

# A NEW PLAN FOR FAT MAN

by

My Name Here

**FADE IN**

**INT. THE PENTAGON WAR ROOM - EVENING**

Admirals, Generals, and other officials from all the United States Armed Forces mingle around a large conference table. The conversations are an excited white-noise hum.

Around the room are tasteful and subtle hints of Christmas. A pine bough with red ribbon as the centerpiece, and a very small Christmas tree in a corner.

**SUPER: DECEMBER, 1944**

A door opens at the far end of the room. A MARINE SARGEANT enters, holds the door open, and stands at attention.

SARGEANT

President Roosevelt, Commander in Chief!

The room goes silent as every occupant stands at attention and salutes.

Through the door enters a wheelchair with a man in a Santa Claus hat. He waves with one hand and holds a sack of gifts with the other.

The man in the wheelchair is PRESIDENT FRANKLIN ROOSEVELT. Wheeling him in is VICE PRESIDENT HARRY TRUMAN.

ROOSEVELT

Ho-Ho-Ho! Merry Christmas!

As the room begins to cheer and bust out in laughter. Numerous wait staff follow Roosevelt with carts of champagne bottles, cigars, and appetizers.

The bubbly is served. Officers take turns to shake the President's hand and exchange Christmas wishes.

The room quickly fills with a blue haze of cigar smoke as the chatter reaches a deafening pitch.

From the masses emerge a towering four-star General smoking a pipe. The corners of his mouth show a barely discernible smile. For GENERAL MACARTHUR, he's downright giddy.

MACARTHUR

Merry Christmas, Mister President.

ROOSEVELT

Why, General McArthur! Contain yourself, sir! You don't want to give everyone the impression that you actually have emotions!

MACARTHUR

Yes, sir. I'll try to tone it down.

ROOSEVELT

Aw, come here, Doug.

The President pulls McArthur down to his level for a bear hug and clap on the back.

MacArthur is uncomfortable and steps back. This man needs his personal space.

ROOSEVELT

Now, hold on, General. Don't go too far, I got something for you.

He rifles through his bag, pulls out three small gift wrapped boxes, and hands them to MacArthur.

ROOSEVELT

I need you to find Ike and George. Don't open those boxes until I say so, okay?

MACARTHUR

You're the boss, Mister President.

He salutes, turns, and disappears into the crowd.

Roosevelt looks around the room. He gets Truman's attention and waves him over.

ROOSEVELT

Harry, come here and wheel me over to the head of the table.

Truman was in mid-conversation with a high ranking officer and seems a bit put off. He puts on his best smile.

TRUMAN

Yes, sir.

He wheels him to the table. A waiter brings over two glasses of champagne for Roosevelt and Truman.

Roosevelt taps on the glass with a pen and the room quickly goes silent with anticipation.

ROOSEVELT

Gentlemen, first and foremost, I want to thank each and every one of you for the bang-up job ya'll did in the Pacific. We told the American people that we'd have our

(MORE)

ROOSEVELT (cont'd)  
boys home by Christmas of  
forty-four and, by God, we did it!  
Salud!

Hearty affirmations of 'Here, here' and 'Merry Christmas' throughout the room as Roosevelt raises his glass.

ROOSEVELT  
Second, before we get down to brass  
tacks, I want to recognize a couple  
individuals. Doug, George, Ike? Can  
you stand up for me?

Generals MacArthur, DWIGHT (IKE) EISENHOWER, and GEORGE  
PATTON stand side-by-side on the other side of the table.

ROOSEVELT  
The three men before us engineered  
and executed a flawless ground  
invasion of the Japanese mainland.  
General MacArthur at Nagasaki,  
General Eisenhower at Hiroshima,  
and General Patton at Honshu. Boys,  
go ahead and open your gifts.

The three Generals open their gifts and each hold high  
golden five-star shoulder ornaments.

ROOSEVELT  
It was by your actions and  
commitment that won the  
unconditional surrender of Japan.

A standing ovation ensues as the attendees recognize the  
new, and first ever, five-star Generals.

Roosevelt clinks his glass again for silence.

ROOSEVELT  
I also want to recognize FLEET  
ADMIRAL KING... Where's Ernie?

Roosevelt looks about and notices an embarrassed Admiral  
King at the end of the table.

ROOSEVELT  
Come on Ernie, stand up.

