

Atomic Bomb Damage and Administration

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Introduction

The atomic bombing of Hiroshima was an event that so far exceeded prediction that preliminary measures against raids were not of much help. Despite such circumstances, the army, administration and people had to deal with the damage based on the preliminary measures and remaining systems, functions and resources. There were distinct conditions caused by the atomic bombing; however, there were some aspects which the bombing had in common with other war damage and massive natural disasters.

This paper explains the administrative measures by featuring the administrative system before the atomic bombing, preliminary measures against air raids, the reconstruction of the badly damaged administrative system, the army-led cleanup of war damage, the implementation of support systems, first-aid measures, information control, and restoration to a normal state.

I. Battles in the Mainland and Hiroshima

1. Chugoku Sokan-fu Authorities

Near the end of the Asia-Pacific War, when Japan's defeat seemed inevitable, Japanese leaders prepared for battles on the Mainland. In April 1945, in anticipation of the projected Allied invasion of Japan's mainland, the government established the First General Army responsible for eastern Japan (headquartered in Tokyo) and the Second General Army responsible for western Japan (headquartered in Hiroshima). Controlling the Japanese Fifteenth Area Army (headquartered in Osaka) and the Japanese Sixteenth Area Army (headquartered in Fukuoka), the Second General Army set its headquarters on the site used by the Fifth Cavalry Regiment, located in Futabanosato, Hiroshima City. In July, the Japanese 59th Army (parent unit: the Japanese Fifteenth Area Army) and Chugoku Military District were established. The Army's Shipping Command, which handled shipping operations led by the army (united with the army transportation unit), was in Ujina, and took command of 240 army groups outside and inside of Japan, with total of more than 300,000 personnel (Akatsuki Butai). Near the end of the war, Hiroshima became a more important hub for the Japanese Army. Kure City, which is located near Hiroshima City across from Hiroshima Port, was a marine hub which had Kure Naval District, the largest naval arsenal in western Japan.

Along with the military district system, the Chugoku Sokan-fu [the locational governmental office] was established. It was delegated authorities by the central government. The Chugoku Sokan-fu, which presided over five prefectures was established in Hiroshima. Isei Otsuka, the governor of Hiroshima Prefecture as well as the head of Chugoku regional administration council, was appointed head. Locational government offices had great power. The Chugoku Sokan-fu exercised the right to command governmental offices and governors of five prefectures in the Chugoku district, and the right to request deployment troops by the army and navy. The head office was set up in Hiroshima Bunrika University, located in Senda-machi.

2. Preliminary Measures against Air Raids

Genshin Takano took over the position of Hiroshima Mayor after Otsuka left to become the head of Chugoku Sokan-fu. As the person in charge of civil air defense, and having experienced the bombing of Osaka, Takano had a sense of the danger of the delay in preliminary measures against air raids.

Currently, this city has relatively few air raids, but I am ready for possible massive air raids in the near future. As this is a small city with many rivers, most of the buildings are built of wood. In the event of a fire, we would have a difficult situation. I am alarmed and worried.
(Letter of Shingen Takano)

Although there was no way for the mayor to know that air raids on Hiroshima had been forbidden because the city was the target of atomic bombing, Takano expressed worry (“I feel uneasiness”) in a letter written on July 20 about the lack of air raids, and hastened the process of organizing an evacuation¹.

Amid the situation where many medium- and small-sized cities were destroyed, our Hiroshima City has had only minor damage. I feel rather uneasy about it. I am unsure if preparations for evacuation can be completed before a possible attack, but I have implemented them on a large scale.
(Letter of Shingen Takano)

As Hiroshima was originally a military-based city, it had focused on air defense measures such as implementing air-raid drills. However, airstrikes on other cities were more massive than predicted. In addition, the fact that there had been no air raids targeting Hiroshima, despite its being a military-based city, had caused some fear. Hence, the authorities assumed that air raids on Hiroshima would be the largest yet experienced. The municipal police “predicted that Hiroshima, an important hub, would experience dreadful air raids the like of which other cities have never experienced,” and proceeded to implement measures with an “extravagant assumption” that 300 B-29 bombers would come to attack the city². In addition, as a life-saving and medevac measure, the authorities borrowed 200,000 inner tubes from the Akatsuki Butai army and requested them to deploy their boats in each river. Furthermore, they established a support scheme in which police offices neighboring Hiroshima City provide food (rice balls for 200,000 people and dry biscuits and water for 400,000 people) without instructions in the event of air raids on Hiroshima. (Diary of Torayoshi Ishihara)

3. Air Raids Policy by Administrative Agencies

The Prefectural Office in Kako-machi was wooden structure built in 1878 with a 70,000m² vacant lot created after removing neighboring buildings. The office was not fire resistant. Then, the Division of Police was transferred to Hiroshima City Hall and the Division of Public Works was moved to Honkawa National School since both buildings were fire resistant. In addition, other Divisions were evacuated to Aki Women’s High School (Part of the Investigation Division and Agricultural Division), Fukuromachi National School (Sanitary Division), Hiroshima Chamber of Commerce and Industry (part of the Accounting Division), and a school for the blind in Nagaomachi (part of the Educational Affairs Division). Since the seven rivers flowing through the city would function as natural fire belts, divisions were allocated in each area’s delta in order to avoid complete destruction of administrative functions. Also, Hiroshima City Hall, Honkawa National Schools, Hiroshima Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Aki Women High School and Fukuya Division store were appointed as sites to which to transfer the Hiroshima Prefectural Office in case the office were damaged by air raids.

At the same time, “reflecting the intention of mayor Takano, 300 public servants stayed at the Prefectural Office every night in order to protect the office at all costs whatever happens,” strengthening the defense system (*Kenchou Genbaku hisaishi (Chronicle of A-bomb Damage to the Prefectural Office)*, p177). At Hiroshima City Office, 60 officers stayed in rotation. The city employees were also responsible for evacuation guidance. Dividing the city into 24 small areas, the Boukuu Shouku Genchitai officers [evacuation guidance groups consisting of city employees] were allocated to each area to support citizens

with evacuation as well as to contact the city authorities in case of air raids. (Shiyakusho Genbakushi (*Chronicle of A-bomb Damage to the Hiroshima City Hall*), pp16, 33). This was part of preparations for the mainland battle, and public servants were required to “with a spirit of sacrifice,” “discharge your duties and show yourself at your best in the decisive battle as governmental employees of the empire.” (Instruction by Mayor Otsuka on May 10). (*Kenchou Genbaku-hisaishi (Chronicle of A-bomb Damage to the Prefectural Office)*, p34-35).

Another important challenge was to protect public documents from air raids. Hiroshima Prefecture transferred public documents to Takada District Office (Yoshidacho, Takada District), recreation facility for teachers (Jigozenmura, Saeki District), Aki Woman’s High School and a school for the blind in Hiroshima. In addition, to documentary evidence regarding expenditures and other documents were stored in air-raid shelters near the prefectural office and these documents remained undamaged.

Hiroshima City evacuated a large part of family registration to Sanyoubuntokuden, [a hall built to commemorate a Japanese Confucianist, Rai Sanyo] in Hijiyama. The building was used by the Branch of Family Register and Election Division and employees worked there. Booklets often used such, as parts of family registration lists, seal registration, and land and house registers, were kept in the basement in front of the city hall, at the former site of the Fujita Building. Those documents also remained undamaged in the atomic bombing. However, documents of each division kept in the storage room of the Archives Section located on the north side on the third floor of the City Hall were lost in a fire when they were temporarily evacuated in Otemachi National School. These documents were scheduled to be moved to the Seinenkan building in Takata, Furutamachi, Saeki District. Other important documents stored in warehouses, which were left after building evacuation, were also destroyed by fire. (Fumiaki Kazuno)

II. Damage and System of Administration under Atomic Bombing

1. Damage of Hiroshima City Hall

At the night of August 5, since the warning was issued, air defense officers and Bokushouku Genchitai were working as usual but went home at 3am or early in the morning. Some of them continued to work the next day (*Shiyakusho Genbakushi (Chronicle of A-bomb Damage to Hiroshima City Hall)* p33). As city employees working at night were allowed to take a break till noon, on August 8, relatively few male officers worked at the office, while most of the female officers were working. When they were about to start to work after a morning meeting in a court, the a-bomb was dropped. (*Shiyakusho Genbakushi* (Ibid. pp34-36). The city hall was 1.2 km away from the hypocenter.

“Suddenly, a blinding flash came out. Right after that, trembling sounds roared as if the sounds would destroy the city hall” (Ibid. pp36-37). Windows were broken, and people and things were blown away by the blasts, rendering the city hall an absolute hell. There were people killed on the spot; others were severely wounded or recovering consciousness. Some people who were in the basement and near the wall escaped with minor injuries. Survivors tried to escape by helping each other. After a moment, fire occurred and gradually surrounded the city hall and the area around it. Many people evacuated to the pond in the public hall.

Because buildings near the city hall had been removed due to the building evacuation policy, it was predicted that the city hall would not catch fire from other buildings. However, the hot blast of the fire engulfed the city offices, destroying most of them. Along with the Defense Policy Division, the Director of Defense Policy Division Office, and a boiler room in the southeast corner of the basement, the Health Affairs Division and Relief Division located on the first floor escaped complete destruction because of desperate fire extinguishing conducted by city employees. Around 3pm, when the fire had been put out, those who could walk evacuated.

Officers were injured at their office, on their way to work and in their homes. Senkichi Awaya was buried and died under a collapsed building at the Kakomachi City office. His burned body was found on the 7th. According to the 1946 City Guide, there were 1,445 officers as of August 1, 1945 and 271 out of them were killed. Shigeteru Shibata, the deputy mayor at the time of the bombing, recalled 10 years after the incident, “During the war, a total of 1,200 officers worked at the City Hall; nearly 900 officers at the main building and about 170 were in the Water Supply Division in Motomachi. Among those officers, 377 people in the main building died instantly or were missing, 83 of Water Supply Division died or were missing, reaching a total of 460. There were no officers who escaped without injuries. It was a completely terrifying state.” (Shigeteru Shibata, p23). According to the statistics confirmed by the end of February 1966, the total number of officers exposed to radiation at work was 1,068 (including 42 city council members). 455 among them were killed, 424 survived and 199 were missing. The breakdown of the deceased was 184 unknown date of the death, 45 killed instantly, 106 died within one month of the bombing, 12 died within one year and 98 passed away after one year. (*Shiyakusho Genbakushi (Hiroshima City Hall Journal)* pp246-249)

2. Damage of Prefectural Office

Hiroshima Prefectural Office, located 900m from the hypocenter, was completely destroyed. It was said approximately 700 officers were working at the time of the bombing, and many of them died instantly or were buried under the building and died in the fire. Evacuated offices and branches near the hypocenter were almost completely destroyed. Many were exposed to the radiation on their way to work or at their homes. The casualty numbers confirmed as of August 10 were, out of 1,107, 254 were in good health, 267 were injured, 57 died and 529 were missing. (*Sensai Kiroku (Record of War Damage)*, p116). Mayor Takano wrote in a letter on September 7, “This area is in a truly terrible state as a result of the atomic bombing. Already 606 prefectural employees have died, and there will be a considerable number of deaths. Most of those who survived were away on business trips” (a letter of Genshin Takano). *Hiroshima Kenchou Genbaku Hisaishi* (Hiroshima Prefecture Journal of A-bomb Damage) published in 1976, recorded casualties among Hiroshima Prefectural employees. The death toll at the building was 607, that of branch officers was 524, with a total of 1,131. (This death toll was the total number of Hiroshima prefectural employees who had died by January 31, 1976). (*Kenchou Genbaku Hisaishi (Chronicle of A-bomb Damage to the Prefectural Office)*, pp92-93, pp323-386)

3. Administrative System: Reconstruction from Destruction

All buildings projected to be the sites for transferring the prefectural office (City Hall, Honkawa National School, Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Aki Women’s High School, Fukuya department store) were burned out or collapsed. It was nine hours after the bombing when the police department director (instead of the mayor, who was away on a business trip) set up a headquarters of the Municipal Air Defense Department at Tamoin Temple in Hijiyama.

