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## Atomic Bomb

- President Truman and advisors believed it needed to compel Japan's surrender, avoiding a costly land invasion (Operation Downfall) expected to cost millions of American and Japanese lives.
- Japan's military leadership was determined to fight, and a powerful demonstration of destructive capability was deemed necessary to break their will.



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## Atomic Bomb

- President Harry S. Truman made the decision to use atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945.
- The stated primary objective was to force Japan's unconditional surrender and end World War II as quickly as possible, thereby avoiding a costly land invasion of the Japanese mainland.



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## Atomic Bomb

### Key Factors in the Decision

#### Projected Casualties of Invasion

A U.S. military land invasion of Japan could have resulted in hundreds of thousands of Americans and potentially millions of Japanese military and civilian deaths.

#### Prompt Surrender

Truman and his advisors hoped the immense shock value of the new weapon would convince Japan's leaders to surrender immediately, a goal that traditional bombing and a naval blockade had not yet achieved.

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## Atomic Bomb

### Key Factors in the Decision

#### Lack of Alternatives

The Interim Committee, a high-level advisory group of scientists and government officials, recommended using the bomb against Japan without specific warning after concluding that no demonstration on an unpopulated area would be convincing enough to force surrender.

#### Political Considerations

There were also post-war geopolitical considerations, as the U.S. wanted to demonstrate its military power to the world, particularly the Soviet Union, and limit Soviet influence in Asia by securing Japan's surrender before the Soviets advanced further into the region.

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# Atomic Bomb

## Key Factors in the Decision

|                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Public Opinion</b>    | The American public, weary of a long war and angered by the Pearl Harbor attack and Japanese atrocities, largely supported the use of the bomb to achieve total victory and unconditional surrender.   |
| <b>Historical Debate</b> | The decision remains one of the most debated and controversial in history, with opponents questioning whether the bomb was necessary and supporters arguing it was the only viable way to end the war. |

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# Atomic Bomb

- On August 6, 1945, at 8:15 am, the first bomb, "Little Boy," was dropped on Hiroshima, killing an estimated 70,000 to 80,000 people instantly.
- Developed as part of the Manhattan project, the gun-type bomb was delivered by the B-29 bomber *Enola Gay* and detonated with the force of about 15 kilotons of TNT.
- The total death toll surpassed 100,000 by the end of the year due to injuries and radiation effects.



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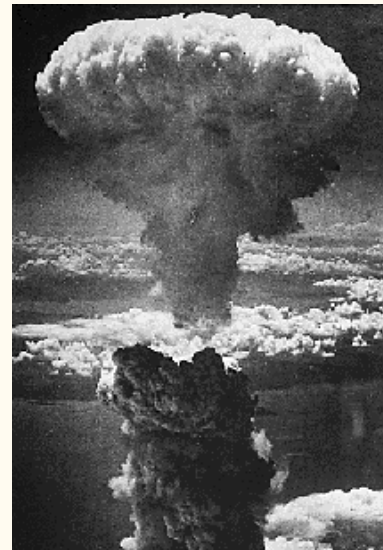




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## Atomic Bomb

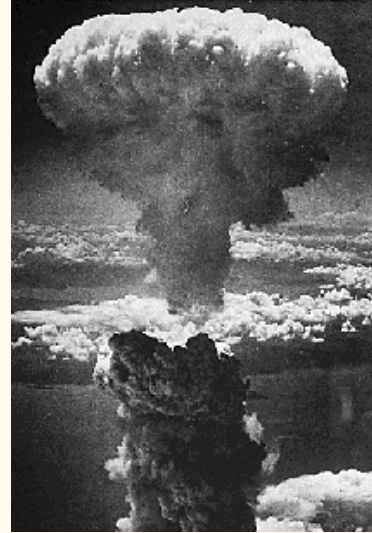
- The second atomic bomb, nicknamed "Fat Man," was dropped on the city of Nagasaki, Japan, on August 9, 1945 at 11:02 a.m. It was a plutonium-based implosion-type weapon with a yield of 21 kilotons, deployed by the B-29 bomber *Bockscar*.
- Nagasaki was the secondary target after the primary target, Kokura, was obscured by clouds, leading to widespread devastation and contributing to Japan's unconditional surrender later that month.



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## Atomic Bomb

- "Fat Man" was a more complex and powerful plutonium-based implosion-style weapon, weighing nearly 10,000 pounds (4.5 tons). It had an explosive yield equivalent to approximately 21 kilotons of TNT, which was more powerful than the "Little Boy" bomb used on Hiroshima.
- An estimated 40,000 people were killed instantly. By the end of 1945, the death toll reached over 70,000 people.



