

History essays - atomic bomb



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

America's Decision to Drop the Atomic Bomb on Japan

The United States' rightful decision to drop the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki was a military measure calculated to speed the end of the war. The bombings were nuclear attacks during World War II against the Empire of Japan by the United States. The ultimate decision made by President Harry Truman was one of the most divisive and controversial issues of the twentieth century, since he had to ask himself whether it was right to use a weapon of unspeakable destructive force. Prior to President Truman's presidency, Franklin Roosevelt has authorized a team of the Army Corps of Engineers the task of creating an atomic bomb, and the project was headed by Major General Leslie R. Groves (Dinkins, 125). It became known as "The Manhattan Project", and was kept as a top secret for obvious reasons. After six months of intense firebombing of Japanese cities, "Little Boy", as the bomb came to be known as, was dropped on the city of Hiroshima on August 6, 1945. It was followed by the detonation of the "Fat Man", the second nuclear bomb, over Nagasaki (Hoyt, 45). Although many may argue that the bombing was unethical and immoral, from a traditionalists' point of view, I strongly believe that it was more beneficial since it shortened the Pacific War.

President Truman was looking for a way to end war as quickly and painlessly as possible for the United States; he was not looking for a way to avoid using the bomb. Winning the war decisively at the lowest cost in American casualties was the primary goal of the United States, and the bomb was presumably the best solution to accomplish the objective. He believed that "The bomb will shorten the agony of war, in order to save the lives of

thousands and thousands of young Americans.” (Walker, 93). Furthermore, Truman’s concerns were broader. In order to explain his reasoning to satisfy the American people, he had no other alternative but to use the bomb once it became accessible. Many believed that if he had backed off from using a weapon, public confidence in his capacity to govern would be put into question, and persistently challenged as well (Hoyt, 46).

As an added incentive, another reason for using the bombs was to provide diplomatic benefits by making the Soviet Union “ more open to America’s wishes” (Walker, 94). Also, Truman didn’t drop the bomb initially to insult or impress the Soviets, but it was a by-product, or a “ bonus” to America. All in all, his primary consideration in using the bomb immediately was not to frustrate Soviet desires in Asia, but to end the war at the earliest possible time (Lewis). Diplomatically, it would urge them to accept our positions. Hence, the growing differences with Soviet Union was just a factor that led the American officials to think about the dropping.

In addition, Japan’s aggregation was another factor that led America to unleash the nuclear bombs. According to the ancient Samurai tradition, the Emperor did not intervene in political affairs since he held a God-like status and therefore, could not face disappointment (Walker, 56). Hence, the Japanese army was quite ferocious, as their utmost duty was to serve the emperor, and sacrificing ones life for it was regarded as a great honor. In the kamikaze missions led by the Japanese, the suicide bombers would risk their lives for combat, and would die in these attacks. During the battle of Okinawa, of the 117, 000 Japanese soldiers stationed on the island, and only 7, 000 were left alive. On April 6th alone, 355 planes participated in

kamikaze missions (Lewis). All this indicated that they were not going to give up regardless. Also, U. S had offered Japan to surrender unconditionally, and the peace negotiations were also denied, which left Truman with no other open options.

In conclusion, other reasons such as the violation of the Kellogg- Briand Pact due to the invasion of Manchuria in 1931, and the dreadful attack on Pearl Harbor contributed to America's decision as well. The results were received well among many Americans. It not only saved over half a million lives, but also prevented us from the bereavement of thousands of lives that would have been sacrificed. Not only military, but diplomatic, and political considerations weighed heavily in favor of the use of the bomb as well; the American leaders, too, had always assumed that it would be dropped when it became available (Walker, 96). It would speed the end to the war militarily, while it would make the Soviets accept our demands. On the contrary, delaying this vital action which would conquer us victory could have had severe consequences. Also, the bomb was used as a self-defense for America on the whole, since the Pacific war had made our home-fronts vulnerable to land invasion as well, which would have put numerous lives in danger at home. All in all, the bomb was the only way to end the suffering of the millions who were being held captive by the Japanese oppressor, and therefore, was the right decision that was made.

Works Cited

Dinkins, David. Why Did President Truman Drop the Atomic Bomb? 4 Oct. 2003.

Hoyt, Edwin P. Japan's War: the Great Pacific Conflict, 1853 to 1952. McGraw-Hill Publishing, 1986.

Lewis, Chris. "The Impact of the Atomic Bomb on Japan." Atomic bomb on Japan 21 Oct. 2002 09 January 2008 .

Walker, Samuel J. Prompt and utter destruction: Truman and the use of atomic bombs against Japan. The University of North Carolina Press, 1997.