Despite being injured when his left leg was buried under a collapsed building at a governmental office in Yanagimachi, Police Department Director Ishihara escaped and headed to Sokan-fu and the City Hall after engaging in relief activities. Both the Sokan-fu and the City Hall were burned out, so he headed to Tamoin Temple, which was designated as a gathering place in case of emergency. There, at around 5 pm, together with an injured police officer, he set up a sign reading “Headquarters of Hiroshima Prefectural Air Defense.” Mayor Takano, who was in the Bigo area (Fuchumachi, Ashina District) arrived at Tamoin Temple around 6:30pm³. By 8:30 pm, 60 officers, most of them police officers, had gathered at the temple.

The next morning, the Municipal Air Defense Department (tentative prefectural office) was moved to the Hiroshima Higashi Police Station in Shimoyanagimachi. The Higashi Police Station had been transferred to the fire-resistant building of Geiyo Bank prior to the atomic bomb and it escaped from the fire due to fire-fighting efforts.

At the time of the atomic bombing, an executive meeting was being conducted at the city governor's office. Treasurer Kurose, educational department director Saito and director of the Wartime Life Policy Department Taniyama attended the meeting and all were injured. Most of the executives and city employees, who were on the defense duties in reaction to an air raid warning issued the previous day, were wounded at home. Despite being injured at home, Distribution Division Chief Shinzo Hamai went to the city hall right after the bombing. He met treasurer Kurose, covered in blood, in front of the headquarters of Hiroshima Railway, across from the Miyukibashi bridge, and heard about the situation at city hall. After that, Senior Examiner Nakahara (exposed to radiation in Niho) appeared, followed by Deputy Mayor Morishita. (Shinzo Hamai, pp3-8) Deputy Mayor Morishita passed out for a moment because he had been buried under the building in which he stayed in Sendamachi, then escaped to the Minami branch (in Minami-machi) in pajamas and ran into Distribution Division Chief Hamai and others. After discussing the countermeasures among the four of them, they went to city hall together with Senior Examiner Nakahara around 2pm. Then Morishita took command in lieu of the city mayor⁴. On the evening of the 6th, they managed to contact the Municipal Air Defense Department at Tamoin Temple⁵. On the morning of the 7th, Deputy Major Shibata appeared together with a secretary and his son. Shibata had been exposed to radiation at home in Nakahiro and buried under a collapsed building. Though he was unable to walk due to the injury, he reached Honkawa National School, carried by his son on his back. He returned because of a severe fire and then came to the office the day after that. (Shibata, pp17-18) Although there were a few employees, they stayed at the office to restore administrative functions⁶.

Chugoku District Sokan-fu, the top of the commanding operation in the Chugoku district, was also completely destroyed. Head Director Otsuka died in the fire under a collapsed building at an official residence in Kaminagarekawa. Deputy Director Hattori was exposed to radiation and injured in an office in Hiroshima Bunrika University, but escaped to the headquarters of the Second General Army located in an air-raided shelter in Futabayama and asked the army to bring the situation under control. After that, Hattori headed to Tamonin Temple and ordered that the prefectural governor cope with the situation because Sokan-fu had lost its function. (*Chugoku Chiho Sokan-fu Shi (Chronicle of Chugoku)*, pp29-30)

The Chugoku District Commanding Office of the 59th Army, located in Motomachi, was in a devastated state and Commanding Officer Youji Fujii had been killed. Surviving Chief of Staff Shuitsu Matsumura dispatched Lieutenant Yamamoto to the 230th Division stationed in Haramura, Kamo District. Lieutenant Yamamoto arrived at the 230 Division at 4pm and relayed his orders. The advance unit left Haramura at 8pm, followed by a major unit commanded by the Chief of Infantry leaving at 10pm. They were transferred in cargo transports (Fukuhei Ando). First Lieutenant Yoshiharu Dobashi, who was in the advanced unit, wrote in his note, "We marched to Haponmatsu Station and then got on a train in the dark at 8pm. The train moved slowly and finally arrived at Kouyou Station (?) in suburban Hiroshima City. From there, we marched into Hiroshima City. It was already dawn on the 7th. The devastated state of the city in the break of dawn was beyond imagination." (*Hiroshima Genbaku Sensaishi Dai 1 kan (Chronicle of A-bomb on Hiroshima vol.1)* p430)

4. Recovery Operation Conducted by Army

Amid the situation where both army and administrative bodies were partially destroyed, the Army's Shipping Command located in Ujina, far from the hypocenter, escaped serious damage. Commander Bunro Saeki described the situation after the bombing.

Right after the atomic bombing, the state of the explosion was completely unknown. Numerous clouds piled and remained in the sky above the city. It was a horrible situation.

I tried to contact the General Army, Commanding Office of Chugoku District, Prefectural Office and City Hall, but could not reach them. Although the situation was unclear, it was confirmed that a fire had occurred in Hiroshima City.

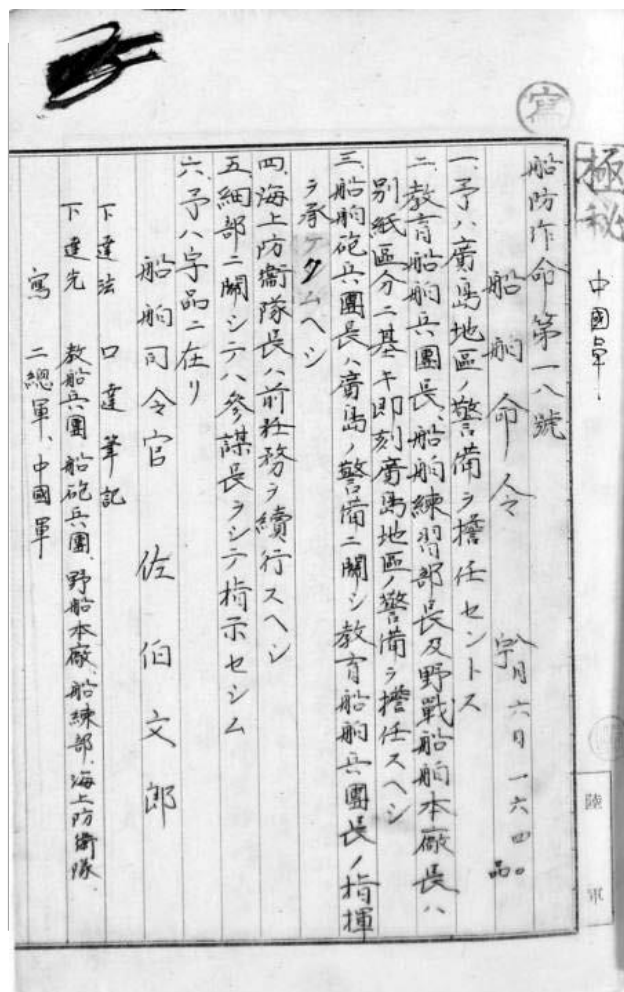
After a while, burned patients descended on the Shipping Command. We brought them to the Gaisenkan building and all naval doctors provided first-aid treatment.

Considering “there is no time to waste,” the Commander issued the first order at 8:50. (*Senpakushiribu Sakumei Tsuzuri (a file of operation orders by the Shipping Command)*)

The First Operation Orders

Issued at 8:50, August 6, Ujina

1. After a bombing by enemy aircraft at 8:15 a.m. today, August 6, fires have broken out in many areas. Coupled with the blast, there appears to be extensive damage.
2. I intend to contribute to firefighting and rescue operations in Hiroshima.
3. Captain of the maritime guard unit is ordered to send firefighting vessels to areas along the Kyobashi River to perform firefighting duties.
4. The captain of the Hiroshima shipping unit should use some of their boats to transport victims to Ninoshima Island and perform rescue operations by sailing up the Kyobashi River.
5. The director of the field shipping station should dispatch rescue units to operate rescue activities in the Kyobashi River. In addition, he should allocate part of the rescue units for firefighting in the city.
6. The Chief of the Marine Training Division should prepare rescue units near the Chuobashi bridge and also dispatch the special communication reserve squadron.
7. The Chief of the Marine Education Division should dispatch part of the division to provide rescue activities for the special communications reserve squadron in Sendamachi and also prepare for firefighting using major units.



Orders concerning defense in the Hiroshima area

(The 18th Operation Order) 16:40, August 6, 1945

Owned by Military Archival Library, National Institute for Defense Studies (a file of operation orders)

8. The Commander of Army Marine Artillery Corps should immediately dispatch part of the corps to help the special communication reserve squadron.
9. The Inokuchi Unit and Kounoura Unit should stand ready.
10. I am at the Army Marine Headquarters in Ujina.

Thus, the rescue activities such as firefighting, rescue and transportation of patients started to operate based on the decision by the Army's Shipping Commander.

Close to evening, based on the order by the General Army, the Army's Shipping Commander was given command of units in Hiroshima and units arriving in Hiroshima, as well as Soka-fu, prefectural government and the city and responsible for defense (Bunro Saeki). Due to a request from Deputy Director Hattori, the Second General Army decided to operate rescue activities in a situation where the administrative system was destroyed and entrusted the activities to the Army's Shipping Commander. Receiving the order from the General Army, the 18th Operating Orders (a photo appears on the previous page) was issued at 4.40pm (*Senpakushiribu Sakumei Tsuzuri (a file of operation orders by the Shipping Command)*). The commander wrote in the order "I was appointed to be in charge of defense of the Hiroshima area" and divided the city into three defense areas, east, middle and west, and then assigned the Chief of Marine Training Division, Commander of Army Marine Artillery Corps and Commander of Marine Education Division to each area⁷. At 10am, August 7, at the headquarters of the General Army, a meeting was conducted for directors of governmental institutions, the army and the navy stationed in Hiroshima. It was agreed to operate first-aid measures based on instructions by the General Army (*Sensai Kiroku (Chronicle of War-Damage)* p100). Reflecting the agreement, under the name of Bunro Saeki, the Army's Shipping Commander responsible for defense of Hiroshima, "Hiroshima Defense Orders" were issued as the first order at 2pm. (Ibid. p102)

I was appointed to conduct defense operations in Hiroshima and take command of units stationed in Hiroshima and near the city for the immediate recovery of the city. Regarding the defense operations toward recovery, Chugoku District Soka, Hiroshima Prefectural Governor and Mayor of Hiroshima were divided for administrative purposes.

Regarding the defense operation for recovery, administrative organizations were under the control of the army. It was de facto military administration based on the unanimous agreement among military officers stationed in Hiroshima, and recovering operations were conducted by the army. In order to solidify the cooperation among military, governmental and private institutions, various meetings were held one after another after the meeting for directors of governmental institutes, army and navy stationed in Hiroshima conducted from 10am on the 7th. The following list of meetings related to Hiroshima Prefecture appeared in *Sensai Kiroku (Record of War Damage)*.

