

My Feelings about the tragedy

Ms. Tsugi Sakamoto

On the day the atomic bomb was dropped I was at 33 Fukuromachi. It was near the old Koukaido building.

It was 3 km from the hypocenter, 10 minutes from Nagasaki Station and 5 to 6 minutes from the prefectural office. On that day I was working at Mitsubishi's Takenokubo Lumbermill. I went to work but because there was no one there to operate the machines, I went home as the air raid alarm was called off.

Because I happened to be the one in charge of Kokubou Fujinkai [A woman's political action group called the Society for National Defense] in the neighborhood, I was totaling up the membership fees. Suddenly I was surprised by an extreme flash and loud booming sound and ran outside. As it was, the house was leaning over and the street was covered with fragments of roof tiles and glass.

Some of the people on the street were bleeding from their heads and their hair was stuck onto their faces with blood, some were burned like black people, some were half naked because the blast had torn off their clothes and from their torn clothing, their thin skin was hanging down.

When I realized this was such a grave matter, I saw the master of Chuo Onsen [natural spring baths] in our neighborhood walking around naked and covered with blood. I and my sister in law had gone to Chuo Onsen to pick up some Kimono and Futons so we took him to 2 or 3 hospitals but were told "This isn't an emergency aid station!!" and were refused. I then remembered that Shinkouzen Elementary School had become an aid station and

we rushed him to the school.

At the school, many injured people were lined up. We went in front of the line to ask the doctor directly, and because they were treating the most badly injured first, he was treated immediately.

He said his body still hurt, so I picked up some cloth from the street and cleaned blood off his body. Then took him to the neighborhood shelter at Osuwasama and asked his neighbor to look after him before going home.

Shortly after that, my brother in law came home with bandages on his head and face, something heavy had fallen onto him and his whole back was injured like a bee hive. He was at a factory in Saiwaimachi when the bomb hit. My husband was working at Kawanami shipyard [in Kouyagimachi] and as my brother's wife had gone on an errand to Daikokumachi there was nothing I could do, so I put up a notice on the front door saying "Gone to Atagomachi", then I went to my home town, Kamiatago, with my first aid kit and some food in each hand.

My husband came back and after dinner we went to our home but the house was burned down and we hadn't evacuated anything, so from that moment we became penniless. We were lost and went to live with my parents in Atagomachi. I couldn't get to sleep, idly watching the town burning till late at night.

The next day, I went to Daikokumachi to look for my brother's wife with my sister, but from the prefectural office we had to skip along because the road was hot and the power lines were melted down and were strewn along the street like the white noodles running along water in bamboo channels that we eat. On our way we saw horse carts burning and dead horses with their stomachs coming out all over the place next to the carts. It

was terrible just like a living hell. The neighbor told us that when they went to the Urakami area, there were many people calling out "Help, help!"

I would never want to experience such a tragedy again. We found out later that my brother's wife had gone to Tanakabara with her parents and was safe.

[Location at Bombing: Fukuromachi]