

The decision to use the atom bomb was a torturous decision one settled by a combination of Japan's lack of a prompt/unconditional surrender, military necessity, combined with the racism rampant in American culture.

Japan as of 1945 and the several decades preceding it was controlled by the military elite who created a pseudo fascists and hyper militaristic state. It is through this culture that Japanese soldiers gained their reputation as warriors willing to throw themselves at an opposing force with no regard for life or limb. Of course this a only subjective claim why Japan would have little reason to surrender either in a timely manner and/ or unconditionally before the dropping of the bomb.

Objectively Japan had little reason to surrender. As a *Combined Chief of Staff Estimate of the Enemy Situation* confirms "The ground component of the Japanese armed forces remains Japan's greatest military asset. There are at present some 110 infantry and 4 armored divisions in the Japanese Army with a total strength of about 4,600,000" (Mcfarland, Cornwall-Jones 1945, p. 6). Much noise has been made about the memo entitled *Memorandum of the use of S-1 Bomb* sent to Secretary of War Henry Stimson . It states " since I have been in touch with this program I have had a feeling that before the bomb is actually used against Japan that Japan should have some preliminary warning... " during recent weeks I have also had the feeling... that the Japanese government may be searching for ... surrender" (Bard 1945, p. 2).

The bomb being a military necessity is difficult to prove. The word necessity is a tricky word with the Merriam-Webster definition being “something that you must have or do” (Webster). With that said, in the context of a military operation, the deployment of the atom bomb against Japan was necessary.

The Japanese Army was fanatically motivated and willing to endure extreme pain, certain death, and overwhelming odds just for the privilege of killing American servicemen. As Eugene Sledge (a marine who served in combat) states in Paul Fussell’s *Thank God for the Atom bomb*, “ It would shock the American public and the world [that] every Japanese soldier, civilian, women and child would fight to the death with whatever weapons they had, rifle, grenade or bamboo spear”. (Fussell 2016, p.2 ). American Marines had encountered fierce Japanese resistance while fighting on tiny “insignificant” islands. With the objective evidence provided by the report to the *Combined Chiefs of Staff* and the first hand evidence offered by servicemen who had fought in combat there is little reason to believe that Japan would consent to a swift and unconditional surrender.

The third and final factor in the decision to use the bomb was the racism rampant in American culture and, specifically, the hatred of the Japanese people.

Japanese-Americans, in the years between 1941 and 1945, had their civil liberties taken away from them . Under executive order 9066 Japanese-Americans men, women, and

children, citizen of the United State's were rounded up and relocated to prisoner camps for the duration of the war.

This severe discrimination found in mainstream American culture is best exemplified by the Superman comic book entitled *The Sneer Strikes back!* . In the comic book Clark Kent visits an internment camp for Japanese Americans . The facilities are portrayed as nice and homely with the American guards simply trying to do their duty and keep everyone safe . As the story unfolds the “evil” Japanese prisoners take a guard hostage and attempt to escape; luckily Clark Kent (Superman) is able to prevent the ungrateful Japanese from escaping. As the comic book ends it gives some helpful advice “ Superman says you can slap a jap” (Seigel Schuster 1943, p. 5).

This type of media is so foreign to our modern eyes upon first glance one would assume that Superman may help the imprisoned japanese.

Though political leaders such as Truman truly “ [regretted] the necessity of wiping out whole populations because of the pigheadedness of the leaders of a nation”, popular media and culture which the average American was immersed in portrayed the Japanese as a subhuman people who deserved the atom bomb (Truman 1945, p.1).

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