ethical use of nuclear weapons has been debated by scholars for decades, particularly in the aftermath of Truman's decision to launch nuclear weapons on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in the end of World War II. Many argue that Truman's decision was unethical as they claim the catastrophic effects of the bomb are still felt today. It can be difficult to distinguish between just and unjust use of force in war, especially when nuclear weapons come into play. One thinker who wrote extensively on the just war is Augustine of Hippo. Even though his works date all the way back to the 5th century, where nuclear weapons did not exist, many of his concepts and principles of just war still apply today. In this thesis, I analyze Augustine's just war tradition and apply it to the use of nuclear weapons in war. I apply his arguments to the case study of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, specifically Truman's decision to deploy the weapons. Finally, I look at today's nuclear arsenal and how it has changed since the end of World War II and how this change impacts what Augustine would say about nuclear weapons and their use. Particularly, I apply Augustinian thought to both deterrence theory and counterforce strategy.

In his *City of God*, Augustine writes on his conception of justice and just war, or *justum bellum*. He says that there can be no perfectly just war in the City of Man, as men are fallen, however some wars can be more unjust than others. His argument is split into two parts, justice to go to war and justice in war. On justice to go to war, Augustine discusses elements that can make a war more or less just, such as just peace, necessity versus desire, and right authority. On justice in war, he talks about how the individual

must act justly as a soldier. I focus more on the justice in war in this thesis, as Truman's decision occurred when the US was already at war with Japan. Augustine discusses many different elements that make a war more just, two of which are discrimination and proportionality. He argues that war must be discriminate, such as distinguishing between combatants and non-combatants, and that the force used against the target must be proportionate for it to be a more just war. In this thesis, I focus on both discrimination and proportionality when determining what Augustine would say both about Hiroshima and today's nuclear arsenal.

The bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki is a key instance of the use of nuclear weapons that is still highly debated today. While Truman holds the ultimate responsibility for the decision to bomb Japan, FDR, Henry Stimson (Sec. of War), and James Byrnes (a key advisor to Truman) all contributed and should be accountable for the decision as well. They all agreed with Truman, as Byrnes even advised Truman that the best course of action was to deploy the bomb. Japan had proven itself ruthless and brutal in their war strategy and rather than coming closer to peace, the war between the US and Japan kept turning more and more deadly. The Japanese were resolved to fight to the death and did not care how many lives, both American and Japanese, they took with them. Truman weighed the pros and cons of using the bomb but ultimately decided that, given the circumstances, using the bomb was the lesser of two evils. His main goal was to save both American lives and Japanese lives, too. From an Augustinian perspective, Truman used proportionality and discrimination in his decision, making it more ethical and more just. He purposefully chose the two cities for their military targets and stayed as far as he could away from non-combatants in his targeting. He also used as much

proportionality as the bomb allowed, as it was brand new at the time. Compared to today's nuclear arsenal, the bombs that hit Hiroshima and Nagasaki pale in comparison of force.

In the final chapter, this thesis will analyze both deterrence theory and counterforce strategy as they relate to Augustine's just war tradition. Deterrence theory essentially argues that a state of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) is the best way to maintain peace in the international system. MAD exists when two states possess such massive nuclear weapons that if either one of them attacked the other, causing complete annihilation, the defender has the capability to completely annihilate the attacker. This theory is based solely on defense where discrimination and proportionality in force and target do not exist. On the other hand, counterforce strategy undermines MAD as it argues for smaller, more precise weapons to be used to disable a country from a counterforce attack, meaning destroying their nuclear arsenal. The counterforce era has made counterforce strategy much more possible through technological advances in accuracy of nuclear arms. Deterrence theorists do not like counterforce strategy because it undermines the whole principle of MAD. In this thesis, I argue that Augustine would take issue with both of these theories for different reasons. He would oppose the entire premise of deterrence theory, as it is based around the idea of being indiscriminate and unproportionate. He would also have an issue with counterforce strategy as it argues for a preemptive strike, which would not be a necessity for war according to Augustine. However, Augustine would agree with counterforce strategy in its argument for low-yield, highly accurate nuclear weapons. He would maybe argue these kinds of weapons could be used as an element of force in a more just war as they make discrimination and

proportionality easier and therefore could make decisions about targeting more just and ethical.

CHAPTER ONE

St. Augustine and Just War Tradition

St. Augustine is acknowledged as the father of the just war tradition. He wrote extensively on good and evil and from this, depicts how it relates to war and peace between men. In his *City of God*, St. Augustine articulates how Christians can reconcile their Christianity with war and the idea of using force, in some cases fatal force, against other humans. His theology is intricately connected to his arguments on just war, such as just cause to go to war, or *jus ad bellum*, which encompasses a more policy and strategic level, and what actions or motives are just in war, or *jus in bello*, which encompasses a more tactical level. We must first explore Augustine's conception of just war and explain its reasoning and its components in order to later connect Augustine's thinking on just war to both Truman's use of nuclear weapons and the 21st century revolution on nuclear weapons.

To fully understand the ins and outs of his just war thinking, it is necessary to make the distinction between *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello*. *Jus ad bellum* is the justice to go to war, such as reasons for war and goals of war or decisions made by state leaders and those in authority, whereas *jus in bello* is justice in war, including the actions taken by an individual soldier or an officer. This distinction will be important later on, as well, as the question arises of whether there can still be a distinction between *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello* in the case of nuclear weapons. To understand what falls under *jus ad bellum*, we must begin from Augustine's discussion of the relationship between the Supreme Good and the Supreme Evil. The next part moves to Augustine's argument on

the free will of man, as it is closely related to peace and war, where men have a choice to engage in war and how to behave in war. From there, this chapter will move to his argument on peace, which is essential to understanding war, as war is the privation of peace as evil is the privation of good. Once these foundational concepts are drawn out under *jus ad bellum*, *jus in bello*, or justice in war, is discussed. These two principles together encompass Augustine's just war tradition and are therefore imperative to understand and draw out, especially as they come into play in the following chapters when we discuss the specific case of the use of nuclear weapons as well as the technological advances in these weapons.

Supreme Good and Supreme Evil

In Book 19 of *City of God*, Augustine begins by discussing Supreme Good and Supreme Evil. Many philosophers before Augustine's time tried to define good and evil. Some equated the Supreme good with what makes man happy.¹ These philosophers, like Varro, did not have the Christian perspective. Varro concluded that the Supreme Good of man is a combination of the goods of the soul and the body, which then brings man happiness. The problem with this secular view is that it finds good and evil simply in the soul and body of this earth, meaning man can have ultimate happiness through his own earthly efforts towards virtue and truth.

Augustine argues instead from the perspective of the City of God, claiming rather that the Supreme Good is eternal life, and the Supreme Evil is eternal death.² The

¹ Saint Augustine, *Concerning the City of God against the Pagans* (London: Penguin Books, 1972), 843.

² *Ibid.*, 852.

relationship between good and evil for Augustine is that Evil is not the opposite of Good, as many believe and argue, but rather it is the absence of Good. To arrive at this conclusion, he first asks where evil could come from if God is so good. God is the greatest spiritual substance and highest form of being, therefore the highest good. Since he is the highest and most absolute good, he cannot will evil or create it otherwise his essence would be corrupted. God also could not have made evil, and since he made all things and he is the absolute good, then all things are good that are created by Him. Evil, therefore, does not have a substance as it is not created by God, so it must be the privation of goodness, the loss of substance.³ “I inquired what wickedness is; and I did not find a substance but a perversity of will twisted away from the highest substance, you O God, towards inferior things, rejecting its own inner life and swelling with external matter.”⁴ Evil is not a thing that makes humans will evil things, rather the choices of will are responsible for the lack of goodness a person chooses. Free will is further discussed in the next section of this chapter.

Because man is fallen and has a tendency towards evil, we are unable to attain this Supreme Good on our own. God gives us the help we need through our faith in Him. We can therefore not ultimately be happy, and our souls not rightly ordered without God, who is perfect justice and perfect joy. The philosophers believed that through their own efforts, they could bring themselves to this same end, but they were missing the most important element: God. “... the less the soul has God in mind in all its thinking, the less it is subordinated to God; and the more the desires of the flesh oppose the spirit, the less

³ Saint Augustine, *Confessions* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 124-125.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 126.

subordinate is the body to the soul.”⁵ When the body and soul are not ordered rightly with God, then the desires of the flesh are more prevalent, such that man’s free will chooses things of this world, not of God.

Free Will of Man

As evil is the privation or lack of good, man has a free choice to choose to do good or evil things. Man can use his free will, but with the foreknowledge of God, as God has perfect knowledge of all that has happened and will happen in the City of Man. When man’s will is aligned with God’s will, and is therefore good, then he does not corrupt things in nature by using them in a way that is inconsistent with their purpose. However, when man misaligns his will from the will of God, his will is not rightly ordered anymore and therefore it chooses to corrupt nature by using it as a means to his own ends.⁶ When a man’s soul is disordered, he uses his will for selfish ends rather than God’s ends, which directly relates to *jus ad bellum* as leaders have free will to enter into war.

Augustine’s doctrine of selfhood says that ‘self-love’ is the source of evil, as it comes from abandoning God as your end and making yourself your end.⁷ A man’s soul and body are infected with human error and make choices based on self-love rather than love that is the law of nature, God’s love. This self-love is also described as pride, as man puts himself and his own desires and ends over God. This disordered love comes

⁵ Saint Augustine, *City of God*, 854.

⁶ Peter Campbell, “War in St. Augustine’s City of God” (University of Notre Dame), 5.

⁷ Reinhold Niebuhr and Robert McAfee Brown, *The Essential Reinhold Niebuhr* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), 125.

from Adam and Eve, who, because they desired more power and domination, used their free will to try to become like God and fell into sin. God gave them dominion over the earth, along with free will. They were tempted and wanted more than their mere dominion, so out of pride and self-love they freely chose domination and power.⁸ This original sin plagues every human, as all are born into it. Therefore, every man or woman makes choices through their free will to align themselves with this world or with God's ends; with the city of man or the city of God.

Augustine claims that human nature is the cause of war in two respects, one being man's lust for power and the other being his punishment from God for this human sin.⁹ On the latter point, he says that "even when a just war is fought it is in defense of his sin that the other side is contending; and victory, even when the victory falls to the wicked, is a humiliation visited on the conquered by divine judgement, either to correct or to punish their sin."¹⁰ While man does freely choose peace or the privation of it, God uses war to teach his people to use their free will for His ends, not for the evil desires of their hearts. Augustine goes further to say that there is no perfect justice in the earthly city, as perfect justice is only found in God. Therefore, there can be no truly just war, however, there can be wars that are more just than others. In the Latin, *justum bellum* are the words Augustine uses to describe what is now interpreted as *just war*. However, *justum* can also be translated from the Latin as *justified*, which then further supports this interpretation of Augustine's

⁸ Campbell, "War in", 5.

⁹ David D. Corey and J. Daryl Charles, *The Just War Tradition: Augustine* (Delaware: ISI Books, 2012), 54.

¹⁰ Augustine, *City of God*, chapter 14.

argument for a more or less justified war, where it never reaches pure justice.¹¹ War is sometimes the necessary outcome of a situation, such that a political authority can align his ends with God's peace. This will be elaborated further on when discussing the authority of a just ruler in war.

Peace as an End of Man and War

Just as Adam and Eve lusted for power, so men lust for domination and vengeance. This domination is so destructive to the hearts of men that Augustine says it would be better to be a slave to man than a slave to the lust of domination.¹² Just as the soul becomes disordered and falls from God's will, so the community becomes disordered and falls from its end, peace. Because God allows man free will, God therefore allows them to choose war or peace. Augustine warns that peace is not assured, because "we do not know the hearts of those with whom we wish to maintain peace, and even if we could know them today, we should not know what they might be like tomorrow."¹³ However, he goes on to say that peace is the instinctive aim of all creatures, as well as the goal of all wars.

In both just and unjust wars the goal is peace. All men desire peace, even when they disrupt peace to go to war they are disrupting it to try and achieve a different peace of their choosing. Augustine states that even robbers or crooks maintain a "shadow of peace" with the people they do not kill and from whom they want to hide their activities.

¹¹ Paul Ramsey, *War and the Christian Conscience / How Shall Modern War be Conducted Justly?* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1961), 15.

¹² Augustine, *City of God*, chapter 14.

¹³ *Ibid.*, chapter 5. John Mearsheimer brings up this same issue that Augustine brings up here, saying that states can never be certain about the intentions of other states (an offensive realist perspective). Robert J. Lieber, *Political Science Quarterly* 117, no. 2 (2002): 321-22. doi:10.2307/798192.

When people decide to go to war, they are either trying to defend their peace or they are trying to assert their kind of peace (and domination) on others. Like the concept of good and evil, war, like evil is not a thing in itself but an attempt to achieve peace, a good that has being rather than just being a privation. Take the example of Adolf Hitler, a man who began a war and is responsible for the death of millions of people. Even he justified his intentions for going to war and saw his actions as good, though twisted by free will. He went to war with the intent to create a different peace, his own corrupt self-love kind of peace. The end of this justification for war was technically peace, however it clearly was an unjust war that devastated Europe. Even in this extreme example, it shows all men do desire peace, though it looks different when the heart and will are ordered or disordered from God.

