

The Reality of Nuclear War Concealed by U.S. and the A-bomb Disease Certification Class-action Lawsuits

Classified Hiroshima and Nagasaki: The U.S. Nuclear Test and Civil Defense Program (Gaifusha, 2008)

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In February 2008 I published a book entitled *Fuin sareta Hiroshima/Nagasaki* [*Classified Hiroshima and Nagasaki: The U.S. Nuclear Test and Civil Defense Program*] (Gaifusha, 2008).

This book reflects the research I have carried out in Hiroshima since my appointment at HPI, and the doctoral dissertation which was submitted to Doshisha University in 2003. For this book I drew mainly upon

U.S. government documents collected at the National Archives at College Park, Maryland U.S.

Drawing upon Manhattan Project records and contemporary newspaper articles, Chapter 1 examined the activities of the U.S. government and military regarding the collection of medical information in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and public announcements about the impact of the A-bomb during the period of the occupation of Japan.

As part of the Manhattan Project, in 1943 the U.S. government set up the “Radioactive Poisons Subcommittee,” and conducted a study on the military use of radioactive materials. A report of the subcommittee explained “the factors involved in employing radio-active materials effectively” are “highly persistent and can contaminate an area for many months. Immediate decontamination could take place only at the sacrifice of personnel.”

Following the dropping of the A-bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Japanese government claimed that the A-bomb was a more brutal weapon than poison gas which had been prohibited by international law.

On September 5, 1945, following the start of the occupation, Wilfred Burchett’s report published in the British *Daily Express* stated that “People are still dying mysteriously and horribly—people who were uninjured in the cataclysm—from an unknown something which I can describe as the atomic plague.” On the other hand, Brigadier General Thomas F. Farrell, deputy to the Head of Pacific Command Major General L.R. Groves, “denied categorically that it produced a dangerous lingering radioactivity in the ruins of the town or caused a form of poison gas at the moment of explosion.” (*New York Times*, September 13, 1945). That is to say, he denied the existence of residual radiation which occurred one minute after the detonation of the A-bomb.

The purposes of the U.S. government in making such a statement which underestimated the influence of the A-bomb were to reject the Japanese government’s claim that the use of the A-bomb was against international law, and to make practicable the landing of occupation troops in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. On the other hand, the U.S. Military Joint Commission for the Investigation of the Effects of the Atomic Bomb in Japan and the U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey collected, brought to the U.S. and classified many atomic bomb materials.

Chapter 2 focused on the U.S. government’s declassification policy of the A-bomb issue through the use of

documents from the Manhattan Project and the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC). Before the commencement of Operation Crossroads, the U.S. nuclear test held in the Pacific in the summer of 1946, Groves recommended the publication of the Manhattan Engineer District Report, the U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey Report and a report written by the British Mission to Japan. However, at the same time he stated that “No authoritative statement on radiation and its effects can be made by anyone until the completion of the analysis of the available data by the Joint Medical Commission.”

After the nuclear test was conducted, due to the serious contamination caused by the second test, a further test was cancelled. It was recommended that “if it was desirable from a Naval standpoint to do so, that all pictures and written material be censored and edited by someone familiar with security and the technical information involved.” U.S. Navy personnel cleaned the contaminated battleships used for the test, but it was nevertheless admitted that “Immediate decontamination could take place only at the sacrifice of personnel.”

Chapter 3 discussed the Civil Defense Program of the early 1950s. The U.S. government explained how people could survive a nuclear attack by means of a “Duck and Cover” approach and ignored the issue of the impact of residual radiation.

Chapter 4 discussed the 1954 Bikini Atoll nuclear test and the subsequent Civil Defense Program, drawing upon documents from the Federal Civil Defense Administration (FCDA) and AEC. Following the exposure of the Lucky Dragon crew members to fallout from a nuclear test, the dangers of fallout began to be widely understood. In 1955 FCDA and AEC claimed that “You can survive” even the dangers from fallout through inviting civilians to a nuclear test conducted in Nevada. At the time, AEC was still denying the existence of fallout (residual radiation) in the cases of Hiroshima and Nagasaki due to the fact that the detonation of the A-bomb had taken place at high altitude.

Chapters 1 to 4 reveal that the U.S. government consistently underestimated the influence of the radiation caused by the A-bomb and based on such public statements, constructed the Civil Defense Program.

Following the submission of this dissertation in March 2003, newspapers reported about A-bomb disease certification class-action lawsuits toward the Japanese government. I was very surprised to learn that the so-called “science” which had been produced by the U. S. government, and which ignored the influence of residual radiation, was still being applied in the Japanese government’s certification of A-bomb disease. The standards and logic produced by the “perpetrator” were still being actually applied to the “victims.”

It is clear that “data” collected from *Hibakusha* were being collected for the purpose of preparing for future nuclear war. On the other hand, their appeals were ignored in the name of “science” which did not recognize the existence of residual radiation. Sixty-three years have already passed since the dropping of the atomic bomb. Now it is time to “judge” this event for the sake of human beings and not for militaristic purposes. I hope that this book will contribute towards this “judgment” and eventually assist in the procurement of justice.

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