

From the Ashes  
MacArthur's Responsibility for Rebuilding Japan

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Individual Performance

Process Paper: 485 words

After two years of Texas History Day competition, I decided that I was ready to take on a more familiar piece of history. This decision, along with a suggestion from a past judge, led me to researching the atomic bomb. However, I did not want to repeat an over-represented viewpoint so I searched for controversy within the decision and found MacArthur. He was against dropping the atomic bombs on Japan and felt that Truman was responsible for the terrible tragedy of targeting civilians. MacArthur actively took responsibility for the reconstruction of Japan, straining relations between him and Truman along the way.

By mid-August, I researched internet articles and found books that helped me determine my primary thesis. I then searched Truman's Presidential Library, the National Archives, and military archives to find primary sources that would help me understand my topic and the various viewpoints. I was trying to uncover why the government felt justified in dropping the bombs and how they determined that it was America's responsibility to clean up the mess the bombs left behind. In past wars, the American Government provided financial aid but made former enemies responsible for cleaning up the mess. As I centered on Japan's reconstruction, I discovered General MacArthur's role in writing the Japanese Constitution and changed my focus from the dropping of the atomic bombs themselves to the nationwide, all-encompassing reforms they caused. I used my notes to create an outline and a timeline and then filled in the gaps in my research by finding information about the feud between Truman and MacArthur. I used notes and photos from my research to create my script.

I wanted to do a performance because I have done performance for the past two years and liked working with props and costumes. I decided to portray General Douglas MacArthur, since he was Supreme Commander of Allied Powers (SCAP) and was the center of reforms undertaken in post-war Japan. I wanted my props to be historically accurate. My research on MacArthur's

uniform led to reenactment pieces purchased on EBay including an accurate hat and pipe. I was inspired to use a slide projector after I found unpublished photos taken in Japan by MacArthur's personal driver at the Texas Tech University Library. I feel that the photos represent key points of the rebuilding and provide a unique perspective to my performance.

MacArthur's responsibility for rebuilding Japan fits the theme of *Rights and Responsibilities* in several aspects. President Truman accepted responsibility for dropping the atomic bombs on Japan. General MacArthur thought that violated the rights of Japanese women and children who were not soldiers, which addresses actions that are issues of morality. MacArthur also accepted responsibility for reconstructing Japan and created the new Japanese Constitution to guarantee the Democratic rights of Japanese citizens after the occupation ended. MacArthur taking responsibility for Truman's destruction of Japan helped them not only recover but prosper over the years.

## Annotated Bibliography

### Primary Sources

#### Interviews

Berkowitz, Pete. Personal Interview by author. October 24, 2013.

Pete Berkowitz worked for the Atomic Commission in the 1950s and met Robert Oppenheimer and Enrico Fermi. He explained that after the atomic bombs had been dropped on Japan, the effects of radiation caused great concern. When the bombs were produced, the scientists knew about radiation, but no one understood the long term effects, like babies being born deformed. He did not know General MacArthur, but he did know what MacArthur was doing in Japan to clean up after the bombs. This interview helped me understand that the Atomic Commission learned a great deal about the effects of the atomic bombs because of MacArthur's clean-up and restructure of Japan after the war.

#### Speeches

"Address by President Truman about Policy in the Far East, 1951." *PBS*. <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/macarthur/filmmore/reference/primary/officialdocs03.html> (accessed February 17, 2014).

This speech by President Truman to the American Public showed how he wanted to deal with the war in Korea. He wanted a minimal conflict, quickly executed stamp-out. MacArthur, on the other hand, pushed and pushed north, until Truman decided he'd enough. That is a big reason as to why MacArthur was fired.

"Speech Explaining the Firing of MacArthur." *Teaching American History*. <http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/speech-explaining-the-firing-of-macarthur/> (accessed February 16, 2014).

This is a speech by President Truman to the American Public announcing MacArthur's replacement for Supreme Commander of Allied Powers. It gave Truman's reasons for firing MacArthur and let me see how Truman tried to justify his actions. Also, there was some insight on Truman's opinion on MacArthur's performance. This helped me see Truman's point of view in firing MacArthur.

