

# Truman and the atomic bomb – sources questions essay

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1) I disagree to this to an extent. I feel that the wording of the leaflet shows a reason why America wanted to bomb Hiroshima. In the leaflet it says; ' we ask you to petition to your Emperor now to end the war!' This shows to me that they were wanting to drop the bomb so that it would make peace. However I do not agree totally with this use of the bomb because considering America had spent two billion dollars on the Manhattan Project (developing the A-Bomb they were going to want to test it to see how much damage it could really do.

Another reason why they may have wanted to drop it which is hinted in the leaflet is that America2) I feel that Source C is reliable to an extent. Due to this source being written as a diary entry so Truman would have written with a view to hindsight because he would have known that it may be published later on for public access. He also says, ' I have told the Secretary of war to use it so that military objectives and soldiers and sailors.' This could mean that he actually did intend just to hit these targets but they did not ' realise' exactly how powerful the bomb was and it accidentally wiped out the whole of Hiroshima! If you look at source B then you can see the mass destruction that4) I feel that both of these sources are very useful to a historian studying the reasons for the dropping of the bomb.

Source D was written for a British historian book so it may have a slightly biased view towards America as we are allies with America although having said that it does bring both side of the arguments in subtlety, ' Critics of Truman say the bomb was dropped because its development had cost a great deal of money and this had to be justified.' In this they re saying ' critics' which is a skate goat for C. Cuplin perhaps as he may not have <https://assignbuster.com/truman-and-the-atomic-bomb-sources-questions-essay/>

wanted to write that himself. Source D also has some interesting facts which are quite true which could be very useful to a historian so that they can see the extent of the bomb and how much damage it really could do.

Source E is different to source D; not only is it a picture but it is a lot more to the point and very blunt with a hint of sarcasm involved. Source E also brings in an extra point that Source D did not mention; this is that Japan was seeking peace before the first atomic bomb was dropped! This is true because it was written in Truman's diary and this now shows to the historian that perhaps America were dropping the bomb for other reasons other than just to make peace and end the war early. Evening Standard, which is a fairly good British newspaper, writes source E; another difference in this source is that although it is British they are not covering their backs about what they feel is the truth because they are saying that the Americans blatantly dropped the bomb for testing because after all the Manhattan Project had cost over two billion Dollars in research which has been the most expensive development in the military history. I believe that source D is more useful to the historian as it encumbers more points about the dropping of the A-bomb which are all true and are useful to know. 5) There are many reasons why Source F and Source G differ.

For example source F is written by a Russian historian. This is going to mean that it is going to be anti-American because of their past history; America and Russia has always hated each other mainly because they had this huge power struggle as they are two huge superpowers battling for more and more power. Russia also hated America because of the cold war and the fact

they were ahead of Russia with military developments. Russia also disagreed with Americas use of the A-Bomb because they could see that the reason why they were really wanting to drop it was to scare the Russians and try and stop the Russians from taking over countries in the east hence why the cold war started. Source G is written by The US Secretary of State in 1945 so this is going to be trying to cover the Americans back and he will be writing with a view to hindsight so it shows America in a different light because it is being published to the public.

The two sources are also written at different times which may effect what they say for example; Source G is written in 1945 and Source F is written in 1984 which was also after the cold war which will effect what the Russian says. 7) The atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 for a variety of reasons – as the question suggests the US at the time focussed their exposure heavily on the peace benefits of the bombs, but in fact, there were much more important factors at work behind the public scenes. One of the main reasons that was proposed was that of peace; In source A the Americans are explicitly stating that they are dropping the bomb purely for peace and it was there just to make sure that the Japanese would go to there emperor but one thing that conflicts with this idea is that it was written in Truman’s diary that the Japanese emperor had already pleaded for peace as long as he can stay as emperor but then the Americans changed the surrender to an unconditional surrender. However having said this it is apparent that this was not the main issue on the Americans minds.

There are other supposed reasons why the Americans dropped the bomb such as in source C Harry Truman in his diary is saying that he wanted to use the bomb on military objectives such as a munitions factory or perhaps Hiroshima if they felt that it was anything to do with the military. The reason that so many people died could just have been an 'accident' because the Americans did not realise how powerful. Source E is implying that the bomb was dropped purely for testing purposes, 'Don't you see, they had to find out if it worked'. After all the Americans did spend around two billion dollars on the Manhattan project which was the development of the bomb. This is the most money that has been spent on any military technological advance that the world has ever seen so the Americans would have been wanting to show that it was not a waste of time and money.

The Americans would have also wanted to have tested the bomb on a city also to see what it would do to people and all of the different types of building because the only place the Americans had tested the bomb before this was in the Sahara desert and in the sea. There was another main reason why the Americans wanted to drop the bomb and this was that of revenge. There were two main factors which contributed to this feel of wanting revenge and these were; the 'sneak' attack of Pearl harbour and the large percentage of American service men that were in POW camps and the torture that they had to suffer while they were in these Japanese camps. The Americans were absolutely stunned by the attack of Pearl Harbour because the Japanese carried out the attack on a peaceful Sunday morning when everyone was at church and relaxing and the Americans did have the slightest clue that the Japanese were flying over because they did not really

take notice of there radar; this was so humiliating for the Americans that the Japanese had flown all the way from Japan to attack America and no one even notice because they dismissed the radar pictures as their own planes coming in from the main land. As source D suggests; the Americans dropped the bomb to ‘ show off’ to the Russians about how powerful they were and that they should try and take over any land in the east Obviously, peace was an important headline reason, but the other reasons stated above and in the sources also played a major part in the Americans thoughts when planning the dropping of the bomb.