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## Reasons for Atomic Bomb

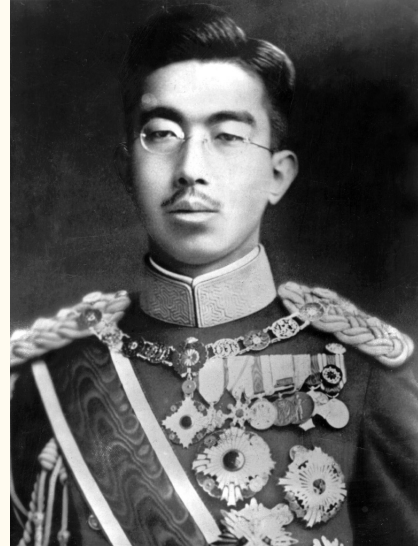
- **Prevent a costly invasion:** U.S. military planners anticipated a land invasion of Japan (Operation Downfall) would result in hundreds of thousands of American and millions of Japanese casualties, due to the fierce Japanese resistance, which included the mobilization of civilians.
- The U.S. wanted to avoid an "Okinawa from one end of Japan to another" scenario.



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## Reasons for Atomic Bomb

- **Force Unconditional Surrender:** Japan's military government was deadlocked and refused to accept the Allies' demand for unconditional surrender as outlined in the Potsdam Declaration, hoping to negotiate terms that would preserve their government and military structure.
- The shock of the new weapons was intended to break this political stalemate and force an immediate acceptance of the terms.



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## Reasons for Atomic Bomb

- **Speedy Conclusion of the War:** The war in Europe had ended in May 1945, but fighting continued in the Pacific.
- U.S. leaders were determined to end the war as quickly as possible to prevent further loss of life in ongoing conventional bombing campaigns, a naval blockade, and continued fighting in occupied territories.



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## Reasons for Atomic Bomb

- **Demonstration of Power (Atomic Diplomacy):** A significant, though often debated, factor was the desire to display the immense power of the new weapon to the Soviet Union, the emerging Cold War rival. Using the bomb served as a warning to deter Soviet expansion in the postwar world and give the U.S. diplomatic leverage.
- **Justify the Cost:** The top-secret Manhattan Project had cost nearly \$2 billion (a massive sum at the time), and there was internal and political pressure to demonstrate the value of this massive investment.



**Key:** The atomic bombings were the “least bad option” that ultimately saved lives on both sides by preventing a brutal and prolonged invasion.

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## Reasons Against Atomic Bomb

- **Immoral and inhumane:** The bombings resulted in the deaths of thousands of innocent civilians, including women and children, raising profound ethical questions about targeting non-combatants and violating humanitarian norms.
- **Key:** It is intrinsically evil to kill innocent human beings as the act is seen as inherently wrong regardless of intentions or circumstances. The action itself is never justifiable, and good intentions or beneficial outcomes cannot make it morally good.



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## Reasons Against Atomic Bomb

- **Japan was already defeated:** Many historians and some military leaders at the time, including Admiral William Leahy and General Eisenhower, argued that Japan was militarily defeated and the use of the bombs was unnecessary to win the war.
- They believed a naval blockade and continued conventional bombing would have forced surrender.



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## Reasons Against Atomic Bomb

- **Alternatives to the bombing:** Critics suggested several alternatives could have ended the war without the use of the atomic bombs:
  - Modifying the "unconditional surrender" demand to allow Japan to retain its emperor, which was a key condition for the Japanese leadership.
  - Waiting for the Soviet Union to enter the war against Japan, an event that many analysts believed would be the decisive shock needed for surrender.
  - A demonstration of the bomb in an unpopulated area to showcase its destructive power without mass casualties.

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## Reasons Against Atomic Bomb

- **Prompting the Cold War/Nuclear Arms Race:** Some argue the bombs were used primarily to demonstrate U.S. power to the Soviet Union, rather than solely to defeat Japan. This action is seen as having precipitated the nuclear arms race, making the world a more dangerous place with the ongoing threat of nuclear warfare.
- **Insufficient time between bombings:** Dropping the second bomb on Nagasaki just three days after Hiroshima was seen by some as not providing enough time for the Japanese government to assess the destruction and consider surrender, especially given the communication technology of the time.
- **Elizabeth Anscombe:** She contends that it is always wrong to intentionally kill innocent civilians, a principle she felt was violated by the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. She argued that the ends (ending the war) did not justify the means (murdering innocents) (contra utilitarianism).