When describing the earthly city, Augustine further recognizes that peace is difficult to maintain. When there is a community and peace has been established by a dominant group, that group is not exempt from giving way to self-love and interest and corrupting the peace.¹⁴ Community is difficult to maintain throughout the world. Men vary in ethnicities and speak different languages, so communication between them is hampered. This separates men from one another and makes community beyond certain cultural and geographical boundaries difficult. Aspects like ethnicity and language bond men together. But they also drive men apart, making peace more difficult to attain and maintain. Augustine describes the city of man as one of tension, competition, and conflicts.¹⁵

¹⁴ Niebuhr and Brown, *The Essential*, 129.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 127.

However, this sort of temporal peace relates back to man's relationship with God. God gives man through obedience and faith the ability to aim towards the peace of eternal life. He can gain this through the correct use of the gifts from God's perfect wisdom and justice. The body and soul must be together in peace to have ordered obedience in faith that leads to eternal life, or everlasting peace. Augustine argues that even when a victory goes to the more just side, and the peace attained is something to be desired, men must still keep their eyes on the higher goods of the heavenly city, as that is only where perfect and eternal peace are found. Even if the just side wins, he can still fall from God by neglecting the higher goods of heaven, therefore falling into misery.¹⁶ This idea reinforces the principle that all men are able to error, even those who are more just, which is why the gifts of God are necessary to order our lives towards eternal life in the heavenly city.

Reconciling Christianity and War

Throughout the Bible, God calls his people to be peacemakers, particularly in the Beatitudes when he says, "blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God."¹⁷ But if God calls his people to be peacemakers, how can war ever be justified? Augustine interprets this text saying "Be a peacemaker, then, *even in fighting*... For war is waged in order to attain peace; and through your victory you might bring those whom you defeat to the advantages of peace."¹⁸

¹⁶ Augustine, *City of God*, 600.

¹⁷ Matthew 5:9.

¹⁸ Augustine, *Letter 189 "To Boniface."*

As stated earlier, because of sin God sometimes punishes people through war. But then, would it not follow that God wills evil, if war is a horrible evil? This cannot be true as God is perfect good and just. God allows men to use their free will to either order their nature with God or corrupt it, and by choosing war he chooses corruption. “Wars... pride... lust... violence...—all these evils belong to man in his wickedness, and they all spring from that root of error and perverted affection which every son of Adam brings with him at his birth.”¹⁹ Thus, God uses war sometimes to punish man but war is a choice that human beings freely will to engage in because of their desire for power and, at the bottom, their desire to be like God.

While Augustine makes it clear that no war is truly just, as all men are flawed, and all regimes consist of and led by flawed human beings, he does argue that there is a kind of spectrum of justice when it comes to war, with the least just wars on one end and more just wars on the other. There are certain aspects of war that make it more just than other wars. When Christians are called to fight a war, a tension can arise between their earthly duty and their heavenly duty. Some Christians are convicted in a way such that killing anyone, such as in war, is not in line with Christ’s teaching. As previously mentioned, in the New Testament Christ calls his followers to be peacemakers and to, when harmed or hurt, turn the other cheek rather than return harm for harm. Augustine was challenged to provide a solution to this apparent tension between Christianity and fighting in war. He takes a less literal approach to the Scriptures and a more metaphorical or figurative approach which successfully reconciles the two. For example, Augustine points out that in the Old Testament, King David was in the army and in the

¹⁹ Augustine, *City of God*, 1065.

New Testament, Christ tells a centurion, who is worried about his military standing making him unworthy of Christ, that he has more faith than those he has found in Israel.²⁰

Augustine demonstrates that the Scriptures can be interpreted in different and equally correct ways, like both literally but also allegorically, so that war is not necessarily an unjust evil, rather its justice is qualified through certain parameters. For example, when Christ calls believers to turn the other cheek in the New Testament, Augustine believes that he does not mean literally, but rather that “one must above all else be careful so that patience, which is more valuable than everything an enemy can take from us, is not itself lost to the desire for vengeance.”²¹ This is just one of multiple conditions of war that make it more just.

For a war to be just according to Augustinian thinking, it must begin because of necessity rather than desire. For a war to be a necessity rather than a desire, and therefore have a just cause, it must be waged out of a wrong having been committed against another. Augustine takes it one step further by saying that the wrong must have been so egregious that lenience would not be beneficial to either parties.²² It must be a response to an unjust act perpetrated and therefore require a just punishment on the perpetrator with peace as its end. Just wars are then reactive, not proactive. Augustine says that wise men say that they will wage just wars and will lament the fact that they must go to war by necessity, because if the war was not just, these wise men would not be waging it. It is the injustice of the opposing side that creates the necessity for war.²³ There can be no

²⁰ Corey and Charles, *The Just War Tradition: Augustine*, 57.

²¹ Augustine, *Letter 138*, “*To Marcellinus*.”

²² Corey and Charles, *The Just War Tradition: Augustine*, 58.

²³ Augustine, *City of God*, chapter 7.

necessity for war if another side has not committed a horrible evil, an evil that outweighs the horrible evil that is war. The act committed and its implications must be greater than the evil of war for a war to be considered one of necessity.

What follows, then, is that wars of desire must be unjust. When man disorders his free will, he wills for domination and power. This desire for domination leads him to choose war to attain his own, selfish ends. War, either out of necessity or desire, remains a free choice. The difference is that wars of desire are freely chosen out of self-love of man, where wars of necessity are from man's love for God and for his perfect peace. When man is prideful, that is to say he has decided to corrupt his nature, then he seeks his own peace; this peace is essentially a desire to be God and have dominion over men, or peace of injustice.²⁴ Wars of desire stem from man making himself the center of existence, rather than God. However, just because one makes them self the center of existence does not mean that they in reality are. God remains the center and self-giving love remains the law, not self-love.²⁵ This self-love is defeating, and man must be saved from this if peace is to be attained and maintained. Because this self-love always remains with man in the world, he will choose the desires of his heart, including war for the sake of his own selfish desires rather than from just necessity. It is not that man seeks war, rather he uses war as a means to attain his end, self-love. This distinction between necessity and desire is most applicable to leaders of states as they are the ones who make the decision to go to war; they have incredible power to influence and decide the end of states. This justice to go to war, or *jus ad bellum*, is one of the two key aspects of

²⁴ Ibid., chapter 12.

²⁵ Niebuhr, *Political Realism*, 130.

Augustine's just war tradition. It is important to discuss leaders of nations and their just or unjust authority to make decisions, which is still another aspect of *jus ad bellum*.

The Authority of Leaders

Augustine has already established that all men are flawed and are subject to original sin. Because of this, no ruler can rule in perfect justice and so every decision he makes is one that is subject to error. However, just as there are different levels of just wars, there are different levels of just authority in rulers. When a ruler turns from justice to injustice, it is similar to when he turns from rightly ordered free will to corruption of nature. The justice of a ruler is essential to a just war as he is the ultimate earthly authority for a state.

The least just ruler would be the tyrant. As Augustine explains, the fulfilling of the tyrant's desires is the end of the state, which requires vying for power and domination. The tyrant goes to war for desire not necessity, as his will is disordered. Just like the example of Adam and Eve, who desired power and domination rather than being happy with dominion and perfect order with God, tyrants seek to be like God, desiring power and domination instead of harmony with God and domination over nature. Just as evil is a privation of good, war is a privation of peace and the justice of a war is defined by how it is used as a tool to move back towards a peace that resembles the peace found in God. However, for the tyrant, this peace is a distorted peace of his own will, as he does not seek peace found in God but rather peace found in himself. Augustine says that a man's soul is impoverished when it lacks the source of life which is God.²⁶ The

²⁶ Augustine, *City of God*, 511.

soul 'dies' when it is no longer derived from God. When a tyrant chooses war, his desire is still peace but a peace that does not align with God's perfect peace, rather it is a peace that suits the desires of his heart. He wishes to make his enemies his subjects and to subject them to his kind of peace, which is domination over them. The tyrant uses his army and war as a means to his end, therefore it is even more significant if he is wicked than if a regular citizen is because his power is greater and more influential to the community. Using people as a means to an end is evil because human beings are an end in themselves.

Just as God relates to nature so does the ruler relate to his people. As God has a divine plan for nature and its end is perfect peace and justice, so rulers use their free will to attain an end of good or evil.²⁷ The tyrant utilizes his citizens to reach his own desires and not the good of the community. A tyrant chooses war, rather than having war forced upon him by a grievous wrong committed against him and his community. While just rulers grieve when war is necessary, the tyrant delights in serving the desires of his free will. He is unable to carry out a just war as his cause for war is not for well-ordered peace but for pride of self-love.

On the other end of the spectrum are Christian rulers. These, in the eyes of Augustine, are the best fit rulers for just wars and their authority stems from God. These rulers acknowledge Him as their source of power, not themselves. The Christian ruler is similar to the tyrant in that they both have free will and make a choice whether to use it for good or for evil. A good Christian leader, however, responds to handling temporal goods in an unselfish manner. He chooses to use his power for justice and peace that is

²⁷ Campbell, *War in*, 16.

not aimed at his version of peace but God's perfect peace. The good ruler acts justly in a time of war when he responds to aggression from the opposing side, aggression that begs for a just punishment, and when he has peace as his end.²⁸ When a Christian ruler resorts to arms under these conditions, then he is acting justly and in line with God's will.

This ruler is not perfect, as only God is, so he will err, but his intent is good, even if his judgements are not perfect. Augustine qualifies the Christian ruler by saying that he cannot simply be a Christian to be a good ruler, he must also be given the gift of ruling from God. This, Augustine says, is important if he is going to rule his citizens well. If he does not have a gift for ruling he could err more easily than a Christian leader who does possess this gift. Further, he says that "As for those who are endowed with true piety and who lead a good life, if they are skilled in the art of government, then there is no happier situation for mankind than that they, by God's mercy, should wield power."²⁹ God mercifully gifts power to a Christian of piety and of skillful governance to rule a state. When this leader wields this power, he does so leading a good life, making choices that are good in the eyes of God, not evil in his sight. This same idea applies to war. The good Christian ruler will go to war when necessity calls him, not because his heart desires power. Rather, his heart grieves at war. He hopes for goodness from his neighbor, as his soul is ordered towards goodness, whereas the tyrant hopes for aggression from his neighbor because he wishes for a war that will bring him more power and domination.³⁰

²⁸ Ibid., 16.

²⁹ Augustine, *City of God*, 214.

³⁰ Campbell, *War in*, 16.

Man's soul derives its life from God, whether a tyrant or a Christian leader. However, when this leader is a Christian ruler, his life is good because his life can only be good when God is active in it to create the good.³¹ In contrast, a tyrant's soul, while deriving its life from God, lives a bad life because it rejects God's goodness and turns towards wickedness and evil. It follows that a tyrant will use force to bring his own kind of peace whereas a good Christian ruler uses it as a means to obtain just peace. Also, good rulers will desire that their people direct their free wills towards God. Such rulers will try to make this the aim of their community rather than have them be distracted by war.³² The tyrant, in contrast, will use his citizens in war for his own gain, unconcerned with guiding their free will towards God.

It is important to note that Augustine was not arguing that there are only two kinds of rulers, rather that the tyrant and the Christian represent the two extremes of political authority. A political leader seeking glory rather than domination is not as dissipated as the tyrant but not as the good Christian ruler. This ruler is not the greatest, as he is not striving towards peace of God and justice, but he is also not striving towards the evil of his own self-love and domination.³³ This leader wants glory from war, for his name to be recognized among nations, which differs from a desire for power and domination. This is to say, there are many kinds of rulers and that are shown throughout history, but the best possible ruler would be the Christian ruler, who rules with a rightly-ordered soul that derives its life and objectives from God. The worst would be the tyrant,

³¹ Augustine, *City of God*, 511.

³² Campbell, *War in*, 20.

³³ Augustine, *City of God*, 212.

who uses his power for himself and for his own gains rather than the good of his community. Just as Augustine argues that there is a kind of spectrum of just wars, where some wars are more just than others, leaders can be put on a similar spectrum of justice.

The decision of rulers to go to war can be very difficult and complicated. Rulers must determine the justice of going to war and weigh if their decision for war is necessary and not according to their own desires. Peace must be their end, a peace that is not driven by corrupted free will but by justice according to and ordered to God. However, Augustine's reasoning applies not just to Christians but to non-Christians or pagan rulers. Leaders do not need to be Christian to take Augustine's arguments about just war seriously. While he does argue that the good Christian leader will enter the most just war, Augustine's principles about just war apply universally, as can be seen in the world today when authority figures make these kinds of decisions. Leaders go to war, a privation of peace, with the end of peace, and the authority figure who is right will do so only if it is worse to not enter war. Therefore, Augustine's argument for *jus ad bellum* is not limited to the Christian, rather it can be applied universally to all states.

