tell the little people ("the truck driver, the steelworker") just why this occasion wasn't completely empty. Her answer was gracious, although she looked like someone who'd just swallowed something sickening but was too polite to mention it. Frost was not that tactful. In fact, he was often downright snide. "Any minute now," Rather said at one point, "we'll be looking for our first sight, our first glimpse, of Lady Diana." "Any minute now," snickered Frost, "we'll see our glimpse."

If Rather had to play the part of tormented bumpkin, he managed to strike back at his hosts, first with a show of belligerent pedantry, then with some plain arrogance. Frost mentioned that Charles was the first Prince of Wales to qualify for a university degree, which casual revelation sent Rather tearing through his index cards: "First Prince of Wales educated at a regular school, the first to earn a university degree, the first to ride a steeplechase, the first to jump from an airplane, the first to have flown jets and a helicopter—" He paused, then added, "The list is long," as if to say, "*That*'ll show you! Now shut up or I'll keep reading!" And soon after this, Rather carried on an interminable analysis with fellow correspondent Tom Fenton, pointing out how nice it was that this "show" (the wedding) allowed the British to say, " 'We *like* each other! We *like* being British!' "—a remarkable fact, Rather went on, considering the high unemployment, the riots, the end of the empire, the national paralysis, etc., etc. His two co-hosts were conspicuously silent, and Murrow was turning over in his grave.

IF RATHER seemed too garrulous, he was restraint itself compared to the gang at ABC, who jabbered as if afraid of losing consciousness. The anchorpersons were as rude as Rather, although it was not their native co-host whom they mistreated (the merry Robert Morley), but the much put-upon royal bride, who made a slight mistake in reciting her vows. Peter Jennings's cohort at the anchor desk was Barbara Walters, whose function, as the networks' resident *yenta*, was, as ever, to talk about the clothes and tribulations of the rich. During the ceremony she was oddly silent (perhaps taking a short nap) until the end, when the couple were on their way to sign the register. "And you know, Barbara," Jennings suddenly said in midyammer, "I thought, earlier on, I detected a touch of nervousness in the Princess of Wales."

This call to dissection brought Walters snapping back to life. "You know," she meowed, "she seems to just do everything *right*, and perhaps this is why the people love her *so* much. *Even* the mistake that she made when she said—uh—her now husband's name backwards—she said 'Philip Charles' instead of 'Charles Philip'—" "Barbara," Jennings answered, all compassion, "we look back just at that moment, and, as you point out, the Princess of Wales did make a minor, and totally *forgivable*, fluff." Minor, forgivable, and too good to pass up: right after this simpering duet, they actually *played back* the audio part of the tape so we could savor that "forgivable fluff" once more, even drowning out the beginning of a Handel oratorio to amplify that little slip.

THIS WAS not nobly done. Moreover, these people are in no position to judge anyone's flubbed lines, since they committed more than their own share. Jennings referred to somebody named "Pope John the Paul," mentioned "a very waving Prince Andrew," and told us that the wedding party ate a "sumptuous, simple lunch." He referred to one of Henry Purcell's works as "a 7th-century hymn," claimed that Charles I was beheaded in 1625 (the year of his coronation) and, in reading his own list of firsts for the present Charles, came up with one that was as farfetched as it was baffling: "The first Prince of Wales to reach the age of 30 unmarried since James Stuart back in the 18th century, in 1718." Even with all these errors, Jennings, a resident of England, still appeared to know a lot more about the place than did the fast-paced Rather, who restricted himself to bizarre utterances like this one: "Is the air of expectancy just literally bursting at the seams out there as it is here? It must be!"