- 7th Meeting for directors of governmental institutes, army and navy stationed in Hiroshima/Directors' meeting (at headquarters of Hiroshima Prefecture)/Discussion among Manager of Economic Department, Chief of Agriculture Division and Officers in local branches/ Meeting on Rescue Measures (at Headquarters of Army's Shipping Command)
- 8th Meeting hosted by Army Shipping Command (at City Hall, cancelled)/Meeting for marine officers concerning sanitary and rescue hosted by Hiroshima Prefecture/Six officers visiting Hiroshima from the Air Defense Department and had a talk with prefectural governor after communicating with Soka-fu and General Army (at Prefectural Office)/ Talk between Army's Shipping Command and Prefectural Governor/ Liaison conference of General Army (at Hijiyama Shrine)/Marshal Hata talked with the Police Department Manager (at Prefectural Office)/Chief of Chugoku regional Munitions Command talked with Police Department Manager (at Prefectural Office)/Conference on

rescue operation (at Air Defense Department = Prefectural Office)

- 9th Meeting hosted by General Army (at City Hall)/ Liaison conference of Army's Shipping Command (at City Hall)
- 10th Okayama Prefectural Governor, Domestic Affairs Manager of Yamaguchi Prefecture and Director of Ministry of Interior's Air Defense General Headquarter visited Hiroshima/Hiroshima Prefectural Governor visited Army's Shipping Commander, Directors of Railway Bureau, Communications Bureau, Western Communication Bureau and Head of Nishi Police Station/ Meetings among defense unit, police department, volunteer guards and neighborhood association in the area under jurisdiction of Ujina Police Station/ Liaison conference of Army's Shipping Command (at City Hall)
- 11th Meeting for measures against disaster (at Prefectural Office)/Defense meeting (at Headquarters of Army's Shipping Command)
- 12th Prefectural Governor observed the status of relief aid and then provided directions to the chief of Sanitary Division/Chief meeting of measurement against disaster (at headquarters = Prefectural Office)/Liaison conference of General Army
- 13th Prefectural Governor provided direction to related chiefs after observing the relief aid situation/Committee on War Damage Measurement (at Prefectural Office, cancelling defense meeting at headquarters of combat command)
- 14th Prefectural Governor provided direction to Chief of Sanitary Division after observation
- 15th Manager meeting (at Prefectural Office)/Liaison conference hosted by local commands and division meeting (at City Hall)/ Instruction by Prefectural Governor, assembling of prefectural employees (at Prefectural Office)
- 17th Prefectural Governor visited Kure Naval District, Kure City Hall and Kure Police Station/The Chief Staff of the Second General Army visited Prefectural Governor/Meeting concerning prefectural office transfer (at Toyokougyo)
- 18th Prefectural Governor visited Headquarters of Military District/Manager and chief meeting/Meeting for Mayor and Head of local branches/City planning meeting
- 19th Manager and chief meeting/Director of the Red Cross Hospital visited Prefectural Governor
- 20th Prefectural Governor provided instructions on transfer of Prefectural Office (to the Toyokogyo building)/Liaison meeting of directors of governmental officers (at Sukan-fu)
- 21st Prefectural Governor visited the Second General Army/Deputy Director Hattori visited Prefectural Governor/Chairperon of Hiroshima City Council visited Prefectural Governor

Administrative institutes were responsible for recovery operations. When the army supported them the headquarters of the Military District and the Local District took initiatives. However, since the army units and governmental institutes were completely destroyed, there was no choice but for the Shipping Command to take the lead. However, such operation was a "tentative measure" and immediate recovery was the goal.

At the liaison meeting on August 8, the army stated "we will make efforts to understand the current situation and try to feel people secured" and "also make efforts to restore people's lives by dealing with major problems" and that such rescue operations would last "for 20 days to one month. Then, return to normal operation at Soka-fu and Prefectural office accordingly." On the other hand, the Prefectural Governor indicated that the prefecture would work together with institutes such as Kure City, local branches of the prefecture, infrastructure offices and others because only a few dozen city employees could work. (Ibid. p105)

In the relief plan for Hiroshima on August 10, “Patients accommodated by the Defense Commander of Hiroshima will be moved to military district offices and private institutions” (Ibid.p118). At a defense meeting held at the Army’s Shipping Command on August 11th, the army stated that “Persistent technical and labor support from the army would be difficult to continue. Prefecture and City should consider this” (Ibid.p123).

In addition, the Defense Order of the Hiroshima area (the 23rd Operational Order) stated that the headquarters of combat command would be removed and returned to the Army’s Shipping Command. The order requested to set up a contact office and delegate a director from the Headquarters of Hiroshima District (Ibid. p127). This was a preparation for returning to the original operation system where the Headquarters of Hiroshima District was under the jurisdiction of the Chugoku Military District.

In a such process, relief operations immediately after the atomic bombing were formed. Then, on August 15, the responsibility of defense operations in the Hiroshima area was transferred to the chief of Chugoku Military District. However, the chief of the Chugoku Military District should “regarding the relief operation, divide the governmental and private institutions for administrative purposes” (The Second General Army Operational Orders). Military operations returned to normal but still control by the army continued⁸.

Such first-aid relief operations by the army brought significant results in the short term. “Daily meetings were conducted to discuss the priority of relief operations and other measures. The relief operation has been conducted consistently under organized control among all institutions” (detailed report on relief operation against bombing on Hiroshima on August 6). Also, Saeki, the Commander of the Army Shipping Command, wrote in a report to a chamberlain dispatched by Emperor Showa on September 3, “Under the control by the director of the Second General Army, army, governmental and private institutions made efforts for the relief operation together and completed rescue duties in the short term. I am very pleased with it” (*Juuji Gosaken Roku (Record of Chamberlain dispatched by Emperor)*).

5. Support System

Despite the unpredicted attack, support from inside and outside of the prefecture was received. Support from outside of the prefecture, in particular, was made based predetermined plans. Through Kaibe and Kaita Police Stations, the Director of the Police Department directed police stations in the prefecture to provide support for food, police officers, civil defense volunteers and rescue members based on predetermined plans.

As a result, by 3pm on the 6th, when the a-bomb was dropped, 120,000 servings of dried biscuits were distributed and rescue units arrived at Tamonin Temple to set up a relief station. On the following day, the 7th, 190 police officers and 2,159 civil defense volunteers operated in Hiroshima and 300 rescuers came to Hiroshima from the areas under the jurisdiction of police stations. A total of 20,000 defense volunteers were dispatched. Dispatch of rescue units consisting of doctors and nurses to Hiroshima continued until October 5, when The Wartime Damage Protection Law expired. The total of rescuers from within Hiroshima Prefecture who were engaged in the rescue operation was 2,557, with a cumulative total of 21,145. Rescuers from outside of the prefecture totaled 715, with a cumulative total of 5,397. In addition, teachers and students of women’s high schools were dispatched.

Since most of the city employees were injured, City Hall’s function was on the verge of crisis and asked for support from Kure City Hall and Prefectural Office. A prefectural governor’s report on the 21st described, “Among 1,200 city employees who are expected to play a major role in rescue operations, a considerable number of them died or were injured, resulting in only 80 employees attending. Hence, city hall did not operate. Officers from the prefectural office, army and other institutes were engaged in operations.” (Ibid.)

Regarding the prefectural office, local branches were located in several areas in the prefecture, and they could dispatch employees to make up for shortages of officers due to injuries and deaths. On the 9th, a list

of where prefectural employees, related organization officers and officers from local branches were from was established. At the same time, investigation of the deceased, people in good health and the injured was started. A boarding house for prefecture employees and their families was used as the Itsukaichi Sanpo Dojo institute to support the investigation. On the 10th, Higashi Police Station was allocated for executives of the prefectural government and police department officers, and the Sanshi Shinyou Kumiai building was allocated for prefectural employees and local branch officers to stay overnight (*Sensai Kiroku (Chronicle of War-Damage)* pp111-114).

The prefecture also asked the government for transfer and recruit officers. On August 13th, the Prefectural Governor wrote to vice-ministers of each ministry requesting that “Any officers such as higher or junior officials, please arrange the transfer to our prefecture. If possible, officers from this prefecture or who have experience working in this prefecture are more desirable.” For reference, he named a total of 25 managers and chiefs who were killed or injured (Ibid. pp129-130).

Regarding the army, it was not predicted that the Army’s Shipping Command would play a major role in the rescue operation, but they built on their past experience of supporting the prefectural police department with preparation for air raids. Not only units stationed in Ujina, but also other marine units stationed outside of Hiroshima were dispatched to the city based on the order from the Commander of Army Shipping Command. It is said that the total of dispatched officers reached 4,000. At 11:20 am, Kure Naval District also ordered the preparation for rescue units to deploy, having received a report from officers returned from Hiroshima. Including 160 of the 321st infantry units, which arrived in Hiroshima in the early morning of the 7th, other units under the jurisdiction of the Second General Army were dispatched. At the Eba and Hesaka Branches of the First Army Hospital, rescue operations were conducted soon after the atomic bombing. As such, rescue operations were conducted by institutions related to the Army Hospital.

In the Ujina district, which escaped serious damage, a meeting for army, governmental and private organizations was held on the 10th. The Office for Restoring the Ujina Defense District was established to autonomously promote reconstruction with support from the defense unit (Akatsuki Butai) by utilizing governmental and private institutions. The director of Ujina Police Station served as the chairperson of the office and members consisted of probationary officers of the Army Shipping Command, non-commissioned officers of a branch of the Ujina Military Police, the Chair of the Neighboring Committee of Ujina, the Head of the Ujina Civil Defense Volunteers and the Chair of the Neighboring Committee of Western Minami-machi. They worked to ensure the security of citizens and promptly handle daily necessities. Regarding regulating traffic, although the army took responsibility for major railroads, governmental and private institutions promptly performed the recovery operations by delegating areas of responsibility (Ibid. p124-125).

III. First-Aid Relief Operation

1. Evacuation/Relief/Distribution

The number of people who escaped from Hiroshima City or were transferred because of injuries or as evacuees was more than 200,000. Many people escaped on foot, but some were moved by trains, trucks and ships. In the cities located along the Geibi Railway, Shohara and Toujou, in the western side, Otake and Iwakuni, many people were accommodated. In the neighboring areas, along with relief stations and schools, houses were also used for accommodating evacuated people. Since the bombing was so far from what had been predicted, it was impossible to have an organized evacuation guide. Thus, evacuation was made based on individuals’ decisions. However, since evacuation stations were designated in each area of Hiroshima City in advance, evacuated people had options for the destination to which they evacuated. Such evacuation stations also helped them to establish the whereabouts of their families. In addition to making thorough preparations for the evacuees in advance, Hiroshima City sent letters asking host towns to accept them, establishing a proactive stance after the evacuation. (Kakogawa Village, *Shomuiken Tsuzuri (A file of General Affairs)*).

Based on the current information, there is a high possibility that our Hiroshima City would experience massive air raids. I predict it is just a matter of time. Thus, today I made an announcement to all citizens and told them to devote ourselves to national defense and protect with all our might the military-based city. However, if we lapse into a situation in which evacuation is inevitable, although I know it would be trouble for you and your citizens, I would highly appreciate it if you would help our citizens by accommodating them based on the Sufferers Evacuation Implementation Guidelines, which was decided by the decree. I would simply ask you for your generous sympathy and support.

March 17, 1945

Hiroshima Mayor Senkichi Awaya

To Heads of Local Branches
Directors of Police Stations
Mayors of towns
Heads of villages

In anticipation of air raids, Hiroshima City designated national schools and other buildings as 32 relief stations and 18 hospitals. There being horribly damaged, the rescue operations could not be carried out as planned. However, buildings where large numbers of severely injured people were accommodated were appointed as relief stations and rescue units were allocated, leading to voluntary rescue activities. Based on various materials and notes, a total number of relief stations established on August 6 was 99 (including 16 hospital relief stations), relief stations outside of the city counted 142 (including 38 hospital relief stations), reaching a total of 241.

At hospitals which escaped complete destruction, such as Hiroshima Red Cross Hospital and Hiroshima Posts and Telecommunications Hospital, rescue operations were conducted immediately after the bombing. Relief stations were set in each area. For instance, at Honkawa National School, the Army Sanitary Unit conducted medical treatment from the 7th. Also, from August 8 through September 6, rescue units were dispatched from Saijo Clinic, Miyoshi, Kake, Onomichi, Mihara, Takeshima and Innoshima.

Rescue activities which started voluntarily were gradually liaised and coordinated by the army. So that private relief efforts could be brought under the army's control, the Hiroshima Relief Plan produced by the Army Shipping Command on August 10th stipulated that daily meetings be held at Combat Command (in City Hall) daily at 2pm, "in order to conduct rescue operations in accordance with current conditions."

In other words, private relief stations were tentatively placed under control of the army (*Sensai Kiroku (Chronicle of War-Damage)*).

