



MAPW Fact File

Hiroshima and Nagasaki

May 2002

Hiroshima:

8.15am 6 August 1945

Little Boy – Uranium gun-type fission; . 50kg-70kg enriched uranium

Explosive yield: 15 000 tons TNT

90 000 killed immediately, 145 000 died within months

Obliterated 10km²

Shockwaves destroyed everything within a four-kilometre (2.5-mile) radius 10 seconds after the bomb exploded 567 metres above the ground.

Nagasaki:

9 August 1945

Fat Man – Plutonium fission; 6.2kg plutonium

Explosive yield: 21 000 tons of TNT

40 000 killed immediately, 75, 000 dead by end of 1945

Detonated 500 metres above Nagasaki and total destruction spread about 1km.

Plutonium

Japan's first encounter with this extremely toxic element came in the horrific bombing of Nagasaki on Aug 9, 1945. Unlike the uranium bomb that had been dropped on Hiroshima three days earlier, the Nagasaki bomb was made with plutonium. The 6.2 kilograms used in that bomb, however, pale in comparison to the 30,000-plus kilograms that Japan has accumulated through its plutonium-based civil power production program. (Japan News Today 14 April 2002)

Today's thermonuclear weapons are **100 to 1000 times more destructive** than the earlier bombs used on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

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Censorship in the nuclear age

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www.ippnw.org/IPPNWBooks.html#Bombay]

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(extract)

"Censorship denies people alternatives to the propaganda put out by Governments and hawks.

SHORTLY AFTER the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the United States' strategic bombing survey hired a Japanese film unit to record the physical and medical effects of the bomb. They were then edited to produce a documentary entitled "The Effects of the Atomic Bombs Against Hiroshima and Nagasaki". The finished film was shipped to the U.S. in May 1946 with much publicity. It was declared 'top secret' and locked in a vault, never to be shown to the American public. Only in the late 1960s was it returned to the Japanese.

Robert Jay Lifton and Greg Mitchell in their insightful book "Hiroshima in America: A Half Century of Denial" suggest why American officials were uncomfortable with the footage: "The Japanese newsreel team had gone into hospitals to document the burn and radiation effects. They not only photographed a burned-out trolley car, but the rows of bodies and bones that surrounded it. Even the footage of strictly physical phenomena featured troublesome imagery: radioactive sand clogging wells used for drinking water; dead stalks of rice seven miles from the hypocenter; the silhouette of a painter on a ladder, his brush outstretched, permanently etched onto the surface of a concrete wall by the flash of the bomb."

America's reluctance to deal with the human impact of the only cases of atomic bombing of civilian populations has persisted. In 1995, the Smithsonian museum in Washington had planned an exhibition featuring the "Enola Gay", the airplane that dropped the bomb on Hiroshima. The exhibition was to not only recall the events surrounding the bombing, but also examine the bomb's impact on people, and feature documents showing that high-ranking military leaders had doubts about dropping the bomb. In response, the American Air Force Association, supported by several right wing politicians, launched a major campaign attacking the exhibit as revisionist and defending America's use of the atomic bomb. The exhibition in its proposed form had to be cancelled."