

SOURCE C



British prisoners of war in a Japanese camp in Burma. According to a British medical officer they were treated 'like animals'.

SOURCE D

'No demonstration, such as over a desert island, was likely to bring the war to an end. The final decision of when and where to use the atomic bomb was up to me. I regarded the bomb as a military weapon and never had any doubt that it should be used. The top military advisers recommended its use.'

US President Harry S. Truman, who gave the order to use the bomb.

SOURCE E

'It is my opinion that the use of this barbarous weapon at Hiroshima and Nagasaki was of no material assistance in our war against Japan. The Japanese were already defeated and were ready to surrender because of the effective sea blockade and the successful bombing with conventional weapons.'

◀ Admiral Leahy, US navy, adviser to President Truman in 1945, writing in 1950.

SOURCE F

'The experience of Russian scientists in nuclear research is entirely sufficient to enable them to retrace our steps within a few years. The race for nuclear armaments will be on in earnest not later than the morning after our first demonstration of the existence of nuclear weapons. The military advantage and saving of American lives achieved may be outweighed by a wave of horror and revulsion sweeping over the rest of the world.'

Report to the US government by an advisory committee of scientists, 1945.

SOURCE G

'It was a horrible sight. Hundreds of injured people who were trying to escape passed our house. The sight of them was almost unbearable. Their faces and hands were burnt and swollen; and great sheets of skin had peeled away from their tissues to hang down like rags on a scarecrow. This morning they had stopped. I found them lying on both sides of the road so thick that it was impossible to pass without stepping on them.'

Diary of Dr Tabuchi, a Japanese doctor, 7 August 1945.

EXERCISE

- 1 It was part of the code of honour of Japanese soldiers to commit suicide rather than surrender. How do you think this may have influenced the events of August 1945?
- 2 What might the following people have thought or felt when they heard the news on 6 August 1945? Look at the table 'Two other air raids' and at the figures in pages 66–9 as well as at the sources.
 - an Allied soldier.
 - families in Britain.
 - families in the USA.
- 3 Why were Churchill (Source B) and Truman (Source D) so certain that the decision to drop the bomb was right?