The Role of the Individual in War

Now that the many elements of *jus ad bellum* have been discussed, it is now necessary to define what the individual's role and responsibility is in war, or *jus in bello*. Through the distinction between the justice to go to war and justice in war Augustine hopes to reconcile Christian convictions with participation in war. Citizens engage in the actions that stem from the strategy and policy of a leader, so what tactics they use along with their actions in war matter. As discussed earlier, there is a tension between the earthly city and the heavenly city. Christianity calls its people to obey secular authority

which may ask them to act according to the dictates of the world rather than in accordance with those of the heavenly city.

Augustine reconciles this apparent tension in the following way. In the beginning of his *City of God*, Augustine addresses the point that not all homicide is murder. “There are some” he argues, “whose killing God orders, either by law, or by an express command to a particular person at a particular time.”³⁴ Christians then must not worry about the killing of men in war, if, and only if, it is in accordance with God’s orders either by law or command. However, this must be qualified as if a leader orders an individual to slaughter women and children, for instance, the individual must not follow through with his commands as this killing would be an unjust action of the individual, regardless of the leader’s intentions. The authority of the leader exonerates soldiers from the moral responsibility of the justice of the war. But it does not free soldiers to act unjustly in war. It is in war that their moral responsibility lies.

In the world, Christians are called by the earthly city to defend their country and save their fellow countrymen fighting against their enemies. However, Augustine argues that when men enter into a war and carry out the commands of their ruler, they are not morally responsible for their actions as long as those actions are in the parameters of their orders and those orders are in accordance with the leader’s justice to go to war. If the orders are from a tyrant, the individual remains without moral conviction because he is following the orders of his ruler and if the commands are proportionate to the justice in war. “... one who owes a duty of obedience to the giver of the command does not himself ‘kill’—he is an instrument, a sword in its user’s hand... the commandment

³⁴ Ibid., 32.

forbidding killing was not broken by those who have waged wars on the authority of God...”³⁵ The individual is an instrument of war, such that his goal is not to kill, rather killing is a means to the end which is the ceasing of aggression by the enemy. It is a slippery slope to say that an individual is without any moral conviction if he follows orders, because though that is true to a point, he still is morally responsible for his actions according to the justice of the war.

Individuals do still have a moral duty on the battlefield and can be held liable for their actions. If they choose to use their free will and act outside of their commander’s orders they will be held responsible. The way in which the individual soldier remains innocent for his actions in battle is that he follows direct orders from his superior and does not act on his own accord, unless his commander’s orders are unjust in nature, such as killing many innocent, unarmed civilians. The soldier must obey the orders of God above the orders of the ruler, if the ruler has evil intentions. However, if the soldier is ordered to engage in combat with another army with proportionate force, this individual is not morally held responsible for killing another soldier. In this way, the force of war is the responsibility of the ruler and not of the soldier. The soldier is like a pawn, he is used by the ruler as a means to an end. Because of this, it is not his decision whether a war is moral or not, as he does not have the power to decide such a thing. If each soldier was charged with deciding whether a war was just or not, no war would ever come to fruition because everyone would have different opinions and convictions of the war. The soldier does not have a moral conviction to decide to fight or not, however if he is asked to renounce his faith or in any ways claim to not serve his God, then naturally this would be

³⁵ Ibid., 32.

a condition for not obeying authority.³⁶ Just like Daniel in the Bible, when there was a decree that no one could pray to the Lord, he did not obey because it was a direct evil that the authority was asking of him. So in war, if a direct evil is asked of the individual he must not obey as he must obey the precepts of God.

Just as a ruler decides to go to war for necessity, so the individual soldier must have the same outlook. If he goes to war with the intent to kill unjustly, he then is committing a sin. The soldier's free will must align with God's will and he must desire the peace of God not of evil. While he may be under authority that is not from a Christian leader and be called to a battle that is not just, his actions should align in accordance with the commands given to him. As long as his orders are not completely unjust, and his intentions are still good, then he is not committing a sin. The principle still applies that while his actions must align with his commands, the individual remains morally responsible if he chooses to follow commands that are morally unjust, commands that do not stem from necessity. He must intent to obey his earthly authority, as long as it is not in direct and clear opposition to God.

Augustine argues that it is important to consider an individual's conduct in war because there are just and unjust ways to act in war. When an individual soldier is getting ready to go to war, he should not "think of using the gift of God against God... The will should be concerned with peace and necessity with war, so that God might liberate us from necessity and preserve us in peace. Peace is not sought in order to provoke war, but war is waged in order to attain peace."³⁷ In this way, the soldier should

³⁶ Campbell, *War in*, 26.

³⁷ Corey and Daryl, *Origins of*, 61.

think about the end of the war he is fighting, so that he will use his ability of force in a way that achieves this end and this end only. Soldiers needs to think in terms of proportionality and discrimination in the specific military engagements in which the they fight rather than in the war itself. If their leader asks them to engage in an obviously immoral act like the killing of prisoners of war then they should refuse, as this is not a discriminate or proportional action. Not all of their actions in war are excused because they are under authority. They are innocent of the justice of the war as a whole, or *jus ad bellum*, but not actions in war, or *jus in bello*. The soldier's conduct should be that of benevolence, such that the welfare of the victims and conquered are a main concern of the soldier, "in this way, the biblical precepts remain active internally even while the external deeds of war seem harsh and cruel."³⁸

Necessity of Arms in War

Strong arms are often necessary to secure victory in war. The way in which men increase their empire is through conquering other peoples. Wicked men wage war in order to grow their power and domination over other kingdoms and communities. Augustine says that if these people remained peaceful, rather than trying to extend their realm, then the world would consist of very small, peaceable neighbors and be in concord with each other. However, this is not the reality of the world. The reality is that humans are fallen and desire power and because of this desire they attack other peoples. Thus, those who attack are those who are power-seekers, and those suffering attack are often those who must wage wars of necessity to fight the tyrant from his drive for power. It is

³⁸ Ibid., 57.

better, then, for a people to defend themselves in war against a ruler seeking domination than it is to remain in peace and let this domination come to fruition.³⁹

In order to defend against this aggression, weapons and arms are necessary. Augustine would say that it is better to defend yourself than to let the tyrant impose unjust peace upon you. This is why he calls just wars those of necessity; it is necessary to stop neighbors from their domination-seeking desires. Even if a nation trusts its neighbors, as Augustine said earlier about peace, one day they could be peaceful and the next they could change their mind. Nations and humans are unpredictable, and it is better to be safe than sorry and arm yourself. These arms and their use must, however, be proportionate and discriminate for Augustine to say they are more just. The use of these arms could be for defense, if a nation attacks you, or for offense, if a nation cuts off your water supply. Regardless if they are used for offensive or defensive purposes, they must be proportionate to the act committed against you and they must be discriminate so as not to purposefully injure or kill innocent, unarmed civilians.

Just conduct in war, *jus in bello*, is an essential aspect of the just war tradition. How individual soldiers act in war must be rightly ordered to God's will not the will of themselves. The weapons and use of weapons in war also must be discriminate and proportionate to have a more just war. Tactical weapons are used in war at the level of engagement and must be used in a just manner, so that they do not harm innocent civilians and also are not an excessive punishment to the wrong committed against them. When nuclear weapons come into play at the level of the individual, the level of tactical engagement, just use becomes even more significant and complex. However, it remains

³⁹ Augustine, *City of God*, 154.

that even when using these weapons, for Augustine, there must be proportionality and discrimination.

Modern Warfare

In the modern era, weapons of mass destruction have become an important part of the defensive tool that countries amass. These weapons did not exist in Augustine's time and they add a new and complicating element to the calculations of the justice to go to war and just conduct in war. What still remains true, though, is that Augustine bases his argument in his Christian faith, focusing his arguments towards God's nature and his will and perfect peace. These are the grounds for which he bases his just war thinking, so that man must be in accordance with God and at his mercy to be acting justly in all aspects of war, like the cause and conduct of it. However, he still does say that non-Christians can also fight wars more justly, as they simply would be behaving in accordance with the will of God whether they know it or not. World leaders today still establish pretexts for their uses of force, even leaders like Hitler. They know that they cannot use force without any kind of justification, but their justification exposes their awareness that there is a standard of justice. This spectrum of the justice of war that Augustine creates still stands today, even in the face of nuclear warfare. Augustine never thought that war was ever truly just on earth, as all men and nations are flawed and only in God is there perfect goodness and justice, but he did believe that some wars were more just than others. Men must not divert from God's nature and keep his will aligned with Him, so that when it comes to decisions of just cause and conduct of war, man will be able to do justice in the eyes of God.

Modern nuclear weapons make the discussion of *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello* even more complicated, as the distinction between the two may become murky. The distinction may remain more with the use of tactical nuclear weapons than with strategic, as tactical weapons are used in engagement and even tactical nuclear weapons have more ability to be discriminate and more proportionate than strategic weapons. Tactical weapons also are used by combatants, where strategic nuclear weapons are ordered to be used by leaders and the task of using them is carried out by very few soldiers. So then, is there a discrepancy between the justice to go to war and justice in war when dealing with nuclear war? The answer to this will be spelled out in more detail in the following chapters, however, overall, I do argue that there does remain a distinction between the two.

Now that the just war tradition of Augustine has been examined, it can now be applied to the only use of nuclear weapons. In particular, this thesis will consider Truman's decision to drop nuclear weapons on Japan at the end of World War II. What would Augustine say about this major event in world history? Augustine says that defending your state against the tyrannical rule of another is more just than letting that state take control over yours. Did Truman act within the parameters of the just war tradition when he decided to use these weapons against Japan? Was the use of these kinds of weapons just conduct according to Augustine? The following chapters seek to answer these questions.

CHAPTER TWO

Truman's Use of Atomic Bombs

On July 25th, 1945, Carl Spaatz, the commanding general of the Army Strategic Air Forces, was informed that “The 509 Composite Group, 20th Air Force will deliver its first special bomb as soon as weather will permit visual bombing after about 3 August 1945 on one of the targets: Hiroshima, Kokura, Niigata and Nagasaki.”⁴⁰ Handy, the chief of staff, went on to explain, “additional bombs will be delivered on the above targets as soon as ready by the project staff... further instructions will be issued concerning targets other than those listed.” The United States officially issued the plan to use atomic bombs in an attempt to end the atrocious war with Japan with the least amount of American casualties. This decision made in 1945 has stirred up much conversation in the past 70 years on the ethics or necessity to use these weapons of mass destruction on another state. Harry Truman, having only been president of the United States for a few months, faced much scrutiny and scorn from many who believe it was morally or strategically wrong to deploy the atomic bomb. This instance is the only in history of a state using this kind of force and strategy against another state. Dropping the bomb is considered to be inherently unjust and unethical and there is little debate about it. This chapter seeks to remedy this lack of debate by analyzing Truman's decision by applying Augustine's just war tradition to it.

⁴⁰ Michael Kort, *The Columbia Guide to Hiroshima and the Bomb* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 259.

From the beginning stages of the atomic bomb to its coming to fruition, many complicated and complex factors came into play. While Truman as president was the man who had the authority to deploy the atomic bomb, there were many other key players involved in its creation and the decision on how to use it in World War II. Truman, in fact, solely trusted his advisors on the subject as he did not consider himself a military strategist. But ultimately, the decision was his as commander and chief of the armed forces to drop the bomb on Hiroshima and then on Nagasaki. The consensus of many is that dropping the bomb on Japan was inherently unjust and there is little debate about it. This chapter, however, seeks to remedy this lack of debate and analyze this single case in history through Augustine's eyes. What came into play in the decision to use the bomb? Was the use of this atomic bomb necessary in this circumstance? If so, was it morally right? Was the decision to bomb these two cities just according to Augustine's just war tradition? The answer to these questions is answered in this chapter.

I argue that it ultimately was more just in this circumstance for Truman to use the atomic bombs to end the Pacific War than to choose against it. I also argue that Augustine would say Truman's decision of the use of an atomic bomb against Japan was just war. This chapter explores the justice of Truman's decision, weighing all the factors and decisions that led up to it. It is important to understand first the historical setting of the bomb and the war that was going on during the development of the bomb. It is also necessary to know who, besides Truman, were key players in the formation and political strategical use of the bomb. This chapter then moves into a discussion of war strategies of prominent states during WWII to see how the bomb fits into the political scene. Then,

the facts of bombing the two cities are discussed. Finally, there is a discussion of what Augustine would say about the bombing and Truman's decision.

Background to the Bomb

While discussion of the use of the first atomic bombs in history often centers around Truman, the beginning of the creation of this incredibly destructive and deadly weapon began under Roosevelt. In 1939, six years before the bomb was successfully crafted and detonated, Albert Einstein wrote a letter to FDR explaining that uranium could be turned into energy that if combined in a reaction, could produce an amount of power never seen before.⁴¹ Einstein also warned the president that German scientists were already at work using these same kind of materials and ideas. Roosevelt did not give much consideration to Einstein's letter besides creating an exploratory committee that gave a mere 6000 dollars to research on the topic, which equates to just over \$100,000 in 2017 dollars. However, the British also knew that Germany was in the midst of creating a bomb and therefore warned the US of their intelligence in the matter, turning Roosevelt's attention to the gravity of this news. At this point, the United States had not entered the war, though they knew it was imminent.