The greatest rudeness was committed toward us, the viewers, who were forced to look around those talking heads, to try not to hear those self-assured voices, to look for that vivid and immediate marvel which television always promises, never delivers. We looked for beauty, and were given numbers. The newscasters may not have learned much about British culture in preparing for this event and they may have been ill-schooled in the national tongue, but they had been diligent in jotting down as many dates and weights and lengths and sizes as their files would hold, giving us history according to the *Guinness Book of World Records*: St. Paul's has the second-highest dome in Europe, has 17 bells, weighing from 300 pounds to two and a half tons, that would ring 4,000 changes of music on the wedding day; the nave is 652-feet long; the yacht *Britannia* has a crew of 276, is as long as four football fields; the wedding cake is five feet high, weighs 250 pounds, contains 50 pounds of marzipan, etc., etc.

These are the sorts of facts with which the networks crowded out the glories of that day. Wandering around outside the cathedral, Tom Fenton, an incredulous chuckle in his voice, asked people why they put up with all the mobs and waiting, why they didn't stay home and watch the wedding on television. "I know all that," one woman said, "but you wouldn't have the atmosphere, you know?" The fact that he would even have to ask the question is almost as appalling as the "coverage" itself.

New Republic (August 22 and 29, 1981): 26-30

'Thank God for the atom bomb.'

Hiroshima: A Soldier's View

by Paul Fussell

Many years ago in New York I saw on the side of a bus a whiskey ad which I've remembered all this time, for it's been for me a model of the brief poem. Indeed, I've come upon few short poems subsequently that evinced more genuine poetic talent. The ad consisted of two lines of "free verse," thus:

> In life, experience is the great teacher.
> In Scotch, Teacher's is the great experience.

For present purposes we can jettison the second line (licking our lips ruefully

as it disappears), leaving the first to encapsulate a principle whose banality suggests that it enshrines a most useful truth. I bring up the matter this August, the 36th anniversary of the A-bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, to focus on something suggested by the long debate about the ethics, if any, of that affair: namely, the importance of experience, sheer vulgar experience, in influencing, if not determining, one's views about the first use of the bomb. And the experience I'm talking about is that of having come to grips, face to face, with an enemy who designs your death. The experience is common to those in the infantry and the Marines and even the line Navy, to those, in short, who fought the Second World War mindful always that their mission was, as they were repeatedly told, "to close with the enemy and destroy him." I think there's something to be learned about that war, as well as about the tendency of historical memory unwittingly to resolve ambiguity, by considering some of the ways testimonies emanating from experience complicate attitudes about the cruel ending of that cruel war.

"WHAT did you do in the Great War, Daddy?" The recruiting poster deserves ridicule and contempt, of course, but its question is embarrassingly relevant here. The problem is one that touches on the matter of social class in America. Most of those with firsthand experience of the war at its worst were relatively inarticulate and have remained silent. Few of those destined to be destroyed if the main islands had had to be invaded went on to become our most eloquent men of letters or our most impressive ethical theorists or professors of history or international jurists. The testimony of experience has come largely from rough diamonds like James Jones and William Manchester, who experienced the war in the infantry and the Marine Corps. Both would agree with the point, if not perhaps the tone, of a remark about Hiroshima made by a naval officer menaced by the kamikazes off Okinawa: "Those were the best burned women and children I ever saw." Anticipating objection from the inexperienced, Jones, in his book *WWII*, is careful to precede his chapter on Hiroshima with one detailing the plans already in motion for the infantry assaults on the home islands of Kyushu, scheduled for November 1945, and ultimately Honshu. The forthcoming invasion of Kyushu, he notes, "was well into its collecting and stockpiling stages before the war ended." (The island of Saipan was designated a main ammunition and supply base for the invasion, and if you visit it today you can see some of the assembled stuff still sitting there.) "The assault troops were chosen and already in training," Jones reminds us, and he illuminates the situation by the light of experience:

> What it must have been like to some old-timer buck sergeant or staff sergeant who had been through Guadalcanal or Bouganville or the Philippines, to stand on some beach and watch this huge war machine beginning to stir and move all around him and know that he very likely had survived this far only to fall dead on the dirt of Japan's home islands, hardly bears thinking about.

