

ARGUING THE USE OF THE ATOMIC BOMB

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In 1945, in an effort to force the Japanese to surrender during World War II, the United States dropped two atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. These droppings were the only two times a nuclear weapon was used against an enemy within conflict in all of history. The bombs were very important tools needed to win the war in a short amount of time, without them more than 1 million more American soldiers would have died in battle. There are many benefits of the bombs, but there are also consequences that carried along. There were other methods of ending the war considered, but this was the best one available and was the best decision for the country.

Germany surrendered to the Allies on May 7th, 1945, which ended World War II in Europe. However, the entire war was not over yet. There was still a battle going on in the Pacific between Japan and the United States. President Harry S. Truman was faced with the tough choice of enduring more months of battling, which would have killed more people, or to drop a nuclear weapon which would almost immediately end it all. On August 6th and 9th, the bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.¹ Over the next two to four months, the effects of the atomic bombings killed between 90,000 and 146,000 people in Hiroshima and 39,000 and 80,000 people in Nagasaki. For months afterward, large numbers of people continued to die from the effects of burns, radiation sickness, and injuries, compounded by illness and malnutrition.¹ On August 15th, Japan surrendered to the Allies, and signing an instrument of surrender on September 2nd, officially marking the end of World War II.

There are many benefits of dropping the bomb on Japan, but also some consequences that follow. First, the bomb actually saved many American lives. The alternative method President

¹ “Atomic Bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.” Wikipedia. Wikimedia Foundation. Accessed December 15, 2020. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atomic_bombings_of_Hiroshima_and_Nagasaki.

Harry S. Truman considered, instead of dropping the bomb, was for Americans to invade on ground. If this were to have happened, many American lives would have been lost. More than 1 million to be precise. Another benefit was that atomic weapons lead to the formation of the United Nations. The governments of the world began to shift their priorities from conquest and colonization to rebuilding and wealth management after World War II. The developed countries of the world, including those with communist tendencies, looked for ways to limit the influence of adverse authoritarianism in the world.² As you can see, the bombs had some benefits.

However, there were some consequences as well. Many innocent people, who were not involved in the conflict, were harmed by the bombs. Many of the children who lived in Hiroshima developed acute malignant lymph gland leukemia because of their exposure. Japan also faced a cancer surge for the next 50 years. Almost half (46%) of the cancer-related fatalities that happened in and around Hiroshima and Nagasaki are attributed to the fallout, like the black rain, that occurred after dropping the bombs.² There were also more birth defects found in babies born after the dropping of the bombs. As you can see here, there were many benefits of the bombs. However, those benefits also came with some consequences.

As stated before, President Harry S. Truman was faced with a tough decision on how to attack Japan. The main two plans were to either drop the bombs, or to invade Japan on land. If Truman were to have chosen to invade by land, over 1 million American soldier lives would have been lost.¹ But by dropping the bombs, not as many American soldiers died. However by dropping the bomb, more innocent people died. Less innocent Japanese lives would have been lost in America invaded by land, as it would have been the soldiers fighting and not the innocent

² “16 Advantages and Disadvantages of Dropping the Atomic Bomb.” FutureofWorking.com, August 14, 2019. futureofworking.com/6-advantages-and-disadvantages-of-dropping-the-atomic-bomb.

ones. But since the bombs were dropped, everyone in the city was affected. Also if Truman would have chosen to invade by land, it would have taken Japan longer to surrender. This would have allowed time for the Soviet Union to take over Japan, as they were planning to do so. But since the bombs were dropped, that made Japan surrender more quickly. Just think a minute of if the Soviet Union would have gained control of Japan, we would have been in deep trouble. However, the bombs prevented this from ever happening.

Overall, the atomic bombs were a good thing for the United States. Yes, many Japanese lives were lost. But if you think about the long-term effects of not dropping the bombs, they could have been very bad. As stated before, the bombs made Japan surrender much more quickly. At the same time, the Soviet Union was planning on invading Japan and taking over. If the bombs were not dropped, that would have given more time for Japan to surrender. More time for that would have allowed the Soviet Union to take over, and we would be one of their top targets. Just think for a minute of how severely bad that would have been. But thanks to the bombs, that never happened. The bombs also caused the world to shift their priorities from conquest and colonization to rebuilding and wealth management after World War II. For example, after World War II the United Nations was formed. However, by dropping these weapons, American lives were valued over Japanese lives. The bombs caused the world to focus more on peace than conflict. Even though there were some consequences, the bombs actually caused a lot of positive things to happen throughout the world.

One of the most important events of World War II for the United States is the atomic bombings in the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. This event caused Japan to surrender to the Allies and prevented other things like a Soviet takeover from happening. It had many benefits, including making the war end quicker while saving many American lives, but had

many consequences such as causing Japan to have server health problems for the next 50 years. There are also benefits of this being the method of ending the war, as it made the war end quicker and made countries focus more on peace, but this method valued American lives over Japanese lives. But in the end, the bomb was the way to go. Without it, the world could have faced severe consequences that we could only imagine happening.

Bibliography

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