



Testimonies

Section 4 www.AtomicBombMuseum.org/6_3.shtml

From My Sickbed

Shizuko Nishimoto

Patient at Atomic Bomb Hospital, Hiroshima

Oh, how many times did I wonder, "Why didn't I die at that time . . . ?"



*Shizuko Nishimoto, Patient at Atomic Bomb Hospital, Hiroshima (HIMAT, 214)

Alas, August 6 comes 'round again. That horrible A-bomb, that scorched earth, the fire that left all Hiroshima in ashes, these are all vivid in my memory. No words or pictures could ever express the cruelty of the atomic bomb.

On that day, two neighbors happened to be in my house. At the moment of 8:15 AM, the gate of hell was opened. My two neighbors were crushed under the collapsed staircase. I moved my body little by little from under the staircase. My dress was completely torn off; I found myself almost bare. I got out of my house, and looking back, saw that it was burning too furiously to re-enter.

My two neighbors were burning alive, trapped under the staircase. But I could not enter the house. I felt sorry for them, but had no time to spare; I had to get away from the fire. I was bleeding profusely; later I counted 38 wounds on my body. At the time, my husband was at work and somehow my son survived, though both were wounded seriously. The three of us held each other and cried at the good fortune of our survival.

Just after the atomic bombing, we moved to the country. From that time I couldn't do any housework, but went regularly to the doctor for treatment of my injuries and severe diarrhea. About one year after my exposure to the A-bomb, I felt a kind of prick in my body; I wondered if one of my bones had been broken when I was pressed under the crushed house. I asked my doctor about this. He said that I had a piece of broken glass in my body, and proceeded to extract it. It was a 3 cm (1 inch) long triangular piece of glass with a bit of my flesh on its top. As I have been hospitalized as often as eight times during the 27 years since then, almost half my life has been spent in the hospital. The reason for my suffering from one illness after another is simple: my exposure to the A-bomb. Oh, how many times did I wonder, "Why didn't I die at that time . . . ?"

Why do people make, or have others make, atomic bombs, the enemy of all humankind? Why don't people throughout the world try to live in peace? Why are there still people who make nuclear weapons in this world? Why do they concentrate so much on how to kill others? Do these people not realize that we cannot live by ourselves?

For me, a 64-year-old woman, it is impossible to understand those who think so avidly of fighting or of making ever more lethal weapons. To those who have assembled great numbers of people to make these, the deadliest of weapons, I appeal, please cease and desist right now. Why do you apply yourselves so arduously to bringing the human race into ruin?

We should never repeat the first nuclear crime. Please stop all war and all preparations for war. Stop making weapons, especially all nuclear weapons, right now!

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