MacArthur, Douglas. "Truman Library:." *Truman Library*. N.p., 19 Apr. 1951. Web. 27 Mar. 2014.  
<[http://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study\\_collections/koreanwar/documents/index.php?pagenumber=1&documentdate=1951-04-19&documentid=ma-2-18](http://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/koreanwar/documents/index.php?pagenumber=1&documentdate=1951-04-19&documentid=ma-2-18)>.

This is MacArthur's official address to congress. It showed how MacArthur handled himself in public even after his dismissal from service. He talked of the humility from speaking

from where so many other people had given their farewell, and the pride he got as he reflected on his military career. Then he spoke of how the problems in Asia rippled over to Europe, and vice versa. It showed how concerned MacArthur was with the fate of the countries that he felt he had left behind. It told me how passionate he would have been giving a speech like the one I am.

"Statement by President Truman Relieving Gen. MacArthur of his Military Duties, 1951." April 10, 1951. *PBS*. <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/macarthur/filmmore/reference/primary/officialdocs02.html> (accessed February 17, 2014).

This is the press release that the public received when MacArthur was fired. It showed both how Truman tried to portray the dismissal, the implications of MacArthur's dismissal on the conflict in Korea, and the impact on MacArthur's legacy. He would have been furious with these terms, as he was obsessed with the legacy he left behind. It spoke volumes between the lines of how Truman disliked MacArthur and how MacArthur would react.

"WWII: Surrender of Japan." Sept. 2, 1945. *Bay Journal*. <http://bay-journal.com/usa/macarthur-speeches.html> (accessed February 17, 2014).

In this speech, Gen. MacArthur said he hoped a "better world shall emerge out of the blood and carnage of the past." This speech helped me understand that when MacArthur was put in charge of cleaning up Japan and helping the country recover, he put these words into action. He had his own opinion on how he needed to do his job, but he did not treat the Japanese people like the enemy while he was there. He even went against what President Truman wanted to accomplish his mission. This speech helped me understand MacArthur's attitude toward the Japanese people during his command there.

## Documents

"Proposed Draft Message to Douglas MacArthur." April 1951. *Harry S. Truman Library and Museum*. General File; PSF; Truman Papers. [www.trumanlibrary.org/exhibit\\_documents/index.php?pagenumber=2&titleid](http://www.trumanlibrary.org/exhibit_documents/index.php?pagenumber=2&titleid) (accessed January 15, 2014).

This is the letter MacArthur received to relieve him of duty. It left him just enough temporary power to order his way home, and then he was no longer in command. I both have a copy of and quote this letter at the beginning of my speech, and it gives a good point to introduce MacArthur's resentment and anger at Truman and his decisions.

MacArthur, Douglas. "Draft Memorandum, "General MacArthur's Message on Formosa", August 17, 1950. Secretary of State File. Acheson Papers." *Truman Library*. N.p., n.d. Web. 27 Mar. 2014.  
<[http://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study\\_collections/achesonmemos/view.php?documentVersion=original&documentid=67-4\\_25&documentYear=1950](http://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/achesonmemos/view.php?documentVersion=original&documentid=67-4_25&documentYear=1950)>.

This report from General MacArthur to President Truman was the predictions for the duration and tide of the Korean War. The way MacArthur was able to foresee almost the entire war



showed his worth as a general and further proved the injustice in his dismissal. This confirmed my viewpoint of MacArthur being undignified and angered.

MacArthur, Douglas, and Harry Truman. "Douglas MacArthur to Harry S. Truman, with draft letter to MacArthur by George Elsey, October 30, 1950; MacArthur, Douglas-dismissal; General File; PSF; Truman Papers.." *Truman Library*. N.p., n.d. Web. 27 Mar. 2014. <[http://www.trumanlibrary.org/exhibit\\_documents/index.php?pagenumber=1&titleid=184&tldate=1950-10-30&collectionid=firem&PageID=-1&groupid=3412](http://www.trumanlibrary.org/exhibit_documents/index.php?pagenumber=1&titleid=184&tldate=1950-10-30&collectionid=firem&PageID=-1&groupid=3412)>.

