Most Americans ever since have seen the destruction of the populations of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as necessary and effective—as constituting just means, in effect just terrorism, under the supposed circumstances—thus legitimating, in their eyes, the second and third largest single-day massacres in history. (The largest, also by the U.S. Army Air Corps, was the firebombing of Tokyo five months before on the night of March 9, which burned alive or suffocated 80,000 to 120,000 civilians. Most of the very few Americans who are aware of this event at all accept it, too, as appropriate in wartime.

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