

# Americas decision to drop the atomic bomb history essay

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## **Atomic Bomb DBQ**

Thesis SFI America's executive decision to drop the atomic bomb on the Japanese was done for the sole reason of ensuring our power over the Soviet Union, and the surrender of Japan was a mere side-effect of the bombing. During 1939 to 1947, many conferences were held to discuss matters of diplomacy, and the importance of forcing Japan to issue a formal surrender to the United States. Japan was already weakened because of the war, and our military believed that they would soon surrender. Also, the scientists who had designed and built the atomic bomb agreed that it was not necessary to drop the atomic bomb on the Japanese, because their surrender would have happened anyway, however, there was still some dispute over whether or not it was necessary (Doc. G). Therefore, the United States' choice to drop the atomic bomb on Japan was not merely to force Japan to surrender; but was mainly done to intimidate the Soviet Union. President Eisenhower met with Truman in mid-1945 to convince him that Russia would deny everything from the Japanese besides a full surrender (Doc. C). This supports the concept that America only dropped the atomic bomb because it was a necessary evil to stop Soviet forces from getting more involved in the war, thus keeping them away from Japan. During World War II, it was necessary to form an alliance with Russia in order to defeat Nazi Germany. Both sides knew that they could not trust the other, and yet they had to defeat their mutual enemy, the German dictator Adolf Hitler. Therefore, this tenacious alliance was merely temporary. Following the Potsdam Conference, Truman told America that the atomic bomb was completed, and ready to win the war

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(Doc. E). The United States no longer had to rely on Russia for protection from Germany. The completion of the atomic bomb would put the United States high on the scale of political powerhouses. The Soviet Union wasn't directly told that the bomb was completed, but they easily found about the Manhattan Project, through multiple international spy networks, such as the KGB. Following this, in August of 1945 Truman attempted to justify his personal reasons for dropping the bomb on the Japanese. This speech was significant in the fact that this was broadcasted over the radio (Doc. H). He justified himself by saying that the war would have lasted far too had the bomb not been dropped, and that he did it to saves American lives (mainly soldiers), and also to intimidate Russia, who he still (accurately) claimed should not be trusted. Military leaders who had expressed discontent with Japanese war styles had often thought that Japan would be coerced into backing out whether or not America actually dropped the bomb. This unease was shown through events such as the Internment of Japanese-Americans, and Japan's gruesome war conduct which was portrayed through their fighting techniques. One such example of the horrors of Japanese warfare were Kamikaze pilots, suicide pilots who would use their planes as weapons to crash into the enemies. In 1947, the Secretary of War Henry Stimson declared that the war would not have ended until 1946 if it weren't for the Americans to drop the bomb (Doc. A). As Secretary of War, Stimson took direct control of the entire project, and closely supervised the Manhattan Project as well. Both Roosevelt and Truman followed Stimson's advice on the bomb, and Stimson's views often overruled those of military officers when they opposed his views with opposing opinions. Even American war officials

agreed that dropping the atomic bomb ended the war quickly, and few will argue that point to this day. However, they acknowledge that Japan's offensive front was already exhausted, and would have eventually been defeated without the use of the bomb. (Doc. B) Therefore, it can be assumed that the United States ultimately did not drop the atomic bomb to defeat the Japanese, as victory was already evident. It must be assumed that the dropping of the bomb was done only to scare Russia. In early 1945, before the bomb was even dropped, Russia was threatening to enter into the war against Japan if they did not agree to an unconditional surrender. (Doc. D) The United States found it unnecessary for the Soviet Union to enter the war against Japan, and eventually used the atomic bomb to talk them out of their decision. Atomic scientists agree as well that dropping the atomic bomb had absolutely nothing to do with Japan's surrender. By this time in the war, Japan was basically already defeated. (Doc. F) James Byrnes, an atomic scientist, was another man who argued that dropping the bomb needed to be done in order to limit Russia's power and influence. Other scientists also agreed that the bomb was used to shorten the casualties, lengths, and basic costs of the war. (Doc. H) If the war had continued, it is predicted that monetary costs would have shot through the roof, creating prices that America simply had no intention of paying. So, another factor of dropping the bomb on Japan was to prevent the cost of the war from driving our country back into a depression. Clearly, Japan's surrender was not the main goal of the atomic bomb. The goal was to instill fear in our growing superpower rival, the Soviet Union, and to place the United States in one of the top positions of diplomacy among the world powers. The American government and military

have both agreed that a Japanese surrender was evident in the near future. Atomic scientists have also justified that Japan's surrender was only an additional accomplishment, while the primary goal of the bomb was to intimidate Russian forces, and lessen their power on a global scale. In the end, dropping the atomic bomb was not just a way to end the war with Japan, but another chance for America to show their enemies just who holds the power, atomically speaking, of course.