

# Practice ia ib history

[Countries](#), [United States](#)



IA A. Plan of Investigation This investigation evaluates whether or not the dropping of the two atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki was necessary to make Japan surrender unconditionally. To assess the extent to which the deployment of nuclear weapons affected the Japanese decision to surrender unconditionally and if Japan was already prepared to do this prior to the use of the atomic bombs. The details and motivations of the United States to drop the bombs are explored as well as Japan's peace negotiations with the United States and their progress prior to the U. S. choosing to use the bombs. Actions of the United States and Japan not related to the end of World War 2 are not assessed in this investigation. The two sources selected for evaluation, Code-Name Downfall: The Secret Plan to Invade Japan-And Why Truman Dropped the Bomb by Thomas B. Allen and Norman Polmar and Downfall: The End of the Imperial Japanese Empire by Richard B. Frank are evaluated for their origins, purposes, limitations, and values.

B. Summary of Evidence On the 15th of June 1944 535 ships landed 128, 000 U. S. Army personnel on the island of Saipan. From Saipan B-29 bombers were in range of Tokyo. Imperative that they not allow this to happen the Japanese Vice Admiral attacked the U. S. Navy with about nine-tenths of Japan's fighting fleet in the Battle of the Philippine Sea. Once the battle concluded the U. S. had lost 130 planes and 76 aircrew. Japan lost 450 planes, three carriers', and 445 aircrew. The Japanese Navy's carrier force was effectively destroyed. The U. S. took control of the island a short time later. More than 29, 000 Japanese soldiers died defending the island. (Hoyt 297-312) On the 23rd of October 1944 the Battle of Leyte Gulf, the largest naval battle in world history began. With the goal of cutting Japan off from South East Asia

and its oil supplies the U. S. Navy fought against the last remains of the Imperial Navy. By the battle's end on October 26th Japan had lost 10, 500 seamen, a fleet carrier, 3 light carriers, 3 battleships, 10 cruisers, 11 destroyers, and 500 planes. Japan's once mighty Navy was no more. After this the Japanese were not able to carry out another significant Naval action for the remainder of the war. (Pape 123-168) Shortly afterwards the allies launched their invasion of the Philippines. On the 17th of April 1945 Mindanao, the last major island of the Philippines, was taken by the allies. In total 336, 000 Japanese soldiers died defending The Philippines. (Hoyt 421-427) Within a few months of the fall of The Philippines Japan lost control of Burma and Borneo to the Allies. In total the Japanese military lost more than 41, 000 soldiers defending the islands. After this the Japanese were effectively cut off from all of their major oil supplies. (Hoyt 437-449) With Japan's foreign empire nearly decimated by the U. S. and its allies the U. S. turned to the Japanese Home Islands themselves. The Battle for the island of Iwo Jima ended on March 26th with total Japanese defeat. Of the approximately 21, 000 Japanese defenders only 216 survived. On June 21st the Allies defeated Japan in the Battle of Okinawa (Feifer 145-163). 75, 545 Japanese people lost their lives defending the island. This was to be the last major battle of World War Two. (Hoyt 478-487) While in Europe the USAAF had only used precision bombing to limit civilian casualties the Air Force abandoned this policy while bombing Japan. The first raid using low-flying B-29 bombers carrying incendiary bombs to drop on Tokyo was on the night of February 24-25 1945 when 174 B-29s destroyed around 1 square mile of the city. Changing their tactics, on the night of March 9-10, 1945, a wave of 300

American bombers struck Tokyo. In the ensuing firestorm more than 100,000 Japanese civilians were killed and roughly a million were injured. Dropping nearly 1,700 tons of bombs more than 16 square miles were completely burned and more than a quarter of a million structures were destroyed. Before the dropping of the Atomic bombs more than 50% of Tokyo was completely destroyed. (Hoyt, 560-598) Nihei, a young Japanese school girl at the time, recalled that, "" Those images in my mind... can never be erased... I can see myself there, the flames all around me. And I'm running for my life. Hell could be no hotter. " By July about a quarter of all the houses in Japan had been destroyed, leaving more than 15 million Japanese civilians homeless. Its transportation system was near collapse with almost all the strategic railways destroyed. American forces had sowed aquatic mines in the shipping lanes from the air effectively stopping all Japanese naval movement. Food had become so scarce that most Japanese were subsisting on a sub-starvation diet. On Monday, August 6th, 1945 by executive order of President Harry S. Truman the U. S. dropped the nuclear weapon " Little Boy" on the city of Hiroshima. Truman said that, " The world will note that the first atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, a military base. That was because we wished in this first attack to avoid, insofar as possible, the killing of civilians." 90,000 to 166,000 civilians were killed by the blast. Only 3 days later on August 9th the " Fat Man" nuclear weapon was detonated over Nagasaki. 60,000 to 80,000 civilians were killed. (Gosling, Fehner 28) Yoshitaka Kawamoto, just thirteen years old at the time, was in a classroom less than a kilometer away from the hypocenter, " One of my classmates, I think his name is Fujimoto, he muttered something and

