*Was the use of the atomic bomb against Japan justified?*

Although the atomic bomb had never been used before in warfare, it was wrong for President Truman to unleash a weapon so terrible. The use of the atomic bomb and the effects of it cannot be justified.

Even though the weapon had not been used before, Truman was aware of its potential dangers, and he knew how destructive the atomic bomb could be. In a petition signed by nearly 60 scientists who had worked on the creation of the bomb (Document 1), Truman was warned about the possible consequences of using the bomb. “Atomic power will provide the nations with new means of destruction. The atomic bombs at our disposal represent only the first step in this direction and there is almost no limit to the destructive power, which will become available in the course of this development.” This shows us that use of the weapon was a “slippery slope.” Once one person used it, other people would be encouraged to use it also. This statement was made by the scientists, who knew the power of the weapon, so their statement was very serious.

Opponents argue that war calls for desperate measures and that war will always cause death. Former Secretary of War Stimson states this belief in Document 5. “The decision to use the atomic bomb was a decision that brought death to over a hundred thousand Japanese...

But this deliberate, premeditated destruction was our least abhorrent alternative.” He realizes the horrible power of the atomic bomb but argues that its force prevented future deaths. The Japanese did not want to fight anymore after the bombs were dropped, so there were not any more battles, with lots of casualties on each side.

Despite this belief, the atomic bomb is a particularly horrible weapon, and it results in many painful deaths. An eyewitness account of the bomb (Document 4) states, “Many people on the street were killed almost instantly. The fingertips of those dead bodies caught fire and the fire gradually spread over their entire bodies from their fingers. A light gray liquid dripped down their hands, scorching their fingers.” It is hard to believe that the Americans couldn’t have tried harder to find a peaceful alternative or at least one that wasn’t so violent. Additionally, the effects of the atomic bomb have been felt for many years after the initial attacks. This is an event that will live on in history for many years, and it will be remembered as an unjustified attack.

**Reflection**

After arguing the other side of the issue, my mind has not changed. I still believe that the United States should’ve used the bomb against Japan. I know that war is a horrible thing, and I know that the pictures show terrible wounds and destruction of people and places. However, I believe that the Japanese would’ve done it to us if they had had a chance. This was the only option that would end the war for good, and the United States had to take it.