

# Thank God for the bomb

by Greg Martinez



August 6 is the anniversary of the first time an atomic bomb was used in wartime. It was on that day in 1945 that the United States dropped an atomic bomb on the Japanese port city of Hiroshima. Three days later, a second atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki and six days after that, Japan surrendered and World War II ended. The Nagasaki bombing was the last time an atomic bomb has been used in wartime. Despite the massive death, destruction, and injury caused by the bombs many more people are alive today that otherwise may not be.

I am always a little taken aback by those who claim the United States was wrong to use the bomb. Their reasoning is that the war in Europe was over and the Russians were ready to enter the war against Japan. They claim that the bombing of Nagasaki was unnecessary and that the Japanese would have surrendered if they had adequate time to assess the bombing of Hiroshima. According to the critics, the bombing was motivated by racism and a desire to use Japan as a laboratory to learn more about the effects of the bomb.



My father was in World War II in the Pacific Theater. He was in many of the toughest battles in that part of the war, Okinawa, Iwo Jima, and Midway Island. The United States was planning to invade the Japanese mainland to end the war and he was in one of the divisions scheduled for that campaign. This attack would have been much more dangerous than the famous D-Day invasion of Normandy in the European Theater of World War II, the estimated casualties ran high as a million troops. Japan is a much more densely populated country than northern France and the Japanese were known for their fanaticism during the war, as evidenced by their kamikaze fighters. The kamikaze went on suicide missions in planes loaded with explosives and fuel, crashing into enemy ships.



I have great respect for the Japanese people and all they have contributed to the world in technology and manufacturing. They are polite and respectful people who work hard and don't complain. I was impressed by the absolute lack of looting during the horrible Tsunami that struck Japan earlier this year. The Japan of World War II was completely different. The country was in the grip of fanatical and tyrannical leaders. They were ruthless and bloodthirsty back then and committed such atrocities as the [Rape of Nanking](#), Pearl Harbor, and the [Bataan Death March](#). They were extremely cruel to civilians and prisoners of war. For some reason, the story of the war in Japan has not received nearly as much coverage in the media as the War in Europe.

An estimated 150,000 to 250,000 people died in Japan as a result of the bomb, the exact death toll will never be known. Neither will we ever know how many people are alive today because of the bombs; I'm probably one of them.



*Staff Writer, Greg Martinez.*

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