However, it was not the army's major duty to control relief stations and provide medical treatment for citizens. Both relief activities and medical treatment were responsibilities of administrative or private institutions, thus the army rushed to return to its normal condition. The orders for the Director of the Army Medical Department on the 9th were: "Along with recovery of private medical institutions, the current medical system should change to the army's medical system" (Ibid. p121). In other words, the army started to focus on accommodating wounded soldiers. Thus, from the 14th, nearly 15,000 patients (citizens) who had been accommodated in the army's institutions such as Shipping Command were transferred to prefectural institutions. Police stations in Hatsukaichi, Otake, Kabe, Tadanoumi, Takehara, Saijou, Miyoshi and Shobara accommodated 1,000 patients each. Police stations in Kaitaichi, Hiro, Kouchi and Yoshida accepted 500 patients each.

Together with relief aid for patients, it was necessary to expand roads by removing debris. In addition, there was the difficult problem of the disposal of bodies. The influence on the citizens was enormous. Since it was “in the summer decay period,” it was decided to “deal with it immediately.” Then, it was ordered to bury or cremate the bodies with the attendance of Shinto priests or Buddhist monks if possible and investigate the numbers of bodies “even if names were unknown.” It was ordered to complete the first disposal by August 9. In fact, only a small number of Shinto priests and Buddhist monks attended. It was just not possible. There was no choice but to dispose of the bodies in a harsh manner, such as piling up the bodies and burning them with gasoline.

The overall disposal of bodies operated by the army, police and civil defense volunteers tentatively ended on August 11. After that, partial disposal operations were conducted in the sea beneath ruins of fire. The numbers of the disposed bodies which the prefecture confirmed by August 20, were 17,865 handled by the police, 12,054 by the army and 3,040 who died outside of the city after evacuation. In the city, bodies were cremated and delivered to close relatives, people with connections to the deceased, City Hall, etc. The bodies that Hiroshima City received were handed over to bereaved families. As of October 31, 11,525 were picked up, 4,805 were delivered and 6,720 were left.

At the beginning, City Hall was used as an evacuation station. Being led by the directors, city employees stayed at the hall to conduct relief activities such as distribution of rice balls, issuing certificates for sufferers, looking for missing people, organizing remains and providing consolation payments. On August 13, 2 million yen was delivered from the Prefectural Relief Division and a total 60 yen of consolation payment, 30 yen each from the prefecture and city was provided per person. After that, 50 yen per person was given to the dead as condolence money. These operations were continued till December 10. Also, survivor’s benefits (for housing, household belongings, bereavement and injuries) was distributed from September 15 to April 10, reaching a total amount of 229 million yen with 44,569 cases. (*Shiyakusho Genbakushi (Chronicle of A-bomb Damage to the Hiroshima City Hall)*)

2. Measures for Keeping Public Calm/Maintaining Security/Information Control

It was devastation in the midst of war. The authorities struggled to suppress the feeling of war-weariness and to keep the public calm. On August 7, a notice by the Prefectural Governor was issued telling citizens, “keep in mind that the only way to retaliate is to beat the enemy. We persistently believe in ultimate victory, overcoming difficulties and devoting ourselves to the war for the emperor” (*Hiroshima Kentichi Kokuyu (Hiroshima Prefectural Governor’s Notice)*).

In addition, the prefectural governor attempted to make the damage look lighter than it actually was. When an officer from the Miyoshi Branch received instructions from the Prefectural Governor at Tamonin Temple to support a bicycle unit, the governor said “be careful not to talk about the damage exaggeratedly” (*Kenchou Genbaku-hisaishi (Chronicle of A-bomb Damage to the Prefectural Office)* p 291). Sensai Kiroku (*Chronicle of War-Damage*) related a conversation on August 8 between Marshal Hata and the Director of the Police Department: “They mentioned that an investigation into the bombing has been conducted, although the damage was not massive...” (*Sensai Kiroku (Chronicle of War-Damage)*)

The army, specifically the military police, struggled to maintain order under the air raids. The order (the 3rd Operating Order) issued by the Chugoku military police at 2:10, August 8 warned against false rumors. (*Senpakushiribu Sakumei Tsuzuri (a file of operation orders by the Shipping Command)*)

Citizens were horrified by the bombing this time since it was dreadfully powerful compared to previous air raids. Because of this, it is predicted that some people unreasonably consider

its performance and proclaim that the damage was tremendous. Or some people may refer to the defense policy by the army, or make pessimistic remarks mentioning losing war. Furthermore, false rumors which lead to anti-army and anti-war sentiment with aspirations of peace. We will clamp down on such rumors.

In the chief meeting for recovery measures on August 12, prompt arrangement of neighborhood associations and Tonarigumi neighborhood groups was discussed in order to keep the public calm. In addition, prevention of crimes, maintenance of security and control over false rumors and feelings of war-weariness were argued. (*Sensai Kiroku (Chronicle of War-Damage)*) Through Kuden Houdou [verbal news reports made by groups of people, established because printers had been destroyed] and news reports posted on walls, the extent of the damage, the progress of relief operations, and the policies of the authorities were each reported in their turn. Along with this, using newspaper (distribution from newspaper companies in Osaka and other cities) and broadcasting, the authorities made efforts to prevent false rumors. (detailed report on relief operations after the bombing of Hiroshima on August 6) Since these countermeasures worked, although there was looting during the fire, the authorities' fears were not realized. The Prefectural Governor wrote in a report on August 21, "Having witnessed the devastating bombing, there were signs that people were horrified, distressed and becoming pessimistic. However, as the days went by, they calmed down and the momentum among people to restore the military-based city and to beat the enemy is increasing" (Ibid.).

As mentioned previously, there was a perception that the disposal of the bodies had tremendous influence on citizens. The authorities made efforts to support the army and citizens with establishing a good relationship. The instructions by the Chief of Staff of the Chugoku Military District issued on August 15 ordered, "By enforcing the morals and behavior of the units, we attempted to bring about a feeling of appreciation and trust among administrative officers and citizens, specifically those who had suffered" (Dai 59 Gun Sakumei Kou Tuzuri (a file of Operation Orders by the 59th Division)).

The official notification by the director of Domestic Affairs Department (addressed to school principals) issued in reaction to the Imperial Rescript which declared the end of the war emphasized "training faithful and promising Japanese people" and to prevent people from "inquiring into the government or leaders' responsibilities." It is considered that they were attempting to maintain order after the war (*Kencho Genbaku hisaishi (Chronicle of A-bomb Damage to the Prefectural Office)*).

IV. Restoration of Administrative System

1. Returning to a Normal Condition

The recovery operations led by the army were taken over by the administration from the middle of August. In September, when demobilization had started, the rest of the recovery operations were conducted by the prefecture and the city. Later on, operations were shifted from recovery to restoration. The closure of relief stations on October 5, due to the lapsing of the 2-month period based on the Wartime Damage Protection Law, was an obvious change. However, it was the beginning of the so-called "lost decade," when the a-bomb victims felt discarded by society.

There was an urgent necessity to resume the administrative system which had been halted after the atomic bombing. At Hiroshima City Hall, although Deputy Mayor Morishita served as an acting mayor instead of Mayor Awaya, who was killed in the bombing, it was necessary to select a successor immediately. A city council was held on August 20, where Ichiro Fujita (chairperson of Fujita Gumi) was appointed as the new mayor, but he declined the offer. Then, September 29, Shichiro Kihara (member of Lower House) was elected and he accepted it. After the Ministry of the Interior's process,

finally a new mayor was inaugurated. In the winter of that year, operation of City Hall was conducted in the burned buildings which was windswept without window frames.

As mentioned later, the process of the prefecture's return to a normal state had to start with securing a place for operations. It also needed to secure officers—in particular, recruiting police officers was an urgent problem. Thus, police officers were recruited from the demobilized army and “Nearly 300 people from marine teams in Otake, Kure and Yasuura and Naval Aviator Preparatory Course Trainees from Kure were half-compelled to” enter the Police Training Institute. Unprecedented trouble where trainees ran away from the institute occurred, but about 700 police officers were employed by the end of October, securing a total of 1,784, including the injured and those who had demobilized from the army (*Shinpen Hiroshima Keisatsu Shi (Chronicle of Hiroshima Police Station)* p679).

Budgeting was one of the challenges for returning to a normal state. The city council was summoned to discuss an additional budget for restoration on August 25. Two days before that, Hirahara Chief of the Domestic Affairs Division, invited Shiro Ichikawa, the General Affairs Chief of the Takada Branch, to compile a budget. “No prefectural employees who understood finance and budget had survived” (*Kenchou Genbaku-hisaishi (Chronicle of A-bomb Damage to the Prefectural Office)* p.144). Soon after he started to work, Ichikawa composed a draft of a bill. As the amount of the current budget was unclear, it was difficult to clarify the amount of the additional budget. Then, Ichikawa established a new budget combining the additional and current budgets together to receive approval from the council. After approval, prefectural officers were dispatched to the houses of city council members to collect additional money. It was not until the end of September that the current budget as of July became clear. (*Sengo Hiroshima Kenseishi (History of Hiroshima Municipal Government after the War)* p9).

The prefectural administration was unable to operate without financing. Chief Hinohara struggled with recruiting, and by November, a total of 10 employees joined to budget division and tax division by hiring from local branch offices and people demobilized from the army. They promptly composed the budget for the fiscal year 1946, which was scheduled to be discussed in the prefectural meeting in December. In order to plan the budget, the required materials had to be compiled from each department and division. However, since most of the employees who were engaged in budgeting mainly worked at the main building of the prefectural office, most of them died in the atomic bombing. Thus, there were few employees who knew about budgeting. In addition, the basic materials for budgeting were lost and furthermore there were departments whose budget was unclear. In the end, they needed to plan a budget from scratch by collecting materials and relying on the memories of employees. (Ibid.)

The settlement adjustment for fiscal 1944 “required tremendous efforts because almost all the accounting documents were burned and lost. Inviting the person in charge, who suffered from illness caused by the atomic bomb.....Somehow, we managed to complete the documents based on surviving materials.” They were distressed and perplexed. (Ibid. p26)

As mentioned above, some documents escaped from the fire and were transferred from the evacuation area as the restoration process proceeded. However, due to the loss of a considerable amount of the documents, it was obvious that trouble would occur in operations. In a meeting of directors and section chiefs on August 18, they agreed to “obtain bank account books from other prefectures as directed before” (*Sensai Kiroku (Chronicle of War-Damage)* p137).

Office supplies for employees to work also needed to be arranged. There is a story about trouble that prefectural employees had. “Together, we were busy getting office supplies. As a result, we started to work with damaged desks and chairs by collecting evacuated items, etc.” “It was impossible to purchase commodities required by the prefecture. Although, supplies from other prefectures were not

in good condition and hard to use. The Supplies Division received lots of criticism” (*Sengo Hiroshima Kenseishi (History of Hiroshima Municipal Government after the War)* p25).

Shuichi Kodama (later to become the director of the Hiroshima Printing Bureau and a member of the prefectural assembly) who was assigned to recover printing systems picked up a printer and employees which the Army Clothing Supply Division evacuated and also brought a casting machine from a diving training school in Otake City. Regarding office supplies, he brought back necessary office supplies from the Supply Division in Kaita. Trucks for transportation were diverted from the Army’s Clothing Supply Division (*Sengo Gojunen Hiroshima Kensei no Ayumi (50-year History of post-war Hiroshima Prefectural Government)* p 282).

Because it was evacuated to Honkawa National School, the Infrastructure Division lost a large part of its employees. Moreover, a typhoon hit Hiroshima, causing an unprecedented disaster. The disaster recovery plan was created with support from other prefectures (*Sengo Hiroshima Kenseishi (History of Hiroshima Municipal Government after the War)* p.85). 10 out of 20 officers of the City Planning Division, Infrastructure Department died and the rest were severely injured. Only Chief Sadakura Takeshige, who had a minor injury, and several officers who were away due to a business trip, survived and were in good health. Right before plotting the restoration plan, the process started with a few officers (*Sengo Gojunen Hiroshima Kensei no Ayumi (50-year History of post-war Hiroshima Prefectural Government)* p 284).

