

D. Arguments for and against the use of the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki

1. Was Japan already defeated and unable to defend itself?
2. Against - would argue yes
 - very little navy and air force left
 - island was blockaded, people were starving
 - estimated that by the end of 1945 Japan would have surrendered.
- For - would argue no
 - Examples of Iwo Jima and Okinawa
 - Use of Kamikazes
 - messages from the military, Japan would fight to the last man
 - movement of troops out of Manchuria to defend homeland

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2. Was it morally right to use the bombs? (Dostoevski: Grand Inquisitor)
- Against - no
- innocent civilians were killed.
 - favor warning and demonstration - by not warning the act was immoral.
 - U.S. lost moral edge by dropping the bomb.
- For - Yes
- Viewed it as saving lives
 - "ends justify the means"
 - if Japan or Germany had it, they certainly would have used it.

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3. Were the Japanese seeking peace and willing to surrender?
- Against - Yes
- it was the Americans who refused (Potsdam Declaration) to give in on unconditional surrender demand.
 - guarantee of the emperor would have led to the Japanese surrendering.
- For - no
- they were seeking a military alliance with the Soviet Union.
 - Military leaders were unwilling to surrender - samurai mentality
 - aborted attempt to kamikaze attack the surrender ceremony

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4. Was the bomb used to impress the Soviets?
- Against - Yes
- Bomb was used to prevent Soviet advances in Asia
 - Bomb was used to gain favorable terms in postwar negotiations with Soviets.
- For - no
- Bomb was used to end the war as quickly as possible.
 - The actions of the Soviets after the war rendered the bomb diplomatically ineffective.
 - U.S. interests in Manchuria insignificant

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5. Did the use of the bomb save lives?
- Against - yes/no
- did prevent invasion - yes
 - but led to 250,000 deaths
- For - yes
- lives saved by not invading - both U.S. and civilians.
 - "Fire bombings" led to 100,000 deaths in Tokyo
 - U.S. POW's saved from execution.

E. Results of the Atomic Bomb:

1. U.S. lost its moral edge.
2. Launched the world into the nuclear age.
3. Established the U.S. as a postwar super-power.
4. The use of the bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki prevented future uses of the weapon.
 - a. devastation and destruction never to be repeated.
 - b. forced diplomacy to do its job.