Loving the Atom
‘Now I am become Death, the destroyer of worlds.’

Oppenheimer, 16 July 1945
When Neils met Winston

Bohr tried to persuade Winston against using the Bomb.

Churchill: ‘I cannot see what you are talking about. After all this new bomb is just going to be bigger than our present bombs. It involves no difference in the principles of war.’
Stimson: ‘I called it a royal straight flush and we mustn't be a fool about the way we play it’.

Truman: it seems a terrible thing to gamble with such big stakes in diplomacy without having your master card in your hand.

Molotov: ‘[The atomic bombings] were, of course, not against Japan, but against the Soviet Union’.
Power
Oppenheimer wondered if "the living at Hiroshima and Nagasaki might envy the dead."
‘How easy it is to kill people when you turn your mind to it.’

Isidor Rabi
Moral Qualms

Admiral William Halsey, commander of the Third Fleet, publicly argued that the scientists 'had a toy and they wanted to try it out ... The first atomic bomb was an unnecessary experiment. ... It was a mistake ever to drop it.'
Moral Qualms

Leo Szilard proposed a scenario in which Germany beat the Americans to the bomb, dropped two of them, but still managed to lose the war. ‘Can anyone doubt that we would then have defined the dropping of atomic bombs on cities as a war crime, and that we would have sentenced the Germans who were guilty of this crime to death at Nuremberg and hanged them?’

*The scientists too?*
A Fact

The percentage of Americans who morally object to the use of the atom bomb against Japan is about the same today as it was in 1946.
Selling the Atom
Loving the Atom

The 1947 Manhattan telephone directory listed 45 companies using the word ‘atomic’ in their names, including the Atomic Undergarment Company ... All over America, little towns renamed themselves ‘Atomic City’. In Richland Washington, the high school close to Hanford chose the name 'bombers' for their mascot. Children watched 'Atom Ant' cartoons and Boy Scouts competed for an atomic energy merit badge. In a 1946 radio show, Bob Hope joked that Valentine’s Day messages should read: ‘Will you be my little geranium, until we are both blown up by uranium?’
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Nuclear Medicine
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Loving the Atom
Loving the Bomb
Atomic Cocktail

- 1 1/2 ounces vodka
- 1 1/2 ounces brandy
- 1 teaspoon sherry
- 1 1/2 ounces Brut champagne

**Instructions:** Stir the vodka, brandy, and sherry well with cracked ice, then strain into a chilled cocktail glass and add 1 1/2 to 2 ounces cold brut champagne.
If you are caught outdoors in a sudden attack, a hat will give you at least some protection from the heat flash.
Fighting Fear
Duck and Cover
Loving the Bomb

‘There’ll be fire, dust and metal flying all around
And the radioactivity will burn them to the ground
If there's any Commies left they'll be all on the run
If General MacArthur drops an atomic bomb’

Jackie Doll and His Pickled Peppers, 1951
It was widely recognised that the hydrogen bomb has no military utility.

Truman: ‘It is part of my responsibility as Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces to see to it that our country is able to defend itself against any possible aggressor. Accordingly, I have directed the Atomic Energy Commission to continue work on all forms of atomic weapons, including the so-called hydrogen or super bomb.’
By 1969 the superpowers were, between them, spending more than $50 million a day on nuclear armaments. The two sides felt secure because each had the ability to destroy the world many times over.
On 30 October 1961, the Soviets tested a 50-megaton bomb.

The flash could be seen 1,000 kilometres away, despite heavy cloud cover. The mushroom cloud rose to 64 kilometres, and the atmospheric disturbance orbited the earth three times.

An observer over 250 kilometres away felt the thermal pulse.

In villages hundreds of kilometres away wooden houses were completely destroyed and roofs were blown from stone structures.

The bomb had no purpose other than fear.
And finally

‘The abdication of thought has been the decisive factor in the collapse of our civilization.”

-- Albert Schweitzer