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## Key Events to Japanese Surrender

- **Potsdam Declaration:** Allied powers issued an ultimatum on July 28, 1945, demanding the unconditional surrender of all Japanese armed forces.
- **Atomic bombings:** The United States dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima on August 6 and Nagasaki on August 9, 1945.
- **Soviet declaration of war:** The Soviet Union declared war on Japan on August 8 and invaded Japanese-occupied Manchuria the next day.



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## Key Events to Japanese Surrender

- **August 15, 1945:** Emperor Hirohito announced the surrender to the Japanese people in a radio broadcast known as the Jewel Voice Broadcast.
- **September 2, 1945:** The formal signing of the Instrument of Surrender took place on the deck of the USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay. The ceremony officially marked the end of WWII.
- **Surrender signatories:** Japanese Foreign Minister Mamoru Shigemitsu and General Yoshijiro Umezu signed the document on behalf of Japan, while General Douglas MacArthur accepted it on behalf of the Allied Powers.



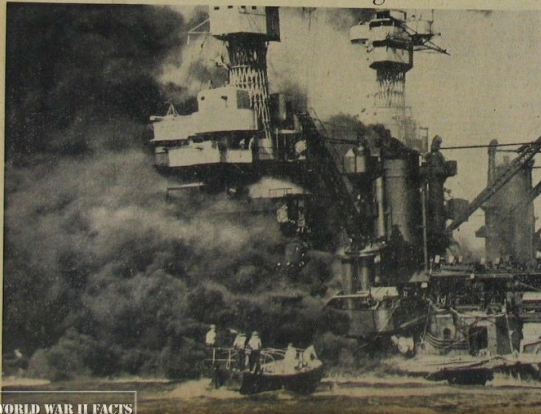
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# JAPANESE SURRENDER; WORLD WAR II ENDS

*Pearl Harbor Is Avenged!*



WORLD WAR II FACTS  
www.worldwar2facts.org

## AMERICAN POWER OVERWHELMS FOE

Washington, Aug. 14.—President Truman announced at 7 p. m. (Youngstown time) Japanese acceptance of surrender terms.

They will be accepted by General Douglas MacArthur when arrangements can be completed.

Mr. Truman read the formal message relayed from Emperor Hirohito through the Swiss government in which the Japanese ruler pledged the surrender on the terms laid down by the Big Three conference at Potsdam.

President Truman made this statement: "I have received this afternoon a message from the Japanese government in reply to the message forwarded to that government by the Secretary of State on August 11.

### No Qualifications

"I deem this reply a full acceptance of the Potsdam declaration which specifies the unconditional surrender of Japan.

"In this reply there is no qualification.

"Arrangements are now being made for the formal signing of surrender terms at the earliest possible moment.

"General Douglas MacArthur has been appointed the supreme Allied commander to receive the Japanese surrender.

"Great Britain, Russia and China will be represented

This message expressed Hirohito's "extreme concern" at the "calamity caused by the United States."

White House aids emphasized that on the basis of previously laid plans V-J Day could not come until the latter part of the week. They laid heavy stress on the fact that Japan actually will not have surrendered until responsible Japanese leaders have signed on the dotted line.

There was good reason to believe that had the acceptance not come through today the atomic bomb campaign would have been resumed and one hint of this came in a report from Guam that Superfortresses were again thundering northward against enemy industrial targets. The B-29s were used to make the bomb attacks and had been out of action since Saturday.

And, this was not all that was in store for the enemy. President Truman, it was reported by military authorities, had counted on the use of newly developed weapons in America's secret arsenal to shock and knock Japan out of the fighting at an early date.

The Potsdam demand for unconditional surrender would reduce Japan to her four main islands. The later Allied note would allow Emperor Hirohito to remain as a monarch committed to promulgate any edicts which the victorious Allies handed to him.

**Tells of Nipponese Weeping**  
Dorel, semi-official Japanese news agency, described a scene of weeping Nipponese gathered before the Imperial Palace.

"Aug. 14, 1945, the Imperial decision was awaited in Japan."

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## Victory Celebrations

- **Victory in Europe Day (VE Day):** May 8, 1945, millions poured into the streets across Europe and the United States to dance, sing, and rejoice. Major events included crowds in London and New York's Times Square.
- **Victory over Japan (V-J Day):** August 14 and September 2, 1945, there were widespread celebrations, which included public gatherings, street parties, and other forms of public rejoicing.