This letter was an expression of thanks and also gave a report on the progress on the campaign in Korea. It was out of alignment in comparison with the other documents I found because of the polite, professional courtesy in the interaction. It showed, while there was mistrust and dislike between them, they could both hold it in, when necessary.

MacArthur, Douglas. "Joint Chiefs of Staff to Douglas MacArthur, attached to copy of letter from Douglas MacArthur to Joe Martin, March 20 and 24, 1951; MacArthur, Douglas-dismissal; General File; PSF; Truman Papers.." *Truman Library*. N.p., n.d. Web. 27 Mar. 2014. <[http://www.trumanlibrary.org/exhibit\\_documents/index.php?pagenumber=2&titleid=187&tldate=1951-03-24&collectionid=firem&PageID=1&groupid=3460](http://www.trumanlibrary.org/exhibit_documents/index.php?pagenumber=2&titleid=187&tldate=1951-03-24&collectionid=firem&PageID=1&groupid=3460)>.

This response to Truman's orders shows MacArthur's view of the Korean War. The way he saw it, if he failed in Korea communism would be rampant, and spread all across Europe. Though if he won, he would save freedom and preserve peace. It showed, once more, that MacArthur would be passionate throughout the entire presentation.

"Truman Library." *Truman Library*. N.p., n.d. Web. 27 Mar. 2014. <[http://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study\\_collections/koreanwar/documents/index.php?documentdate=1950-08-26&documentid=ki-14-8&pagenumber=1](http://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/koreanwar/documents/index.php?documentdate=1950-08-26&documentid=ki-14-8&pagenumber=1)>.

This packet is a review on the impacts on foreign relations if MacArthur was fired. It shows how the MacArthur Statement would negatively affect the U.S. It showed me how much the peoples in Asia thought of MacArthur. Many governments were even predicted to become wary because of his firing. It also talks of how Truman didn't have a very good excuse to present to the public.

## Books

*Atomic Fundamentals*. Albuquerque, NM: Special Weapons Training Group, 1958.

This book was published for the Atomic Commission in the 1950s as a how to manual. This book showed how much the average person involved in the planning of the atomic bombs actually knew about them. It let me know that they did not know the aftereffects of what the bombs would do. They just knew that it would be very destructive and very deadly. They knew the

blast's power and radius and even the wave lengths of the shock waves, but all they knew of the radiation was that it was there. They knew nothing of its effects on the human body.

Donnell, Joe. *Japan 1945: a U.S. Marine's Photographs from Ground Zero*. Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2005.

This book has a variety of pictures, showing living conditions for the Japanese civilians and the occupational marine forces. It also showed how hard the war, and the bombs, had been on Japan. Its vast arrangement of pictures and their captions helped me understand what it was like in Japan at that time, and the challenge MacArthur faced in rebuilding.

Glasstone, Samuel, and Philip J. Dolan. *The Effects of Nuclear Weapons*. 3d ed. Washington: U.S. Dept. of Defense, 1977.

This let me know how much damage the government thought they were doing when they dropped the bombs. It showed their intentions instead of the disaster of what actually happened. The book gave exact descriptions of what the tests had shown and how the blasts were expected to affect the infrastructure and people around them. Truman had know the effects of the blast, but he dropped them anyways.

The Manhattan Engineer District. *The Atomic Bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki*. Lexington, Kentucky: The Manhattan Engineer District, 2013.

This book gave an objective, clean cut, hard numbers account of the atomic bombings. It gave death counts, damage costs, and radiation poisoning levels. It helped me understand the extensive damage caused by the bombs and some of the medical issues MacArthur faced while he was commander of the occupational forces. Through this data I gained an understanding of Truman's orders to not provide rations, medical care, etc. and made it evident that he was unaware of the score of damage and actual state Japan was in.

## Newspapers

"Truman Fires MacArthur." *Washington (Washington D.C.)*, April 11, 1951.

This was a magazine article showing how the public first learned of MacArthur's firing. It also let me know how the public reacted and helped let me show Truman's unpopularity because of it.