2. Transfer of Government Buildings

In order to return to normal operations, the prefectural office needed to be transferred from the Higashi Police Station, which was being used provisionally, to another building. On August 16, as candidates for a new office, Toyo Kogyo and Japan Steel Works were investigated. As a result, it was reported that the former was not damaged and accessible to the station while the latter was severely damaged and far from the station. The day after that, Toyo Kogyo agreed to rent the building. On August 20, the prefectural office was transferred to Toyo Kogyo in Fuchumachi, Aki District. At that time, it was a difficult situation in which there were not even chairs and desks for officers. Thus, we used former army military goods and rented from various institutions and managed to operate routinely” (*Sengo Hiroshima Kenseishi (History of Hiroshima Municipal Government after the War)* p26).

Shiro Ichikawa recalled that prefectural officers visited him on August 23 and visited the prefectural domestic affairs department that day. There were makeshift long tables and chairs in the office. However, there were officers who did not have their own desks. They used the desks of other workers who were absent. There were a few officers who came to work every day. Because the transportation system had not yet recovered, they came early in the morning and when they stayed till late at night, they slept on their desks (Ibid. p9).

Having spent winter in such conditions, as fiscal year 1946 was about to begin, construction for the government’s own buildings started. At first, a barrack-style building was planned, but the construction expense was 6 million yen and the buildings would be unusable for 5 years. Thus, they considered renovating the Army’s Weapon Supply Division, inherited from the Army, and making it the prefectural office. It was predicted that the building could not be used since the roof and windows were left broken after the bombing and it would cost a lot to repair them. However, it was found that repairs could be carried out with relatively little cost. From late spring, construction started at top speed and workers began transferring to the new buildings as they were completed. (Ibid. p10). The announcement of the transfer was issued on June 20.

Regarding the restoration of other buildings, such as municipal schools and famous landmarks, “students of municipal schools were studying under the open sky and did not have classes on snowy and rainy days. It was a hard damage both administratively and educationally. A restoration plan was composed immediately. Then, in 1946, a tentative barrack building was built due to the budget and other conditions. Administrative functions and education were continued. From 1947, major construction started but still walls were made from boards and windows were covered with paper instead of glass. But, after three years, schools and governmental offices were gradually restored” (Ibid. p83).

The prefectural office was transferred to a warehouse of the Army’s Supply Division, and finally secured a place of its own. However, the warehouse had cracks caused by the Nankai Earthquake and there was a possibility that the warehouse would collapsed in the event of another earthquake. Also, it consisted of eight buildings without passages that connected those buildings. Since it used to be a warehouse, lights had to be turned on all the time. Also, it was not very accessible. Thus, for such reasons, there was a need to construct a new building in the center of the city (Ibid p84). However, it was difficult to do because of continuous financial difficulties. The new prefectural office building was completed on April 19, 1956 which was 10 years after the atomic bombing (*Sengo Gojunen Hiroshima Kensei no Ayumi (50-year History of post-war Hiroshima Prefectural Government)* p91).

Conclusion

This paper explained the administrative measures against the damage caused by the atomic bombing and the recovery process of administrative operations returning to normal by focusing on preparation for air raids at a time when a mainland battle was still being predicted, prompt measures for recovery led by the Army, rescue operations, first-aid relief, information control, measures for keeping the public calm, maintaining security, breaking free of military administration, recruiting officers for returning to normal operations, personnel and commodities inherited from the army, etc.

Since the administrative system experienced enormous damage, its recovery was not easy. In addition, Hiroshima City and the people residing there had more difficult challenges and would require a longer time to recover. I would like to address these subjects at another opportunity.

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¹Recalling the building evacuation, Director of the Police Department Torayoshi Ishihara commented that because the Hiroshima City does not face the open sea and also “the policy of the building evacuation attempted to reflect public opinion,” “there were some delays”

²The prediction of a high possibility of massive air raids was known by all the directors of the Police Department. Tomita from the Ujina Police Station remembered that Matsumoto, the Head of Nishi Police Station, said in a meeting before the atomic bombing: “Hiroshima has not experienced bombing so far, however, there must be massive air raids in near future. In that case, the measures that we have planned would not work. I am considering “unplanned plans” (*Kenchou Genbakuhsaishi (Chronicle of A-bomb Damage to the Prefectural Office)* pp 273-274)

³According to Jitsuo Kitagawa, the prefectural governor investigated the Kitagawa Tekkojo company in Fuchucho, Ajina District on the previous day. Then, he visited the company again at 8 am on the day after that, when he received a call from Hiroshima. Kitagawa drove him to a police station in Fukuyama by company car. (*Sengo Gojunen Hiroshima Kensei no Ayumi (50-year History of post-war Hiroshima Prefectural Government)* pp 281-282). Then, the governor stopped by Saijo Police Station and Kamo District Office to hear the situation and requested help with relief activities. After that, he returned to Hiroshima (*Kenchou Genbakuhsaishi (Chronicle of A-bomb Damage to the Prefectural Office)* pp286-287).

⁴Hamai, Chief of Supply Division: in order to arrange food distribution to a-bomb victims, he picked up a truck from an armor training institute in Ujina after having a discussion with the directors in front of the headquarters of Hiroshima Railway. He drove to a warehouse in Fuchusho, Aki District and drove a truck full of dried biscuits to Red Cross Hospital together with another truck from Kure (Shinzo Hamai pp9-11).

⁵Chief of Supply Division Hamai headed to the Tamonin temple to contact Hiroshima Prefecture (Shinzo Hamai, pp14-15).

⁶Deputy Mayor Shibata recalled that he arrived at the city office one day after the bombing: “I was embarrassed that I had spent a day off with minor injuries” and described the struggling officers “those who made efforts to complete their duties, not caring much about their families, were strongly tied together with something noble, beautiful and pure, something that I could not describe with regular words” (Shigeteru Shibata, pp18-19). An officer who went to work six days after the bombing despite having difficulty walking was “scolded by Shibata.” Shibata demanded, “How could you be absent from minor injuries?” The officer replied, “I hit my legs and back hard. I managed to come to the office today although I have severe pain.” Shibata replied, “We do not have enough people. Please work hard” (*Genbaku Taikenki (Record of A-bomb Experience)* p79).

⁷The navy was responsible for defense of the northern part of Hiroshima City. On August 11 after the withdrawal of the navy, the Northern District Defense Unit was established. Major General Fujii (commander of the Hiroshima District Command) was appointed as the head. (*Sensai Kiroku (Chronicle of War-Damage)* p123)

⁸It was unclear how long administration by the army continued. On August 15, the liaison meeting hosted by the headquarters of the local district was conducted. After that, communication between the prefectural governor and the directors of the army was held. On August 20, a meeting for the directors of governmental institutes was conducted at a Sokan-fu. As there were no records of meeting hosted by the army, it is predicted that the administration by the army ended either August 16, at the earliest, or 20, when the meeting for directors of the governmental institutes was held to return administration to normal. Incidentally, Deputy Mayor Shibata described the administration by the army: “Soon after the announcement of unconditional surrender was reported on August 15, nobody came to regular meetings. After a discussion at the Prefectural Office, we decided to hold meetings under the name of prefectural governor. Then, finally, regular participants took part.” Shibata recalled the army withdrew as the war ended (Shigeteru Shibata, p22). Kiyoshi Okazaki, the Chief of

Staff of the Second General Army remembered, “The General Army proclaimed martial law which continued after the end of the war,” mentioning that the administration by the army (Shibata described it as “martial law”) lasted after the end of the war.

Orphans of the Atomic Bomb: Untold Stories

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Introduction

The atomic bomb, dropped for the first time in history on Hiroshima on August 6th, 1945, changed the lives of the survivors. In addition to losing parents and spouses, children and siblings, they also lost houses and places of employment, and the local community was completely destroyed.

Especially difficult was the experience of those who are called “atomic bomb orphans.” According to a nation-wide survey compiled by the Ministry of Health and Welfare in 2011, the number of orphans in Hiroshima Prefecture at 5,975, exceeded the numbers in Tokyo and Osaka during the chaotic postwar period, when public support was scarce.¹

However, that there were many orphans who were badly harmed, both mentally and physically, goes unmentioned, as do the stories of their lives. Why? In this article, I will investigate the history of the atomic bomb orphans, using primary source materials and previously unknown documents. I will also be using the testimony of atomic bomb survivors whom I previously interviewed, and I will consider the recovery that occurred after the atomic bombing.

1. Rescue Immediately Following the Bombing: Hijiyama Camp For Lost Children

There is a journal with “Hiroshima City Hijiyama National School, 1945” written on the cover in black ink.² On the labeled August 8th, it reads, “At 4pm, Mr. Kurose, the revenue officer, took the orphans and opened a camp for lost children.” The journal also mentions that there were five people working there, including principal, Masami Ishida, and teachers, among them Yoshie Tomasu. Under the chaotic conditions following the bombing, relief efforts began on behalf of children whose parents’ whereabouts were unknown. Hiroshima Prefecture’s record of war damage recorded that a camp for orphans was opened on August 10th in Hijiyama National School. In fact, the camp was opened two days after the bombing.³ Hijiyama National School was about 2.8 km southeast of the hypocenter and escaped the fire. About 50 students in the classrooms were injured by class fragments and other debris, but all survived.

Children older than the third grade were evacuated en masse to Tsuda Village in Saiki-Gun (currently Hatsukaichi City).⁴ Immediately after the atomic bombing, wounded citizens evacuated to the school, which became one of the 13 emergency relief stations established by the prefecture on the 7th. The principal, Ishida, and the school’s female teachers remained there and helped care for the injured.⁵ “There are many injured people. In addition to orphans, the camp for lost children is accommodating others, 24 people in total” (diary entry, August 9th). According to a note written by Tomasu, herself a mother, and 28 years old at the time, “I breastfed a baby crying out for its mother, and the baby went to sleep.” However,

a few days later, “It died.”⁶ Childcare continued under extreme conditions. The camp was administered mainly by the Hiroshima City Administration. Among the documents left by Norimichi Yabuki, who later served as the head of the Tokyo Bureau of the Hiroshima City Administration, and who also worked to establish the Hiroshima City Peace Memorial City Construction Act in 1945, there is a document overviewing the Hijiyama Camp For Lost Children.⁷ It is thought that this document was created in preparation for the inspection of Hiroshima by Torahiko Nagazumi, who was dispatched by the emperor and visited the Hijiyama Camp For Lost Children on September 3rd, 1945. Hiroshima City’s report⁸ to the government contained the overview.

A total of 91 people (including 36 girls) were being accommodated there by September 2nd, the day before Nagazumi’s visit. The breakdown was as follows: 40 children aged 0-5, 47 children aged 6-12, 4 children older than 13. 18 children were eventually taken by their parents, and 14 were taken by relatives, a total of 32. However, 9 children died. “They suffered from sever diarrhea, and grew weak and died.” The cause of death was acute radiation syndrome.

On the 16th of September, Hiroshima City created a list of children accommodated at the camp in order to search for their relatives and parents, and posted it on the Hiroshima Administrative Offices, Hiroshima Eastern Police Station (then provisionally serving as Hiroshima Prefectural Office), Fukuya Department Store, and Hiroshima Station. In addition, Hiroshima City twice broadcast radio messages via Hiroshima Central Broadcasting Station, (present-day Hiroshima Broadcasting Station), which resumed operations at Hara Broadcasting Station in Gion-machi (present-day Asaminami Ward).

“By helping each other, the orphans grow up.” The Chugoku Shimbun, which resumed operations using a rotary press evacuated to suburban Nukushina Mura (present-day Higashi Ward) reported on a camp for lost children on September 3.

The paper reported that the hair of the children, which had fallen out “due to atomic bomb radiation sickness” had started to grow back little by little,” and depicted them cheerfully picking wildflowers and catching frogs. The article also reported that “more than three children newly arrive every day.” It reported the names of all 35 children (12 of whom were girls) , the eldest aged 15. There was “Katsu-chan” (age five), and “two unidentified children (five and six years old, both in Koimachi on the day of the bombing).” Apparently, the young children were in such a state that they could not even tell others their names.