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## Victory Celebrations

- **Alfred Eisenstaedt** snapped an iconic photo of a U.S. Navy sailor kissing a woman in a white dress (dental assistant) amid the jubilant crowds in Times Square to celebrate the end of World War II.
- The photo, published in *Life* magazine, became an instant symbol of victory and the end of the war.
- We owe an extraordinary debt of gratitude to our military soldiers who served in the war, especially those who made the ultimate sacrifice of giving their lives, as well as civilians who contributed through prayers, rationing, and working in war industries.



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## A Note of Gratitude

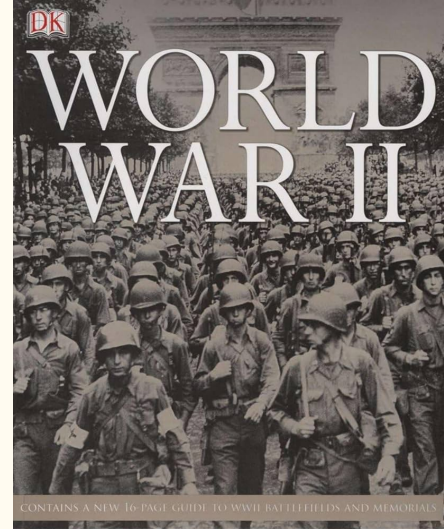
"We owe our World War II veterans – and  
all our veterans – a debt we can never  
fully repay."

~Doc Hastings

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## Political and Diplomatic Lessons

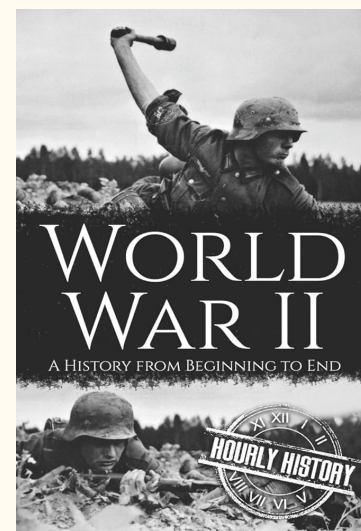
- **Vigilance against extremism:** World War II is a great reminder that political systems can descend into extremism and atrocities. Citizens must be vigilant and not become complacent.
- **Confronting aggression:** The failure of appeasement showed that appeasing an aggressor can be more dangerous in the long run and that democracies must be prepared to resist aggression when it first appears.



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## Political and Diplomatic Lessons

- **Dangers of isolationism:** The war demonstrated that isolating one's country can be dangerous, as it allows aggressive powers to grow stronger unchecked.
- **Impact of ideology:** The conflict underscored how extremist ideologies could lead to unprecedented atrocities like the Holocaust, and how a nation of culture could be transformed into one of barbarity.

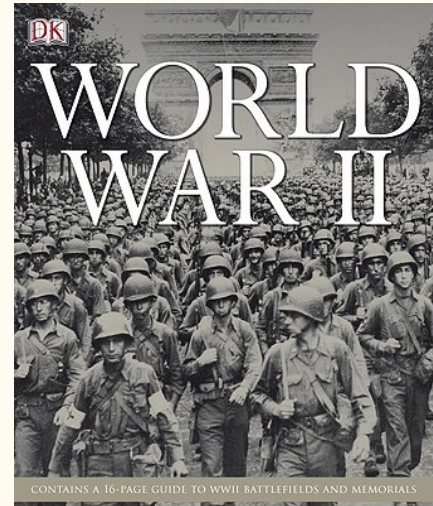


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## Political and Diplomatic Lessons

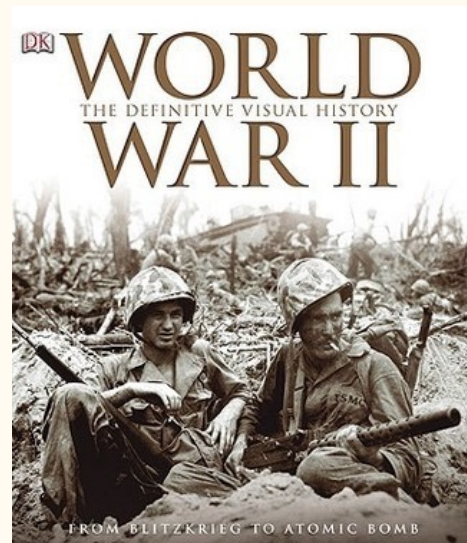
- We saw how ideologies such as Fascism and Communism were a kind of cancer of the mind or virus in the soul.
- They rejected evidence that conflicted their worldview and leveraged emotions such as fear and anger with the goal of creating a strong sense of identity, belonging, and a promised utopia (or Messianic dream) in this life wherein happiness, equality, and/or prosperity will result. Ideologies have significant consequences as we saw that millions of people died.