In 1941, Japan took the United States by surprise in attacking Pearl Harbor, while Germany declared war against the US, entering the US into the war and causing Roosevelt to approve the beginnings of the atomic bomb.⁴² This project became known as the Manhattan Project, headed by Brig. Gen. Leslie Groves and Dr. J. Robert

⁴¹ Wilson D. Miscamble C.S.C, *The Most Controversial Decision: Truman, the Atomic Bombs, and the Defeat of Japan* (United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 6.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 7.

Oppenheimer. Little did they know at the time that the 6000-dollar budget for research would turn into a 2-billion-dollar undertaking, which translates into 35 billion dollars today. Because Great Britain was allied with the US, it was naturally involved in the discussions of the development of the atomic bomb, but it was not involved in physically making the bomb. Churchill wanted the bomb to be a joint deal, to which Roosevelt agreed. These two superpower countries were allied in the war, after all, so it made sense for them to share information about a potential new strategic military power. They also agreed that neither side would share information with any 3rd party without the consent of the other. Both countries wanted to keep all information about the project top secret, as Germany also vied to create the same kind of weapon. What is noteworthy at the onset of the building of the bomb is that “Neither the British nor the American leader expressed any significant reservations about the new weapon and, while they never formally approved its use, an operating assumption emerged that if and when it was completed it would be directed against their Nazi foe.”⁴³ It is understandable that perhaps neither Churchill nor Roosevelt understood the potential influence and destruction this bomb would have in the international system, which is why they were not concerned with the use of it. It also is likely they did not envision the bomb ever becoming fully developed, as this was new territory for scientists and engineers and the likelihood that it could be successful was initially doubtful.

The scientists who created this bomb found that there were two potential fuels, one was U-235 and the other was plutonium. Each of these fuels needed different bomb designs. The one that used the U-235 fuel was named the “Thin Man” (later called the

⁴³ Ibid., 11.

“Little Boy”) while the one using plutonium was named the “Fat Man.”⁴⁴ The two bombs in the end were two different types—one based of uranium that was difficult to separate the fuel for but easy to make the explosive part, and one based of plutonium that was easy to create fuel for but more difficult to create the implosion mechanism.⁴⁵ While the brilliant minds who were creating the bomb understood the potential capacity it possessed, Roosevelt and Churchill did not fully grasp or understand it. They seemed to have a limited understanding of how powerful the atomic bomb could be if successful, and they did not see its potential to change the balance of the international system. Although, no matter how destructive the bomb was, the means of delivery would limit its effective range as intercontinental missiles did not exist at this time. They rather prepared their armies for conventional warfare to ensure they had enough force and might to take on the axis powers.

During the research and creation process, then current senator Truman attempted to find out more information about this project and how much money it was costing, however Secretary of War Henry Stimson told him to not ask more questions and to give up the topic. Truman, still curious mostly about government spending, pried a little more before backing off at Stimson’s command. Little did Truman know at that time he would be the leader to give the order to bomb Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

⁴⁴ The U-235 bomb was the original hope of the scientists. It involved a critical mass being assembled by one part of the fuel firing into a target that had the same material which would create a nuclear explosion. For plutonium, they found it worked better to use “shaped charges to implode or squeeze a sphere of plutonium into a critical mass.” Ibid., 19.

⁴⁵ Michael D. Gordin, *Five Days in August: How World War II Became a Nuclear War* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2007), 42-43.

Key Figures

While Truman was the president at the time of the Pacific War and the defeat of Japan through atomic force, many more important people were involved in the decision and process of going nuclear. It is important to note here that this thesis specifically analyzes the role of individuals in the bombing of Japan, rather than bureaucracies, because for Augustine, moral decisions are made through free will, which individuals possess, not political institutions. This applies to decisions made to go to war and in war.

The first individual was FDR, as he gave permission to begin the process of building the atomic bomb. FDR had no qualms about building the bomb, it appeared to him like it was another stronger weapon for the US to have at its disposal. The American strategy to war during his presidency and World War II became about gaining total victory but preserving American lives in doing so. He addressed the nation in a radio broadcast, as this was the main source of contact with the people at the time, by saying “in winning this war, there is just one way to guarantee the minimum of casualties—by seeing to it that, in every action, we have overwhelming material superiority.”⁴⁶ Both FDR and Truman shared the same ideal of limiting their own casualties in the war, as one would expect from most leaders of nations. It is quite likely, then, that FDR would have chosen the same path as Truman in deploying the bomb to end the war if he had lived that long. Truman would have had to take battle hardened soldiers who just won in Europe and ship them off to fight in Japan, which would likely lessen their chances of winning and heighten chances for many casualties. FDR most likely would have weighed this cost as well and ultimately came to the same conclusion as Truman on the

⁴⁶ Miscamble, *The Most Controversial Decision*, 14.

bomb. Although FDR was a man well loved by the citizens of the United States for his warm character and bright personality, he more or less kept the American people in the dark about his goals for post-war peace. He knew the US must work with the Soviets in figuring out how to deal with Germany after the war, something the American people may not be happy about.

Roosevelt not only kept the American people in the dark, he also kept most of his advisers and close associates distant. When Truman became his Vice President in 1944, Truman rarely saw Roosevelt, meeting with him very few times to discuss any of Roosevelt's plans domestic and abroad. Some argue this was because Roosevelt did not want anyone else to have any control over policy making, but it also could be due to Roosevelt preferring to be independent in decision-making, as he was the head of the country and that was his job.⁴⁷ Because of this isolationism, when he died, Truman came into office barely knowing Roosevelt's policy intentions. He wanted to carry on Roosevelt's legacy and appeared to try and make decisions that were in harmony with what Roosevelt would have done. FDR was a critical figure in the beginning stages of the atomic bomb and the initial thoughts on its use in the war. It is hard to say if even by his death he understood the implications of this weapon, which makes it difficult to argue whether he would have chosen to use it in the way Truman did or if he would have second thoughts about it, but considering Truman's desire to continue the work of Roosevelt, along with Roosevelt's seeming unwaveringness in using it as a way to end the war, I argue that Roosevelt would have chosen the same course of action as Truman and his advisers. Roosevelt holds some moral and ethical responsibility for the bomb.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 25.

Another important figure is Winston Churchill, as he worked closely with Roosevelt and even initiated conversation with him about the atomic bomb. For Churchill, it was important to be on the same page as the US in terms of foreign policy, particularly during the years of the War. Churchill provided the US with German intelligence that got the ball rolling on atomic bomb research. He made sure that Roosevelt promised to keep him on the same page and consider him in all decisions. He also played a major role in international diplomacy throughout the war and into the defeat of Germany and Japan. Churchill, like Roosevelt and Truman, did not hesitate about the use of the new bomb, his concern was with how it would best be used, not whether it would be used. He was a proponent of the bomb, wanting to see its creation brought to fruition, as he was a supporter of air force seen through Britain's air strikes on Germany throughout the war. Churchill, while not being a part of the country that built and deployed the bomb, holds responsibility for its creation and its use.

Roosevelt's Secretary of War during World War II, Henry Stimson, played an important role in the atomic bomb discussion, though he usually found himself opposing the views of his fellow advisors and his president. Being the Secretary of War, he was one of few people who knew the extent of the Manhattan Project, and because he knew so much, he knew FDR needed to decide whether to keep this project a secret if it were completed or to tell the world, as a show of freedom of science and of access.⁴⁸ While having an amicable relationship with Roosevelt, Stimson did not get along as well with Truman. From the Senate to the Vice Presidency to ultimately the Presidency, Stimson and Truman did not see eye to eye on issues as they had very different backgrounds and

⁴⁸ Ibid., 18.

ways of thinking. Stimson believed Truman was a self-interested politician, which is problematic when trying to collaborate on important matters. However, especially once Truman became president, the pair were able to work together while having different opinions on matters of foreign and even domestic policy.

Soon into Truman's presidency, Stimson briefed him on "an immense project that was underway—a project looking to the development of a new explosive of almost unbelievable power."⁴⁹ As Roosevelt kept Truman in the dark on matters, the former did not have much information on the bomb before this briefing, besides what he had inferred from Stimson a few years prior. Stimson continued to be a key player in the matter of the atomic bomb in the months following, meeting with Truman again in April of 1945 to discuss the Manhattan Project in more detail and explain the implications and reality of the power of the bomb. He even said that "within four months, we shall in all probability have completed the most terrible weapon ever known in human history, one bomb of which could destroy a whole city."⁵⁰

Stimson originally knew more about the power of this weapon than his superiors, and, because of this understanding and his stance on foreign policy, proved wary of the physical use of the weapon eventually against Japan. He came to Truman many times during the months that the bomb was nearing completion, fighting for an alternative to the bomb as he worried that it would have a major impact in the international system. He believed that the US could reach an agreement with Japan in 1945 rather than using the bomb to destroy its cities, as Stimson knew the power and might of the atomic bomb. He

⁴⁹ Harry S. Truman, *Memoirs, Vol. 1, Year of Decisions* (New York: Doubleday, 1955), 20.

⁵⁰ Miscamble, *Controversial Decision*, 32.

also worried about the bomb's implications on the US relations with the Soviet Union. Stimson, like Roosevelt and Churchill, was concerned not with the bomb's use but rather with the possible implications of it on US relations with other countries.⁵¹ Being knowledgeable from the beginning of the project and seeing it through to the end, though with some hesitation, makes Stimson a key player in the use of the atomic bomb.

Someone who is arguably more significant than Stimson and Churchill in these few years, yet someone who is often overlooked, is James Byrnes. Truman almost nominated him for Roosevelt's VP before Roosevelt asked Truman himself to run on his ticket. It is clear even before Truman took office as president that he had high respect for Byrnes, and he proved this respect and trust throughout the Pacific War as he fully relied on Byrnes's expertise and insight on foreign matters. Once it became more apparent that the bomb was nearing completion and may be successful after all, Truman appointed an Interim Committee to consider the implications and unknowns of the bomb, and appointed Byrnes as his personal representative on the committee. He had so much trust in Byrnes that he did not take part in the committee, rather he waited for Byrnes to give the committee's conclusions to him. Besides being on this committee and eventually being selected for Truman's Secretary of State, Byrnes also served previously as the Senate majority leader, a Supreme Court Justice, and the director of the Office of War Mobilization and Reconversion (OWMR). Some argue that he was a better politician than FDR, as he played a crucial role in the development of American policy through all of his roles, specifically as Secretary of State during World War II and in the Pacific.

⁵¹ Ibid., 70.

Compared to Truman's relationship with Stimson, Byrnes and Truman seemed always to be on the same page on every issue that arose, such as their shared concern for domestic affairs and the wellbeing of the United States over international concerns. Byrnes, unlike Stimson, was a strong proponent of the full use of the atomic bomb. On the issue of defeating Japan, he said, "both the public and their representatives would be outraged if the Truman administration later were shown to have displayed any reluctance to win the war with Japan as quickly as possible by foregoing the use of this weapon."⁵² From his perspective, the American people would be upset if the administration could have saved American lives and chose not to. Byrnes was a forceful hand with a noteworthy amount of influence over Truman, so when the bomb was finally complete, he advised it be used as soon as possible against Japan in one of their important industrial and military cities, to which Truman agreed. Every decision that needed to be made, Byrnes was at the head of it, determining the best choice for Truman. He was an experienced politician and offered wise council to Truman throughout his presidency, having incredible influence over the presidency. It seemed almost that Byrnes was the brains behind the whole operation while Truman was the figurehead, doing exactly what Byrnes said. He was intent in using the bomb as political leverage and diplomacy between the US and the Soviets. He was also concerned about US relations with the Soviets after the war, as he saw difficulty in an amicable relationship as the two countries had very different ideologies, so having the arsenal of the atomic bomb in their back pocket was an advantage. Byrnes was dedicated to the American people and his priority,

⁵² Ibid., 43.

like Truman's, was saving American lives. He therefore advocated for the use of the bomb, knowing its destructive power in order to force the Japanese into surrender.⁵³

The most well-known politician involved in bombing Japan is Harry Truman. As Vice President under Roosevelt, Truman hardly knew about the bomb and its creation, as Roosevelt did not speak with Truman about his plans or visions for issues, in particular, ones relating to how to end the War. When Truman suddenly ascended to the office of the President after the sudden death of Roosevelt, he showed a desire to continue the work of Roosevelt and carry on his legacy, despite being unsure of Roosevelt's vision for the country. This intentionality in Truman's personality followed in the way he ran his presidency, by being exacting and prudent in his decisions. Some describe President Truman as "a person of tough fiber, plain, warm manners, direct approach, and earthy humor, who possessed both courage and the capacity to make a decision."⁵⁴

Truman did not appear to be highly concerned with the bomb and its potential at the beginning of his presidency. This is shown by his purposeful lack of involvement in the Interim Committee, as he did not attend any meetings, rather appointed a personal representative. Truman rather was heavily focused on the creation of the UN, as he saw a lack of international organization and wanted the big powers of the world to be united under one entity. He focused his attention on this project much more than he did on the bomb initially. However, the increasingly violent war in the Pacific forced Truman to shift gears to concentrate on the construction of the atomic bomb, as it was possible that the US could try and use it against Germany. But Truman knew that the bomb would not

⁵³ Ibid., 70-73.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 27.

be finished before Germany would be defeated and so he chose to not use it as a threat against Germany, rather he saved it for the threat of Japan.⁵⁵ This instance also shows that Truman used discretion in his choice of threatening nuclear destruction. It seems that even if the bomb was ready, Germany was already headed towards defeat and using the threat of an atomic bomb was not necessary. As we see later on, Japan's defeat was a completely different circumstance.

