

To Drop or Not to Drop → How to end World War II A Presidential Decision

Dr. Farrington Daniels, the director of the University of Chicago Lab, polled 150 scientists working on the atomic bomb, in order to get their views on how the bomb should be used. These were the choices they could vote upon:

1. Use the bombs in the manner that, from a military point of view, is most effective in bringing about prompt surrender at minimum human cost to U.S.
2. Give a military demonstration in Japan to be followed by renewed opportunity for surrender before full use of the weapon is employed.
3. Give an experimental demonstration in this country, with representatives of Japan present; followed by a new opportunity to surrender before full use of the weapon is employed.
4. Withhold military use of the weapon, but make a public experimental demonstration of its effectiveness.
5. Maintain as secret as possible all developments of our new weapons and refrain from using them in this war.

This is how the scientists voted on five different methods of using the bomb as listed on the questionnaire:

23 votes (15.3%) - Use the bombs in the manner that, from a military point of view, is most effective in bringing about prompt surrender at minimum human cost to U.S.

69 votes (46%) - Give a military demonstration in Japan to be followed by renewed opportunity for surrender before full use of the weapon is employed.

39 votes (26%) - Give an experimental demonstration in this country, with representatives of Japan present; followed by a new opportunity to surrender before full use of the weapon is employed.

16 votes (10.7%) - Withhold military use of the weapon, but make a public experimental demonstration of its effectiveness.

3 votes (2%) - Maintain as secret as possible all developments of our new weapons and refrain from using them in this war.