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## Political and Diplomatic Lessons

- **Propaganda and communication:** WWII showed the effectiveness of political propaganda in shaping public opinion and influencing attitudes toward the war effort.
- **Fragility of peace:** The conflict's massive human cost and the rapid descent of nations into conflict highlight how fragile peace can be and should not be taken for granted.



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## Human Rights and Ethical Lessons

- **Humanity's Capacity for Both Evil and Heroism:** The war exposed the boundless potential for both savagery (e.g., the Holocaust, the Bataan March, Fire Bombings, etc.) and extraordinary acts of courage and resilience.
- Ordinary people were forced into impossible choices, revealing the complexities of human nature under extreme duress.



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## Human Rights and Ethical Lessons

- **The Power of Propaganda and Scapegoating:** The conflict demonstrated how easily a society can be manipulated by propaganda, leading to the dehumanization and systematic persecution of minority groups.
- It underscored the need to discern fact from propaganda and be skeptical of those in power.



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## Human Rights and Ethical Lessons

- **Accountability for War Crimes:** The Nuremberg Trials established the principle that individuals can be held accountable for crimes against humanity, and that there is no honor in following dishonorable orders.
- **The Necessity of Universal Human Rights Standards:** The atrocities committed during the war, particularly the Holocaust and involuntary medical experiments, made it clear that a global standard for human rights was needed.



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## Catholic Lessons

- **Inherent Human Dignity:** The war highlighted the fundamental Catholic teaching that all humanity shares a common origin and equal nature, created in the image of God.
- Nazism's racial theories and euthanasia programs were seen as antithetical to our Catholic faith, and the Church's resistance to these ideas emphasized the sanctity of every human life, regardless of race or ability.



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## Catholic Lessons

- **The Nature of Evil and Totalitarianism:** Catholics learned the grave dangers of political ideologies, such as Nazism and Fascism, that seek to supplant God and place the State, race, or people at an idolatrous level.
- The conflict underscored the reality of the "ongoing conflict between good and evil" and the need for constant vigilance against ideologies that destroy human agency and religious freedom.



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## Catholic Lessons

- **The Just War Doctrine:** The war reaffirmed the Catholic "just war" tradition, which outlines criteria for when war is morally permissible (self-defense as a last resort) and how it must be conducted (protecting non-combatants, proportionality).
- The immense destructive power of modern warfare emphasized the condition that the use of arms must not produce evils graver than the evil being eliminated.



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## Catholic Lessons

- **Heroism and Charity:** Many Catholics, including clergy and laity, engaged in heroic efforts to save lives, especially those of Jews and Allied soldiers, by hiding them in religious houses, providing false documents, and establishing escape lines.
- The actions of faithful Catholics like St. Maximilian Kolbe and St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross reveal that self-sacrificial love not only reveals the primacy of God's love, but unleashes His love into the world overcoming sin, evil, and death.



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## Catholic Lessons

- **The Complexity of Neutrality:** The Vatican's official neutrality, aimed at preserving the institutional Church and its ability to provide pastoral care, remains a subject of debate.
- Pope Pius XII strategy revealed that there was a tension between pragmatic diplomacy and the need for a clear, public moral voice against grave injustices.



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## Catholic Lessons

- **Saints emerging from violence:** The war produced many saints who demonstrated "the glory and splendor of God in the midst of violence and hate.
- **The human cost of removing God:** Priests who served during the war observed that it was a firsthand lesson in what happens when God is removed from life, strengthening their own determination to make God supreme in their lives and to take God to others.



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## Catholic Lessons

- **Moral vacuum:** World War II reminds us that a world without God (Japanese mentality) and a world that rejects God (Nazis and Communists) leads to suppression of individual conscience and grave offenses against human dignity such as the Holocaust.
- **Ideology as cancer:** World War II reveals how ideology can infiltrate everyday thought and language through propaganda, spreading hatred and justifying evil actions to ordinary people.



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## Thank You!

- Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to participate in this course!
- Our hope is that the good Lord has touched you, your hearts have been strengthened in God's providential care, the daily sacrifices that you make contribute to our Lord's Kingdom, and move you along the path of becoming a joyful saint with our Lord Jesus for eternity.



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