

# CON

## **The Dropping of the Atomic Bombs on Japan Cannot Be Justified**

### **Japan was on the verge of surrender.**

- More than 60 of its cities had been destroyed by conventional bombing
- Its islands were being blockaded by the American Navy
- The Soviet Union had entered the war by attacking Japanese troops in Manchuria
- By 1945 it was only a matter of time before Japan lost the war and so arguments suggesting that only the atomic bombs could have ended the war are false.

### **The USA could have tried harder to get a Japanese surrender.**

- The Americans were demanding “unconditional surrender” and would not agree to the Japanese keeping their Emperor
- The Japanese people believed that their Emperor was a God-like figure and would never agree to him losing his position as leader.
- This needlessly prolonged Japan's resistance.

### **There was no need to drop the bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki**

- In using the bomb, the United States could have chosen an uninhabited or military target. Such a show of force was also likely to have convinced Japan's leaders to quit, without killing many people.
- The United States should have made much more effort to warn the Japanese of the potential power of atomic weapons as a method of convincing the Japanese to surrender.
- In fact the power of the bombs was never explained to the Japanese leaders.
- The two cities were of limited military value. Civilians outnumbered troops in Hiroshima five or six to one.

### **Dropping the Atomic Bombs was morally wrong**

- Using the atomic bombs on civilian targets was morally wrong and against the Geneva Convention. This says that bombings should be carried out against military targets.
- Hiroshima and Nagasaki had almost no military value.
- The cities were chosen because they had not been bombed previously and America wanted clean targets to measure the impact of the atomic weapons.
- In effect, some 250,000 people lost their lives so the U.S. could conduct a test, which is an atrocity.

## **Dropping the second bomb can never be justified**

- Even if people can argue that Hiroshima was necessary to force the Japanese to surrender, the U.S.A did not give enough time for word to filter out of its devastation before bombing Nagasaki.
- The truth is that the USA wanted to try out a second bomb.
- Scientists at Los Alamos had built two bombs, the plutonium bomb which was dropped on Hiroshima and a uranium bomb.
- Hiroshima had shown the effectiveness of the plutonium bomb, but another mission was needed to see what damage a uranium bomb could do.
- The people of Nagasaki were therefore killed so that America could test its second bomb. The people of Nagasaki died to show the Americans how powerful their uranium bomb was. This makes the bombing a war crime.

## **The Atomic Bombs were not like conventional weapons.**

- The bombs melted the eyes and skin and left people with injuries much more horrific than the worst casualties from ordinary bombing.
- Several women had the intricate designs from their Kimonos burned into their flesh
- The radiation released from the bombs caused radiation sickness, which killed many thousands of people, who had managed to survive the initial blast, because the radiation was carried on the wind.
- The radiation is one of the main reasons why the bombings can be seen as a war crime.
- Atomic bombing cannot be compared to conventional bombing because of the factor of the radiation poisoning, which leads to cancers such as Leukaemia.
- The radiation released from the bombs is still causing problems in Japan today, where babies are still being born with disabilities as a result of the atomic bombs.

## **The Americans chose to sacrifice the lives of Japanese civilians to protect the lives of US soldiers.**

- The main argument for the dropping of the bombs is that invading Japan would cause high US casualties. Dropping the bombs did save US soldier's lives, but civilians are not supposed to protect soldiers with their lives.

## **The bombings were more about keeping the Russians out of Japan**

- The real reason America used these weapons was to show Russia that the US possessed them.
- America wanted to prevent the Russians from becoming more involved in the war against Japan.
- America was due to invade in November 1945 and by this time the USSR would have fought long enough to have wanted involvement in Japan at the end of the war.
- Dropping the bombs brought the war to a speedier end and meant that the USSR could have no say in what happened to Japan.
- Dropping the bombs also gave the Americans an advantage in the Cold War against the USSR, because the bombings showcased the full destructive power that the U.S. had available.

## **Dropping the bombs cannot be justified**

- The only legal deaths in war are military deaths.
- To plan on the basis that civilians will die to save military deaths is not legal under international law.
- To say that the U.S. was justified in dropping the bombs, one would have to believe that "the end justifies the means" but here the means was the appalling death of civilians,
- Bombs of this magnitude can never be justified, especially against civilians.

## **Other arguments**

- The bomb was used partly to justify the \$2 billion spent on its development.
- Conventional firebombing would have caused as much significant damage without making the U.S. the first nation to use nuclear weapons.