

Ray & Akiko Wilson's comments, about 7 p.m., at the August 6, 2006
Bloomington-Normal Citizens for Peace and Justice ceremony and picnic.

In the late 1930s, there was an amazing revelation, the discovery nuclear fission. When nuclear fission occurs the energy released was 100,000 – 1,000,000 times greater than energy released from chemical reactions. The dream of abundant energy for all was near. But those dreams became nightmares, first for the Japanese, then for the world.

Recall walking out into the sun earlier this week. How hot it was, though the sun was 93,000,000 miles away.

Nuclear war was first initiated in 1945, when a nuclear fission bomb exploded above the center of Hiroshima City, with its 400 yard diameter fireball only 400 yards away from the people below. 4 football fields. The Sun's surface temperature is 5,500 deg C. The bomb's surface temperature was 7,700 deg C, 2,200 C deg hotter than the sun. 400 yards above.

For anyone caught out in the open, exposed to this heat, 7 calories/sq.cm., causes 3rd degree burns, total skin death. Out to 2 km radius. Think what it must have been like at hypocenter where it was an unimaginable 99 cal/sq.cm. Under such conditions skin melts or chars.

The heat and blast of this single small primitive nuclear bomb destroyed 13 sq. km. = 5.0 sq. miles of Hiroshima.

The death toll that day was 70,000. After two weeks it had reached 126,000. By Dec 31 there were 140,000 dead, large numbers of women, children, elderly; and Allied prisoners of war; we knew they were there. Add 70,000 at Nagasaki, the death toll became more than 210,000 at the end of 1945. By 1950 there were perhaps some 250,000 or more killed by these two bombs.

Chemical and biological attacks would have been more humane. The United States was not signatory to the 1925 Geneva Protocol which condemned the use of chemical weapons.

The dying did not stop in 1950. Instead it marked the onset of a new battle against bomb induced leukemia and other radiation sicknesses. In October 1955, 10 years after 1945, 12 year-old Sadako Sasaki was the 14th child to die in her junior high school that year. What would it mean to have 14 Bloomington Jr. High students die this year?

All of the present U.S. bombs are now "Super" bombs, hydrogen bombs. The largest bomb detonated (Soviet) was almost 4000 times more powerful than the Hiroshima bomb.

In the 50 years following 1945, there were created in world arsenals *the equivalent* of 70 Hiroshima size bombs per day. Saturdays and Sundays included, 70 each day for 50 years.

And yet it is reasonable to assume that most congressmen and White House people do not understand this Nuclear Madness. They do not truly understand what happens in nuclear war – nor do their wives. Where would they have learned about the truth, when it was not revealed through the photographs until some 22-30 years afterwards, and then who cared?

I hope you all will continue your efforts to learn and to educate others about the truth of nuclear war, and continue your efforts to bring about a world with peace, fairness, and justice for all people, not just for us.

A good reference is Naomi Shohno's, THE LEGACY OF HIROSHIMA – Its Past, Our Future, Kosei, Tokyo, 1986. Used copies, sometimes as inexpensive as \$0.99 at Amazon.

Hello. I am Akiko Wilson. I am from Hiroshima.

In Japan they say “Cranes live one thousand years and turtles live ten thousand years.” Japanese people love cranes for their beauty and consider them a symbol of long life and good luck. People fold one thousand cranes for family or friends who are sick, to wish their recovery.

Paper cranes came to be considered a symbol of peace 10 years after the Atomic Bombing of Hiroshima. Sadako Sasaki was exposed to Atomic Bomb radiation when she was 2. She was in good health for 10 years, and then leukemia, cancer of the blood, struck her down. She fought with the disease for 8 months. She kept folding paper cranes, more than 1000, and prayed that she would get better.

After Sadako passed away at the age of 12, friends started a movement to build a monument for Sadako and other children who were killed by the Atomic Bomb. That is how paper cranes became the symbol of peace. Many people in Japan and from the world send paper cranes to Hiroshima to wish for peace. Here (at this picnic) are about 800 paper cranes folded by people in this community.

We are going to make paper lanterns and float them. In Hiroshima people floated many paper lanterns in the Motoyasu River by the A-Bomb dome on the evening of August 6, early this morning our time. You can easily find photos of paper lantern floating in Hiroshima using Google.

In Japan we have the Obon Festival from August 13-August 15. This is the time the spirits of ancestors and family come back to us. In Hiroshima we decorate our family cemeteries with paper lanterns. In some area in Japan, lanterns are floated to send the spirits back to their world.

A few years after the Atomic bombing, the survivors and citizens started to float lanterns praying that their family and friends killed by A-bomb may rest in peace. On August 6, from the extreme heat and pain, people who were burned by the atomic bomb jumped into the rivers and died. Hiroshima is on a delta created by 7 rivers. On that day all the rivers were filled with people who tried to escape from the heat and pain.

In Hiroshima people write the victim's names and their own name on the lanterns. Others write messages for peace. They float them with their prayers.