

## My Presidential Bookcase

*By Hap Hansen*

There are several hundred books in my bookcases. Many are historical fact or fiction. A substantial number of those books are about Presidents of the United States. If I had to choose my favorite President, it would be John F. Kennedy, whose life was taken far too soon.

One of the Presidents I admire the most is Harry S Truman. He made one of the most difficult and heart wrenching decisions any President has ever had to make. As World War II was nearing conclusion, five of the military chiefs of staff asked for a meeting with Truman. They told the President that it was time to end the war, and they had two ways in which to do it. A five-star General said, essentially, "Mr. President, we have two options. One. We can invade Japan and win the war, but we estimate nearly 100,000 American soldiers will be killed in the effort. Option Two. Our scientists have developed what is called an Atomic Bomb. We can drop one or more on Japan, but we estimate that could kill four or five hundred thousand Japanese citizens. Mr. President, what should we do?" Can any of us imagine how extremely difficult that decision was? Obviously, Truman ordered the bomb to be dropped on Japan.

As an aside, in the early fifties, I was stationed on Guam, working in the payroll department of the Army. Once each month, I flew to the island of Tinian to pay the few remaining troops still stationed there. You may recall that Tinian was the island from which the bombers took off to drop the Atomic bombs on Japan. After bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Japanese surrendered. On Tinian, I was taken to the airfield where the bombers took off. You may not know, that there were four holes in which the bombs could be placed, and then hoisted up into the bellies of the bombers. I believe the other two holes were for bombs meant for Tokyo, if needed. I took an entire roll of film while walking near the bomb holes. Later, when the film was developed, the entire roll was clouded and nothing could be seen. I can only assume the film was clouded by the remaining radiation left behind by the bombs.

Back to my Presidential Bookcase. After reading the presidential books and, in my opinion, as a political Independent, I believe the most admired Presidents were Roosevelt, Truman, Eisenhower and Kennedy. The least admired would be Hoover, Nixon and Trump.

As we all know, politicians have begun campaigning for the 2020 election. It is already a nasty campaign and it's only going to get worse. Hang on to your hats and let the fun begin!