



# Downfall: The End of the Imperial Japanese Empire

By Richard B. Frank

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In a riveting narrative that includes information from newly declassified documents, acclaimed historian Richard B. Frank gives a scrupulously detailed explanation of the critical months leading up to the dropping of the atomic bomb. Frank explains how American leaders learned in the summer of 1945 that their alternate strategy to end the war by invasion had been shattered by the massive Japanese buildup on Kyushu, and that intercepted diplomatic documents also revealed the dismal prospects of negotiation. Here also, for the first time, is a comprehensive account of how Japan's leaders were willing to risk complete annihilation to preserve the nation's existing order. Frank's comprehensive account demolishes long-standing myths with the stark realities of this great historical controversy.

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### Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

*Downfall: The End of the Imperial Japanese Empire* is an impeccably written analysis of the last months of the Pacific War and the unfolding of the American air campaign over Japan. The story opens with a searing description of the fire-bombing of Tokyo in March 1945, which caused more deaths than the atom bomb in Hiroshima. Within five months, Japan's economy was collapsing and the country faced catastrophic starvation. Richard B. Frank coolly analyzes different scenarios for ending the war (Russia waited in the wings). Frank concludes that the emperor and the Japanese military were far from ready to surrender, and that the decision to use the atom bomb probably saved millions of lives, not only Allied but Japanese and other Asian lives, also--perhaps a hundred thousand Chinese were dying each month under Japanese occupation. The effects of the bomb worked on many levels, even lending faces to the Japanese militarists, who could convince themselves that they were defeated not by a lack of spiritual power but by superior science. Densely documented, intelligently argued, *Downfall* recreates the end of the war from the viewpoints of the principals, giving the book an unusual immediacy. A highly valuable insight into the disintegration of the Japanese Empire, one of the most dramatic episodes of World War II. --John Stevenson

From Publishers Weekly

The premise behind this excellent history of the concluding stages of WWII in the Pacific is that the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki has cast a light so bright that it has blinded historians to many of the political, diplomatic and military realities that existed before August 6, 1945. In his comprehensive study of the last months of WWII, Frank (Guadalcanal) aims to present events "as they were perceived and recorded by American and Japanese participants in 1945. A not years or decades thereafter." In 1945, American strategists developed their plan, "Operation Downfall," for forcing the unconditional surrender of Japan. Japanese leaders, meanwhile, mobilized all available military and civilian resources for a final defense of the homeland. Though they knew the war was lost, Japanese military strategists believed their preparations were sufficient to compel the Allies to offer more generous terms on which the war might end. Frank immerses his readers in the flow of intelligence estimates, battle experience and shifting strategy on both sides. The centerpiece of the book is an exacting and dispassionate examination both of the American decision to use the atomic bomb and of whether Japan would have surrendered absent the bomb. Frank marshals an impressive and complex array of evidence to support his contention that surrender by Japan was by no means imminent in August 1945, and that alternatives to the bomb, such as incendiary bombing, carried no certainty of causing less suffering and fewer deaths than the atomic bomb. In his balanced use of sources and in his tough-minded sensitivity to moral issues, Frank has enriched the debate about the war's conclusion. Agent, Robert Gottlieb of William Morris.

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From Library Journal

Few historical issues have generated as much controversy as the question of whether the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945 was necessary to compel Japan's surrender. No single book can be expected to end such a heated debate, but Frank's masterly study of Japan's decision to surrender comes close to doing so. Based on extensive documentation from contemporary U.S. and Japanese diplomatic and military sources, it is the most authoritative treatment available of the end of the Pacific War. Frank (Guadalcanal: The Definitive Account of the Landmark Campaign) emphasizes the enormous reluctance of Japan's military and civilian leaders even to consider, let alone accept, Allied demands for unconditional surrender prior to the atomic bombings. Skillfully weaving together the strands of military and diplomatic

events, Frank contends that absent the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki the war would have continued for at least several more months, at a cost in Japanese and Allied civilian and combatant lives far in excess of the admittedly awful toll that the atomic bombs exacted. A powerful work of history that belongs in all libraries. A Steven I. Levine, Univ. of Montana, Missoula  
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## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Ronald Ralph:**

The book *Downfall: The End of the Imperial Japanese Empire* will bring one to the new experience of reading any book. The author style to explain the idea is very unique. If you try to find new book you just read, this book very suitable to you. The book *Downfall: The End of the Imperial Japanese Empire* is much recommended to you to see. You can also get the e-book from official web site, so you can more easily to read the book.

#### **Linda Yohe:**

The book *Downfall: The End of the Imperial Japanese Empire* contain a lot of information on the item. The writer explains your ex idea with easy technique. The language is very easy to understand all the people, so do certainly not worry, you can easy to read that. The book was written by famous author. The author provides you in the new period of time of literary works. You can easily read this book because you can please read on your smart phone, or gadget, so you can read the book in anywhere and anytime. If you want to buy the e-book, you can wide open their official web-site as well as order it. Have a nice examine.

#### **Dorothy Pierce:**

Is it you actually who having spare time after that spend it whole day through watching television programs or just lying on the bed? Do you need something totally new? This *Downfall: The End of the Imperial Japanese Empire* can be the response, oh how comes? The new book you know. You are therefore out of date, spending your time by reading in this brand new era is common not a nerd activity. So what these guides have than the others?

#### **William Davis:**

A lot of people said that they feel bored stiff when they reading a publication. They are directly felt that when they get a half elements of the book. You can choose the book *Downfall: The End of the Imperial Japanese Empire* to make your current reading is interesting. Your skill of reading proficiency is developing when you just like reading. Try to choose simple book to make you enjoy to read it and mingle the idea about book and looking at especially. It is to be first opinion for you to like to available a book and learn it. Beside that the e-book *Downfall: The End of the Imperial Japanese Empire* can to be your new friend when you're really feel alone and confuse in doing what must you're doing of this time.

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