Though Hiroshima and Nagasaki are considered tragedies of mass destruction, at the time, Truman and the Interim Committee saw the bomb as the best and *least* harmful solution to the problem of Japan. Truman analyzed the committee's conclusions and was forced to weigh two options: to keep conventional warfare and invasion of Japan and risk thousands more American lives, or to deploy a weapon that probably would incite Japanese surrender and save all those American lives. "Moral complexities or future diplomatic implications failed to complicate their straightforward thinking. The atomic bomb might possibly save American lives... This remained, throughout, the essential motivation that guided the decision to use the horrific weapon against Hiroshima and Nagasaki..."⁵⁶

From the beginning of his presidency, Truman valued American lives over everything. It appeared that there was no forethought about the morality of the bomb, rather it was a straightforward and seemingly simple decision for the president to make. What made his decision even more justified was the increasing level of violence and

⁵⁵ The bomb didn't have any role in his foreign policy goals with the USSR and Stalin, but it did come into play when the two factors of Japan's resilience and the bomb's successful testing were present after the fall of the USSR.

⁵⁶ Miscamble, *Most Controversial Decision*, 44.

destruction of the Pacific War, combined with the refusal of Japan to back down as a part of their philosophy of war. Both on sea and land, Japan gave the US tough losses and many casualties as they proved they were going to fight to the bitter end.

As President, Truman saw these losses, together with Japan's war strategy, as something that could not continue and needed to end. He, along with Great Britain, demanded unconditional surrender, which Japan vehemently refused as their government wanted to stay in power and their army was trained to never retreat in war. Listening to his advisers and agreeing with them, Truman made the ultimate decision to command the bomb's release on Hiroshima in early August. While many important figures influenced this decision, ultimately as the leader of the United States, the responsibility fell on Truman to pull the trigger for the release of the bomb. One can argue that his advisers and cabinet forced his hand or made him their puppet to get their way of using the bomb, but Truman is responsible because none of these men had the authority that Truman did. Leaders, as Augustine says, must have just authority to make decisions in war. The question of whether Truman's decision in war (*jus in bello*) was just according to Augustine will be discussed further on in this chapter. It is important to note, however, that the distinction shown in the first chapter between *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello* becomes more complicated when dealing with nuclear weapons. It seems, rather, that there is hardly a distinction between those who decide to use force and those who employ force on the battlefield. Now, it is necessary to discuss the strategy of war of the United States, Japan, Great Britain, and the USSR to further grasp why Truman decided to use the atomic bomb.

War Strategy

War strategy of different states is an essential part to the outcome of war. For the Pacific War, the strategies of the US and Japan in particular were very different and at odds with each other. The strategies of the USSR and Great Britain also came into play in this war, but in a lesser degree of importance. The US political strategy began with Roosevelt whose goal it was to defeat American isolationism that existed for a long time and create relations with the international system. Truman wanted to continue this vision, as he also wanted to see isolationism replaced with peace relations and alliances with other countries. Truman participated in war himself in World War I and therefore had an interest in military and increased the defense spending at the beginning of his term. He enjoyed domestic policy much more than foreign policy, as he did not wish to attend the Potsdam conference in Berlin.

The basis of United States foreign policy at this time was a demand for unconditional surrender, that states must surrender with no concessions given to them. Roosevelt began this when he called for unconditional surrender of the Axis powers, and Truman continued it with Japan. “Truman inherited from Roosevelt the strategy of keeping American losses to a minimum, and he was committed to carrying it out for the remainder of the war.”⁵⁷ The goal was least American casualties and the means was the greatest weapons. Officials did not question the use of the atomic bomb, as it fell in line with American foreign approach to war that was created by Roosevelt and which Truman continued.

⁵⁷ J. Samuel Walker, *Prompt and Utter Destruction: Truman and the Use of the Atomic Bombs against Japan* (North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 9.

Strategically speaking, the United States, as well as Great Britain, built up their defenses and military forces in the wake of the war. The US spent much of its money on the army, including the atomic bomb. American citizens were in the dark about their tax dollars funding the weapon that wiped out two major Japanese cities, however, a significant portion of their tax money funded the research and building of the bombs. Truman, having experience in war, was well versed on construction of defense infrastructure and knew the US needed to be well-prepared for war. Along with the army, the US thrived in the air and at sea with their aircrafts and submarines. Air strikes were a large part of their war strategy as they fought Germany and Japan. The US fought these enemies on all fronts, as Truman vowed to fight the war with all vigor they possessed.

After working with the Soviet Union and Great Britain to defeat Germany, the US turned its attention to defeating Japan in the increasingly brutal Pacific Theatre. Japan had a hand in bringing the US into the war initially by bombing Pearl Harbor, and the situation spiraled down from there. Initially, the bomb was never discussed in strategy to defeat Japan. Rather, they tried strategies like tightening the naval blockade on Japanese islands, preparing for invasion on land, and massive conventional bombing assaults on Japanese cities through the air.⁵⁸ These strategies proved ineffective to damage Japanese forces or spirit. The eventual decision to use the bomb is discussed later, but once he decided to use the bomb, Truman had to choose in which city to deploy it.

⁵⁸ Miscamble, *Most Controversial Decision*, 46.

Truman was advised to attack a city that was a “vital war plant employing a large number of workers and closely surrounded by workers’ houses.”⁵⁹ One strategy given to him was to inflict the most psychological pain on the Japanese by bombing the ancient city of Kyoto, however the city suffered damage from air strikes and the US wanted to see what exact destruction the bomb caused as a way of shocking the Japanese so he chose Hiroshima as the first target. Truman clearly thought out the implications of deploying the bomb and the specific ramifications of each city choice and the odds of it ending the war. Truman wanted to inflict the most pain and destruction on the Japanese in order to incite surrender, something that seemed so far from the Japanese minds. The situation in Japan became so horrendous and detrimental to US lives that Truman believed the bomb was the best choice of strategy to increase the odds of a Japanese unconditional surrender. The US did not want to give any concessions to their enemy as they were such a brutal and authoritarian state, they did not deserve any sympathies or compromises from the US.

Truman’s main goal of preserving American lives at the smallest cost remained throughout the war. He truly believed the bomb was the best course of action for achieving his goals. He even wrote to his wife, “I’ve gotten what I came for—Stalin goes to war August 15 with no strings on it... I’ll say that we’ll end the war a year sooner now, and think of the kids who won’t be killed! That’s the important thing.”⁶⁰ Truman had a predicament: he did not want to make America look weak by compromising with Japan and taking back his unconditional surrender demand, but the goal of his war strategy was

⁵⁹ Ibid., 43.

⁶⁰ Harry S. Truman, 1884-1972; Truman, Bess Wallace; Ferrell, Robert H., *Dear Bess: the letters from Harry to Bess Truman, 1910-1959* (New York: Norton, 1983), 519.

to save American lives at the least cost and not giving in meant more American lives lost. The atomic bomb then became the perfect solution. Though eventually understanding the destructive ability of the bomb, Truman did not waiver in his determination. The bomb solved his predicament by saving American lives and inciting Japanese surrender. This strategy made sense according to this aspect of American war strategy.

One other significant part of the US strategy was American diplomacy relating to Truman's prioritization of achieving peace and organization between states, which also involved his atomic diplomacy, or rather lack thereof. One great success of Truman was his significant role in the creation of the UN as he saw it may be a good influence on creating peace and ending WWII. Truman "brought to the presidency a firm belief that a peaceful postwar world depended upon the adoption by the US of world leadership in both the political and economic spheres. He saw the establishment and operation of a new world organization as crucial... he expected to work in collaboration with the wartime allies in shaping the postwar international structure."⁶¹ When Roosevelt was president, he considered discussing the atomic bomb creation with the Soviets, but he never did. He kept the creation of the bomb a secret until his death.

Truman continued Roosevelt's plan of secrecy and did not use the threat of an atomic bomb to gain political advantage with the Soviets particularly. Nevertheless, whether he intended to or not, the use of the bomb against Japan had a powerful effect on the Soviets. However, Truman could have created some kind of atomic diplomacy and benefited from getting an advantage among the powers of the international system. Rather, he eventually told the leader of the Russians at a conference that he more or less

⁶¹ Miscamble, *Most Controversial Decision*, 26-27.

had an amazingly destructive weapon that was almost assured to provoke Japanese unconditional surrender. Not using the possession of this weapon as leverage in the international system was a significant choice by both Roosevelt and Truman, but ultimately it worked out for the United States and its relations with other states.

The Japanese, like the US, built up their military on land, sea, and air. Their devotion to victory was unmatched by other countries, as Japan taught their army to not retreat or surrender. “The indispensable qualification for high command [in the Japanese military] was a willingness to fight heedless of circumstances, and to avow absolute faith in victory.”⁶² Once the war had reached 1944, the US had seemingly mortally wounded Japan’s fleet on the water. On land, the battlefield became “killing grounds of unusual ferocity.”⁶³ Japanese war strategy was not one of defense, rather when their enemy attacked harder, they fought back with more ferocious and brutal war tactics. For example, when the US attacked Japan hard on the water and in the air, Japan came back by using *kamikaze* attacks on American ships.⁶⁴ These attacks significantly increased American casualties in the war and naturally alarmed Truman whose primary goal it was to save American lives. By 1945 the Japanese still were not backing down and the war continued to become more intense and difficult. The Japanese attitude towards war was contempt at surrender and willingness to commit suicide if it meant hurting the enemy in

⁶² Max Hastings, *Retribution: The Battle for Japan, 1944-1945* (New York: Random House Inc., 2008), 58.

⁶³ Eric Bergerud, “No Quarter: The Pacific Battlefield,” *Historically Speaking* 3, no. 5 (June 2002): 9.

⁶⁴ *Kamikaze* attacks a Japanese war strategy where Japanese soldiers ran suicidal air strikes against their enemy vessels (over 3,000 Japanese kamikaze pilots died during WWII).

the process. Following in this mindset, the terms of unconditional surrender were out of the question, as that is even worse than surrender with compromises.

In 1945, the Japanese ambassador Sato corresponded with foreign minister Togo saying that Japan should surrender to the enemy to end the war as Japan knew eventually some kind of surrender was in their future. However, following in Japanese traditional war strategy, Togo replied to this advice saying “with regard to unconditional surrender... we are unable to consent to it under any circumstances whatsoever. Even if the war drags on and it becomes clear that it will take much more bloodshed, the whole country as one man will pit itself against the enemy in accordance with the Imperial Will so long as the enemy demands unconditional surrender.”⁶⁵ This mentality of the foreign minister on ending the Pacific War displays Japan’s attitude as a whole towards war. Compared to Truman, who prioritized saving American lives over anything else, the Japanese put their national structure and saving of the emperor’s seat above the lives of their citizens.

Even after the bomb exploded on Hiroshima, half of the emperor’s advisory council still opposed unconditional surrender, saying they wanted to gain more surrender terms like no foreign occupation and self-disarmament. Once the next atomic bomb dropped on Nagasaki, members of the council continued to defy other members saying Japan could not surrender. However, after suffering two incredible blows and utter destruction of major Japanese cities, the emperor finally gave in and agreed to unconditional surrender. “He came to understand that the atomic bomb undermined ‘the fundamental premise’ of *Ketsu-Go* ‘that the US would have to invade Japan to secure a

⁶⁵ Miscamble, *Most Controversial Decision*, 65.

decision' in the war. Ultimately, the atomic bombs allowed the emperor and the peace faction in the Japanese government to negotiate an end to the war."⁶⁶ Throughout the war Japan suffered through conventional air strikes, immense damage to cities, and lack of food and daily supplies because of naval blockades, yet continuously the military leaders and the Japanese government refused to give any concession and continued to fight, getting more and more brutal and cruel as the war went on. The atomic bomb proved to be the key to cutting through the Japanese resistance and forcing unconditional surrender.

During World War II, Great Britain wanted to be sure of their relationship with the US and that they were on the same page in terms of strategy and defense. Churchill, as mentioned before, told Roosevelt that he wanted inclusion in all decisions regarding the bomb even before it had been created. He wanted to ensure that Britain was not left in the dark on issues regarding the Axis powers, and even gave their intelligence surveillance on Germany to the US to help them. Great Britain also strategically used air strikes against Germany and had a very strong air force power. Churchill was a proponent of the atomic bomb's use. In the war against Japan, Britain took a backseat approach which left the US to deal mostly with them. While supporting the US, they did not put manpower into this war as they did with Germany. The US is credited with the defeat of Japan in history more than Britain or the Soviet Union as they are the country that physically defeated Japan in the Pacific War. While fully supporting the US, Britain is partially responsible for the deployment of the bomb as Churchill aided Truman in issuing statements warning Japan of the bomb and demanding surrender.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 112-113.

