of Stalin’s rise to power, had operational advantages that far surpassed Nazi capabilities in World War II’s counter-intelligence war. The sad fate of the “Red Orchestra” notwithstanding, the Germans never succeeded in developing useful operational intelligence at a strategic or tactical level as they were unable to penetrate any significant Soviet military or political organization while the Russians thoroughly compromised most German counter-intelligence efforts. Moreover, the Soviets not only safeguarded their political and military organizations from Nazi penetration and infiltration, they also prevented most sabotage by the Germans through the ruthless application of force. Stephan concludes, therefore, that the success of their counter-intelligence operations during World War II provided the Soviet’s with strategic advantages that made a decisive contribution to the Red Army’s victory in 1945.

While Stephan writes a highly readable book, his audience should not forget one of his central goals was to present a study that would stimulate further research based on declassified Russian sources. In questions regarding the counter-intelligence war on World War II’s eastern front, we are still waiting for the winners to write an authoritative history—there is more to this story! But, there is no question that the author thoroughly researched his sources available to him and brings his background in intelligence to bear on the pages of his book. The result is a smooth flowing text that offers readers an analysis of another important theater of operations on the Eastern Front. For these reasons, Stephan should be read after digesting John Erickson’s, Earl Zeimke’s and David Glanz’s redoubtable classics on the Soviet’s in World War II.

John W. Steinberg


The history of the end of World War II in the Pacific has been contested almost from the day Japan decided to surrender. The effects that the atomic bombings of Japanese cities and Soviet entry into the war had on that decision have been especially contentious subjects. Tsuyoshi Hasegawa’s commendable book charts a judicious course through those minefields of contention.

The focal point of Hasegawa’s study differs somewhat from those that preceded it. Truman, he argues, was racing to end the war before Stalin joined it and expanded the Soviet empire in East Asia. That thesis is not entirely new, but by drawing on Soviet archival records more fully than other studies, Hasegawa brings the Soviet role more fully into the picture than they did.

The conventional U.S. view of the end of the war has failed to withstand the onslaught of historians, and Hasegawa follows their lead in casting doubt on it. He rightly dismisses the claim that the Potsdam Declaration was a peace offer, whose rejection by Japan led Truman to order the atomic bombing. Noting that the written order to drop the bomb was dispatched the day before the declaration was issued and that a specific reference to sparing the emperor in an earlier draft was dropped, he concludes that it was written to be re-
jected: "The truth is quite the opposite, however: the rejection of the Potsdam Declaration was required to justify the dropping of the bomb" (p. 172). To strengthen his case, Hasegawa might have pointed out that the bombing directive gave Japan as little as three days to respond to the declaration. In any event, the United States did not wait for a definitive answer from Japan. Instead, it "rushed to drop the bomb without any attempt to explore the readiness of some Japanese policy makers to seek peace through the ultimatum" (p. 173).

Why the hurry? Hasegawa's answer is one that others before him have put forth: "The United States no longer needed Soviet assistance to force Japan to surrender; in fact, it became imperative for the United States to use the bomb to hasten Japan's surrender before the Soviet Union could enter the war" (p. 156). Whether that was Truman's conclusion is not clear from the evidence. It surely was the view of Secretary of State James Byrnes, but it was not the Army's. In Chief of Staff George C. Marshall's realistic assessment, "even if we went ahead in the war without the Russians, and compelled the Japanese to surrender to our terms, that would not prevent the Russians from marching into Manchuria anyhow and striking, thus permitting them to get virtually what they wanted in the surrender terms" (p. 153).

It was quite another matter to have Stalin join Britain and China in signing the Potsdam Declaration. That might have lent weight to his bid for a greater role in the postwar occupation of Japan. Stalin himself was disappointed at not being asked to sign, which would have given him a pretext for declaring war on Japan. Here, Hasegawa presents some telling evidence from the Soviet archives, including a draft declaration of its own that the Soviet delegation had brought to Potsdam but never tabled.

The omission of Stalin's signature led Japan to intensify its efforts to obtain Soviet mediation to end the war on terms more favorable than unconditional surrender. Hasegawa correctly concludes, as others have: "there was no realistic possibility that the Japanese government would have accepted the Potsdam terms." The most that Foreign Minister Shigenori Togo and his dovish allies could get internal agreement to do was approach Moscow. That was acceptable to the diehards in the Army who still hoped to entice Stalin to enter the war on Japan's side. Soviet entry into the war knocked the props out from under both those strategies and prompted the palace to sue for peace.

Stalin, says Hasegawa, took Truman's failure to consult him on the declaration as "conclusive proof that the United States intended to obtain Japan's surrender without Soviet help. He decided to enter the war as quickly as possible before the atomic bomb would force Japan to end the war. Now the race was on in earnest" (p. 165). Hasegawa offers convincing evidence on this point: Stalin had told Truman at Potsdam that the Red Army would enter the war by the middle of August, but he ordered the target date set by his generals, between August 20 and August 25, moved up ten to fourteen days.

Stalin was surely racing to seize territory, but was Truman? If Truman's aim was to end the war as soon as possible, before the Red Army could advance, why even after the Hiroshima bombing did the United States turn down Japan's conditional surrender? And why did it drop a second atomic bomb on Nagasaki without first communicating explicitly its willingness to preserve the throne and spare the emperor, which U.S. officials knew was Japan's principal condition for suing for peace?