On August 6, 1945, President Harry Truman released the awesome power of the atomic bomb on the Japanese city of Hiroshima. This action helped to end the Second World War, but at a terrible price.

**HARRY S. TRUMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE DROPPING OF AN ATOMIC BOMB ON HIROSHIMA (excerpt)**

Address to the Nation, August 6, 1945

"Sixteen hours ago an American airplane dropped one bomb on Hiroshima, an important Japanese Army base. That bomb had more power than 20,000 tons of TNT. It had more than 2,000 times the blast power of the British "Grand Slam," which is the largest bomb ever yet used in the history of warfare.

The Japanese began the war from the air at Pearl Harbor. They have been repaid manyfold. And the end is not yet. With this bomb we have now added a new and revolutionary increase in destruction to supplement the growing power of our armed forces. In their present form these bombs are now in production, and even more powerful forms are in development.

It is an atomic bomb. It is a harnessing of the basic power of the universe. The force from which the sun draws its power has been loosed against those who brought war to the Far East.

We are now prepared to obliterate more rapidly and completely every productive enterprise the Japanese have above ground in any city. We shall destroy their docks, their factories, and their communications. Let there be no mistake; we shall completely destroy Japan's power to make war.

It was to spare the Japanese people from utter destruction that the ultimatum of July 26 was issued at Potsdam.* Their leaders promptly rejected that ultimatum. If they do not now accept our terms they may expect a rain of ruin from the air, the like of which has never been seen on this earth. Behind this air attack will follow sea and land forces in such numbers and power as they have not yet seen and with the fighting skill of which they are already well aware.

The secretary of war, who has kept in personal touch with all phases of the project, will immediately make public a statement giving further details.

His statement will give facts concerning the sites at Oak Ridge near Knoxville, Tennessee, and at Richland near Pasco, Washington, and an installation near Santa Fe, New Mexico. Although the workers at the sites have been making materials to be used in producing the greatest destructive force in history, they have not themselves been in danger beyond that of many other occupations, for the utmost care has been taken of their safety.
I shall recommend that the Congress of the United States consider promptly the establishment of an appropriate commission to control the production and use of atomic power within the United States. I shall give further consideration and make further recommendations to the Congress as to how atomic power can become a powerful and forceful influence towards the maintenance of world peace." Harry S. Truman  

Source: Department of Energy Complete Text

Directions: Answer the following questions in complete sentences and provide reasons for your response. Cite specific evidence from the text of the speech to support each answer. Explain how the evidence answers the question.

1. What reasons did Truman give for dropping the atomic bomb on Hiroshima? ____________________________

2. What did President Truman say to address safety concerns? ____________________________

3. What are the ethical implications of the atomic bomb? ____________________________

4. Why would President Truman be against sharing the secret of the atomic bomb with the world? Why would he support sharing atomic technology with Great Britain and only divulge minor details to the Soviets? ____________________________

5. To what extent did the decision to drop the atomic bomb and subsequent postwar foreign policy decisions of the Truman administration lead to the Cold War? ____________________________

6. General Douglas MacArthur, one time commander of United Nations armed forces during the Korean War, in a 1954 interview stated that he had wanted to drop "between thirty and fifty atomic bombs" on enemy bases before laying radioactive waste material across the northern edge of North Korea during the war. Why do you think Truman decided not to use the atomic bomb in the Korean War of 1950? How did this precedent dictate warfare in subsequent presidencies? (Write a complete paragraph with evidence and reasons.)

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________
Excerpts from Winston Churchill’s Iron Curtain Speech March 1946

A shadow has fallen upon the scenes so lately lighted by the Allied victory. Nobody knows what Soviet Russia and its Communist international organization intends to do in the immediate future …

… We understand the Russian need to be secure on her western frontiers by the removal of all possibility of German aggression. We welcome Russia to her rightful place among the leading nations of the world … It is my duty however, for I am sure you would wish me to state the facts as I see them to you, to place before you certain facts about the present position in Europe.

From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic an iron curtain has descended across the Continent. Behind that line lie all the capitals of the ancient states of Central and Eastern Europe. Warsaw, Berlin, Prague, Vienna, Budapest, Belgrade, Bucharest and Sofia, all these famous cities and the populations around them lie in what I must call the Soviet sphere, and all are subject in one form or another, not only to Soviet influence but to a very high and, in some cases, increasing measure of control from Moscow.

The Communist parties, which were very small in all these Eastern States of Europe, have been raised to pre-eminence and power far beyond their numbers and are seeking everywhere to obtain totalitarian control. Police governments are prevailing in nearly every case, and so far, except in Czechoslovakia, there is no true democracy.

Turkey and Persia are both profoundly alarmed and disturbed at the claims which are being made upon them and at the pressure being exerted by the Moscow Government. An attempt is being made by the Russians in Berlin to build up a quasi-Communist party in their zone of occupied Germany by showing special favors to groups of left-wing German leaders…

1. What positive comments does Churchill make about the USSR? _______________________________________________________________________

2. What negative comments does he make? _______________________________________________________________________

3. What Soviet actions were causing concerns for Americans? ___________________________________________________________________

4. What would a Soviet observer make of the reaction to Churchill’s speech in the USA? ______

5. What evidence is there that Churchill’s speech has increased tension between Britain, the USA and USSR? _______________________________________________________________________

American and British leaders were alarmed at Soviet control of Eastern Europe.
Truman urged a tough stance toward the Soviet Union.
1946 former Prime Minister Winston Churchill made the following “Iron Curtain” Speech in Fulton Missouri.
Stalin used Churchill’s words to persuade his people that the U.S. and U.K. were enemies.
Excerpts from President Truman's speech of March 12th 1947 - The Truman Doctrine

The peoples of a number of countries of the world have recently had totalitarian regimes forced upon them against their will. The Government of the United States has made frequent protests against coercion and intimidation, in violation of the Yalta agreement, in Poland, Rumania, and Bulgaria. I must also state that in a number of other countries there have been similar developments.

At the present moment in world history nearly every nation must choose between alternative ways of life. The choice is too often not a free one.

One way of life is based upon the will of the majority, and is distinguished by free institutions, representative government, free elections, guarantees of individual liberty, freedom of speech and religion, and freedom from political oppression.

The second way of life is based upon the will of a minority forcibly imposed upon the majority. It relies upon terror and oppression, a controlled press and radio; fixed elections, and the suppression of personal freedoms.

I believe that it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures.
I believe that we must assist free peoples to work out their own destinies in their own way.

I believe that our help should be primarily through economic and financial aid which is essential to economic stability and orderly political processes.

1. Look at the first paragraph. According to Truman, what actions have been taking place that the USA is unhappy about? Who is he criticizing here?

2. Look at paragraphs 2-4. What is the choice facing the people of the world?

3. Put Truman’s policies into your own words.

4. From your knowledge of the events of the time, do you agree with Truman’s analysis of the situation?