

version of American behavior toward the people who gave us Pearl Harbor?

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1/89

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BERNSTEIN REPLIES: Unfortunately, Lawrence Rubin misinterpreted my review, ascribed to me various arguments that I neither made nor intended, and thus misunderstood both my purposes and words.

My main purpose was to assess the book. *Making* is, as I wrote, a good "read"—an engaging narrative, rich in description of people and events, sometimes romantic about science and scientists, and disappointingly skimpy in both analysis and research.

Thus, for PHYSICS TODAY's readers, I provided a few examples of the skimpy research, purposely choosing important matters, including President Truman's and Secretary of War Henry J. Stimson's attitudes about killing noncombatants, J. Robert Oppenheimer's various responses to the bomb, and the pre-Hiroshima estimates by the Joint Chiefs of Staff's committees of "only" 20 000–46 000 fatalities. My use of "only" was not to minimize the potential tragedy nor the grief in 1945 America, but to stress that this estimate was less than 10% of the (false) postwar claims about pre-Hiroshima estimates. It is important, I think, that readers know what policymakers *actually believed* before Hiroshima; citizens might ponder why the postwar claims greatly misrepresented these pre-Hiroshima estimates. The June–July 1986 *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* has an article, by me, that further probes these matters.

My book review stressed that the potential loss of 20 000–46 000 American lives in an invasion easily justified, for American leaders in July–August 1945, the use of the A-bomb. In World War II, even 3000 lives would probably have justified that decision for leaders and plain citizens in what was deemed a just war against hated enemies. Use of the bomb was made even easier because the enemy was also "yellow." Racism was not the controlling reason for the bomb's use. Undoubtedly, it would have been used against Germany had the weapon been ready much earlier. I have repeatedly stated this conclusion elsewhere.

In moving beyond what I actually discussed, Rubin uncritically assumes that: (1) the invasion was the only viable alternative to the bomb; and (2) Japan's defense plans and hopes (with many millions of civilians defending

the homeland until death) would have been automatically, and fully, implemented if the invasion had occurred. On both matters, honest analysts have seriously disagreed—even after considerable research. Thus, any statement of what "might have happened" requires great care, judicious assessment, and humility. I purposely did not discuss these "might have been" questions in my review. Nor did I seek to imply answers, or suggest condemnations—though *Making* itself has been read by some as an indictment. Strangely, Rubin admires *Making*, then battles against what I did not write, and ultimately deals with important but speculative matters in simplistic fashion.

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Maryland Centers in on Superconductivity

The recent news story on US superconductivity efforts (August, page 55) did not mention the ongoing work at the Center for Superconductivity Research at the University of Maryland's College Park campus. The State of Maryland has made a strong commitment to superconductivity research by starting this center in July 1988 and by funding the center with an annual budget of \$2 million (projected to be \$3 million in 1991). At present the center has 6 faculty, 5 postdoctoral fellows and 13 graduate students and staff. We are in a strong growth phase, actively recruiting new faculty and staff and building up new facilities. Outside support is being given by the Electric Power Research Institute, and we are seeking Federal funding as well as industry-government-university collaborations.

I believe superconductivity research and development will play an important role in the US economy during the next 10–15 years, and I certainly expect that the Maryland center will make vital contributions to this national effort.

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Honor Engineers with an Un-Draper Award

I found myself quite troubled by the National Academy of Engineering's decision to name their award after Charles Stark Draper (November 1988, page 51). I do not mean to

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