The Soviet Union, on the other hand, did not become involved in the war against Japan until the summer of 1945. The US did not necessarily need the help of the SU, but their entrance into the war only showed Japan the force behind the Allied powers. In August 1945 Stalin officially declared war on Japan, after the US bomb Hiroshima. Stalin knew the US had an atomic bomb and encouraged Truman to use it against Japan to end the war. Like Great Britain, the Soviet Union and Stalin supported the use of the atomic bomb, making them somewhat responsible for its deployment on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The Ending of World War II

On July 16, 1945 the first atomic bomb in history was successfully detonated in New Mexico while Truman was at the Potsdam Conference. Excited about the news, Truman did not think twice about its use on Japan, even as he understood further the destructive power of the bomb. He wrote in his diary,

I have told Sec. Of War, Mr. Stimson, to use it so that military objectives and soldiers and sailors are the target and not women and children... even if the Japs are savages, ruthless, merciless, and fanatic, we as the leader of the world for the common welfare cannot drop this terrible bomb on... Kyoto or Tokyo... we will issue a statement asking the Japs to surrender and save lives. I'm sure they will not do that, but we will have given them a chance.⁶⁷

Truman's sentiments about the distinct target of the bomb and his doubtfulness of Japanese surrender show he did not want to end innocent lives. Rather, he wanted to target military personnel and infrastructure hoping it influenced surrender, showing his desire for discrimination. He also clearly saw the United States as a leader or example of ethics and value for life among all the states and therefore ensured his decision of which

⁶⁷ Ibid., 71.

cities to bomb was most ethical given the circumstances. Truman was not bombing them out of spite or because he thought they deserved harsh punishment for their actions, rather he was very discriminate in choosing the targets for the reason that they would be least likely to hurt non-combatants and most successful in hurting the military and their arsenals. He saw that even the threat of this incredible destruction was unlikely to sway Japanese war strategy. In this reflection, Truman also demonstrates discrimination in his choice, which is an important aspect of just war for Augustine. Truman could have chosen targets that were much more devastating to civilian life and less related to military supply. However, he strategically chose target cities that were known to have military arsenals and would be militarily detrimental to the Japanese. This use of discrimination is a key factor in how Truman's decision to deploy atomic bombs understandable and more just.

In preparing for the bomb strike, the engineers and pilots agreed it should not be assembled until it reached the air in fear that it would explode during takeoff. Their chaplain prayed that "armed with Thy strength may they bring this war to a rapid end."⁶⁸ It is clear it was the aim of the military as well to bring an end to the war and save the lives of their people. The statement released by Truman warning of the coming destruction did not worry the Japanese, who continued to fight vigorously against the Allied powers. Once the bomb exploded on Hiroshima, Truman did not fear bombing another city, as Japan did not surrender. He wanted to show that the US had an unlimited supply of these bombs to make Japan fear them. He even warned Japanese citizens to flee the cities in order to save their lives. Basically, the message sent by the US was one

⁶⁸ Ibid., 85.

of “surrender before your whole country is wiped off the earth.” It must be clear, though, that Truman did not want to bomb these cities or these people, however Truman found it was the most ethical way to end the war given the circumstances.

Finally, as discussed before, the emperor submitted to the Potsdam demands of unconditional surrender on 15 August. Still, in his announcement, the emperor did not use words of defeat, but rather made himself sound as though he was submitting for Japanese interest, showing further the unwillingness in the attitudes of the Japanese to be defeated.⁶⁹ The surrender became official on September 2, 1945 on the USS Missouri.

Truman’s Intentions and Justice According to Augustine

In bombing Hiroshima, 80,000 people died. In the bombing of Nagasaki, 45,000 died instantly and around the same number of people were injured or died later from the lasting effects of the atomic bomb. Some argue that effects of the atomic bomb, such as the radiation that remains in the air, still exist today and impact Japanese society. However, even if this is true, still more people would have been killed if the atomic bomb was not used at this point in the war. The Japanese made it evidently clear that they had no plans of backing down and even showed their will to increase violence and brutality. FDR, before the bomb existed, proposed a plan for US troops to fight their way across the island, likely causing a great amount of casualties in the process with no guarantee they could even make it across. The bomb gave a guarantee of success in destroying the city and ensuring American lives. Even after bombing two cities, some people thought that the US should continue to bomb Japan. However, Truman said:

⁶⁹ Ibid., 106.

I know that Japan is a terribly cruel and uncivilized nation in warfare but I can't bring myself to believe that, because they are beasts, we should act in the same manner... for myself, I certainly regret the necessity of wiping out whole populations because of the 'pigheadedness' of the leaders of a nation and, for your information, I am not going to do it until it is absolutely necessary... my objective is to save as many American lives as possible but I also have a humane feeling for the women and children of Japan.⁷⁰

This sentiment of the president is significant when determining his mindset about the atomic bomb's use. It is clear that his intentions with the bomb was not primarily to cause harm, particularly to the innocent, but rather to end the war swiftly and cause the least amount of not only American lives, but also Japanese lives. It is argued that many more Japanese soldiers and innocent civilians would have been killed or injured had the war dragged on and the atomic bomb was not used.

Truman believed that simply because the enemy was cruel and brutal, that did not justify the cruelty and brutality back, rather he believed that the Japanese brought the use of the atomic bomb upon themselves as the necessary force to end the war. Truman said it so well that he did not want to use the bomb to destroy a whole population because of the choices of the leaders, but it was absolutely necessary in his eyes to use it and it was the best option. He was clear that it is not right or desired to kill innocent people, but the other option was the loss of thousands upon thousands of not just American lives, but also Japanese lives. The US would have probably won the war regardless, but many say the casualties could reach over 200,000 Japanese alone if the bomb was not used.

Truman did not sit down and ponder whether it was ethical or just to use the bomb against Japan, but he prioritized American lives and in using the bomb probably saved Japanese lives, too. Another way it is clear that Truman did not want to kill innocent

⁷⁰ Ibid., 100.

people is in his choice of where the bomb exploded. He and his advisers chose Hiroshima as the target because it was a military headquarters, communications center, and an assembly place for Japanese troops. He did not want to choose cities that contained many women and children, as they were not in the military and were innocent lives.

It is important to note that none of Truman's advisors, like Byrnes or Stimson, nor his predecessor Roosevelt, nor countries like Great Britain or the Soviet Union, opposed the use of the weapon against Japan. In a way, they are all responsible in part as they agreed and advised Truman to make the decision on how to use the bomb against Japan. But what would Augustine say about the atomic bomb and its use on Hiroshima and Nagasaki?

In talking about war, Augustine is a big proponent of discrimination of force, something that was brought up by the Japanese when defending themselves against the use of the bomb after the war. They claimed Hiroshima was not a military target and that the city lacked any kind of fortification. They said that the bomb was indiscriminate in nature, showing that "the zone damage spread over a wide area and all persons within this area, without discrimination as the belligerents and non-belligerents and irrespective of the sex or age, were killed or wounded by the blast and radiated heat."⁷¹ Critics agree with this sentiment, saying that the bomb took out a whole city, rather than just the military or its infrastructure. However, there is a distinction between the discriminate use of atomic bombs and "their employment for discriminate objectives"⁷² On this point, I argue

⁷¹ Ibid., 96.

⁷² Paul Ramsey, *The Just War: Force and Political Responsibility* (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1983), 58.

Augustine would agree the bomb is indiscriminate and did not separate innocent citizens from the military in taking out an entire city. However, simply because the bomb was not completely discriminate does not necessarily mean it wasn't just in Augustine's eyes.

One commentator asked the question, "If the atomic bombs shortened the war, averted the need for a land invasion, saved countless more lives on both sides of the ghastly conflict than it cost, and brought to an end the Japanese brutalization of the conquered peoples of Asia, does this make their use moral?"⁷³ I argue that Augustine would say, given the circumstances, that because the use of the bomb was seen as the absolutely necessary solution to accomplish all these things, there was just cause for using the bomb against Japan. No precedent existed for Truman to follow when deploying the atomic bomb, however he saw it as a just force in war to save lives and end the war. Japan was ruled by a brutal emperor in a corrupt monarchy, and the living conditions in the state were rough for citizens. Many decisions made by this monarchy were not just, particularly their decisions to go to war and in war against their enemies. The attack on Pearl Harbor brought the US into the war, and Augustine would say that the US had just cause to go to war with Japan as a wrong was committed against the US. Augustine says that the wrong must have been so egregious that lenience would not be beneficial to either parties, and this instance of Pearl Harbor could not be ignored, making it necessary for the US to enter the war, according to Augustine.⁷⁴

⁷³ Ibid., 115.

⁷⁴ David D. Corey and Charles, J. Daryl, *The Just War Tradition: Augustine* (Wilmington: ISI Books, 2012), 58.

The force and kind of tactics used against the United States by Japan were cruel and brutal, and just force was required to combat them to achieve the end of the war, which was peace. Truman wanted peace and the least amount of American lives lost in achieving it, as peace is the end of war. The war declared by the US was a war of necessity, not desire, and it continued this way until it ended. Augustine says that the end of war is peace, and that the actions of leaders in war to gain this peace must be just as well. Truman demanding the use of the bomb, I argue, was a just use of weapons and authority in war as he saw it was necessary to defeat Japan. Though some argue it was evil, it also can be argued that it was a necessary evil, the lesser of two evils. Although many lives were lost in the bombing of these two cities, the bomb was necessary force to compel immediate surrender by Japan. Truman not only saved American lives but he kept the loss of Japanese lives down as well. The use of firepower to soften up areas before sending in US troops to keep casualties low would have actually killed tens of thousands of Japanese civilians. Moreover, because the army invading Japan would have just come from Europe, as mentioned earlier, they would have been risking their lives unnecessarily after having just defeated Germany. “It is the unnecessary infliction of human suffering and the wanton destruction of property that is opposed, not only by the principle of humanity but by military necessity as well.” In this thinking, then, it was justified for the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, as it was Truman’s honest conviction at the time of action. “The fault in this action was in its goal or purpose, not only in the use made of indiscriminate means.”⁷⁵

⁷⁵ Ramsey, *The Just War: Force and Political Responsibility*, 58.

One critic, Admiral Leahy, said that “in being the first to use it we had adopted an ethical standard common to the barbarians of the Dark Ages... a modern type of barbarism is not worthy of Christian man.”⁷⁶ While he is correct that the US, in using this weapon for the first time, adopted a standard in war that atomic bombs are a part of warfare, he is wrong that it is not worthy of Christian man. A Christian man can fight in wars and not compromise their beliefs, and the use of an atomic bomb does not necessarily defy their Christian values. If the use is determined to align with a more just war, then they are not compromising their moral Christian values. The use of the bomb in World War II was not unjust, given the circumstances, as it was just force against a country that planned to continue until the bitter end and cost countless lives of their own people as well as their enemies. It is important to note again that Augustine does not believe any war is truly just, rather that some wars can be more just than others. So, in this case, Augustine would have probably said this use of nuclear weapons was more towards a just war rather than unjust war.

While the use of the atomic bombs is still highly debated, it is interesting that no atomic bomb has been used since WWII. There have been threats made in the international system, as many countries now claim to possess nuclear power, yet Hiroshima and Nagasaki remain the sole example of the destructive power of atomic force. Truman and his advisers, as well as Great Britain and the Soviet Union, remain responsible for the bomb. Truman, as the leader and authority figure of the United States holds the main responsibility for the bomb’s deployment. He pulled the trigger and for the rest of his life and into history is highly critiqued for his decision.

⁷⁶ Miscamble, *Most Controversial Decision*, 115.

Deciding to use the atomic bomb more likely than not saved countless lives in the long run and brought an end to possibly the most gruesome war fought in American history. Truman's main objective was to save American lives, along with Japanese lives, and he decided the best course of action that would accomplish this and end the war was to deploy the bomb. He discriminately chose the two cities, trying to ensure the least amount of civilian casualties. According to Augustine's just war tradition, Truman acted justly in his decision to attack Hiroshima and Nagasaki to bring peace to the international system. In the next chapter, there will be a discussion of the new kinds of bombs that have been produced since the time of WWII, to analyze whether there are more just bombs than others and what Augustine would say about these.

CHAPTER THREE

The New Nuclear Age

The previous chapter expounded upon why it was just of the United States, according to Augustine's just war tradition, to deploy its nuclear weapons on Japan to end World War II. It is now important to turn to the current state of nuclear weapons and the theories surrounding them. The bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki occurred nearly 75 years ago, a time when the United States proved itself to be the foremost power in terms of possessing extensive nuclear arsenal. This instance of the use of nuclear weapons brought about an era of prominence of nuclear arsenals and their implications in international relations. Until 1949, the US was the only country with nuclear weapons. However, in 1949, the Soviets went nuclear, significantly changing international relations. The advent of the hydrogen bomb, a bomb that is 3,000 times more destructive than the bombs used on Japan, also has a significant impact on relations between states, today. Important theories have been developed on nuclear weapons, such as deterrence theory and counterforce strategy. This chapter examines both the arguments of deterrence theory and of counterforce strategy and how they differ. It also explains what Augustine would say is more just and how the growing technology changes the ethical use of nuclear weapons.