Roosevelt slides a gift wrapped box to the end of the table.  
King opens it and holds another five-star ornament for  
another round of applause.

ROOSEVELT

As you all know, while the war in the Pacific raged on, Ernie secured our eastern seaboard from the war in the Atlantic. He kept our shores safe and, for that, we are forever in your gratitude. Cheers!

The room is in a frenzy as glasses are raised yet again and everyone congratulates each other.

Roosevelt settles the crowd with a raised hand. The room falls silent once again.

ROOSEVELT

Thank you, everyone. Now, on to business. Sargeant, would you please clear the room of the service? Thank you.

SARGEANT

Yes, sir.

The Sargeant quickly herds the wait staff from the room and closes the door. The remaining attendees take their seats around the conference table.

ROOSEVELT

(throws the Santa hat on the table)

We are at peace and our boys are coming home. But we cannot ignore what's going on in Europe. GENERAL BRADLEY? Omar, can you give us an update on the latest in the European theater?

GENERAL OMAR BRADLEY stands up and reads from notes.

BRADLEY

Yes, sir. It seems that Europe is in a bad state of affairs. Rommel has defeated Montgomery in North Africa. The Italians have secured Turkey and much of the Middle East, and the eastern front is into Moscow. England, well, it's hard to say where the line through the U.K. is, these days.

The room is suddenly quite somber. Eisenhower raises a hand and stands. He speaks as if a politician in training.

EISENHOWER

Mister President, I think we all know where you're going with this, and we understand, for sure. We just barely finished our first foray on foreign soil and you want to join another?

Fleet Admiral King stands.

KING

Sir, Germany never declared war on the United States. They've held true to their word of not harming any of our vessels in the Atlantic.

A low mumble as attendees have whispered side-bar comments.

ROOSEVELT

And that's why we're here. Can you imagine if Hitler HAD declared war on the U.S. after Pearl Harbor? If we had to fight two fronts instead of focusing all our forces in the Pacific? Think about that for a moment.

Roosevelt lets this scenario hang heavy over the room.

ROOSEVELT

Now ask yourselves, when is enough, enough. How long can we stand idly by while Hitler and Mussolini run rampant across Europe?

General Patton stands up abruptly.

PATTON

Sir, let me at 'em. I'll take on those cocksuckers one at a time, if I have to. Whatever you want, sir. I'm with you!

Not to be outdone, General MacArthur takes a stand.

MACARTHUR

Sir, you know me. If I commit to something, I follow through. Give me back my boys and I'll take any shore you say. I'll even take on those two-faced commies. Just say the word.

Eisenhower leans on the table shaking his head.

EISENHOWER

No, I'm not so sure about this.  
What about our people, sir? The  
American citizen won't stand for  
entering an undeclared war.

PATTON

Ike, when did you get soft? Then WE  
declare it! Our boys could run  
right through those Nazi bastards!  
They're run-down and worn thin!

(to Bradley)

Isn't that right, Omar? What's  
their achilles?

(to King)

Ernie, for God's sake, just find me  
a beach!

With that last remark, Patton slaps both palms on the table  
for effect. There's a bit of instability in his actions.

The low mumble of side-bar discussion ramps up to a dull  
roar. The debates get heated.

Truman holds his hands up and tries to get their attention  
without success.

TRUMAN

Please. Everyone. Please.

Roosevelt has no patience for Truman's mild manner and slams  
his fist on the table.

ROOSEVELT

Settle down, dammit!

Attention getting, yes, but it's more from whom the slam  
came from. They all admire their President and settle back  
down with sheepish expressions.

PATTON

Apologies, sir.

Roosevelt scans the men in the room. He clears his throat  
and continues.

ROOSEVELT

Like I was saying, we can't stand  
in the wings. Watching and waiting.  
We need to come to the aid of our  
friends and allies. We need to  
stand up against the aggressors and  
do the right thing.

A somber look crosses Roosevelt's face.

ROOSEVELT

There are so many fronts, though.  
If...and I emphasize the if...we  
were to get involved, how best we  
approach such an animal?

Silence. All the attendees look down and around to avoid eye contact, until...

TRUMAN

Sir, how do you eat an elephant?

Roosevelt gets a screwed up look on his face before turning to his Veep.

ROOSEVELT

What's that, Harry?

TRUMAN

One bite at a time, sir.

The attendees look puzzled. Patton has another outburst.