On the other hand, John Kenneth Galbraith is persuaded that the Japanese would have surrendered by November without an invasion. He thinks the atom bombs were not decisive in bringing about the surrender and he implies that their use was unjustified. What did he do in the war? He was in the Office of Price Administration in Washington, and then he was director of the United States Strategic Bombing Survey. He was 37 in 1945, and I don't demand that he experience having his ass shot off. I just note that he didn't. In saying this I'm aware of its offensive implications *ad hominem*. But here I think that approach justified. What's at stake in an infantry assault is so entirely unthinkable to those without experience of one, even if they possess very wide-ranging imaginations and sympathies, that experience is crucial in this case.

A similar remoteness from experience, as well as a similar rationalistic abstraction, seems to lie behind the reaction of an anonymous reviewer of William Manchester's *Goodbye Darkness: A Memoir of the Pacific War* for the *New York Review of Books*. First of all the reviewer dislikes Manchester's calling the enemy Nips and Japs, but what really shakes him (her?) is this passage:

> After Biak the enemy withdrew to deep caverns. Rooting them out became a bloody business which reached its ultimate horrors in the last months of the war. You think of the lives which would have been lost in an invasion of Japan's home islands—a staggering number of Americans but millions more of Japanese—and you thank God for the atomic bomb.

Thank God for the atomic bomb. From this, "one recoils," says the reviewer. One does, doesn't one?

In an interesting exchange last year in the *New York Review of Books*, Joseph Alsop and David Joravsky set forth the by now familiar arguments on both sides of the debate. You'll be able to guess which sides they chose once you know that Alsop experienced capture by the Japanese at Hong Kong in 1942 and that Joravsky made no mortal contact with the Japanese: a young soldier, he was on his way to the Pacific when the war ended. The editors of the *New York Review* have given their debate the tendentious title "Was the Hiroshima Bomb Necessary?"—surely an unanswerable question (unlike "Was It Effective?") and one suggesting the intellectual difficulties involved in imposing *ex post facto* a rational ethics on this event. Alsop focuses on the power and fanaticism of War Minister Anami, who insisted that Japan fight to the bitter end, defending the main islands with the same means and tenacity with which it had defended Iwo and Okinawa. He concludes: "Japanese surrender could never have been obtained, at any rate without the honor-satisfying bloodbath envisioned by . . . Anami, if the hideous destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki had not finally galvanized the peace advocates into tearing up the entire Japanese book of rules." The Japanese planned to deploy the undefeated bulk of their ground forces, over two million men, plus 10,000 kamikaze planes, in a suicidal defense. That fact, says Alsop, makes it absurd to "hold the common view, by now hardly challenged by anyone, that the decision to drop the two bombs on Japan was wicked in itself, and that President Truman and all others who joined in making or who [like Oppenheimer] assented to this decision shared in the wickedness." And in explanation of "the two bombs" Alsop adds: "The true, climactic, and successful effort of the Japanese peace advocates . . . did not begin in deadly earnest until *after* the second bomb had destroyed Nagasaki. The Nagasaki bomb was thus the trigger to all the developments that led to peace."

JORAVSKY, now a professor of history at Northwestern, argues on the other hand that those who decided to use the bomb on cities betray defects of "reason and self-restraint." It all needn't have happened, he asserts, "if the US government had been willing to take a few more days and to be a bit more thoughtful in opening the age of nuclear warfare." But of course in its view it wasn't doing that: that's a historian's tidy hindsight. The government was ending the war conclusively, as well as irrationally remembering Pearl Harbor with a vengeance. It didn't know then what everyone knows now about leukemia and carcinoma and birth defects. History, as Eliot's "Gerontion" notes,

> . . . has many cunning passages, contrived corridors
> And issues, deceives with whispering ambitions,
> Guides us by vanities. . . .
> Think
> Neither fear nor courage saves us. Unnatural vices
> Are fathered by our heroism. Virtues
> Are forced upon us by our impudent crimes.

Understanding the past means feeling its pressure on your pulses and that's harder than Javorsky thinks.