"Truman Ousts MacArthur in Quarrel Over Korea." *San Francisco Examiner*, April 11, 1951.

This paper gave a unique view of MacArthur's firing. While most papers at least attempted to sound objective, this paper was against it openly. It showed how the average person's view of Truman dropped as a result of the firing.

*The Boston Herald*. August 7, 1945.



The Headline for August 7, 1945, it "U. S. ATOMIC BOMB OPENS NEW ERA, Missile, 20,000 Times TNT Power, Shatters Jap City; Tests Show Vertical Effect 40,000 Ft., Lateral 250 Mi.; \$2,000,000,000 Death Race Barely Won by Allies." The significance of this headline helped me reiterate the consequences of Truman dropping the bombs.

## Photos

"Basic Directive for Post-Surrender Military Government in Japan Proper, 1947 - 1951." .  
Records of Allied Operational and Occupation Headquarters, World War II, 1907 - 1966.  
*National Archives*. [research.archives.gov](http://research.archives.gov) (accessed January 12, 2014).

This is the cover page for the Basic Directive for Post-Surrender Military Govern in Japan Proper; I joined it with two other documents to show the "policy planners."

"Photographs of Occupied Japan." Circa 1945. Paul S. Williams Papers. S1758.1  
Southwest Collection, *Texas Tech University*.

Pete Williams was General MacArthur's driver in Japan. While he was in Japan, Williams recorded the destruction from the bomb and witnessed the Army's role in rebuilding Japan. His photograph collection helped me understand just how many troops were sent over and that the U. S. controlled every aspect of Japanese life. To keep the spirit of the pictures I wanted to use a slide projector, theses photos drove my script.

"Crossing the 38th Parallel." 1950. *National Archives*. United States Information Service  
Filmstrips, 1942 - 1952. <http://research.archives.gov/description/541822> (accessed  
January 12, 2014).

This is a photo of United Nations forces withdrawing from Pyongyang, the North Korean capital as they crossed the 38th parallel. I made a slide of it to show the transition from MacArthur's role rebuilding Japan to the rising conflict between MacArthur and Truman over MacArthur's role as SCAP. Reason why MacArthur was required to leave Japan and the start of the path that led to his demise, transition from MacArthur's role rebuilding Japan to the rising conflict between MacArthur and Truman over MacArthur's role as SCAP.

"The International Military Tribunal for the Far East " *U. S. Army*. [http://www.army.mil/article/48334/The\\_Tokyo\\_Trials\\_\\_/](http://www.army.mil/article/48334/The_Tokyo_Trials__/) (accessed January 12, 2014).

This is a picture of the International Military Tribunal for the Far East. I wanted to illustrate the magnitude of the trials and that MacArthur wasn't the domineering General Truman portrayed. Instead MacArthur focused on the lower war crimes court cases that directly impacted his soldiers and that he was personally involved in.

"Potsdam Declaration." 1945. *National Archives*. Records of Allied Operational and  
Occupation Headquarters, World War II, 1907 - 1966. [research.archives.gov](http://research.archives.gov) (accessed  
January 12, 2014).



The Potsdam Declaration defined terms for Japan's surrender. As SCAP, MacArthur's role was to uphold Japan's surrender. I reference the document as one of the policies that MacArthur had to enforce as SCAP and how it guided him through the Constitution writing process for Japan.

"United States Initial Post-Defeat Policy Relating to Japan, February 1947-March 1947, 1945 - 1950." *National Archives*. Records of Allied Operational and Occupation Headquarters, World War II, 1907 - 1966. [research.archives.gov](http://research.archives.gov) (accessed January 12, 2014).

It focused on all the economic reforms that were to be made in post-war Japan. I use only the first pages for the U.S. Initial Post Surrender Policy for Japan. MacArthur later had to enforce this through additional policies.

Props

"Amazon.com." <<http://www.amazon.com/>>. Accessed December 12, 2013

Through Amazon.com, I was lucky enough to find several items such as books for research, three different historically accurate pipes, a projector screen, and MacArthur's hat.