PATTON

What the Sam Hill do you mean by that horse shit? "One bite at a time." What do you want? Another drawn out war? Hell, sir, let's hit them with everything we got on all sides!

ROOSEVELT

George, you're out of line! Sit down before I regret that fifth star!

As Patton reluctantly sits, Roosevelt leans over to Truman and whispers in his ear.

ROOSEVELT

Harry, don't make me regret dismissing Wallace as my second. Chances are you're going to be their Commander in Chief in the not too distant future. Find your voice.

Truman looks as if he'd been slapped. He nods to Roosevelt and leans back in his seat.

TRUMAN

Yes, sir.

With the room back in order, Roosevelt starts anew.



ROOSEVELT

Okay, gentlemen. Any thoughts?  
(glances at Patton)  
Rational thoughts?

After a brief moment...

TRUMAN

Sir, I think we need to introduce  
the Fat Man and Little Boy.

Patton leans over to MacArthur and whispers...

PATTON

Ain't that who's leading this  
country these days?

MacArthur snorts and elbows Patton in the ribs.

MACARTHUR

Quiet, damn you! We'll lose that  
star for sure.

Roosevelt gives the two Generals a dirty look before he  
continues.

ROOSEVELT

You're right, Harry. Why don't you  
give them all a briefing.

Truman smiles and stands.

TRUMAN

Thank you, Mister President. Okay.  
Gentlemen, I need not remind you  
that what's discussed in this room,  
remains in this room.

The attendees all nod their heads in agreement but a few  
roll their eyes with the dramatics.

TRUMAN

While you and your boys have been  
doing your part in the Pacific,  
we've been doing ours back here.  
Down in New Mexico we've a Cracker  
Jack bunch of scientists, holed-up  
in a top secret lab, working on a  
weapon that could end all wars.

Truman hesitates for more drama.

TRUMAN

Now, this may sound like it's out of an Edgar Rice Burroughs book but we've discovered how to split the atom.

All around the table are assorted looks of astonishment and disbelief.

ROOSEVELT

True story, men. And with that process, we've developed what we call an atomic bomb. Two of them, actually. Fat Man and Little Boy.

TRUMAN

Preliminary tests show that, upon detonation, they release an untold amount of energy. They produce a fire ball that lays waste to tens of square miles in an instant. They are the game changers. They are the future!

Truman bangs a fist on the table for added effect.

After the news sinks in, Eisenhower stands.

EISENHOWER

Sir, with that much devastation... Well, what I'm wondering is... How do we control it?

PATTON

Control it? Hell, we just drop it! What's there to control? We drop it on Berlin and Rome, and we sort out what's left.

MACARTHUR

Sir, if we do this, it could save hundreds of thousands of lives. American lives.

BRADLEY

Europe is lost as it is. If all goes well, we could have their surrender in days.

EISENHOWER

You might be right, Omar. The death toll could be staggering. We need to think this through. And what's in it for us?

Everyone starts to buy into the idea and Truman wastes no time. He leans on the table and goes in for the finish.

TRUMAN

Then it's settled. We drop the Fat Man on Berlin and Little Boy on Rome!

Roosevelt looks at Truman with a combination of shock and fear. He's uncomfortable at the quick turn of events.

ROOSEVELT

Whoa, now, Harry. We just can't make a decision like this so quickly. Let's just say that this is our primary focus while we explore our options.

TRUMAN

Yes, of course, sir. Let's discuss the other options.

Truman is not going to let go of this so easy and addresses the room.

TRUMAN

So, let's look at our options. First, we could do nothing and let the war in Europe work itself out. Not a very appealing prospect. So, we would have to go for option number two...declare war on the Axis to the protest of every American citizen.

Truman scans the room to rest his eyes on Roosevelt for just a fleeting moment.

TRUMAN

With that, we move our Pacific fleet and manpower halfway around the world and enter into an air, ground, and naval war that's raging across three continents and a million square miles of ocean.

ROOSEVELT

Now, Harry---

TRUMAN

If you please, Mister president. I'm explaining our options, thank you.

Truman is on a roll.

TRUMAN

Tens of thousands, if not hundreds  
of thousands of American lives will  
be lost. Or...we take out Berlin  
and Rome.

Truman leans on the table with palms firmly planted. He  
knows that the room is his.

TRUMAN

What say you, gentlemen? All those  
in favor of using the Fat Man and  
Little Boy as suggested, raise your  
hand.

FADE TO BLACK