The Alsop-Javorsky debate, which can be seen as reducing finally to a collision between experience and theory, was conducted with a certain civilized respect for evidence. Not so the way the new scurrilous agitprop *New Statesman* conceives those favoring the bomb and those opposing. They are, on the one hand, says Bruce Page, "the imperialist class-forces acting through Harry Truman," and, on the other, those representing "the humane, democratic virtues"—in short, "fascists" opposed to "populists." But ironically the bomb saved the lives not of any imperialists but only of the low and humble, the quintessentially democratic huddled masses—the conscripted enlisted men manning the fated invasion divisions. Bruce Page was nine years old when the war ended. For a man of that experience, phrases like "imperialist class-forces" come easily, and the issues look perfectly clear.

HE'S NOT the only one to have forgotten, if he ever knew, the savagery of the Pacific war. The dramatic postwar Japanese success at hustling and merchandising and tourism has (happily, in many ways) effaced for most people important elements of the assault context in which Hiroshima should be viewed. It is easy to forget what Japan was like before it was first destroyed and then humiliated, tamed, and constitutionalized by the West. "Implacable, treacherous, barbaric"—those were Admiral Halsey's characterizations of the enemy, and at the time few facing the Japanese would deny that they fit to a T. One remembers the captured American airmen locked for years in packing-crates, the prisoners decapitated, the gleeful use of bayonets

EVENING AT A COUNTRY INN

From here I see a single red cloud
impaled on the Town Hall weathervane.
Now the horses are back in their stalls,
and the dogs are nowhere in sight
that made them run and buck
in the brittle morning light.

You laughed only once all day—
when the cat ate cucumbers
in Chekhov's story . . . and now you smoke
and pace the long hallway downstairs.

The cook is roasting meat for the evening meal,
and the smell rises to all the rooms.
Red-faced skiers stamp past you
on their way in; their hunger is Homeric.

I know you are thinking of the accident—
of picking the slivered glass from his hair.
Just now a truck loaded with hay
stopped at the village store to get gas.
I wish you would look at the hay—
the beautiful sane and solid bales of hay.

Jane Kenyon

on civilians. The degree to which Americans register shock and extraordinary shame about the Hiroshima bomb correlates closely with lack of information about the war.

And the savagery was not just on one side. There was much sadism and brutality—undeniably racist—on ours. No Marine was fully persuaded of his manly adequacy who didn't have a well-washed Japanese skull to caress and who didn't have a go at treating surrendering Japs as rifle targets. Herman Wouk remembers it correctly while analyzing Ensign Keith in *The Caine Mutiny*: "Like most of the naval executioners of Kwajalein, he seemed to regard the enemy as a species of animal pest." And the enemy felt the same way about us: "From the grim and desperate taciturnity with which the Japanese died, they seemed on their side to believe they were contending with an invasion of large armed ants." Hiroshima seems to follow in natural sequence: "This obliviousness on both sides to the fact that the opponents were human beings may perhaps be cited as the key to the many massacres of the Pacific war." Since the Japanese resisted so madly, let's pour gasoline into their emplacements and light it and shoot the people afire who try to get out. Why not? Why not blow them all up? Why not, indeed, drop a new kind of big bomb on them? Why allow one more American high school kid to see his intestines blown out of his body and spread before him in the dirt while he screams when we can end the whole thing just like that?

ON OKINAWA, only weeks before Hiroshima, 123,000 Japanese and Americans *killed* each other. "Just awful" was the comment not of some pacifist but of MacArthur. One million American casualties was his estimate of the cost of the forthcoming invasion. And that invasion was not just a hypothetical threat, as some theorists have argued. It was genuinely in train, as I know because I was to be in it. When the bomb ended the war I was in the 45th Infantry Division, which had been through the European war to the degree that it had needed to be reconstituted two or three times. We were in a staging area near Reims, ready to be shipped across the United States for final preparation in the Philippines. My division was to take part in the invasion of Honshu in March 1946. (The earlier invasion of Kyushu was to be carried out by 700,000 infantry already in the Pacific.) I was a 21-year-old second lieutenant leading a rifle platoon. Although still officially in one piece, in the German war I had already been wounded in the leg and back severely enough to be adjudged, after the war, 40 percent disabled. But even if my legs buckled whenever I jumped out of the back of the truck, my condition was held to be satisfactory for whatever lay ahead. When the bombs dropped and news began to circulate that "Operation Olympic" would not, after all, take place, that we would not be obliged to run up the beaches near Tokyo assault-firing while being mortared and shelled, for all the fake manliness of our facades we cried with relief and joy. We were going to live. We were going to grow up to adulthood after all. When the *Enola Gay* dropped its package, "There were cheers," says John Toland, "over the intercom; it meant the end of the war."

