

“Discussion About Nuclear Weapons in Japan”

This article is from the “Edifying the Body” section of the Church of God Big Sandy’s website (churchofgodbigandy.com). It was posted for the weekend of May 4, 2024.

By Dave Havir

BIG SANDY, Texas—This week I became aware of an interesting disagreement between two of my favorite journalists—Tucker Carlson and Dennis Prager.

Although some people believe that edification is limited to feel-good stories, I believe that a major part of edification is to inform people about various aspects of life.

Hence, that is the purpose of my posting the following two articles. I believe that this information can be thought-provoking to my friends.



An article by Francis W. Porretto titled “Unspeakable Or Unthinkable?” was posted at libertystorch.info on April 26, 2024. Following are excerpts of the article.

There are things that must be said. Some of those things are terrible to contemplate. Fortunately, there are a few people, at least, who are willing to say them. I aspire to be numbered among them.

Just now, the premier speaker of the unspeakable is Tucker Carlson. For those who don’t watch videos at all, here’s a transcript of the “controversial” part.

Tucker Carlson said to Joe Rogan: “I love, by the way, that people on my side—I’ll just admit it, on the Right—have spent the last 80 years defending dropping nuclear weapons on civilians. Like, are you joking? That’s just, like, *prima facie* evil. If you can’t—‘Well, if we hadn’t done that, then this, that, the other thing, that was actually a great savings’—like, no. It’s wrong to drop nuclear weapons on people, and if you find yourself arguing that it’s a good thing to drop nuclear weapons on people, then you are evil. Like, it’s not a tough one, right? It’s not a hard call for me. So, with that in mind, like, why would you want nuclear weapons? It’s like just a mindless, childish sort of intellectual exercise to justify, like, ‘Oh no, it’s really good because someone else could get’—how about, no? How about spending all of your effort to prevent this from happening?”

That statement caused shocked expressions and outraged statements throughout the American Right.

Here's one from Erick Erickson: "Carlson's moral myopia avoids the obvious. Far more civilians died during conventional bombings than died as a result of atomic bombs. On March 9 and 10, 1944, Tokyo was firebombed. It was called the 'Night of Black Snow,' and it killed about 100,000 people—most of them civilians. Like Dresden, people fled to water and were 'boiled.' WW-II was but 50 years removed from men on horses attacking entrenched combatants, often with swords in hand. Bombs, in WW-II, were 'dumb.' Gravity took them to the earth and killed people—noncombatants and soldiers alike. War 80 years ago was very messy. Carlson and Rogan didn't moralize over Hamburg, Dresden, or Tokyo. Instead, they bobbed their heads and lamented the use of a particular type of weapon, not the death toll or civilians roasting alive from firebombs."

Yet while Erickson has a point, Carlson was half correct at least.

A week ago, I wrote: "Wars are normally the province of governments. Government can stick a gun in your ribs and tell you 'You've just enlisted.' Then it can send you out to fight—and God help you if you don't report."

War and its accessories are big business today: so big that in the shadows cast by the munitions makers there are numerous "arms dealers" who broker such goods to customers even less savory than governments.

The federal government of the United States alone spends nearly a trillion dollars annually on "defense," with a substantial portion of that amount going to weapons design, fabrication, and acquisition. As there are nearly two hundred other nation-states on this sorry ball of rock, I'm confident that the global total is well beyond that.

Governments buy weapons of war. Governments compel their subjects to pay for those weapons. Governments declare and wage war, often using their unwilling subjects as soldiers to do so. Are you beginning to detect a "red thread" here?

While the next statement falls short of provability, I feel confident of its accuracy: "As long as there are governments, there will be wars."

"The purpose of war is to support your government's decisions by force," wrote Robert A. Heinlein, and indeed it is so. Throughout history, except for one tragically brief century in a single continent, unwilling persons—conscripts, civilians, noncombatants, innocent bystanders, what have you—have died in war. It will be so in the wars of the future as well, for weapons—and governments—are becoming more destructive and less discriminating as time passes.

