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## IV. HIROSHIMA AND NAGASAKI

### HISTORY OF TWO CITIES

On the 6th of August 1945, the town Hiroshima in Japan was hit by a blow of fate, that never could have been imagined before. At a quarter past eight a.m. the US bomber B 29 opened its bomb bay. It threw the first atomic bomb on an inhabited area. This weapon for mass extermination was a bomb made of Uranium. It was called 'little boy' by the military. Its explosive force was equivalent to 20000 tons of TNT. Within seconds about 80000 people were killed, whose corpses could be identified. 14000 people vanished without a trace. 100000 people died of their wounds in the following days. In a split second a fireball of 500 meters in diameter with a temperature of 500 Million degrees Celsius as well as a blast of 800 km per hour transformed the town into a desert region.

On the 9th of August, 1945, three days after the destruction of Hiroshima, the air force bombed with a second atomic weapon the town of Nagasaki. This time it was a bomb made of Plutonium. It was called 'fat man' and blasted at two minutes after 11 o'clock three kilometers away from the targeted area. Within seconds it killed 70000 people. The explosive force was equal to 22+2 kilotons of TNT.

### RADIOACTIVITY:

When an atomic bomb explodes, it releases gamma rays as well as neutron rays. Gamma rays are equivalent to very short wave X rays. The neutron rays are not loaded and can penetrate deeply. Into the human body they can induce radioactivity in some tissues.

Phosphorus, that is normally in the bone in form of Phosphates, can so be transformed by the neutrons in radioactive Phosphorus P 32. This sends beta rays into the marrow. By the action of these weapons the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were contaminated. The helpers, too, who came in the following weeks, were contaminated and were victims for generations. The radioactive fallout was widely spread by the wind.

### POLITICAL BACKGROUND:

The USA have developed these weapons in the secret Manhattan Project, always fearing, that the Nazis will be faster. They were tested for the first time in Los Alamos on the 16<sup>th</sup> of July. Officially they used those weapons as early as in August because they wanted to force the Japanese into surrender, although many people think, they wanted to test the weapons even on humans as a revenge for the invasion of Pearl Harbour and to demonstrate their power against the Soviets.

### METHOD: MEET WITH YOUR MAYOR

**Material:** you find everything on [www.mayorsforpeace.org](http://www.mayorsforpeace.org)

**Time and location:** check quickly if your mayor is part of the network: if not there is work for you!

City mayors have played an active part in the global campaign to abolish nuclear weapons. Over 2000 mayors in more than 100 nations are part of Mayors for Peace—a network dedicated to preventing nuclear weapons from being used again. It's led by the mayor of Hiroshima. To find out whether your mayor is part of the network, visit the website ([www.mayorsforpeace.org](http://www.mayorsforpeace.org)). And if he or she isn't listed, request a meeting! Materials for joining you can find also on the website

- Prepare questions: Before the meeting, brainstorm some questions you would like to ask your mayor to determine how he or she feels about nuclear weapons.
- Know your stuff: Find out more about the network so that you can answer any questions your mayor might have. You'll need to sell the idea to him or her!
- Be positive: Explain to your mayor that he or she can make a big difference by getting your city behind the cause. Joining is important but easy.
- Follow it up: If your mayor agrees to take part, make sure you follow it up after the meeting to ensure it happens.

*Source: this method is from ICAN Material "Learn Peace" developed by Tim Wright.*