THOSE who cried and cheered are very different from high-minded, guilt-ridden GIs we're told about by the late J. Glenn Gray in *The Warriors* (1959). During the war in Europe Gray was an interrogator in the Counter Intelligence Corps, and in that capacity he underwent the war at division level. After the war he became a professor of philosophy at Colorado College (never, I've thought, the venue of very much reality) and a distinguished editor of Heidegger. There's no doubt that Gray's outlook on everything was noble and elevated. But *The Warriors*, his meditation on modern soldiering, gives every sign of remoteness from experience. Division headquarters is miles behind the places where the soldiers experience terror and madness and relieve these pressures by sadism. "When the news of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki came," Gray asks us to believe, "many an American soldier felt shocked and ashamed." But why, we ask? Because we'd bombed civilians? We'd been doing that for years and, besides the two bombs, wiped out 10,000 Japanese troops, not now often mentioned, John Hersey's kindly physicians and Jesuit priests being more touching. Were Gray's soldiers shocked and ashamed because we'd obliterated whole towns? We'd done that plenty of times. If at division headquarters some felt shocked and ashamed, down in the rifle companies none did, although Gray says they did:

> The combat soldier knew better than did Americans at home what those bombs meant in suffering and injustice. The man of conscience realized intuitively that the vast majority of Japanese in both cities were no more, if no less, guilty of the war than were his own parents, sisters, or brothers.

I find this canting nonsense: the purpose of dropping the bombs was not to "punish" people but to stop the war. To intensify the shame he insists we feel, Gray seems willing to fiddle the facts. The Hiroshima bomb, he says, was dropped "without any warning." But actually, two days before, 720,000 leaflets were dropped on the city urging everyone to get out and indicating that the place was going to be obliterated. Of course few left.

Experience whispers that the pity is not that we used the bomb to end the Japanese war but that it wasn't ready earlier to end the German one. If only it could have been rushed into production faster and dropped at the right moment on the Reich chancellery or Berchtesgaden or Hitler's military headquarters in East Prussia or—Wagnerian *coup de théâtre*—at Rommel's phony state funeral, most of the Nazi hierarchy could have been pulverized immediately, saving not just the embarrassment of the Nuremburg trials but the lives of about

four million Jews, Poles, Slavs, gypsies, and other "subhumans," not to mention the lives and limbs of millions of Allied and Axis soldiers. If the bomb could have been ready even as late as July 1944, it could have reinforced the Von Stauffenberg plot and ended the war then and there. If the bomb had only been ready in time, the men of my infantry platoon would not have been killed and maimed.

ALL THIS is not to deny that like the Russian revolution, the atomic bombing of Japan was a vast historical tragedy, and every passing year magnifies the dilemma into which it has thrown the contemporary world. As with the Russian revolution there are two sides—that's why it's a tragedy rather than a disaster—and unless we are simple-mindedly cruel, like Bruce Page, we need to be painfully aware of both at once. To observe that from the viewpoint of the war's victims-to-be the bomb was precisely the right thing to drop is to purchase no immunity from horror. See, for example, the new book *Unforgettable Fire: Pictures Drawn by Atomic Bomb Survivors*, issued by the Japan Broadcasting Corporation and distributed here by Pantheon Books. It presents a number of amateur colored-pencil, pastel, and water-color depictions of the scene of the Hiroshima bombing made by the middle-aged and elderly survivors for a peace exhibition in 1975. In addition to the heartrending pictures the book offers brief moments of memoir, not for the weak-stomached:

> While taking my severely wounded wife out to the riverbank . . . , I was horrified indeed at the sight of a stark naked man standing in the rain with his eyeball in his palm. He looked to be in great pain but there was nothing that I could do for him. I wonder what became of him. Even today, I vividly remember the sight. It was simply miserable.

