

# My Memory of the Atomic Bombing

Mr. Den Taguchi

At 10 am on August 9<sup>th</sup>, 1945, there was a customary briefing session from an engineer called Yamaguchi about his completed business trip to Hiroshima shipyard at the turbine drafting room on the fifth floor of engine construction design department in Nagasaki shipyard. On this occasion, he told us "An especially big bomb was dropped in Hiroshima and the whole city was damaged greatly. I escaped more dead than alive and came straight back to Nagasaki, but the situation of my colleague Satoyama engineer's life is unknown." [Satoyama engineer's death was certified duty later on] I noted that the battles on the main islands were finally getting close.

At that time, I had been scheduled to visit Saiwaimachi Machine Factory to inspect the parts we had ordered for the turbine. As I went down to the entrance and was just about to leave, I felt a strange blast that I can't describe and I lay down flat on the floor at once. Right after that, I felt a heavy pressure on my back and wasn't able to move for a time.

Oh, dear! I was really worried that the wall had fallen on to me, but because I was totally conscious, I was able to muster up all my power to raise my back up and it moved slightly. So I crawled out for my life desperately, and found out it was the big shoe cupboard at the hallway that had fallen on me. Thanks to this, I had no injury.

I was the design department's group leader for first aid back then, and I intuitively knew this was not an ordinary situation, so I hurried back to the 5<sup>th</sup> floor. And on my way, I saw the tele-

phone operator Araki from the first floor crouched down on the stairs and he was bleeding, it seemed like he had injured his head. I asked people nearby to take him to a hospital, and then I ran up to the fifth floor. Half of the fifth floor was the salary department for workers, but because of the blast, notes were scattered and clerks were gathering them in confusion.

At the turbine department, because one of the Joshi Teishintai [Women's Volunteer Corps] had been injured on her cheek by a window frame, I took her to the hospital on a stretcher right away. Then there was an order from headquarters to go right away and provide relief at the Saiwaimachi factory, which had been completely destroyed.

I organized a "suicide squad" of 10 people and left for Saiwaimachi factory with a first aid kit. But on our way, we saw a wagon whose horse had been killed by the bomb, and an ice company's container that had been blown over and killed the man under it near an ice company in Asahimachi. The American airplane was still circling over our head with a roar, so I told everyone to take shelter under the Asahi Bridge for a time.

After that, we hurried to Saiwaimachi but when we looked ahead from Inasa Bridge we concluded that it was too difficult to go ahead because of the bursting flames, so we made a detour to Nakanoshima. Then I heard a strange cracking sound from a big warehouse so I looked in and saw it was the canned food inside popping. I feel a bit guilty about it in some way but I took some of them and put them on the stretcher and went back. How delicious that canned food was, I still can't forget the taste from that time.

About a week after the atomic bomb, people who didn't even get injured started getting a yellow rash around their lips one by

one and they suffered, and then they died... It was a terrifying nightmare.

[Location at Bombing: Mizunouramachi]