

Hiroshima and nagasaki: a role of atomic bomb

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Effects of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki

On December 7th, 1941, Japan launched a bomb on Pearl Harbor. Later on, Congress granted President Franklin D. Roosevelt a declaration of war on Japan (" Attack on Pearl Harbor - 1941."). On August 6th, 1945, The United States dropped nuclear weapons on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan. The most important effect of the bombing is that it caused Japanese surrender.

The atomic bombs in these two cities had great infrastructural and physical losses in Japan. Even though these two atomic bombs brought significant physical damage to Japan, that physical damage was mostly important because that the morale of both physical and infrastructural effects led to the surrender, which brought the end of WWII and peace.

The bombing brought significant infrastructural damage to Japan. Both Hiroshima and Nagasaki were in ruins after the bombing. Buildings had suffered significant damage that some were pushed off their foundations, or gutted by fire or completely destroyed (Swain). Damage to wood-frame buildings extended beyond the burned-over area, and becoming more erratic as distances were reached where only the weakest buildings were damaged, until in the outer portions of the city only minor disturbances of the tile roofs or breakage of glass were visible (" The effects of Atomic Bombings."). " The official Japanese figures summed up the building destruction at 62, 000 out of a total of 90, 000 buildings in the urban area, or 69 percent. An additional 6, 000 or 6. 6 percent were severely damaged, and most of the others showed glass breakage or disturbance of roof tile" (" The effects of Atomic Bombings."). Most of the residential areas became ashes and there was no

place or house for the survivors to live. Besides that, the electric power transmission and distribution system was wrecked. Only power equipment of rugged construction could be used within the devastated areas. Instruments were damaged beyond repair. Transportations were greatly damaged by fire. The telephone system was approximately 80 percent damaged. Even though water reservoir was undamaged, pipe connection in buildings and dwellings were mostly broken (Swain). Briefly speaking, most parts of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were devastated and supply in electricity and water was limited. A survivor in the atomic bomb of Hiroshima described the city that, " When I looked down on the town from the top of that hill, I could see that the city was completely lost. The city turned into a yellow sand. It turned yellow, the color of the yellow desert" (Isao).

The atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki also caused severe physical damage on Japan. In Hiroshima, about 30 percent of the population killed, which were approximately between 70, 000 to 80, 000, and additional 30 percent were seriously injured. People were killed or injured immediately because of the flash burns, blast and falling debris, and burns from blazing buildings. However, for the injured people, there were no enough supplies to help them. Only 30 percent of physicians were able to work a month after the bombing; Out of 1, 780 nurses, 1, 645 were killed or injured; And only 3 out of 45 hospitals can be used after the bombing. The radiation effects of the bombing is even more severe. Many survivors are greatly affected from the gamma rays. These radiation was insufficient to produce casualties. However, the effects of gamma rays, which include " all penetrating high-frequency radiations and neutrons that caused injury" (" The effects of

Atomic Bombings.”), are well established. The majority of radiation cases did not show any symptoms until 1 to 4 weeks later. The patients started to lose appetite, and experience a general discomfort at first. Then their gums, mouth, and pharynx started to inflame. Which a day, fever became evident. The degree of fever is determined the degree of exposure to radiation. If the fever is subsided, the patients showed rapid disappearance of other symptoms and became healthy. As for people who's fever remained sustained, lots of them died as a result of radiation disease. The treatment for patients was very limited at the time. There were little amount of vitamins, liver extract, and an occasional blood transfusion. A large percentage of the people died of secondary disease, such as a result of lowered resistance (“ The effects of Atomic Bombings.”). Because of the great number of casualties, elimination of facilities and the lack of care, rescue activities, and significant radiation effects, physical damage the bombing brought to Japan was uncountable. But because of the power of physical and infrastructural damage the bombing brought, these two atomic bombs led to the end of WWII.

Before the bombing, some of the Japanese Government leaders had already been trying to bring the war to the end, but failed to make it unanimous. Starting from the spring of 1944, a group of former prime ministers and others who were close to the Emperor, including Admiral Okada, Admiral Yonai, Prince Konoye, and Marquis Kido, had been trying to make Tojo's resignation and in making Admiral Suzuki Prime Minister after Koiso's fall. However, the agreement was far from unanimous. The Navy Minister, Admiral Yonai, wanted the war to end as well, but the War Minister, General

Anami, showed his will to fight WWII to the end. In the Supreme War Guidance Council, the Army and Navy chiefs of staff also agreed on fight-to-the-end policy. On the peace issue, this organization was evenly divided. Thus, the peace leaders in the Government was trying to surrender despite the opposition of the War Minister and the Army and Navy chiefs of staff (“The effects of Atomic Bombings.”). They need to bring the Emperor actively into the decision to accept the Potsdam terms, which is the term for Japanese surrender. “So long as the Emperor openly supported such a policy and could be presented to the country as doing so, the military, which had fostered and lived on the idea of complete obedience to the Emperor, could not effectively rebel” (“The effects of Atomic Bombings.”).

The atomic bombing, in this case, played a primary role on leaders’ decision to surrender. It was partly a morale effect. The Government leaders were aware how much physical and infrastructural damage a single atomic bomb could cause. Thus, they were worried that there will be further atomic bombings, especially on the remains of Tokyo. Because Tokyo was the capital in Japan with a population of 3.49 millions, the leaders could imagine how disastrous the impact is if further bombing happens. The bombs made it clear to the leaders that defense on their home islands was impossible, and that no army without the weapon could possibly resist an enemy who had it. After the bombing, even though the war minister and the two chiefs of staff in the Supreme War Guidance Council were still unwilling to accept surrender, the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki weakened their inclination to oppose the peace group. “The peace effort culminated in an Imperial conference held on the night of 9 August and continued into the

early hours of 10 August, for which the stage was set by the atomic bomb and the Russian war declaration" (" The effects of Atomic Bombings."). At this meeting, the Emperor stated specifically that he wanted acceptance of the Potsdam terms. The atomic bombs helped Japan to break the deadlock within the Government over the decision of accepting the Potsdam terms (" The effects of Atomic Bombings.").

The most important effect of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki is that it leads to Japanese surrender. If not the atomic bomb, Japan is likely not to surrender so soon, and the war might continue for a long time. The atomic bomb saved not only Japan from further useless slaughter and destruction, but also the whole World.