The drawings and paintings, whose often childish style makes them doubly touching, are of skin hanging down, breasts torn off, people bleeding and burning, dying mothers nursing dead babies. A bloody woman holds a bloody child in the ruins of a house, and the artist remembers her calling, "Please help this child! Someone, please help this child. Please help! Someone, please." As Samuel Johnson said of the smothering of the innocent Desdemona in another tragedy, "It is not to be endured." Nor, we should notice, is an infantryman's account of having his arm blown off in the Arno Valley in Italy in 1944:

> I wanted to die and die fast. I wanted to forget this miserable world. I cursed the war, I cursed the people who were responsible for it, I cursed God for putting me here . . . to suffer for something I never did or knew anything about. For this was hell, and I never imagined anything or anyone could suffer so bitterly. I screamed and cursed. Why? Why? What had I done to deserve this? But no answer came. I yelled for medics, because subconsciously I wanted to live. I tried to apply my right hand over my bleeding stump, but I didn't have the strength to hold it. I looked to the left of me and saw the bloody mess that was once my left arm; its fingers and palm were turned upward, like a flower looking to the sun for its strength.

The future scholar-critic of rhetoric who writes *The History of Canting in the Twentieth Century* will find much to study in the utterances of those who dilate on the wickedness of the bomb-droppers. He will realize that such utterance can perform for the speaker a valuable double function. First, it can display the fineness of his moral weave. And second, by implication it can also inform the audience that during the war he was not socially so unfortunate as to find himself at the cutting edge of the ground forces, where he might have had to compromise the pure clarity of his moral vision by the experience of weighing his own life against other people's. Down there, which is where the other people were in the war, is the place where coarse self-interest is the rule. When the young soldier with the wild eyes comes at you firing, do you shoot him in the foot, hoping he'll be hurt badly enough to drop or mis-aim the gun with which he is going to kill you, or do you shoot him in the chest and make certain he stops being your mortal enemy? It would be stupid to expect soldiers to be very sensitive humanitarians ("Moderation in war is imbecility"—Admiral of the Fleet Lord Fisher); actually, only the barest decencies can be expected of them. They didn't start the war, except in the terrible sense hinted in Frederic Manning's observation based on his experience in the Great War: "War is waged by men; not by beasts, or by gods. It is a peculiarly human activity. To call it a crime against mankind is to miss at least half its significance; it is also the punishment of a crime." Knowing that fact by experience, soldiers have every motive for wanting a war stopped, by any means.

The predictable stupidity, parochialism, and greed in the postwar international mismanagement of the whole nuclear problem should not tempt us to mis-imagine the circumstances of the bomb's first "use." Nor should our well-justified fears and suspicions occasioned by the capture of the nuclear business by the mendacious classes (cf. Three Mile Island) tempt us to infer retrospectively extraordinary corruption, cruelty, and swinishness in those who decided to drop the bomb. Times change. Harry Truman was not a fascist, but a democrat. He was as close to a real egalitarian as we've seen in high office for a very long time. He is the only president in my lifetime who ever had the experience of commanding a small unit of ground troops obliged to kill people. He knew better than his subsequent critics what he was doing. The past, which as always did not know the future, acted in ways that ask to be imagined before they are condemned. Or even before they are simplified.

God's Green Berets

The Jesuits: A History
by David Mitchell

(Franklin Watts, Inc.; $17.50)

The joke has been around for years: a Franciscan and a Jesuit seminarian, friends from childhood, meet at a liturgical conference and exchange complaints about the fact that they are not allowed to smoke. They decide to ask for their superiors' permission. The next time they meet the Franciscan is still bereft of cigarettes, the Jesuit is chain-smoking Camels. "*Deo gratias*, how did you do it?" the Franciscan asks. "It all depends on how you phrase the

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Michael Walzer and Paul Fussell
on the moral calculus of the bomb.