As of November 11th, when the emperor’s brother, Nobuhito, Prince Takamatsu, visited, there were 30 children in the Hijiyama Camp for Lost Children⁹. Sixteen children who had not been retrieved by anyone were transferred to Hiroshima Institute for War Children¹⁰. It is recorded that from 155 to 200 children were sent to the school¹¹, however, it is unclear from the journal how many infants were able to meet their parents and how many died from the aftereffects of the bombing. According to Tomasu’s diary, she mourned 11 children, including the infant she had nursed¹².

2. Left in the Evacuation Area

The total number of children in Hiroshima City just before the bombing was 41,638¹³. During the war, the Japanese government implemented group evacuations for all public elementary

school students from third to sixth grades. The government also designated 13 cities to be evacuated, including Tokyo and Osaka, in July 1944. Hiroshima was added to the list in April, 1945¹⁴. The students of Ootemachi Elementary School (closed after the bombing) and other schools went to the northern part of the prefecture as the first evacuation group on April 3rd. It was said that 8,365 children evacuated to temples and assembly halls in seven towns in the prefecture, and attended local schools. In addition, nearly 17,400 students evacuated to relatives' homes in suburban areas. Approximately 3,300 students who remained with their parents died¹⁵.

Because of the end of the war, on August 30th, Hiroshima City published a notification to school principals ("Concerning Evacuated Schoolchildren") that the group evacuations had ended¹⁶. Students of Hiroshima Public Elementary School, attached to Hiroshima Normal School for Men (present-day Shinonome Elementary School, attached to Hiroshima University) left the evacuation area on September 4th. Students from a total of 36 evacuated schools ended group evacuation status in November. However, there were children who wanted to return, but could not, as they had lost their families, and had no place to go.

A fourth grade student of Nakashima Public School (present-day Nakashima Elementary School in Naka-Ward) wrote notes, which were gathered by the Hiroshima Institute for War Children, titled "Left in Evacuation Area," written one year after the atomic bombing¹⁷. These notes were kept by the boy. These are the first notes about the atomic bomb experience in Hiroshima to frankly depict the atomic bomb damage. Following are quotations:

"The group evacuation has finally ended. My friends were steadily picked up by their fathers, mothers, uncles, or aunts. However, my father and mother didn't come, no matter how many days I waited. In October, I suddenly received a letter from my relatives in Asa Mura (present-day Asaminami Ward), saying that my father and mother and my youngest sister were in Hiroshima and had been killed in the horrible atomic bombing. I was sad. My older brother and I didn't know what to do. I couldn't sleep, recalling memory after memory of my younger brother. Soon after I received the letter, all the students left in Futami-Gun were transferred to a branch of Izumo Shrine in Mirasaka. One month later, on December 28th, we moved to this institute for war children."

His elder brother, in the sixth grade, who was evacuated to Futami-gun, Mirasaka-machi (present day Miyoshi City), and his younger brother, were also moved to the Institute for War Children.

His father had been a repairer of paper for screen doors and scrolls, and his family had lived in Tenjin-cho, Hiroshima City, (currently south of Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park). His parents and younger brother and younger sister evacuated to Furuichi-cho (present-day Asaminami Ward), but the boy, who turned 82 in 2017, said that, "It is still unclear where my father [then 45 years old], my mother [36 years old at the time], and younger sister [1 year old] died."

12 students from Nakashima, Honkawa, Fukuromachi, and Hirose Public Schools, who had been evacuated to Mirasaka-cho, arrived at the Institute for War Children, placed in the-then Municipal Agricultural Experiment Station in Itsukaichi-machi (present-day Minaga, Saiki Ward)¹⁸. Seven students of Ootemachi Public School arrived on the 23rd from Yamanouchi Kita Son, Hiba-gun (present-day Shobara City), followed by 15 children from Hijiyama Camp for Lost Children on the 26th. However, Ootemachi Public School remained closed because few residents had returned to the area.

Those students who stayed in Hiroshima Institute for War Children began to be known as “orphans of the atomic bomb.”

3. Childhood Education

An opening ceremony for the Hiroshima Institute for War Children was conducted on January 19th, 1946. “31 young people were gathered under the generous protection of many people, including the director, Yamamoto Yoshinobu, and others.” According to a newspaper article published right before the opening, students woke up at 6 a.m. and started classes from 8:30, had lunch at 12:00, did agricultural work from 1:30, had a snack (such as milk) at 2:30, starting cleaning at 4:30, had dinner at 5:00pm, and went to bed at 8:00. There was “a field the size of a city block used by the Agricultural Test Center,” and “the school was self-sufficient in terms of food.” However, the students were wearing the same summer clothes that they had been wearing since the group evacuation had started. It was also reported that about 10 school teachers disinfected students with sulfur. The students did not have changes of clothes, and the clothes they had were infested with lice¹⁹. The school was established by a Buddhist named Yamashita, who had heard from his old friend Ikuzo Matsubayashi, chief director of the health division of Hiroshima City, about the plight of the children who had lost parents. He established the school with his own funds. Yamashita had been demobilized from the army on September 15th, 1945. He lost his second son in the atomic bombing.

Classes were conducted in a small branch school of Noborimachi Public School (present-day Noborimachi Elementary School), by Tadashi Tomasu, and his wife Yoshie, who was transferred from Hijiyama Public School. In the beginning, there was “only one 32-square meter classroom.” However, the environment was improved by relocating a dormitory, with the help of donations. The female faculty members lived together with the children, each charged with caring for six to ten children as “assigned mothers.” The children conducted Buddhist memorial services for their family members on the sixth day of every month, and also visited a Buddhist temple, Hikarigaoka Doshinji, every morning and night. The building had been converted from a dojo for spiritual training to a temple²⁰.

However, the school was operating in straightened circumstances. Hiroshima City Mayor Shichiro Kihara, in a city report published on July 20th, 1946, called for burned-out fields to be turned back to agriculture and cultivated once more for the citizens. In Hiroshima City, delays and shortages of food were ongoing. Mayor Yamashita spent a large part of his personal assets to purchase black market rice, miso, and soy sauce to feed the hearty appetites of the children²¹. For medical treatment of eye infections and diarrhea, which were often contracted during the evacuation period, neighboring hospitals and practitioners contributed their support. The Institute for War Children was aided by the efforts and the willpower of those who were moved by a sense of mission.

Education for orphans of the atomic bomb did not only take place at the Institute for War Children. There were children who had no choice but to live independently due to the destruction and poverty wrought by the bomb, even if their parents had retrieved them in the aftermath. Care for orphans returning from Japan’s former overseas territories began on October 22nd, 1945, using the retirement payments of Yorito Kamikuri, a former second lieutenant who established a camp for orphans repatriating from overseas, later called Shinsei Gakuen²². The school opened in a building which had once housed a barracks for a military transportation unit, located in Ujina-machi (present-day Minami Ward). By the end of the year, it accepted 220 children from Davao, Mindanao, Philippines, where there

had been a school for Japanese children. The school also took in homeless children and established Shinsei Gakuen at a place that had once been used by soldiers of the 5th Field Artillery in Motomachi (present-day Naka Ward) on April 1st, 1947. In addition, on September 3rd, 1946, Hiroshima Prefectural Ninoshima School for War Orphans was opened on Ninoshima Island (present-day Minami Ward). 34 homeless children who had been caught by the police in the vicinity of the black market in front of Hiroshima Station entered the school²³. Yoshimaro Mori, who was appointed the principal of the school, and Yutaka Yoshikawa, who had been demobilized from the army in China, made efforts to renovate Ninoshima Storehouse, formerly owned by a military transportation unit. At first, the children tried to escape the island on a raft, or by swimming. Hiroshima Monastery, which had cared for orphans before the war, resumed its activities in Wakakusa-cho, (present-day Higashi Ward), in April, 1947. In August, the Catholic Organization Hikarinosono Setsuri No Ie was established in Gion-cho (present-day Asaminami Ward), then, in June, 1948 it relocated to Motomachi and built a new building. The new building had five rooms with a space of 15 square meters each as well as a vocational center, and cared for 32 children²⁴. Roppo Gakuen, an organization for mentally handicapped children, which relocated to Furutamachi Takasu in 1949, also accepted a-bomb orphans²⁵.

In December, 1947, the Child Welfare Act was passed. Along with the Public Assistance Act passed the previous year, this ensured that facilities for war children officially became child-rearing institutions, and that the amount of subsidies they were eligible to receive thereby increased. However, the support was still insufficient. What allowed the institutions to operate were donations collected by the Red Feather Campaign, beginning in 1947²⁶. In 1949, proceeds from New Year's cards with lottery numbers were also donated.

Beginning in 1948, the children of the Institute for War Children studied at local schools such as Itsukaichi Elementary School and at various junior high schools under the new system of education. According to the overview of the Institute for War Children, at that time, 85 children (25 of them girls), boarded at the school, with the breakdown as follows: 8 infants (3 of them girls), 48 children (14 girls), and 29 junior high school students (8 girls). Their reasons for boarding at the school included being a-bomb orphans (the largest cohort, at 67), homelessness (6), and being transferred from a Child Guidance Center (7)²⁷.

Because of an offer by Yamashita, the Institute for War Children was transferred to Hiroshima City on January 1st, 1953. A total of 171 names are recorded in the log dating from the establishment of the institution to the transfer²⁸. No children died during the period of food shortages. 23 children who were retrieved by parents, 46 by other relatives, and 70 children who were adopted, totaling, 86 children, left the institute by the end of 1950²⁹. In 1955, the institute was renamed Hiroshima City Doushinen, and ended its activities as a childcare institution in 1967.

Those who were called atomic bomb orphans left the institution and survived on their own as the reconstruction of Hiroshima City proceeded. To do things like marry or find work, they were forced to fight against prejudice.



The Hiroshima Institute for War Children established
in the Hiroshima Agricultural Experiment Center site

1947 (photographed by Shunkichi Kikuchi, owned by Tokuko Kikuchi)

4. Childhood Education

Moritaki Ichiro, who lost sight in his right eye in the bombing, and was active in movements to support atomic bomb victims, led Hiroshima Kodomo wo Mamorukai (Hiroshima Association for Protecting Children), an organization for Orphans of the a-bomb, during his time as a professor at Hiroshima University. The association was formed in February 1953. The association promoted moral adoption and member university students conducted a fact-finding investigation pertaining to children in elementary and junior high schools and childcare facilities in Hiroshima City. Moritaki argued in a paper written based on his research, entitled “A-bomb Orphans”³⁰:

“Among the children who evacuated as a group or evacuated to their relatives, not only children who lost both parents to the atomic bomb or atomic bomb-related illnesses, but also those children who lost either of their parents were in a terrible plight. Because of this, these children were also called atomic bomb orphans. This was a point which caused problems.”

Strictly defined, orphans are children who have lost both parents. However, in Hiroshima, which was dreadfully devastated, even those children who still had mothers or grandparents still faced distress because of difficulties in supporting them, worsened by atomic bomb-related illnesses and the destruction of infrastructure. Amid damaged local communities and scarce social welfare, children who lost their parents were the first to face harsh difficulties and social confusion. As they grew up, they struggled with difficult living conditions. While support efforts gathered steam as restoration continued, the atomic bomb orphans were still subjected to thoughtless stares mixed with sympathy.

According to a nationwide survey on orphans summarized by the Ministry of Health and Welfare on February 1, 1948, the total number of orphans who lost both of their parents was 123,511. 28,238 out of them were war orphans. 11,351 were orphans repatriated from overseas territories. Hiroshima Prefecture counted 5,975, the largest number in Japan. Among them, 456 children were cared for in institutions and

the rest were under the custody of their grandparents, mothers, siblings, relatives or acquaintances. The report said that out of 5,975 children, 2,541 were war orphans. It is not unreasonable to posit that a major cause of their parents' death was the atomic bombing.

However, a considerable number of a-bomb orphans were looked after by their relatives residing outside of Hiroshima or moved to Osaka or Hiroshima to survive.

