Hiroshima, President Obama and the Noritake Globe Grenades

Description

Given the current events of the President making a speech at Hiroshima yesterday, and figuring out I hadnâ€™t gotten around to making this post already, hereâ€™s another small bit of history that proves, that as horrible as the A bombs were on Japan, the decision by FDR and later Harry Truman, may well have saved a culture from extinctions.

It would be nice o pursue a World without nuclear weapons. I actually concur with him. I do, however, take exception to him presenting this topic at Hiroshima, and even Nagaski would have been inappropriate. The reason atomic, and later, nuclear weapons were invented, was because of the agressive actions of Japan in the Pacific region of the planet. Long before Pearl Harbor, Japan had occupied, just to name some significant one: The Korean Pennisula, and large portions of Manchuris. In fact, the US had cut off selling scrap metal, lumber and petroleum products via an embargo, as a less than military response to make an international diplomatic point. The embargo hampered Japanese military efforts, but the unintended consequence was then Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, strategically planning to take our powerful Naval forces out of action, so they could then invade SE Asia, where the tin, lumber and POL resources were that they needed to continue their empire building in China.

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The massive human wreckage and war crimes of the Japanese military are well documented along the way, the term â€œThe Rape of Nankingâ€• is but one term in this accounting.

In a twist of irony, our President goes to Japan, and says he is there to mourn the dead of our use of atomic weapons the bring the war to a close, started by the Japanese and filled with brutality towards civilians. I doubt a moment was devoted to considering the men, women and children used for bayonet and beheading training for Japanese soldiers and officers in China (and what is now Korea), let alone the many Korean women who were taken, in todayâ€™s lexicon, as â€œsex slavesâ€• for the Japanese military. Back then, they were called â€œcomfort girlsâ€• and that issue is still major issue between Japan and Korea even now.

Little known history is Japan had successfully developed and tested and atomic weapon before the end of WWII. Revealed by a Japanese immigrant physics professor, who was part of the research team, he had saved docuemtns ordered destroyed before the Allies could find them. The History Channel has a documentary on this bit of history, and the details are also found here on Wikipedia.

Has the President, or his staff bothered to realized both Germany and Japan were working to build the same type of weaponry, and speficially planning to use them for domination? Not likely, it doesnâ€™t fit the narraitve of how bad America has been, trying to build an empire aggressively against the peaceful Japanese peoples.

Ans, yes, they higher irony is the enabling of Iran to build the very weaponry he says the World would be better off without.

Now, on to a telling bit of 2nd hand storytelling that proves we are blessed to have the Japanese culture, economy and as a security partner in peace, and all because of some very difficult decision making, in the end, by Harry Truman.

Assigned to the COMNAVSURFLANT Combat Systems Mobile Training Team (CSMTT) in 1990, one my shipmates, Paul, had been stationed at Naval Station Sasebo, Japan earlier in his career. On his desk, he had a carved wood pen and pencil holder, with his name â€œbookenedâ€• by china globes. The globes were fine white china, about 3â€³ in diameter and had a little â€œchimney,â€• like you would see on a Christmas ornament with out the cap to hold the hanger. Certainly it was a conversation starting piece, and I asked, as Iâ€™m sure many others have over the years: Just what are those globes?

â€œGrenades.â€•

The long version: Sometime in the 80s, the in Sasebo Harbor channel needed dredging and the dredging spoil came up with pile after pile of those spheres. No one, at first, had any idea what they were or for, but someone began asking around.

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Some very old Japanese revealed the story. Noritake made them. The Japanese Government directed them **verbally** to manufacture globes for inexpensive grenades, to be issued to every man, woman and child in the event of an invasion by the Allied Forces. They would run up to them and kill themselves and ans many Allied troops as possible. When the war ended, the globes produced and stored, were order to be dumped in the harbor, to conceal their existence.

It was an entirely undocumented production contract. Consider why any one, or any government, would, with all their mandatory red tape, all of a sudden doing something verbally?

I donâ€™t recall the book, but about 10 years ago, it was on the new book shelf at Borders, the topic was the contents of the diplomatic cables between Toyko and Berlin we had intercepted. The authorâ€™s analysis was Japanâ€™s leadership was poised to expend every Japanese citizen, rather than have anyone remaining, standing in defeat. His conclusion was: The delivery of the two atomic bombs were the tipping point in the Japanese Governmentâ€™s decision to end the war, with out the coming horrific toll in lives that would be an expected outcome.

Paulâ€™s memorabilia of his time in Japan tells of the internal planning to enable national suicide, which means it wasnâ€™t â€œwords, just wordsâ€• of one ally to another in the midst of global war, but a purposeful plan the had put into motion. Knowing the events of Saipan and Okinawa, it is even more clear the Japanese military had great control over what they could get civilians to do in the face of the Allied Forces.

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