An Exchange On Hiroshima

PAUL FUSSELL's defense of the bombing of Hiroshima (*TNR*, August 22 & 29) is written, as he tells us repeatedly, from the standpoint of the ordinary GI. And that standpoint is human, all too human: let anyone die but me! There are no humanitarians in the foxholes. I can almost believe that. But Fussell's recital does remind me a little uneasily of the speech of that Conradian villain Gentleman Brown (in *Lord Jim*): "When it came to saving one's life in the dark, one didn't care who else went—three, thirty, three hundred people. . . ." And Brown went on to boast, very much as Fussell wants to do, that he made Jim wince with this "despairing frankness": "He very soon left off coming the righteous over me. . . ."

But we shouldn't be intimidated, and we shouldn't leave off, but accept the risks of righteousness. After all, Fussell's argument isn't only the argument of ordinary soldiers. It is also and more importantly the argument of ordinary generals—best expressed, I think, by the Prussian general von Moltke in 1880: "The greatest kindness in war is to bring it to a speedy conclusion. It should be allowable, with that end in view, to employ all means save those that are absolutely objectionable." But von Moltke, a stolid professional, probably still believed that the wholesale slaughter of civilians was "absolutely objectionable." With Fussell, it seems, there are no limits at all; anything goes, so long as it helps to bring the boys home.

Nor is this the argument only of GIs and generals. The bombing of Hiroshima was an act of terrorism; its purpose was political, not military. The goal was to kill enough civilians to shake the Japanese government and force it to surrender. And this is the goal of every terrorist campaign. Happily, none of today's terrorist movements have yet been able to kill on the scale of the modern state, and so they have not enjoyed successes as dramatic as the one Fussell describes. But their ordinary members, the terrorists in the foxholes, as it were, must think much as he does: if only we could kill enough people, not a dozen here and there, in a pub, a bus station, or a supermarket, but a whole city full, we could end the struggle once and for all, liberate our land, get the British out of Ireland, force the Israelis to accept a PLO state, and so on. To the boys of the IRA, to young Palestinians in Lebanon, that argument is surely as attractive as it was to the young Paul Fussell on his way to the Pacific in 1945. It is the same argument.

What is wrong with it? If war is indeed a tragedy, if its suffering is inevitable, then nothing is wrong with it. War is war, and what happens, happens. In fact, however, war imposes choices on officers and enlisted men alike. "There wasn't a single soldier," says an Israeli officer who fought in the Six-Day War, "who didn't at some stage have to decide, to choose, to make a moral decision. . . ." Fussell, who has written so beautifully about the literature of war, must know this to be true. And he must also know that there is a moral argument, different from his own argument, that shapes these military choices. Perhaps that argument is most often expounded by those professors far from the battlefield for whom he has such contempt. But it is an argument as old as war itself and one that many soldiers have believed and struggled to live by. It holds, most simply, that combat should be a struggle between combatants, and that noncombatants—civilian men, women, and children—should be protected as far as possible against its cruelties. "The soldier, be he friend or foe," wrote Douglas MacArthur, "is charged with the protection of the weak and the unarmed. It is the very essence and reason of his being . . . a sacred trust." Like policemen, firemen, and sailors at sea, soldiers have a responsibility to accept risks themselves rather than impose risks on ordinary citizens. That is a hard requirement when the soldiers are conscripts. Still, they are trained and armed for war and ordinary citizens are not; and that is a practical difference that makes a moral difference.

Consider how the risks of police work might be reduced, and how many more criminals might be caught, if we permitted the police to ignore the rights

of ordinary citizens, to fire indiscriminately into crowds, to punish the innocent relatives of criminals, and so on. But we don't grant such permissions. Nor are soldiers permitted comparable acts, even if they carry with them the promise of success.