I do not argue there is a clear answer to the issues raised by these theories, however it is important to see the arguments behind them and how they relate to Augustine's just war tradition. I do argue, though, that Augustine would disagree with different elements of both deterrence theory and counterforce strategy. In the case of

deterrence theory, Augustine would likely have bigger issues as he would have a problem with the whole premise or design of the theory. He still would take issue with parts of counterforce strategy but argue that the weapons of counterforce strategy could be used to respond to a nuclear attack more justly. This chapter begins with a discussion about deterrence theory, its benefits and the importance of understanding Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD). This chapter then discusses the problems that deterrence theorists have with counterforce strategy. Counterforce strategy and its benefits will then be discussed, which will include the current counterforce era and how technology has changed the accuracy and precision of nuclear weapons. Finally, there is an analysis on the ethical problems with deterrence and counterforce strategy according to Augustine and how Augustine could have a different, more just strategy on the use of nuclear weapons.

Deterrence Theory

Deterrence theory, unlike counterforce strategy, focuses on defense. Deterrence theorists rely on two principles, one being that countries will not attack their adversaries if they believe the benefit will not outweigh the cost, and the second being nuclear weapons allow countries to inflict unprecedented levels of damage on those who attack them.⁷⁷ The underlying logic in deterrence theory is that there is no need to discriminate between civilians and the army when deploying nuclear weapons. Believers say that precise weapons are not good, as the goal of deterrence is to threaten the most destruction from the biggest weapon, which is why accuracy does not matter to them. They also

⁷⁷ Keir A. Lieber and Daryl G. Press, "The New Era of Counterforce: Technological Change and the Future of Nuclear Deterrence," *International Security* 41, no. 4 (April 2017): 13.

argue for building the largest, most destructive bombs because they do not want any country to have the ability to have counterforce capability, as this defensive bomb has intention to obliterate the country that attacks them.

According to Waltz, states coexist in a state of anarchy, where self-help and security become major motivators for the actions of states. They must ensure their survival and security, and he argues the best way they can do that is to arm themselves with the best defense systems in case of an attack. He says, “The chances of peace rise if states can achieve their most important ends without using force. War becomes less likely as the costs of war rise in relation to possible gains. Strategies bring ends and means together.”⁷⁸ For Waltz, the best way for a state to dissuade an attack from another state is to build defenses that are so great and powerful that the risk is much greater than the reward. Therefore, in the case of nuclear weapons, a state must build its defensive nuclear arsenals so enormous that no state would dare to attempt a first-strike on them. However, in order for nuclear deterrence to work, a state must remain vulnerable to an attack. A state does not have first-strike capabilities, their nuclear arsenal serves retaliation purposes, such that if another country does attack, the built-up arsenal will then be deployed against them. “Although we are defenseless, if you attack we may punish you to an extent that more than cancels your gains.”⁷⁹

The idea behind deterrence theory is deterrence provides peace in the international system. The greater the nuclear arsenal, the less likely that state will be

⁷⁸ Scott D. Sagan and Kenneth N. Waltz, *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: An Enduring Debate* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2012), 5.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 5.

attacked. When considering the costs and benefits of attacking a state that is armed with defensive nuclear weapons, more often than not the cost of attacking the state, which would be obliteration of their own state, will highly outweigh the benefits of the attack. However, states armed with deterrent nuclear weapons do run a risk by leaving themselves vulnerable to attack, but for them, their risk is actually very low as the likelihood of another state attacking them, knowing they possess these weapons, is low. “As long as nuclear arsenals are survivable, that is, able to withstand an enemy’s first strike and retaliate, nuclear weapons are a tremendous force for peace.”⁸⁰

The concept of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) is a large benefit for deterrence strategists. Mutual Assured Destruction exists when two or more states possess massive nuclear weapons that would cause complete annihilation of the attacker and the defender. Throughout the 1960s, the US and Soviet Union were in a stalemate of MAD as neither country was able to destroy the other’s retaliatory forces, even in a surprise attack.⁸¹ MAD is the ultimate form of deterrence, as when a state knows it cannot destroy the other’s nuclear weapons in a first strike, then they will be deterred to attack them. In the case of the US and the Soviet Union, neither country wanted to give up its advantage of deterrent forces, so an arms race began. It became clear that the US wanted to achieve nuclear primacy over the Soviet Union, which deterrence theorists argue is horrible for deterrence. If a country obtains nuclear primacy, it essentially means that they have a first-strike capability. For example, if the US were to achieve nuclear

⁸⁰ Lieber and Press, “The New Era of Counterforce,” 13.

⁸¹ Keir A. Lieber and Daryl G. Press. “The End of MAD? The Nuclear Dimension of U.S. Primacy.” *International Security* 30, no. 4 (Spring, 2006): 42.

primacy, which it eventually did, they would be able to wipe out the retaliatory forces of the Soviet Union, i.e. their deterrent forces, which cancels out the whole concept of deterrence. Nuclear primacy means one country has power to destroy another country's ability to fight back, undermining deterrence. Deterrence theorists therefore hate the concept of nuclear primacy as it diminishes their theory.

Once the US did achieve nuclear primacy, according to Press and Lieber, and therefore escape the stalemate of MAD, they had power over the Soviet Union to destroy them pretty easily. In their model, they show that the Russian strategic nuclear arsenal would be destroyed even if they lessened the accuracy of the United States' nuclear weapons by 20%.⁸² Deterrence theorists would argue this is horrible for deterrence, as it reduces security and increases fear in the international system. When there is a state of mutually assured destruction, or when states are themselves with massive defensive weapons, then there will more likely be peace and less fear of being attacked by a first-strike capable country, as one would not exist. There is balance of power in a state of deterrence, with no state having nuclear primacy.

Essentially, for deterrence to work, "A nuclear arsenal designed for deterrence must, therefore, be able to survive an enemy first strike and still inflict unacceptable damage on the attacker."⁸³ Therefore, according to deterrence theory, a country would not need to fear conquest. The only way, however, to be able to survive an enemy attack and then attack them with powerful nuclear weapons, is through building the largest possible, most destructive bomb that can obliterate the enemy. Precision weapons

⁸² Ibid., 48.

⁸³ Lieber and Press, "The New Era of Counterforce," 9.

undermine the whole purpose of deterrence. This means the bomb is highly indiscriminate, seeking to kill and destroy anything. As will be discussed later, Augustine will have a problem with this argument as he argues that discrimination and proportionality are important elements of a just war.

Counterforce Strategy and the Counterforce Era

Counterforce, unlike deterrence, is a very offensive strategy. The strategy of counterforce involves offensively attacking another country's weapons arsenals in order to disarm them from being able to attack you, essentially like a preemptive attack. It also argues for smaller, low-yield nuclear weapons that are much more discriminate in nature than those of deterrence theory. Technology in the recent age has been rapidly improving, making it more difficult for countries to be confident in the survivability of their weapons. The counterforce revolution creates an arms race and the development of new technologies, which can ensure the survivability of deterrent forces. However, the development of technology can go two ways, as it can enable states to find other states' nuclear arsenals more easily, but therefore it also makes states' ability to hide their nuclear weapons from detection and from a counterforce strike.

There are three approaches to protecting nuclear arsenals that states use but that are also being undermined by developing technology, which is therefore also undermining deterrence.⁸⁴ The first is hardening, which occurs when states physically harden their nuclear sites in order to resist blasts from an attack. This kind of approach used to work as the blasts from an attack from another country would most likely not be

⁸⁴ Ibid., 16.

enough to wipe out their own nuclear arsenal. However, recent developments in technology have created difficulties in successfully hardening nuclear weapons. Before these developments, targets were difficult to accurately destroy because of factors like aircraft speed and altitude, and atmospheric factors like wind and temperature. However, with the development of technology, including aid in guiding aircrafts and self-guided missiles, the accuracy of these destructive forces has increased exponentially.⁸⁵ The ability to use hardening as a strategy of protecting weapons severely suffers today due to the effects of technology advances, such as guidance, inertial sensors, and self-guided missiles. The evolution of the self-guided missile was particularly a game changer, as the computer essentially took over the role of the human, leaving human error out of the picture.

A second strategy being undermined is concealment of nuclear arsenals. In the 20th century, countries were able to hide their weapons pretty easily without them being detected by other countries. However, today it is increasingly difficult to hide nuclear weapons from other states. There have been improvements to technology, such as remote sensing, that enables states to find nuclear weapons that they otherwise could not.⁸⁶ It also is very difficult to conceal weapons, particularly submarine missiles, even previous to these new technological innovations. Now, in the present day, concealment proves to be very difficult, increasing a country's ability to counterforce strikes and decreasing the possibility of deterrence. A final strategy used to secure weapons is redundancy. This form of protection is the use of multiple types of delivery systems and warheads to

⁸⁵ Ibid., 19.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 34.

complicate enemy strike plans. However, just like the other two strategies, technology has undermined this strategy. States are much more capable of finding and destroying an enemy's arsenal of nuclear weapons than they have been in the past.

The best advancement in the 21st century has been in accuracy of nuclear weapons and technology, which leads to less deterrence but better possibility for counterforce strikes. Technology seems to have taken over the jobs that humans had in guiding missiles and in detecting them, which has increased efficiency and accuracy. Accuracy has increased the ability of states to conduct counterforce strikes against other countries. For example, the accuracy of ICBMs (Inter-continental ballistic missiles) has increased from about 50% accurate hit in 1985 to over a 70% accuracy in targeting in 2017. For SLBMs, the accuracy has gone from less than 10% success in 1985 to over a 70% chance of success in 2017.⁸⁷ Accuracy is highly important for discriminating targets. For example, if the United States wanted to deploy an ICBM on a country to destroy their nuclear arsenal today, a counterforce attack, they would have a high chance of successfully hitting their target without injuring innocent people. "The accuracy revolution has rendered low-casualty counterforce attacks plausible for the first time."⁸⁸ It also makes more accurate retaliatory attacks possible, meaning a state's response to a nuclear attack does not need to be the total destruction of another country and all of its people. These weapons could be used to wipe out the government and military of the offending state without annihilating their population. While there is always the possibility of killing non-combatants, the likelihood is significantly decreased than if the

⁸⁷ Ibid., 22.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 27.

state used highly indiscriminate bombs. This will become very important later when discussing Augustine's views on justice in the use of nuclear weapons.

Before the technology revolution and the counterforce era, counterforce strategy has mainly consisted of ground bursts, which has major ramifications, like widespread radiation from fallout. Fallout is a main concern for those who oppose these kinds of attacks, as the deployment of counterforce weapons in a counterforce strategy has proven in the past to have high fallout and therefore effect a large percent of the population and target country. However, because of new studies and new technology, it has been discovered that if weapons are detonated at a high altitude, one that is above the fallout threshold, then fallout will theoretically be reduced, which increases discrimination in targets.⁸⁹ Another argument that attempts to discredit the significant advances in nuclear technology is that the reductions of casualties is not actually that significant. But Lieber and Press show that low-yield nuclear weapons would produce around the same amount of casualties as conventional warfare, indicating there is a significant difference in reduction of destruction to the innocent. Therefore, today's accuracy revolution has made it possible for countries to deliver low-fatality nuclear strikes and therefore discriminate targets as well as deliver proportionate attacks.

In summary, deterrence strategy is undermined by the increasing accuracy in technology. The ability for countries to locate and destroy other countries' nuclear weapons has made deterrence increasingly difficult. The increased accuracy and creation of low-yield weapons also has opened the door to not only using these weapons in a counterforce strategy, but also in conventional warfare. Both deterrence theory and

⁸⁹ Ibid., 28.

counterforce strategy have pros and cons, but they also are very different strategies for the use of nuclear weapons.

Why Deterrence and Counterforce Do Not Align

Deterrence theorists have multiple issues with counterforce strategy and argue against it as being more destructive towards peace. For counterforce strategy, nuclear arsenals are filled with smaller, more accurate nuclear weapons that focus in accuracy and precision when targeting the enemy. The idea behind these weapons is that it decreases the likelihood of many casualties while still achieving the intended ends. However, this is a deterrence theorist's worst nightmare as smaller powered, precision weapons are much more likely to be deployed, and once deployed, there is an even greater likelihood of further use of these weapons. Once you use one of these weapons, you use them all, according to deterrence theorists. Therefore, it is much better and safer to have large disarming defensive strike capability that will hopefully never be necessary to use than to have easily usable nuclear weapons.

If a disarming strike would cause enormous civilian casualties in the target country, but also possibly in allied and neutral neighboring countries, leaders who value human life or the fate of allies would contemplate such an attack in only the direst circumstances. The link between civilian casualties and nuclear inhibition explains why many arms control advocates oppose the development of less destructive nuclear weapons; they worry that such weapons are more 'usable.'⁹⁰

For deterrence theorists, it is better to have a huge indiscriminate bomb for security and peace than to have a significant amount of low-yield accurate missiles that states will more likely deploy against other countries.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 27-28.