In 1953, Hiroshima Kodomo wo Mamorukai confirmed 432 a-bomb orphans among 45 public elementary and junior high schools in Hiroshima City. Those children were infants or in the early elementary grades at the time of the atomic bombing. The association also found that more than 1 out of 4 children (28%) endured conditions where they were "being cared for by needy people who could not even purchase clothing and food."³¹

In a survey conducted in October 1954 with broader research targets, it was revealed that children under such circumstance totaled 1,810, 802 of whom were elementary school students (378 female students) and 1008 were junior high school students (539 female students). At that time, the number of public elementary schools was 34, and that of national schools was two, with total students numbering 43,000. The number of junior high schools was 26, with 14 municipal schools, 10 private schools and 2 national schools, with 21,000 total students³².

The reasons for 1810 students' being a-bomb orphans were: losing parents, 156 (50 were elementary school students); losing a father, 1240 (624 elementary school students); and losing a mother, 414 (128 were elementary school students). At households which lost fathers, mothers became the only breadwinner and struggled to raise their children with the burden of single parenthood by engaging in daily contract jobs offered by the government as a measure against unemployment.

According to a survey on a-bomb orphans conducted by a social science seminar of Hiroshima University before 1960, nearly 1,300 lived outside of Hiroshima Prefecture, working in an industry which did not require personal references, and the turnover was very high.³³ In the city that had suffered from the bombing, being an orphan was a disadvantage in terms of job hunting. Those who were raised in the institutions for war children had no choice but to be independent after graduating from junior high school by doing live-in work or working for small factories.

5 .Moral Adoption

Moral Adoption was a campaign which supported a-bomb orphans' education. Norman Cousins, the editor-in-chief of the *Saturday Review of Literature*, a weekly magazine published by a company based in New York, visited Hiroshima in August 1949 to observe the Institution for War Children. Then, he proposed the concept of moral adoption in the volume issued on September 17.³⁴

"Moral Adoption is an adoption that enables American families to help raise a-bomb orphans who lost their families and relatives due to the atomic bombing. These orphans are cared for in institutions such as Mrs. Yamashita's orphanage [an orphanage for war children where Yamashita's wife Sadako served as a director], but American families take responsibility for education and upbringing. At Yamashita Orphanage, the monthly cost for rearing a child was 2.25 dollars, including educational expenses [at the time 810 yen]. If there are readers who support my idea and want to take part in this project, I am happy

to serve as a go-between.”

At that time, in America, which had implemented the Immigration Act of 1924 that restricted the immigration of Japanese people, legal adoption was impossible. Then, Cousins advocated moral adoption as the second-best measurement. Pearl Buck, a Nobel-prize winning novelist, and John Hersey, the author of the work of reportage *Hiroshima*, supported and participated in the campaign.

Cousins sent a letter to Hiroshima mayor Shinzo Hamai in October explaining the positive reaction to the campaign: “I would like to support all a-bomb orphans in Hiroshima if funds increase”.³⁵ In December, Hiroshima City established the Hiroshima Municipal Fund Management Committee for A-bomb Orphans and expressed cooperation with “moral adoption of war orphans”.³⁶ Thus, a support and educational project had begun.

Adoptions were made based on photos and background information of children provided by Hiroshima. The first adoption was concluded between an 11-year-old girl in the Institution for War Children and a teacher, who was a father of two in Missouri, in February 1950. Then, by the end of March, 71 children had been adopted. Not only donations and gifts such as clothing and books, but letters were also received. University students and second-generation Japanese-Americans residing in Hiroshima helped children translate the letters.

“I feel sorry that our government destroyed Hiroshima completely, resulting in many orphans like you,” (pastor, April 25, 1950).

In the United States, where the atomic bombings were generally considered necessary, this letter clearly shows that citizens who felt remorse tried to lend a hand.³⁷ The moral adoption campaign, on which both Japanese and American citizens collaborated, was the first citizen’s movement bridging the gaps associated with the a-bomb.

Adoptions included children from childcare institutions as well as children from single-female parent families, and the number of adopted children totaled 409 at its peak in 1953. The total amount of donations reached nearly 17.47 million yen by the end of 1957.³⁸ Influenced by this, a domestic moral adoption campaign was started by Hiroshima Kodomo wo Mamorukai. 85 children were adopted and the campaign continued until 1964, when the youngest orphans turned 18.³⁹

The link between adopted children and American citizens faded as the children left the institutions due to the language barrier. Based on materials and letters kept in the Hiroshima Municipal Archives, my senior writer of the Chugoku Shimbun and the author carried a series featuring the feelings and history of those who were raised in the Institution for War Children under the title of “Moral Adoption in Hiroshima” in 1988.⁴⁰

22 people out of 38 whose whereabouts were established asked not to be named in the articles. Many people refused to be quoted with their real names, stating, “Looking back now, I really appreciate the moral parents who supported us even though we had never met before,” however, “I do not want to be considered an a-bomb orphan after such a long time,” and “I have never told even my husband about it.” Many lived far from Hiroshima.

The former war orphans, then around the age of fifty, their great efforts unknown to others, had managed to build homes and create peaceful lives for themselves. The mutual bonds that they had had since

graduating from Hiroshima Institution for War Children and Hiroshima City Doshinen remained strong. However, a reluctance to speak publicly about their experiences was glimpsed, even among those who had responded with their real names. They had an unenthusiastic view of victims' movements and the peace movement. Having been labeled "atomic bomb orphans" by newspapers and magazines from a sensitive age, they had been exposed to the public eye. They had borne feelings that could not be speculated about by the third party.

Looking back, on December 7th, 1947, the emperor's tour of Hiroshima, a visit to an area near the Institution for War Children became a nation-wide subject of conversation. Some orphans were pulled into the election campaign. At every life event, such as leaving the institution and starting a job, and also when they received gifts from the U.S., their experiences were told, mixing heartwarming stories with hardship. In 1954, when protests against atomic and hydrogen bombs flared up after the U.S. Castle Bravo nuclear test at Bikini Atoll, the a-bomb orphans were asked to take action and make comments. Although they were a-bomb victims whose parents were killed, they were left behind regarding support and measures against a-bomb victims which started in 1957, when the Act for Atomic Bomb Sufferers' Medical Care was implemented. People who had remained in evacuation areas outside of Hiroshima City were not eligible for Atomic Bomb Survivor's Certificate.

The current Law for the Protection of Atomic Bomb Victims, which came into effect on July 1st, 1995, sets aside money for the families of atomic bomb victims (provided they had an Atomic Bomb Survivor's Certificate) who died prior to March, 1969. Their grandchildren are eligible to receive 100,000 yen of government bonds for funeral ceremonies. Other war victims, who "understood better than anyone the tragedy of the atomic bomb" were not recipients.

6. Untold Traces

"The miracle of the underground room." A panel exhibited at Fukuromachi Elementary School Peace Museum has this explanation. It is about 460 meters from the hypocenter. The burned-out reinforced concrete West Building was partially preserved by the city and opened to the public in 2002. The fact that three children were saved from the bombing in the basement is testified to by their initials, "A," "O," and "T," as reported by the media at that time. However, what happened after the "miracle" was not mentioned.

All three of the children became atomic bomb orphans. The following is based on the author's previous reportage and on documents provided by the people themselves and their families.

Following his father's death from illness, "A," who was in the fourth grade, lost his mother, grandparents, and siblings—eight family members—in the atomic bombing. Taken in by his father's younger sister, who lived in Matsue, he graduated from middle school, and then began training at a sushi restaurant, where he both worked and lived. At the restaurant, whose owner would become his father-in-law, he earned his independence, as well as two children, a boy and girl. But in 1993, at the age of 57, he died of stomach cancer.

Watching TV programs about the atomic bombing, he would give vent to his feelings, "it was more than that". However, he dared not tell the details about the experience to his wife and his eldest son who took over his restaurant.

“T,” who escaped while holding his classmate A’s hand, lived half a life with continual changes. His younger brother, with whom he had gone to school together on that day (eight years old at the time) died. His mother (thirty years old), who made a living as a tailor (in place of his father, who had died of an illness), was missing. Then, he met a man from the Korean Peninsula who boarded at his home and started to live together in a barrack. However, it was washed away by typhoon Makurazaki on September 17, 1945, and he moved to Soul together with the man. T worked as a shoe polishing boy for American soldiers stationed there and slept in a straw bag in the street. He also experienced the Korean War, where bullets flew back and forth. Upon turning 20 years old, when he started to work and live at a bakery, he began to visit governmental offices and Soul to request repatriation, but it was refused since there were then no diplomatic relations.

“I miss my hometown.” A letter asking for a Certificate of Family Registration was delivered to Hiroshima City in 1958. Along with the cooperation from the mayor of Seoul, he finally managed to return to Japan, his heart’s wish, in June 1960, just before the diplomatic relationship was restored. He had completely forgotten the Japanese language, so the letter was written by a lady who treated him like her real son. Introduced by Hiroshima City, he worked at a Japanese sweet jelly shop, but he recalled “the days when his mother and brother had been alive no matter how he tried not to...”. Since his repatriation was reported in a highly-detailed manner, he was viewed with curiosity. Then, he moved to Osaka counting on connections with Korean nationals residing in Japan, and married at the age of 30. While working at a stainless process work factory, he brought up four sons and one daughter. After establishing a stable life, he looked for the lady who had supported him by taking an opportunity to visit Korea. In 1995, when he called for the information via a local TV show, he finally met a daughter of the deceased lady. T lives alone after losing his beloved wife in 2013, however, he is still in good health residing in Osaka. He turns 82 this year.

“O” was in the second grade. He lost six family members including his father (45 years old at that time) and his mother (44 years old) and siblings. He was separated from his older brothers and sisters, who had just returned from a student evacuation, and taken by the Hiroshima Prefectural Ninoshima Orphanage. On August 6, 1952, when the occupation by GHQ ended, he was selected as one of the five students who served at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Ceremony to unveil the memorial cenotaph for the Atomic Bomb Victims. After graduating from high school, he entered a photo school in Osaka with support from his elder brother. He ran a photo developing shop in Hiroshima and married in 1964. He visited his parents’ graves in a temple in Teramachi (present-day Naka Ward) together with his wife. After the rental contract with his building expired, O became a taxi driver but could not work for long due to health reasons. At the age of 34, he started to work as a city officer and became a father of two sons and then purchased a house. In 1991, he suffered from stomach cancer and undertook surgery to remove the organ.

“Nothing could be changed by telling.” He was unwilling to respond to interviews on the 50th anniversary of the bombing. Children who lost their parents unveiled the memorial epitaph for the atomic bomb victims. He would question and answer within himself: “How are they doing?” “They also don’t want to meet me.” In response to a request from Fukuromachi Elementary School, where they had read an article about him, he spoke about his a-bomb experience, but did not appear in front of the media again. O died at the age of 70 in 2007.

His wife said, “About three months before he passed away, he spoke passionately about his time as an orphan, which he had never spoken about before. I never thought about him passing away. I should have asked about his experiences more.” O must have struggled until the end of his life to find closure.

Here I would like to introduce a story about brothers who supported each other after the atomic bombing despite being separated, one in Japan, the other in Brazil. They were born in then-Zaimoku-cho, and their family ran a timber shop. The location is now the site of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum.

The elder brother was a freshman at Hiroshima City Daichi Kogyo High School (closed after the bombing). He was exposed to the radiation from the bomb near the Tsurumibashi Bridge when he was engaged in building removal (to prevent fire spreading in air raids). His mother (35 years old at the time) and younger brothers and sisters (4 family members) were killed. He himself and his younger brother (in the fourth grade at Nakanoshima Elementary School), who had been evacuated to Mirasaka-cho in a group evacuation, survived. His father died from illness, so there was no choice but to rely on his maternal grandmother, residing in Higashisenda-machi (present-day Naka Ward). The elder brother quit school and began to work and live in a joiner's shop. The younger brother ran away from his grandmother's home the year after his brother started work. He was found near Hiroshima Station and became one of the first 34 charges of Ninoshima Orphanage for War Children.

The elder brother encouraged his younger brother in letters. "I'm sorry that I said some unpleasant things to you when we last met. However, everything depends on how you look at it. Get your act together! Keep your chin up and move forward. Don't give ground to anyone. Do your best!"

