

Did Truman Choose the Right?

During World War II German scientists had discovered a way of splitting atoms. They found that this reaction releases lots of energy and they thought it could be used as a weapon. However the information never got to Hitler, this is because the German scientists were fleeing Germany to the United States. When they got to the United States they told the well known scientist Albert Einstein about this new discovery. Later Einstein wrote a letter to the then-President of the United States, Harry Truman, who then started having this technology further researched. Once they had tested the bombs, they had the opportunity to drop them on Japanese cities. The United States was justified in dropping the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki because it ended the war quickly and minimized Allied losses.

Ending the war quickly was a necessary task because the longer the war dragged on, the more losses there would be. One way of ending the war quickly was to scare everyone out of the war. The way this was done was to drop the newly discovered atomic bombs on Japanese cities. Many people believed that dropping bombs was unnecessary and unjust, however, as an Allied WWII soldier, Paul Fussell, says in document two, "123,000 Japanese and Americans killed each other. War is immoral. War is cruel." This shows that even though dropping bombs on cities may seem unjust, the whole idea of war itself is unjust, cruel, and immoral, so some things that seem wrong, may be justified because it is war, and terrible things happen. In document one, President Truman wrote that he "regarded the bomb as a military weapon and never had any doubts that it should be used." This shows again that this is all a part of war and using the bomb was justified because it was a U.S. weapon and if they could use it to end the war, then they would.

Another necessary task on the Allied side of the war was to minimize Allied losses. If the United States had not bombed Japan then as Henry Stimson says in document nine, "We

estimated that if we were forced to carry out an invasion of the Japanese mainland, the major fighting would not end until the latter part of 1946, at the earliest.” This shows that fighting in the war would have continued on much longer which would end up with many more casualties and Allied losses. We know that Japan would continue fighting because as Dr. Kanazawa Satoshi says in document twelve, “The women and children were told to fight the invading American ground forces with their bamboo spears till death.” This shows that the Japanese were willing to sacrifice anything, even their women and children, just to hold off the Americans and win the war.

In conclusion, all of these reasons about the war and Japan’s unwillingness to give up fighting, even sacrificing women and children, help to show how the United States was justified in dropping the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki because it ended the war quickly and minimized Allied losses.