Tucker Carlson finds the nuclear destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki morally unacceptable. Yet that is what governments do! The scale of the thing, many thousands killed by a single gigantic explosion, is *morally irrelevant*.

Those bombings were no more and no less moral than the bombings of August 6, 1914.

A government with evil intentions had sent two million men marching on a mission of conquest. Its liege lord and top military planners were angry at the stubbornness of a minor power, neutral by treaty, that refused those armies free passage through its lands. The conquest-minded state decided on a strategy of intimidation. An aircraft long kept in reserve was sent aloft on a mission of terror, the first since Hume, Smith, and Locke put their stamp on the moral renaissance of the world.

The aircraft was a Zeppelin, designated the "L-Z" by the commanders of the armies of the German Empire under Kaiser Wilhelm II. Its weapons were gravity bombs, thirteen in number. Its target was the Belgian city of Liege, where the Kaiser's troops had met unexpected resistance to their Schlieffen Plan thrust against France. Its harvest was nine civilian lives: the first civilians deliberately killed by authorized military action in the Twentieth Century.

The date was August 6, 1914.

That, to your Curmudgeon's way of thinking, was the most awful day. The day a major Western power, nominally committed to individual rights, the rule of law, and the norms of civilized warfare, threw all of that aside in hope of imposing its will on the government of another land. The day the line between combatants and civilians was erased.

You who hate war but think Carlson was being excessively moralistic, how much do you *really* hate it? Enough to give up the insanity of government itself? Or is that too steep a hill for you? Are you going to try to ban nuclear weapons?



An article by Dennis Prager titled "Some on the Right Are Having a Moral Meltdown" was posted at townhall.com on May 1, 2024. Following is the article.

My disdain for the Left began at a young age. From as early as I can recall, I hated evil, and I therefore always hated communism. When I realized the Left either supported communism or, at the very least, opposed anti-communism, I understood that leftism was a force for evil. Liberals and conservatives hated communism; leftists did not.

As liberals began their leftward drift in the 1960s—to cite one example, virtually all liberal media condemned President Ronald Reagan's description of the Soviet Union as "an evil empire"—I came to regard conservatism as a moral refuge in a dark world.

In the conservative moral universe, America was essentially a force for good; communism was evil; liberty, most especially free speech, was a supreme

value; Western civilization was a morally superior civilization; the Judeo-Christian value system was the moral bedrock of the West; and Islamic violence—as exemplified by al-Qaeda, the Islamic State, Boko Haram, the Taliban, Hamas, Hezbollah and the Iranian regime—was the great religious threat of our time.

That conservative moral universe is in decline. Some leading figures on the Right are as confused as the Left on some of the most important moral issues. This was made manifest last week when Tucker Carlson told Joe Rogan that any person who defends the dropping of the atomic bombs over Japan is evil.

Here is what he said:

“People on my side . . . on the Right, you know, have spent 80 years defending dropping nuclear weapons on civilians. Like, are you joking? That’s just like prima facie evil . . . It’s wrong to drop nuclear weapons on people. And if you find yourself arguing that it’s a good thing to drop nuclear weapons on people, then you are evil. Like, it’s not a tough one. It’s not a hard call for me. So, with that in mind, like, why would you want nuclear weapons? It’s, like, just a mindless, childish sort of intellectual exercise to justify—like, ‘Oh, no, it’s really good because somebody else will get it.’ How about ‘no’? How about, like, spending all of your effort to prevent this from happening? Would you kill baby Hitler, you know, famously?”

Given that nearly every liberal and conservative thinker over the past 80 years has defended the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, in Tucker’s view, nearly every conservative and liberal thinker of the last 80 years was or is evil.

For those 80 years, the charge that America was evil for having dropped those bombs on Japan has been associated almost exclusively with the Left.