The younger brother started working for farmer in Kakemachi (present-day Kitahiroshima-cho), who had been introduced by the orphanage. In 1959, when he turned 24, he moved to Brazil. The elder brother attended a farewell party conducted by a local men's association. That was the last time they saw each other. In 1956, Hiroshima Prefectural Governor Hiroo Ohara had sought immigration permission by visiting cities in Brazil and America for two months. He tried to expand job opportunities for sons and grandsons of farmers in Hiroshima, which was still on the path to recovery. Before the war, Hiroshima had been the prefecture to send the most immigrants overseas. In Brazil, the Association of Hiroshima People, consisting of 5,500 families, was established in 1955, the year before the Hiroshima governor's visit.⁴¹

The younger brother joined a farm in Sao Paolo run by people from Koda-cho. He cultivated a farm of nearly seven hectares, using horses, looked after the hen houses at night, and sold vegetables in a market on Saturdays. Eleven years after emigrating, he married the youngest daughter of his patron (the owner of the farm) and became a father of two. However, he did not talk much about his life in Hiroshima, telling his wife, a second-generation Japanese immigrant, only that he had a brother there. He also stopped communicating with his acquaintances in Kake-machi, to whom he only sent notification of his marriage. He passed away in 1986, at the age of 51.

I visited his wife, living in Sao Paolo, and she said, "My husband said, 'I prefer traveling around Brazil to visiting Hiroshima.' However, he visited a temple in Brazil on the anniversary of the bombing." She showed me her husband's grave. He often drank in order to forget the horror of the bombing.

I relate the story of the brothers because my wife received a letter asking to let the elder brother know about the death of the younger. The letter had been written by the chair of the Centro Cultural Hiroshima do Brasil on behalf of the younger brother's wife. However, the elder brother's name and address were uncertain, but the letter stated that the elder brother had resided in Zaimoku-cho before the atomic bombing. I visited acquaintances and relatives of the brothers and discovered that the elder brother had worked in Hiroshima City until 1973 as a professional joiner. However, because he had no children, and was a heavy drinker, the household had broken up, and the family had lost touch with him.

Finally, I was able to locate the elder brother, living in the Airin area, in Nishinari Ward, Osaka City, which is the largest area for daily wage workers. He was 54 years old.

“I thought my younger brother was doing well in Brazil. I wanted to visit him, if I had enough money, but things always came up...” He was stopped by tears.

He moved between construction sites in the Kansai Area, and his personal registration was in Airin Ward. “I messed up my eyes at work, and a day laborer recruiter introduced me to a cheap doctor.”

He never received an Atomic Bomb Survivors’ Certificate. After some drinking, he admitted, “Someone told me that I could make money by selling my family register document, knowing I didn’t want to collect the Atomic Bomb Survivors’ Certificate. I got sick of living in Hiroshima, since everything there is connected with the a-bomb.”

Citing one of the Chinese characters used in his younger brother’s name, he said, “My brother was happy. He got out of Japan, where he didn’t want to live, and he had children. My nephew in Brazil is the 17th generation...”

He asked me to send a picture to Brazil, and we took a picture in front of Tsutenkaku Tower. After the series of reports entitled “Brothers in the Hypocenter,” he started to get in touch with his relatives in Hiroshima, but again fell out of touch after a time. If he is in good health, he will turn 85 this year.

Conclusion

In a paper titled “Learning From Hiroshima’s Reconstruction Experience,” published as I reported for the Hiroshima Reconstruction and Peacebuilding Research Project in 2014, I wrote about Hiroshima’s reconstruction and citizens’ lives, and coverage of the atomic bombing. In the report, I didn’t refer to the history of a-bomb orphans. As an excuse, I said that I didn’t have enough space. I thought that I was not in a position to speak about it lightly, because each time I met those who had remained silent, I was shocked by what they managed to say.

The reason why I reported on it was that I wanted to convey a part of a-bomb orphans’ experience which could not be completely told. I also wanted to pass down a record which had not been recorded in history books, and which had been ignored. Upon reflection, I will write here that the media have largely not reported about the a-bomb experiences of people who are unwilling to talk about it.

Finally, I would like to introduce the words of a second-generation of Japanese-American who was exposed to radiation at the age of 15 and lost both parents and an elder sister and returned to America after graduating from Hiroshima Ichi High School (present-day Hiroshima Kokutaichi High School). This person became a seasonal contractor at a farm in California and also served in the U.S. army. After making friends in Hiroshima, he moved to the city and visited Peace Memorial Park instead of visiting his family’s graves. His former residence had been located near the spot where the cenotaph for a-bomb victims stands today.

“When I was discouraged in America, my parents appeared in my dream. I decided to live until the sum of my mother’s age and my father’s age. Now, I am past that age, but I will feel peaceful when I meet my parents in heaven,” he said calmly.

Hiroshima rose from the ashes and developed. Thanks to the endless efforts of its citizens, the city has become a metropolis of 1.9 million residents. However, the extremity of the experiences and the untold

feelings of the people who survived the terrible days after the atomic bombing are now recognized. When I heard the heavy expression of the second-generation Japanese American that he would achieve peace after he died, I felt the pain and the burden of human recovery. The war and the atomic bomb forced people to face this pain and this burden.

¹ General Affairs Department, Statistics Division, Minister's Secretariat Ministry of Welfare, Monthly Report Health and Welfare Statistics (Vol. 2, 2nd Issue), May 1958, p88

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³ Hiroshima Prefecture (ed.), *Hiroshimaken Sensaishi (Hiroshima Prefectural History of War Damages)*, Daichi Hoki Co. Ltd, 1988, p120

⁴ Hiroshima City (ed.), *Hiroshima Genbaku Sensaishi Dai 4 Kan (Hiroshima City History of Atomic Bomb Damages Vol. 4)*, Hiroshima City, 1971, P217

⁵ Hiroshima Kenchiji Takano Genshin Yukoku (Public Announcement by Hiroshima Municipal Governor Genshin Takano), August 7, 1945, owned by Hiroshima Municipal Archives

⁶ Yoshie Tomasu, "Hijiya Kokumin Meigo Shuyoujo Tookaichi Sensaiji Ikuseijo (Camp for Lost Children, Hijiya National School: Itsukaichi Institution for War Children), *Hiroshima Genbaku Sensaishi Dai 5: Shiryohen (Hiroshima City History of Atomic-bomb Damages Vol. 5 Statistics and Materials)*, 1971, pp647-648

⁷ *Hijiya Maigoji Shuyoujo Gaiyou (Overview of Hijiya Institution for Lost Children)*, September 2, 1945, owned by Hiroshima Municipal Archives

⁸ Hiroshima City "Genjousho" (report to the government), September 3, 1945, Shouwa 20nen Jiju Gosaken Roku (1945 Reports by Chamberlain), owned by Archives and Mausolea Department, Imperial Household Agency

⁹ *The Chugoku Shimbun*, December 13, 1945

¹⁰ *The Chugoku Shimbun*, February 12, 1946

¹¹ Hiroshima City Hall (ed.), *Hiroshima Shinshi: Gyouseihen (New History of Hiroshima City: Administration)*, Hiroshima City Hall, 1983, p132

¹² Cited above, "Hijiya Kokumin Meigo Shuyoujo Tookaichi Sensaiji Ikuseijo (Camp for Lost Children, Hijiya National School: Itsukaichi Institution for War Children), *Hiroshima Genbaku Sensaishi Dai 5: Shiryohen (Hiroshima City History of Atomic-bomb Damages Vol. 5 Statistics and Materials)*, p659

¹³ Hiroshima City Office (ed.), *Shinshu Hiroshimashi Shi Dai 4kan (New History of Hiroshima City vol.4)*, Hiroshima City, 1958, p640, *Hiroshima Genbaku Sensaishi Dai 4 Kan (Hiroshima City History of Atomic Bomb Damages Vol. 4)*, p5

¹⁴ The Education Ministry, *Gakusei Hyakunen Shi (Century History of Educational System)*, Teikoku Chihou Gyousei Gakkai, 1972, p567

¹⁵ *Shinshu Hiroshimashi Shi Dai 4kan (New History of Hiroshima City vol.4)*, p640

¹⁶ Hiroshima City Education Center (ed.), *Hiroshima-shi Gakkou Kyouiku Shi (Hiroshima Educational System History)*, Hiroshima City Education Center, 1990, p620

¹⁷ Hiroshima Institution for War Children, *Ano Touji (At That Time)*, August 1946, owned by an individual

¹⁸ Hiroshima Institution for War Children, *Nisshi (Journal)*, December 23, 1945-End of March, 1948, owned by an individual

¹⁹ *The Chugoku Shimbun*, January 16, 1946

²⁰ Referred to Ikusei Nisshi (Education Diary) and a serial report "Ikinuita 30nen (30 years of Survival)" appeared in the *Chugoku Shimbun* from August 7-16, 1975

²¹ Yoshinobu Yamashita, *Ikusei no Jakkann no Kiroku (Piece of Education Record)*, the *Chugoku Shimbun*, August 9, 1975

²² Hiroshima Prefecture (ed.), *Hiroshima Kenshi: Gendai (Hiroshima Prefectural History: Contemporary)*, Hiroshima Prefectural, 1983, pp1135-1136

²³ Hiroshima City Hall (ed.), *Genbaku Sensaishi Dai 1 kan (Hiroshima City History of A-bomb Damages vol.1)*, Hiroshima City Hall, 1971, pp211-212

²⁴ *The Chugoku Shimbun*, June 6, 1948

²⁵ *The Chugoku Shimbun* (ed.), *Honou no Hi kara 20 nen: Hiroshima no Kiroku 2 (20years after Fire of Flames: Record of Hiroshima 2)*, Miraisha, 1966, p296

²⁶ Hiroshima Prefectural Council of Social Welfare, *Hiroshima-ken Shakai Fukushi Jigyuu No Gaiyou (Report on Hiroshima Prefecture Social Welfare)*, March 1955, p88

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- ²⁷ Hiroshima Institution for War Children, *Youran Showa 24, 25 nendo ban (Overview:1949 and 1950)* owned by Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum
- ²⁸ Hiroshima Institution for War Children, *Jidou Meibo (List of Students)* December 26, 1945 to November 19, 1951
- ²⁹ Hiroshima Institution for War Children, *Youran Showa 24, 25 nendo ban (Overview:1949 and 1950)* owned by Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum
- ³⁰ Ichiro Moritaki, Genbakukoji (A-bom Orphans), *Genbaku to Hiroshima (A-bomb and Hiroshima)*, Heiwa to Gakumon wo Mamoru Daigakuin no Kai, 1957, p47
- ³¹ The survey result is recorded in *Genbaku to Hiroshima*
- ³² General Affairs Bureau, General Affairs Division, Hiroshima City (ed.), *Hisei Youran (City Guide)*, Hiroshima City Hall, 1955, pp114-117
- ³³ Hiroshima City Hall (ed.), *Hiroshima Shinshi Dai 1 kan (New Hiroshima History vol. 1)*, Hiroshima City Hall, 1961, pp655-656
- ³⁴ Norman Cousins, “Hiroshima: Four Years Later”, *The Saturday Review of Literature*, September 17, 1949, p30
- ³⁵ A letter from Norman Cousins addressed to Shinzo Hamai, October 11, 1949 (owned by Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum)
- ³⁶ A letter from Shinzo Hamai addressed to Norman Cousins, December 21, 1949 (owned by Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum)
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- ³⁹ Hiroshima Prefecture (ed.), *Genbaku 30 Nen (30 Years after the Atomic Bombing)*, Hiroshima Prefecture, 1976, pp264-265
- ⁴⁰ The Chugoku Shimbun, series of 17 reports and 3 featuring coverages on “Hiroshima Seishin Youshi (Moral Adoption in Hiroshima), July 13 to August 1, 1988
- ⁴¹ Centro Cultural Hiroshima do Brasil (ed.), *Burajiru Hiroshima Kenjinkai Hattenshi narabini Kenjin Meibo (Development History of Centro Cultural Hiroshima do Brasil and List of Hiroshima Residents)*, Centro Cultural Hiroshima do Brasil, 1967, p38