

PAID PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Remembering the Atomic Bomb Victims of Nagasaki, Japan



Yosuke Yamahata; August 10, 1945; Nagasaki, Japan

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On this day 77 years ago, the second nuclear weapon used in warfare was dropped on Nagasaki, Japan

At 11:02 am, the bomb detonated at a height of 1,640 feet above the city with an explosive yield equal to 20,000 tons of TNT. The radius of total destruction was about one mile, with fires across the northern part of Nagasaki and two miles to the south.

Of the 260,000 citizens living in Nagasaki, approximately 40,000 people died instantaneously and another 40,000 perished within five months from the combined effects of three components of physical energy generated by nuclear fission: blast wind (pressure), radiant heat, and ionizing radiation.

Our remembrance of Nagasaki victims is critical for understanding today's threat of nuclear weapons. Our concern is not as much about World War II as about the unimaginable annihilation of innocent populations in a future war involving nuclear-armed nations. We face a nuclear weapons threat that also involves the risks of an accident, an accidental launch or unintended launch, and use by terrorists.

Nuclear weapons are the most destructive, inhumane, and indiscriminate weapons ever created. They are unlike any other weapons in the scale of the devastation they cause and with their uniquely damaging radioactive fallout. A single nuclear bomb detonated over a large city could kill millions of people. The use of dozens or hundreds of nuclear bombs would disrupt the global climate, causing widespread famine.

Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor is located a few miles from the cities of Silverdale and Poulsbo and is homeport to the largest concentration of deployed nuclear weapons in the United States. The nuclear warheads are deployed on Trident D-5 missiles on SSBN submarines and are stored in an underground nuclear weapons storage facility on the base.

There are eight Trident SSBN submarines deployed at Bangor. One Trident SSBN submarine at Bangor is estimated to carry about 90 nuclear warheads. The W76-1 and W88 warheads at Bangor are equal respectively to 90 kilotons and 455 kilotons of TNT in destructive force. Each of the submarines at Bangor are deployed with a destructive force equal to more than 900 Nagasaki-sized nuclear bombs.

Our proximity to the largest number of deployed strategic nuclear weapons in the U.S. puts us in range of a dangerous local and international threat. When citizens become aware of their role in the prospect of nuclear war, or the risk of a nuclear accident, the issue is no longer an abstraction. Our proximity to Bangor demands a deeper response.

Remembering the atomic bomb victims of Nagasaki is essential to preventing the use of nuclear weapons from happening again.

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