Now, an increasing number of America-first conservatives have adopted the position identified for three generations with the America-hating Left.

In another column, I will attempt to explain this right-wing moral decline. But here I will confine myself to a brief moral defense of President Harry Truman’s decision to drop the atom bombs on Japan.

- The responsibility for the war between Japan and the United States lay with Japan.

Every Japanese death was the result of the fascist Japanese government’s decision to attack the U.S., China, Korea, Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, Burma, Thailand and the Philippines. If the Japanese military regime had never attacked those countries, not one Japanese would have been killed.

- The Japanese were as cruel and sadistic as the Nazis.

Because the average American knows little about history, few Americans know how vile the Japanese were during World War II. The Japanese performed grotesque medical experiments on fully conscious Chinese civilians just as Nazi doctors did on concentration camp inmates. The Japanese used Korean and Filipino women as sex slaves to be regularly gang raped by Japanese soldiers. The Japanese tortured and murdered American, Australian and other prisoners of war.

■ Possibly over 100,000 Japanese civilians were killed on the night of March 9-10, 1945, in one of the American bombing raids over Tokyo, far more than were killed in the Nagasaki atom bombing.

American aerial bombing over Japanese cities between 1942 and 1945 killed between 241,000 and 900,000 Japanese, and such bombing would have continued had the atom bombs not ended the war. Apparently, however, killing far fewer people with an atom bomb is more immoral than killing far more people with conventional bombs.

■ Invasion was not the more moral option.

In the words of Roman Catholic priest and University of Notre Dame professor of history Father Wilson Miscamble, "Truman sought to bomb Hiroshima and Nagasaki, two major military/industrial targets, to avoid an invasion of Japan, which Truman knew would mean, in his words, 'an Okinawa from one end of Japan to the other.' His assumptions were entirely legitimate."

■ Here is more from Professor Miscamble.

Professor Miscamble said: "Japanese military and civilian losses had reached approximately three million and there seemed no end in sight. Despite all this, however, Japan's leaders and especially its military clung fiercely to notions of Ketsu-Go ('decisive battle'). In fact, the Japanese government had mobilized a large part of the population into a national militia which would be deployed to defend the home islands.

"Confirming the Japanese determination to fight on is the fact that even after the use of atomic bombs against both Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Japanese military still wanted to pursue that desperate option. ... It took the unprecedented intervention of a Japanese emperor to break the impasse in the Japanese government and finally order surrender. It was only the dropping of the atom bombs that allowed the emperor and the so-called peace faction in the Japanese government to negotiate an end to the war.

"Japanese losses would have been far greater without the bombs. And the overall casualties would also have included thousands of Allied prisoners of war whom the Japanese planned to execute in case of invasion."

Miscamble concludes: "The judgment of history is clear and unambiguous: the atomic bombs shortened the war, averted the need for a land invasion, saved

countless more lives on both sides of the blood-soaked conflict than they cost, and ended the Japanese brutalization of the conquered peoples of Asia.”

(These quotes are taken from Fr. Miscamble’s PragerU video, *Was it Wrong to Drop the Atom Bomb on Japan?* made 10 years ago.)

In Tucker’s view, Fr. Miscamble is just another evil man, as is one of the most morality-driven conservatives of our time, Victor Davis Hanson.

Victor” Davis Hanson wrote: “To Americans and most of the world 75 years ago, each day in early August 1945 that the Japanese war machine continued its work meant that thousands of Asian civilians and Allied soldiers would die. In the terrible arithmetic of World War II, the idea that such a nightmare might end in a day or two was seen as saving millions of lives rather than gratuitously incinerating tens of thousands.”

What explains the moral confusion of some on this New Right is worthy of another column.

But I, for one, have found a silver lining: Clarity about a heretofore puzzling development.

The inability of many America-first intellectuals, podcasters and their followers to call Hamas evil and morally defend Israel is not necessarily a function of antisemitism. It is a function of a broken moral compass.