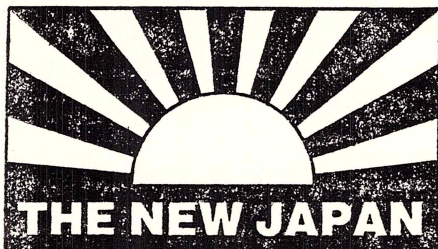


Times
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On August 6, 1945, the first atomic bomb

The forgotten

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40 years after the end of war - and on the fate of thousands of Koreans among the casualties

In the first of a three-part series, David Watts reports on Japan's changing attitudes

Mrs Kim Pil Ea kneels on a hospital bed, her grey hair pulled back, her thoughts lost in the 40 years of suffering since the world's first atomic bomb attack.

Mrs Kim was a young Korean working in Hiroshima, the general headquarters for western Japan, when the bomb fell. Like thousands of other Koreans she had been brought in from the then colony to bolster the war effort. In Hiroshima she bore four sons.

When the B29 bomber Enola Gay appeared over the city on that cloudless August day she was barely a mile from its target. The searing heat after the bomb struck burned off the breasts. Her husband and one of her sons died immediately in the hurricane-force blast.

As with so many other Koreans forced to take Japanese names, the bombing did more than shatter her world and drive her close to madness - she was suddenly Korean again. She returned to her homeland with her three surviving sons but was so weakened she could no longer care for them and gave them up for adoption.

For the next three years she was bedridden, hovering between death and a life forever circumscribed by suffering. Somehow she survived the Korean War to seek out her children again and live with one of them. Yet she is still to some extent, one of the forgotten victims of the atomic bombing.

Forty years after the Second World War the Japanese government cultivated the notion that only Japanese suffered the terrors of nuclear attack. No one knows precisely who was in the city at the time - records having disappeared when the city hall was vaporized - but there were at least 50,000 Koreans in Hiroshima that day, as

well as Chinese, Malaysians, Dutch and American prisoners of war, Germans and Russians.

"When the bomb fell these people were Japanese but when the war ended, and it was time to go home, they were foreigners", says Dr Torataro Kawamura, a physician of extraordinary devotion and self-sacrifice who has spent the last 14 years caring for the Korean victims of the bomb.

At the 40th anniversary ceremonies on August 6 there will be no officially invited representatives of Korean or Taiwanese victims when Mr Leonard Bernstein conducts musicians from 14 countries at the conclusion of his musical journey for peace.

Mr Kanuhiko Kaneda, of the Hiroshima city government, says: "If the Koreans come we will welcome them". That ignores the fact that to leave Korea, a foreign invitation is necessary to qualify for foreign currency. To that Mr Kaneda counters: "We really don't know who we should invite".

Mrs Kim is one of more than 240 Korean victims who have had free treatment thanks to Dr Kawamura. Transport costs are shared between the governments of Japan and Korea, but even the modest help from the South Korean government may end next year through a mixture of national pride and apparent callousness. Some government officials apparently believe all genuine atom bomb victims are dead and do not like to admit that South Korea cannot care for any residual medical problems.

Even in Hiroshima, which has won so much world-wide sympathy, Koreans did not benefit from the feeling of solidarity that the bombing engendered.

For Japanese victims it is relatively easy to qualify for "A-bomb cards", which entitle holders

Doubts on eve of deadline

Eurofighter crisis looms

29/7/45

By Rodney Cowton, Defence Correspondent

In the next few days the fate of the five-nation £20 billion project to build a new European twin-engine fighter aircraft is expected to be decided.

The scheme, the largest multinational military collaboration programme yet attempted, has been the subject of extraordinarily intense activity in recent days as attempts have been made to bridge the gap between the requirements of France and those of the other countries involved - Britain, West Germany, Italy and Spain.

Herr Manfred Wörner, the West German Defence Minister, has repeatedly said there must be a decision by the end of this month.

Last week Herr Wörner went to Paris and had talks with President Mitterrand and Mr Charles Hernu, the French Defence Minister, to persuade them to accept a compromise on engine power, wing area, management structure and location of the project.

However, the gap between the French position and that of the other nations is so great that it seems unlikely it can be bridged.

On Friday there was talk of Mr Michael Heseltine, the British Defence Secretary, going to Paris for talks, but this prospect seemed yesterday to have receded.

