

A Nightmarish Time

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At first I will start on August 8th, I was working on a sling used for handling heavy goods at Mitsubishi Nagasaki Shipyard's Teramachi Assembly Plant back then. But on the 8th, I was digging a shelter and it took all night through until the morning of the 9th. In the early morning on the 9th, I took the first train from Nagasaki Station to Fujitsugunin, Saga and went to the evacuation address in Tagori, Ouramura [back then]. I was sleeping all day that day but in the evening, I heard that Nagasaki had been completely destroyed. I spent that night thinking it must be a false rumor.

The next day on the 10th, I took the first train from Bizen Oura Station and when I got to about 50 or 60 meters from Okusa Station, there was an air raid alarm and the train stopped temporarily. I took shelter inside the train and then the alarm was canceled and the train started to move and got to Michinoo Station before long. But because they said the train wouldn't go any farther from there, I got off and walked along the train track and when I went through Kirodooshi in Michinoo and caught a view of Nagasaki, it took my breath away and I was astonished. The northern part of Nagasaki was a burnt out ruins as far as the eye could see and I was shocked that the rumor I had heard yesterday evening was true. As I got close to the factory, there were people moaning, lying down using a rail as a pillow on both sides of train track and an uncountable number of people who were asking for water.

I covered my eyes from this horrible sight which was worse

than the painting of hell that I saw at a Buddhist temple when I was a young boy, and there was nothing I could do. I arrived at the factory which was my work place at about 10 am. I looked around inside the factory for the injured immediately, but fortunately there weren't any. After lunch, I went to a steelworks to look for my nephew [2nd junior high school volunteer corps] with my sister's husband, twice to the shelter at the back of Yanagawa Park and also went to look for someone else twice at Shiroyamamachi but couldn't find anyone who I was looking for. And everywhere I went was the horrible sight which I cannot describe and I cannot help crying with indignation, even today, which is 37 years on since then. Above is the general situation I saw on August 9.

I will write about my radiation situation next.

As I wrote at the beginning, I wasn't directly exposed to the bomb. On the 10th there was also burning hot weather. In that heat I was walking around as I wrote above, from about 11, my head started to hurt and my throat was dry and painful but I thought it was because of the scorching heat and I kept walking around patiently. At about 3 pm, I could not stand it any more so I waited for the train to go back to my evacuation home [I got home in the evening] and went to a doctor. I was told that it's a summer cold and I would get better soon. But I had a fever over 38 degrees every day and night and all of my whole body's joints ached for about a month. Then it finally got better at the end of the September.

The doctor didn't yet use the word radiation back then. When I think of it now, I'm aware that the radiation caused it. But it is consoling to think that I survived.

That's all about my atomic bomb experience.

I've had enough of these horrors which I could not bear to look at that were caused in a momentary flash.