Another issue deterrence theorists have with counterforce is that even if states simply have the capability of a counterforce strike, it puts other powers in fear of a disarming surprise attack and therefore undermines retaliation, thus undermining deterrence. Counterforce weapons put states in fear that their nuclear arsenals or military weapons will be destroyed, thus disarming them of any ability to attack their enemy back in retaliation. Deterrence theorists desire for balance of power in the nuclear system, where a surprise attack does not need to be feared. Without counterforce weapons, the nuclear world is more stable and insusceptible to surprise attacks. Deterrence theorists say, rather, that with deterrence arsenals, those with massive destructive power and without small, accurate weapons, states are safer, and peace is more likely as states will be on defense, rather than potentially using the tactic of surprise attack. Counterforce theorists, then, would ask the question to deterrence theorists, should states not even create smaller nuclear arsenals of precision, low-yield weapons simply because it can undermine deterrence? Deterrence theorists would say yes, it is better to create only defensive, mass destruction nuclear weapons for retaliatory strikes than to create an arsenal with many lower powered targeted weapons.

Augustine and New Nuclear Weapons

For Augustine, there are no perfectly just wars, rather some wars are more just than others. Obviously, he only discussed conventional warfare, as nuclear weapons did not exist in his time. However, his concepts from his just war tradition can be applied to nuclear weapons, as was done in the previous chapter on the US bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It is important, though, to now apply his just war tradition to the state of nuclear weapons today, particularly to deterrence theory and counterforce strategy, to

examine which tactic he would say is more ethical or just than the other. There is not a clear answer to this, as both tactics incorporate concepts that Augustine would say are just or unjust, but it is nevertheless important to expand on the arguments.

Augustine talks both about the justice to go to war and the justice in war. On *jus ad bellum*, or the justice to go to war, deterrence theory would say, operating from a defensive standpoint, that nuclear weapons are and will only be used in the most rare of circumstances when an enemy decides that the benefit of attacking outweighs the cost of assured destruction. This is the only time that a state will decide it is correct or just to go to war with nuclear weapons. However, for Augustine, while he does argue that only wars of necessity are just, this would not be a proportional response to an attack on a country. Wars of necessity in themselves are defensive, as Augustine says that for a war to be necessary, it must be waged out of a wrong being committed against a state, a wrong so grievous that it would be unjust to be lenient to the attackers.⁹¹ However, the actions taken to correct the wrong must be in proportion to the wrong committed. Deterrence weapons are those of immense destruction to obliterate entire countries, which I argue Augustine would never say is a proportionate response to an attack, even if a state has a just cause to go to war, as there is no just peace that could come out of such a strike.

For counterforce strategy, Augustine more likely would find ethical use of nuclear weapons as counterforce weapons today are low-yield, precision forces. While deterrence theory is defensive, counterforce is offensive. Therefore, since Augustine clearly says that a state must have a just cause to go to war, a war of necessity, in order

⁹¹ David D. Corey and Charles, J. Daryl, *The Just War Tradition: Augustine* (Wilmington: ISI Books, 2012), 58.

for it to be a more just war, he would not agree that it is just to offensively attack a state's arsenal. However, I do argue that he would say that a preemptive strike could be an ethical use of weapons as it is calculated to be the best strategy to secure lives and keep peace. Still, Augustine still may have an issue with a counterforce strike being offensive in nature.

Augustine also argues that the end of any war of necessity must be peace, as war is the absence of peace. He says that war is waged in order to attain peace. When states decide to go to war, they essentially are trying to assert their kind of peace upon others, or else they are trying to defend their peace. Augustine understands that peace is difficult to maintain, yet still always sought by states, regardless if it is true peace or their own corrupted kind of peace. In relation to nuclear weapons, deterrence theorists argue that peace is best kept and maintained when states build up their nuclear arsenal so large as to be able to obliterate the enemy if they try to attack. Their reasoning is that the likelihood of a state actually attacking another state with such incredible retaliatory forces is incredibly low, therefore peace is maintained in the international system. However, if a state does decide to attack another, and cause that state to deploy these weapons, then peace is impossible, as the initial attacker will be destroyed, causing the obliteration of that state. On this aspect of deterrence theory, Augustine may say that deterrence would create peace as there essentially would be no war if deterrence theorists are correct. However, Augustine does point out that states are very unreliable, as they could decide one thing one day, and change their minds the next. Overall, however, Augustine would most likely agree with the aim of keeping peace, however he would not agree with the strategy or means of attaining peace.

For counterforce strategy, peace is kept by de-arming enemy forces so they are unable to attack. Their thought is that a state can avoid a war through counterforce strikes and save lives and resources in the process of doing so. However, Augustine may say still that offensive strikes are not ethical use of nuclear weapons, as they may not be necessary and may incite war, rather than keeping peace. Although, in a situation where a state is able to obliterate the arsenal of a country that will use their weapons against other countries, Augustine could say this is necessary and in the long-run will create a more stable environment of peace than if the state did not attack the arsenal of the enemy.

What is imperative for Augustine is that war is both proportionate and discriminate. In the previous chapter, I argued that there is a distinction between the discriminate use of atomic bombs and “their employment for discriminate objectives”⁹² Augustine would agree the bomb was indiscriminate, but since it was used for a discriminate purpose, it made it a more just use of the bomb. However, in deterrence theory, the bomb is intentionally indiscriminate, and its use is also intentionally indiscriminate, as its use is for the complete destruction of a country, something Augustine would never say is a just use. In Truman’s decision, though the bomb was recently developed and by nature could not discriminate, he strategically aimed the bomb at infrastructure to attack the military element of the Japanese, while also killing civilians but saving more lives.

Augustine would agree much more with counterforce strategy in terms of discrimination, especially in today’s world where accuracy and precision have been exponentially improved, making discrimination very possible. For counterforce attacks,

⁹² Paul Ramsey, *The Just War: Force and Political Responsibility* (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1983), 58.

the point is to discriminate, to take out a specific target with the least amount of casualty. The creation of low-yield weapons enables states to deploy a bomb without having major fallout, which is a huge improvement in recent years. Augustine is a major proponent of discrimination between innocent civilians and the army who represents the country's aims. In a deterrence theory perspective, there is no discriminating in the target, as the goal of the attack is for the most destruction possible. This directly opposes Augustine's just war principle of discriminating the target. He would also have a big problem with the purposeful indiscriminate use of these weapons. It takes out of the hands of leaders the very decision that define their choices as just or unjust. However, for counterforce strategy, the whole purpose is for discrimination, and since the ability to discriminate between the target and non-combatants is only growing stronger, Augustine in this way would support counterforce weapons. Going one step further, since these weapons have become so capable of being discriminate, it can be argued that they not only could be used in counterforce attacks, but also in conventional warfare. If used in conventional warfare, they would serve to attack a specific target, just as in counterforce attacks. Augustine, still, would say that this is a just use of nuclear weapons as it is highly discriminatory.

On proportionality, as touched on before, Augustine would not say that deterrence is at all proportional. No matter how destructive the attack on a state with deterrence weapons is, there is no proportionality in the use of these weapons in retaliation. This, again, is essentially the point of creating these deterrent weapons. They are created to deter attacks from other countries, as the cost of attacking them would highly outweigh any benefit from attacking a deterrence-armed state. However, for Augustine,

proportionality is essential to the ethical use of force in war. Whatever the wrong committed against a state, the response must be proportionate to that wrong. Deterrence theory is based on the opposite of this argument, as Augustine would have a serious problem with the disproportionality of deterrence weapons.

For counterforce weapons, however, Augustine would say they are more ethical as they are specifically made to be proportionate in their use. Proportionality is important in counterforce, as the goal of the attack is to disarm the country, so that an attack will not happen. These weapons are purposefully being modified to become more proportionate, as technology has been able to decrease fallout and increase accuracy of counterforce weapons. Augustine would say this use and these kinds of weapons, more specifically, are a more just use than weapons for deterrence. Even more so, in today's nuclear age, the new, more discriminate weapons return the power to the hands of leaders to make just or unjust choices, which Augustine would argue is a good thing.

Overall, I argue Augustine would not agree with either strategy, rather he would argue that the nuclear weapons in counterforce strategy could be used in an attack against a state that has attacked with nuclear weapons. Especially with the advances in technology that have created better accurate and more precise nuclear weapons, the possibility of using nuclear weapons has become more ethical and just. The ability for states now to discriminate between targets and non-combatants, as well as precisely aim and hit their targets, creates a more ethical use for nuclear weapons than even existed when Truman deployed them on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. If Truman had to make that decision today, he would be able to use these new, precise, weapons to achieve his goal, which would make his choice even more ethical, according to Augustine. Neither theory

is perfect, as both have elements Augustine would say are unjust. Augustine's just war tradition can be applied to the use of nuclear weapons as the elements of his tradition play into the elements of using nuclear weapons in the international system. Each situation of the use of nuclear weapons is complex, as shown in Truman's decision, however there remain foundational elements that make a choice to use these weapons more or less ethical and just.

CONCLUSION

In today's nuclear arsenal, states possess nuclear weapons that are thousands of times more destructive as the bombs used in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. For example, Russia exploded one single bomb that was 4,000 times as powerful as that used at the end of World War II. The advent of hydrogen bombs as well gives states the ability to have immense destructive capabilities. These facts about nuclear weapons today put in perspective the amount of force and destruction used to bomb Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The bombs that Truman used pale in comparison to the bombs that exist today. On today's nuclear arsenal, Augustine would clearly take issue with the amount of force and firepower these bombs contain as by nature they are highly indiscriminate. They take out of the hands of leaders the ability to even choose discrimination or make any kind of ethical choice in deploying them. Augustine would also say that using these kinds of bombs would not create a just peace, as they would completely destroy nations.

Beyond these highly indiscriminate nuclear weapons, however, are also nuclear warheads that are low-yield, precision weapons that, because of advancements in accuracy, are able to precisely hit a target with minimal damage to its surrounding area. These kinds of weapons are what counterforce theorists argue are best to use to destroy another state's nuclear arsenal. Augustine, while not agreeing with counterforce strategy, would say using these kinds of discriminate weapons as a counterforce tactic against a state that has attacked first with nuclear weapons would be a just and proportionate punishment.

Even though Augustine wrote his just war tradition so many years ago, it is clear that many of his points and concepts can be applied not only to modern conventional warfare, but also to the use of nuclear weapons as well. Elements like just peace, justice in war, discrimination, and proportionality all pertain to both the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and to today's nuclear arsenal. Given the circumstances during World War II, Truman made the more ethical decision to use the bombs specifically on Hiroshima and Nagasaki with the purpose of saving lives and the goal of quickly ending the war. This thesis sought to bring about a discussion that is lacking in academia on the ethical use of nuclear weapons both in World War II and today and how justice of war can be analyzed using Augustine's just war tradition.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Atkins, E. M. and Dodaro, Robert. *Augustine: political writings*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011.
- Bergerud, Eric. "No Quarter: The Pacific Battlefield." *Historically Speaking* 3, no. 5 (June 2002): 8-10. Project MUSE. <https://doi.org/10.1353/hsp.2002.0050>.
- Campbell, Peter. *War in St. Augustine's City of God*. University of Notre Dame.
- Corey, David D, and Charles, J. Daryl. *The Just War Tradition: Augustine*. Wilmington: ISI Books, 2012.
- Gordin, Michael D., *Five Days in August: How World War II Became a Nuclear War*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2007.
- Hastings, Max. *Retribution: The Battle for Japan, 1944-45*. New York: Random House, Inc., 2007.
- Kort, Michael. *The Columbia Guide to Hiroshima and the Bomb*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2007.
- Miscamble C.S.C, Wilson D. *The Most Controversial Decision: Truman, the Atomic Bombs, and the Defeat of Japan*. United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2011.
- Niebuhr, Reinhold and Robert McAfee Brown. *The Essential Reinhold Niebuhr*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986.
- Ramsey, Paul. *The Just War: Force and Political Responsibility*. Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1983.
- Ramsey, Paul. *War and the Christian Conscience / How Shall Modern War be Conducted Justly?* Durham: Duke University Press, 1961.
- Saint Augustine. *Concerning the City of God against the Pagans*, trans. Henry Bettenson. London: Penguin Books, 1972.
- Saint Augustine. *Confessions*. trans. Henry Chadwick. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991.
- Sagan, Scott D. and Kenneth N. Waltz. *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: An Enduring Debate*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2012.

Truman, Harry S., 1844-1972; Truman, Bess Wallace; Ferrell, Robert H., *Dear Bess: the letters from Harry to Bess Truman, 1910-1959*. New York: Norton, 1983.

Truman, Harry S. *Memoirs, Vol. 1, Year of Decisions*. New York: Doubleday, 1955.

Walker, J. Samuel. *Prompt and Utter Destruction: Truman and the Use of the Atomic Bombs against Japan*. North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1997.