There is a code. It is no doubt often broken, particularly in the heat of battle. But honorable men live by it while they can. Hiroshima was a violation of that code. So was the earlier terror bombing of cities—Hamburg, Dresden, Tokyo—but Hiroshima was worse because it was even more terrifying. Its long-term effects were literally unknowable by the men who decided to impose them. And the effects were not imposed, any more than those of the earlier bombing, in the heat of battle, face-to-face with enemy soldiers who aim to kill and have already killed comrades and friends. Though there were soldiers in Hiroshima, they were not the targets of the attack (or else we would have attacked a military base); the city was the target and all its inhabitants.

Fussell writes (again) as a democrat, on behalf of "the low and humble, the quintessentially democratic huddled masses—the conscripted enlisted men manning the fated invasion divisions." Given that standpoint, one might have expected him to question the US demand for unconditional surrender that made the invasion of the Japanese islands seem absolutely necessary. There were people in the US government in 1945 who thought a negotiated settlement possible without an invasion and without the use of the atomic bomb. Surely some attempt should have been made—not only for the sake of our own soldiers, but also for those other "huddled masses," the civilian inhabitants of Hiroshima (and Nagasaki too). Why don't they figure in Fussell's democratic reckoning! If Harry Truman's first responsibility was to American soldiers, he was not without responsibility elsewhere; no man is. And if one is reckoning, what about all the future victims of a politics and warfare from which restraint has been banished? Given the state of our political and moral order, with which Hiroshima probably has something to do, aren't we all more likely to be the victims than the beneficiaries of terrorist attacks?

MICHAEL WALZER

I'M GRATEFUL to Michael Walzer for his courteous demurrer, but I think we're never going to agree, for our disagreement is one between sensibilities. I'd designate them as, on the one hand, the ironic and ambiguous (or even the tragic, if you like), and, on the other, the certain. The one complicates problems, leaving them messier than before and making you feel terrible. The other solves problems and cleans up the place, making you feel tidy and satisfied. I'd call the one sensibility the literary-artistic-historical; I'd call the other the social-scientific-political. To expect them to agree, or even to perceive the same data, would be expecting too much.

My aim in writing the article on Hiroshima was to complicate, even mess up, the moral picture. What Walzer does in his comment by playing on our anxieties, with terms like "terrorist" anachronistically applied, is to simplify it again. I was saying that I was simultaneously horrified about the bombing of Hiroshima and forever happy because the event saved my life. Both at the same time. I'll stick with William Blake:

> Under every grief & pine
> Runs a joy with silken twine.

I don't want to dispute data, but I think Walzer's not right when he says: "Though there were soldiers in Hiroshima, they were not the targets of the attack (or else we would have attacked a military base)." But Hiroshima was a military base, the headquarters of the Japanese Second Army, and the soldiers were the target of the attack: we dropped the bomb accurately on the corner of their parade ground and killed thousands of them. But our disagreement is not really about such facts, but about two different emotional and moral styles. If Michael Walzer thinks the "huddled masses" of Hiroshima and Nagasaki don't figure in my reckoning, he's not read carefully. It is because they do figure that I dwelt on the pathos and horror registered so touchingly in *Unforgettable Fire*. And because I don't think righteousness all on one side, I also dwelt on the deeper pathos and horror of the war's continuing. Walzer says of the bomb-dropping that its purpose was political, not military. I say that its purpose was political and military, sadistic and humanitarian, horrible and welcome.

My object was to offer a soldier's view, to indicate the complex moral situation of knowing that one's life has been saved because others' have been most cruelly snuffed out. I was arguing the importance of combat experience, alas, in influencing one's views on the ethics of the bomb. I observed that those who deplore the dropping of the bomb absolutely turn out to be largely too young to have been killed if it hadn't been used. I don't want to be needlessly offensive, nor to insist that no person whose life was not saved by the A-bomb can come to a clear—by which I mean a complicated—understanding of the moral balance-sheet. But I note that in 1945 Michael Walzer, for all the emotional warmth of his current argument, was ten years old.

PAUL FUSSELL