"EBay.com" <<http://www.ebay.com>> Accessed December 10, 2013

EBay was helpful because it allowed me to get the authentic, time period newspaper on my desk. The time period newspaper helped because the impact of the bold head title.

## Secondary Sources

### Internet Articles

"Air Drops to Newly Liberated POWs and Liberation Procedures." *West Point*. <http://www.west-point.org/family/japanese-pow/Blacklist/Air%20Drops.htm> (accessed December 8, 2013).

This document is how I finally found Operation Blacklist. Previously I could not find its code name, so I struggled to find documents about its planning and execution. While it was more of a gateway than anything else, it did let me see that the main goal of the vast majority of people in Washington was to save American troops and get out.

"American Military Leaders Urge President Truman not to Drop the Atomic Bomb." *University of Boulder Colorado*. <http://www.colorado.edu/AmStudies/lewis/2010/atomicdec.htm> (accessed November 20, 2013).

This article included quotes from many military leaders and showed the controversy about Truman ordering the bombs to be dropped in the first place. It let me know how MacArthur and other generals all opposed the bombings. In fact, every single high ranking general and officer all opposed the bombs. This article helped me understand that MacArthur felt very strongly about hitting only military targets. I also learned that when

Truman fired MacArthur, MacArthur would have been bitter. I used this information in my script to show MacArthur's point of view on the atomic bombs and to express his bitterness that the bombs were even dropped at all.

"The Atomic Bombing of Hiroshima." *Century of Flight*. <http://www.century-of-flight.net/Aviation%20history/WW2/Atomic%20Bombing%20of%20Hiroshima.htm> (accessed November 23, 2013).

This article gave a good overview of the events that led up to President Truman's decision to drop the atomic bombs on Japan. It also discussed the choices of where to drop the first bomb. After the bomb destroyed Hiroshima, the Japanese government did not know what caused the destruction until the White House made a public announcement in Washington sixteen hours later. It also told of the hibakusha, which translates to "those exposed to the bomb." This article helped me understand that the destruction caused by the atomic bomb was so huge that the Japanese could not understand it because nothing existed to compare it to. This information helped me understand what a huge task MacArthur had to reconstruct Japan.

"Hiroshima and Nagasaki Occupation Forces." *Defense Threat Reduction Agency*. [http://www.dtra.mil/documents/ntp/factsheets/hiroshima\\_and\\_nagasaki\\_occupation\\_forces.pdf](http://www.dtra.mil/documents/ntp/factsheets/hiroshima_and_nagasaki_occupation_forces.pdf) (accessed February 17, 2014).

This document explained that the first occupation troops arrived in near Hiroshima about 60 days after the bombing. The main body of occupation troops entered Nagasaki about 45 days after the bombing. American scientists from the Manhattan Engineer District arrived three days before these troops and performed a radiological survey. This helped me understand how many troops were actually sent to Japan to clean up. It also gave me a scope of how many troops were risked in the clean-up and how many G.I.s were rescued.

"Island Hopping." *United States History*. <http://www.u-s-history.com/pages/h1671.html> (accessed February 16, 2014).

This source talked about how MacArthur had planned to take Japan. It gave the details of his island hopping campaign and showed his relationship with Admiral Chester Nimitz. This information was intensely useful, as Nimitz and MacArthur were bitter rivals, and the only time they truly agreed on anything was to not drop the bombs. I wanted to show that MacArthur wasn't alone in his opposition to dropping the bomb.

"Milestones: 1945 – 1952." *U. S. Department of State, Office of the Historian*. <http://history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/japan-reconstruction> (accessed February 16, 2014).

This article outlined the three phases of Operation Blacklist. It helped me understand that when MacArthur first arrived and through 1947, he was in charge of making the most fundamental changes for the Japanese Government and society. From 1947 until 1950, his main concern was rebuilding the Japanese economy so communism would not spread there. The last



phase was building a political and economic future for Japan. This information helped me create a framework for my script so I could talk about MacArthur's duties during each phase.

"The Relief of MacArthur." *U. S. Army Center of Military History*. <http://www.history.army.mil/books/PD-C-20.HTM> (accessed February 17, 2014).

