

Telegram, Richard Russell to Harry S. Truman, August 7, 1945.
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The White House
Washington

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THE PRESIDENT

(PERSONAL DELIVERY) THE WHITE HOUSE

PERMIT ME TO RESPECTFULLY SUGGEST THAT WE CEASE OUR EFFORTS TO CAJOLE JAPAN INTO SURRENDERING IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE POTSDAM DECLARATION. LET US CARRY THE WAR TO THEM UNTIL THEY BEG US TO ACCEPT THE UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER. THE FOUL ATTACK ON PEARL HARBOR BROUGHT US INTO WAR AND I AM UNABLE TO SEE ANY VALID REASON WHY WE SHOULD BE SO MUCH MORE CONSIDERATE AND LENIENT IN DEALING WITH JAPAN THAN WITH GERMANY. I EARNESTLY INSIST JAPAN SHOULD BE DEALT WITH AS HARSHLY AS GERMANY AND THAT SHE SHOULD NOT BE THE BENEFICIARY OF A SOFT PEACE. THE VAST MAJORITY OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, INCLUDING MANY SOUND THINKERS WHO HAVE INTIMATE KNOWLEDGE OF THE ORIENT, DO NOT AGREE WITH MR. GREW IN HIS ATTITUDE THAT THERE IS ANY THING SACROSANCT ABOUT HIROHITO. HE SHOULD GO. WE HAVE NO OBLIGATION TO SHINTOLISM. THE COMPTENT- UOUS ANSWER OF THE JAPS TO THE POTSDAM ULTIMATUM JUSTIFIES A REVISION OF THAT DOCUMENT AND STERNER PEACE TERMS.

IF WE DO NOT HAVE AVAILABLE A SUFFICIENT NUMBER OF ATOMIC BOMBS WITH WHICH TO FINISH THE JOB IMMEDIATELY, LET US CARRY ON WITH TNT AND FIRE BOMBS UNTIL WE CAN PRODUCE THEM.

I ALSO HOPE THAT YOU WILL ISSUE ORDERS FORBIDDING THE OFFICERS IN COMMAND OF OUR AIR FORCES FROM WARNING JAP CITIES

x692-A Mike

THAT THEY WILL BE ATTACKED. THESE GENERALS DO NOT FLY OVER JAPAN AND THIS SHOWMANSHIP CAN ONLY RESULT IN THE UNNECESSARY LOSS OF MANY FINE BOYS IN OUR AIR FORCE AS WELL AS OUR HELPLESS PRISONERS IN THE HANDS OF THE JAPANESE, INCLUDING THE SURVIVORS OF THE MARCH OF DEATH ON BATAAN WHO ARE CERTAIN TO BE BROUGHT INTO THE CITIES THAT HAVE BEEN WARNED.

THIS WAS A TOTAL WAR AS LONG AS OUR ENEMIES HELD ALL OF THE CARDS. WHY SHOULD WE CHANGE THE RULES NOW, AFTER THE BLOOD, TREASURE AND ENTERPRISE OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE HAVE GIVEN US THE UPPER HAND. OUR PEOPLE HAVE NOT FORGOTTEN THAT THE JAPANESE STRUCK US THE FIRST BLOW IN THIS WAR WITHOUT THE SLIGHTEST WARNING. THEY BELIEVE THAT WE SHOULD CONTINUE TO STRIKE THE JAPANESE UNTIL THEY ARE BROUGHT GROVELING TO THEIR KNEES. WE SHOULD CEASE OUR APPEALS TO JAPAN TO SUE FOR PEACE. THE NEXT PLEA FOR PEACE SHOULD COME FROM AN UTTERLY DESTROYED TOKYO. WELCOME BACK HOME. WITH ASSURANCES OF ESTEEM

RICHARD B RUSSELL US SENATOR.