

## WHO SHOULD CONTROL THE ATOMIC BOMB

by

Senator Owen Brewster  
of Maine

Up in New England a classic story concerns the Secretary of the Navy from a typical prairie state visiting the Brooklyn Navy Yard for the first time and boarding a ship and exclaiming in supposed amazement, "Why the darned thing is hollow!"

It is with somewhat similar innocence and humility that one approaches the atomic bomb.

Jules Verne pales before the implications of this possible Frankenstein. A responsible scientist envisions an innocent-appearing suitcase in a hotel room here at Broadway and 42nd St. under the impulsion of a radio wave from anywhere you please suddenly accomplishing the disintegration of this great city in which we meet with all its millions of inhabitants.

Even your present dynamic Mayor LaGuardia might be helpless before such a force.

This discussion assumes the present primacy of the United States in this discovery and the possibility of priority in its development and control and presumably in measures for protection against its destructive possibilities.

The United States might well rest its claim upon the right of conquest exactly as the physical world has belonged under international law to those who first established possession.

The United States, however, may much more appropriately in this day and generation rest its claim not merely upon the right of discovery but upon the far more solemn ground of our pledge to use this elemental force of nature only for the welfare of mankind as its first use was to preserve our concept of civilization against the law of the jungle.

As humanity emerges by slow degrees from savagery, America stands out as a trustee in this century of potential peace on earth with its industrial might reaching culmination in the creation of the atomic bomb.

Casuists may compare this concept of America to the Kultur of the Kaiser and the delusion of a master race but the reality remains that peace-loving people everywhere look to America for the salvation of the world from the dread forces of destruction that so recently threatened disaster to all alike.

Without disparagement of our great allies and their tremendous contribution to our common cause, it is yet evident and generally agreed that the unique geographical location of the United States and our vast industrial development made the indispensable contribution to the total victory we have achieved.

The continuing cultivation of our unique resources is equally essential to keep the victory won. The impetus of the two billion dollar dynamo created to generate the atomic bomb must not now be lost.

Science faces a supreme test to determine whether humanity shall survive.

Without blinking our eyes to certain blemishes in our own past, no great nation on earth has a better record of peaceful development to justify our custodianship of this dread secret for the good of all mankind.

Small nations everywhere have full justification for more faith in our benevolence and good intentions and lack of aggressive designs than can be found in the record of any other great power on this earth.

This is not chauvinism but simple fact. This challenges in no way the historic development of other great nations but recognizes rather the unique opportunity afforded us in this hemisphere for a comparatively peaceful expansion until we have made of this continent the productive marvel and — less happily perhaps — the envy of all the earth.

Pending the maturing of a world organization and the demonstration of its capacity to conserve the peace no consideration should be given to turning over this perhaps priceless secret to any other group as this discovery may spell life or death not only for America but for civilization as it has been slowly and painfully evolved upon this earth by the sacrifices of the generations who have left to us this priceless heritage.