pointed outside the window, saying, " A B-29 is coming. " He pointed outside with his finger. So I began to get up from my chair and asked him, " Where is it? " Looking in the direction that he was pointing towards, I got up on my feet, but I was not yet in an upright position when it happened. All I can remember was a pale lightening flash for two or three seconds. Then, I collapsed. I don't know much time passed before I came to. It was awful, awful. The smoke was coming in from somewhere above the debris. Sandy dust was flying around. I was trapped under the debris and I was in terrible pain and that's probably why I came to. I couldn't move, not even an inch. Then, I heard about ten of my surviving classmates singing our school song. I remember that. I could hear sobs. Someone was calling his mother. But those who were still alive were singing the school song for as long as they could. I think I joined the chorus. We thought that someone would come and help us out. That's why we were singing a school song so loud. But nobody came to help, and we stopped singing one by one. In the end, I was singing alone. " On August 9th the USSR entered the war invading Manchuria. With a force of nearly 1, 700, 000 soldiers the Soviets quickly claimed total victory driving the Japanese out and killing 20, 000 to 80, 000 Japanese soldiers and capturing about 650, 000. (Glantz 54-72) On August 15th in a radio address to the nation Emperor Hirohito announced the surrender of Japan. (Pape 87) The largest war in the history of mankind was over. C. Evaluation of Sources

Code-Name Downfall: The Secret Plan to Invade Japan-And Why Truman Dropped the Bomb by Thomas B. Allen and Norman Polmar was published by Simon & Schuster in 1995. Allen is an American writer who went to college in Bridgeport, Conn. He worked for The New York Daily and then became part

of the National Geographic Book Division. Most of his work deals with military history. His book is an excellent source of information because it is based upon hundreds of sources, was written well after the events described so that more evidence is available, and is written by a fairly objective military historian who has less bias because he was not attached to the war.

Downfall: The End of the Imperial Japanese Empire by Richard B. Frank was published by Penguin in 2001. Frank is an expert on World War 2 history. He specializes on the Pacific part of WWII. He fought in the 101st Airborne Division during the Vietnam. This could possibly make him more bias towards U. S. military actions but his book uses hundreds of reputable sources so that his opinion is less biased. His book is a very definitive and exhaustive account of Japanese defeat. It's an excellent and useful source.

D. Analysis " The fact is that as far as the Japanese militarists were concerned, the atomic bomb was just another weapon. The two atomic bombs at Hiroshima and Nagasaki were icing on the cake, and did not do as much damage as the fire bombings of Japanese cities. The B-29 firebombing campaign had brought the destruction of 3, 100, 000 homes, leaving 15 million people homeless, and killing about a million of them. It was the ruthless firebombing, and Hirohito's realization that if necessary the Allies would completely destroy Japan and kill every Japanese to achieve " unconditional surrender" that persuaded him to the decision to end the war. The atomic bomb is indeed a fearsome weapon, but it was not the cause of Japan's surrender, even though the myth persists even to this day. " Said by Edwin P. Hoyt in 1986. According to the UK embassy in Washington the Americans regarded the Japanese as " a nameless mass of vermin". A

1944 opinion poll that asked what should be done with Japan found that 13% of the U. S. public was in favor of the extermination of all Japanese people: men, women, and children. (Hixson 239) The dropping of the two bombs had little to do with defeating the defeated Japan. Even before World War 2 had ended the cold war began. Stalin and the Soviets had taken control of nearly all of Eastern Europe and made it clear that they weren't going to leave. (Glantz 152-167) The Soviet Union had emerged World War 2 as a superpower and as the only legitimate challenger to American hegemony. Militaristic and organized with massive amounts of natural resources the Soviets under Stalin had proven that they were willing to expend unimaginable amounts of human life to win. (Glantz 172-184) With this massive looming on the horizon the terrified United States had to demonstrate its military supremacy. Japan presented a unique opportunity for the U. S. to demonstrate its new destructive power to the Soviets and the Japanese people paid the price. The Japanese were already defeated and seeking peace. (Butow 111-121) " It is my opinion that the use of the barbarous weapon at Hiroshima and Nagasaki was of no material assistance in our war against Japan. The Japanese were already defeated and ready to surrender.... My own feeling is that in being the first to use it, we had adopted an ethical standard common to barbarians of the Dark Ages. I was not taught to make war in that fashion, and wars cannot be won by destroying women and children. " Chairman of the wartime Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral William D. Leahy. Shortly after the conclusion of the war General Douglas MacArthur confirmed what many Military analysts and historians theorized by saying, " My staff was unanimous in believing that

Japan was on the point of collapse and surrender." In 1963 President Eisenhower said, " The Japanese were ready to surrender and it wasn't necessary to hit them with that awful thing ... I hated to see our country be the first to use such a weapon. " E. Conclusion While the dropping of the two atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki certainly contributed to the Japanese becoming even more desperately willing to unconditionally surrender the atomic bombs, despite their unimaginable destructive power, were just another weapon the Japanese had to endure. More than a million Japanese people had been killed by bombing raids. In reality the entrance of the Soviet Union into the war and their invasion of Japanese controlled Manchuria more likely contributed to Japan being more willing to unconditionally surrender. Japan had controlled Manchuria far longer than any pacific island the U. S. fought on and had more than 1, 200, 000 men there. Their total defeat in a very short amount of time made Japan realize that they no longer were able to defend themselves. In conclusion to use the words of General Curtis LeMay, " The atomic bomb had nothing to do with the end of the war." " We are the inheritors to the mantle of Genghis Khan," wrote New York Times editorial writer Hanson Baldwin, " and of all those in history who have justified the use of utter ruthlessness in war." The dropping of the two atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki was in no way militarily justified. The use of the atomic bombs was an act of brutality the likes of which this world has never seen and for the continued survival of the human race I hope never has to see again.