The problem lies in the French need for a relatively light ground-attack aircraft, whereas the other four nations want a bigger, more powerful

fighter, which can dominate the skies.

The French have also been demanding that the project be based in France and that they should lead it.

In Britain there has been apprehension that if the five-nation project collapsed, West Germany and France might, because of wider political considerations, collaborate in building an aircraft closer to French requirements, though this would have been opposed by the West German Defence Ministry and Air Forces.

This danger is now thought to have receded, and it is believed in London that the West German Cabinet is now backing Herr Wörner in insisting on the heavier and more powerful aircraft.

Ghostly reminder: ruins of a

to special health allowances and regular checks. But only a small number of Koreans have them. No Korean names appear on the roll call of victims and the memorial to the Koreans is outside the Hiroshima Peace Park, across the Motoyasu River on a busy corner.

Japan's claims to be uniquely qualified to speak on nuclear war, as the only country to suffer a nuclear attack, are devalued by the attitude of other Japanese towards victims of the bombing and not merely those who are Korean.

As one local journalist puts it: "Peace and A-bombs don't sell newspapers. A-bomb stories only make the local editions of the newspapers, not the national ones." One recent three-part series on the

SPECTRUM

b was dropped on a city. For many, the suffering continues

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victims of Hiroshima



to temple, children's park and army hospital - the heart of the blast that struck Hiroshima in 1945

After the bomb fell, they decided to be kinder to each other. On that score they have not done well

become politicized. Residence qualifications have been extended over the years, partly through greater recognition of the effects of the bomb but also as a means of winning votes for conservative politicians.

The conditions which qualify Koreans for the cards have been slightly relaxed: they now need to have only one Japanese witness to prove that they were affected by the bomb - previously they needed two. But even the single witness is a virtual impossibility for most of them. Korean workers were treated for the most part as slave labour. Their contact with Japanese was minimal, and they often lived in ghetto areas without normal family and other connections.

There will be few Hiroshima victims at the August 6 ceremony in the peace park, especially among the Koreans. "Most people don't go because they feel their private feelings are being exploited in a very public way", says a local expert of the problem. "There are bad memories. The way people died was just so cruel and gross. Many don't even have the bones of relatives. Whole families were sometime buried beneath the rubble of a house. They simply couldn't get their families out, yet they feel riddled with guilt that they didn't rescue them".

Most survivors will come long before the official ceremony starts at 8.15am, the time the bomb fell. Then they will disappear back into their private world of grief and pain.

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TOMORROW

How the role of Japanese women is changing - slowly

Korean victims in one of the national dailies ran only in the Hiroshima editions.

"This was a military city before the war. They were militaristic people. But after the bomb fell they decided to do things differently and be kinder to each other. On that score they have not done well."

According to the standard work *Hiroshima and Nagasaki: the physical, medical and social effects of the atomic bombings*, there were 0,000 Koreans in Hiroshima at the time. Of these 20,000 survived and 5,000 returned to Korea. Church sources in the city say that fewer than 2,500 have the A-bomb card in Japan today and in Korea there are only 250 card holders. It was not until the mid-1960s

that the extent of the problem in Korea was realized by a visitor from Japan who saw the miserable conditions of the A-bomb survivors in slums around Seoul. Korea had no system of treatment for them. In 1971 Dr Kawamura went to Seoul, where he was born, with other doctors to examine the situation.

"At that time in Japan nobody knew that there were these people in Korea. In one week we saw 300 people and became convinced of the hopelessness of the situation. Many of the people had never been attended at all.

"The government's view was that these were foreigners, but I realized that we had to do something for them. I remember talking to representatives of the Korean A-

bomb Association, who said 'Can't you call these people over to Japan?' The very next year we did it".

At first he brought them from Korea at his own expense, paying for their fares and the stay at his private hospital. They are the lucky ones who are strong enough to travel. "The really tough cases cannot leave." For the unfortunate ones, Dr Kawamura for years has given up his annual holiday to travel to Korea and treat them.

Ironically, those Koreans who had sufficient money to go home after the war were soon plunged into the Korean War and could get no treatment. The poor who stayed behind in Japan could get treatment - if they qualified. The issue of A-bomb cards has