This document explained the details of MacArthur's firing and people's reaction to it. It helped me understand the conflict between MacArthur and President Truman and that Truman saw MacArthur as a political threat. It had a copy of the letter MacArthur received from Truman that relieved him from duty and showed the confusion and frustration expressed by the American people. This information helped me show some of the conflict MacArthur has with Truman, and I used a copy of the letter Truman sent to fire MacArthur to begin my script.

Steele, Diana. "America's Reaction to the Atomic Bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki." *Dickinson University*. <http://users.dickinson.edu/~history/product/steele/seniorthesis.htm> (accessed February 16, 2014).

This thesis showed how the majority of people in Washington, D.C. did not care about the bombs. MacArthur was the only one with much passion about the subject. It confirmed that most officials only wanted to save the POWs and did not want to actually help Japan's people. It helped me understand that I needed to play MacArthur as impassioned and angered as I could and that I needed to show that he was working against Washington's wishes in many cases.

"The Truman and MacArthur Controversy." *Center Puncher*. <http://centerpuncher.wordpress.com/2013/08/11/the-truman-macarthur-controversy/> (accessed February 17, 2014).

This article let me know how far the bad blood between Truman and MacArthur really stretched. Their bad relationship was extensive, and Truman simply did not like that MacArthur continued to forge his own path. I used this information to show the dislike MacArthur had for President Truman.

#### Newspaper Articles

Mitchell, Greg. "Countdown to Hiroshima for August 5, 1945: Gen. MacArthur -- No Need to Use Bomb Against Japan." *The Huffington Post*. August 5, 2013. [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/greg-mitchell/countdown-to-hiroshima-fo\\_b\\_3707531.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/greg-mitchell/countdown-to-hiroshima-fo_b_3707531.html) (accessed February 17, 2014).

This article showed MacArthur's personal opinion of the bombs. It also conveys how he was never actually asked his opinion or even mentioned to him that the A-bombs would be used until the decision was already made. When he was asked afterward, he replied that the bombs had had "absolutely no military value." I used this information to show MacArthur's point of view on dropping the bombs.

#### Books



Charles River Editors. *American Legends: The Life of General Douglas MacArthur*. Boston: Charles River Editors, 2013.

This is a biography of MacArthur's life and includes a good overview on his life along with a fair amount of quotes from his various speeches. Also, it had a picture that showed everything I would need for my costume. As supreme commander of the Allied powers (SCAP), he presided over the Japanese surrender on September 2, 1945, and then served as military governor of Japan. When the Korean War started in July 1950, he became commander of United Nations forces in Korea. When Chinese forces began fighting alongside the North Koreans in November 1950, he wanted to take the war into China, but this became a huge conflict with President Truman. I used information from this book to talk about SCAP duties and leading the United Nations in Korea.

Ishikawa, Eisei, and David L. Swain. *Hiroshima and Nagasaki: The Physical, Medical and Social Effects of the Atomic Bombings*. New York: Basic Books, Inc. Publishers, 1981.

While this book had a good amount of factual information, its main value is in its pictures. It has an expansive collection of pictures of the various ailments that radiation and blast effects caused, which made the issue seem much closer to us today, seeing how it could affect us. It was a revealing experience to look through all of the suffering that the atomic bombs had caused.

Mitchell, Greg. *Atomic Cover-up: To U.S. Soldiers, Hiroshima & Nagasaki and the Greatest Movie Never Made*. New York: Sinclair Books, 2012.

This book gave the truly staggering numbers of loss of life and damage to Japan. Officials suppressed the most important film footage taken by the American military and a Japanese newsreel team because it showed the extreme consequences of dropping the atomic bombs on civilians in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. This helped me understand why MacArthur would be so opposed to dropping the bombs, from both a military and a human perspective.

Wasserman, Harvey, and Norman Solomon. *Killing Our Own: the Disaster of America's Experience with Atomic Radiation*. New York: Delacorte Press, 1982.

This book provided a great deal of information on the medical effects of the bombs and how people reacted to them. It allowed me to see how badly the atomic bombs really affected Japan and helped me understand some of the issues MacArthur had to face and personal challenges to him and his men who were serving.