

Tuesday January 31, 1950



[Sun rise](#) 0734 1753
[Moon rise](#) 1449 0539
[Moon Phases](#) 95% 13 days

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[2100](#)
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[2300](#)
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Overview

January 31, 1950 (Tuesday)

- U.S. President Harry S. Truman ordered the development of the hydrogen bomb, after the Soviet Union had become the second nation to acquire the secret of the atomic bomb on August 29, 1949. "It is my responsibility as Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces," Truman said in a public statement, "to see to it that our country is able 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." The first thermonuclear explosion would take place on November 1, 1952 (a feat which the Soviets would duplicate ten months later on August 21, 1953). On March 1, 1954, the U.S. would detonate the first "H-bomb".
- The Soviet Union announced recognition of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, led by North Vietnamese Communist Ho Chi Minh.

[\[note\]](#)



Two, following a heated moral and technical debate among the nuclear physicists and pushed by a strong recommendation from the JCS, Truman on January 31, 1950, authorized research on a much more powerful "hydrogen" or fusion bomb.

One, in response to an urgent plea from the JCS, first conveyed to the White House on May 26, the president on October 17 finally authorized a significant production increase in numbers and types of fission bombs. "At the time he took this action," the historian Rosenberg wrote, "Truman had never received a thorough briefing on atomic strategy from the JCS."

The JCS laboriously and slowly prepared an oral briefing, but Truman's vacation and then the Christmas holidays delayed the presentation until [January 10th 1950](#) . On that date, almost five full years into his presidency, Louis Johnson and Omar Bradley finally introduced field artilleryman Truman to the intricacies of nuclear strategy.

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authorized research on a much more powerful "hydrogen" or fusion bomb.. Six weeks later, on March 10, 1950, again on the recommendation of the JCS, he approved a "crash" program for the hydrogen bomb, to be carried out "as a matter of highest urgency." [1-35]

[note]

The report, known as NSC-68, was requested by President Truman on 31 January 1950, following a feasibility study of both the US and the USSR acquiring thermonuclear weapons; he directed the secretaries of State and Defense "to undertake a reexamination of our objectives in peace and war and of the effect of these objectives on our strategic plans."

Notes for Tuesday January 31, 1950