

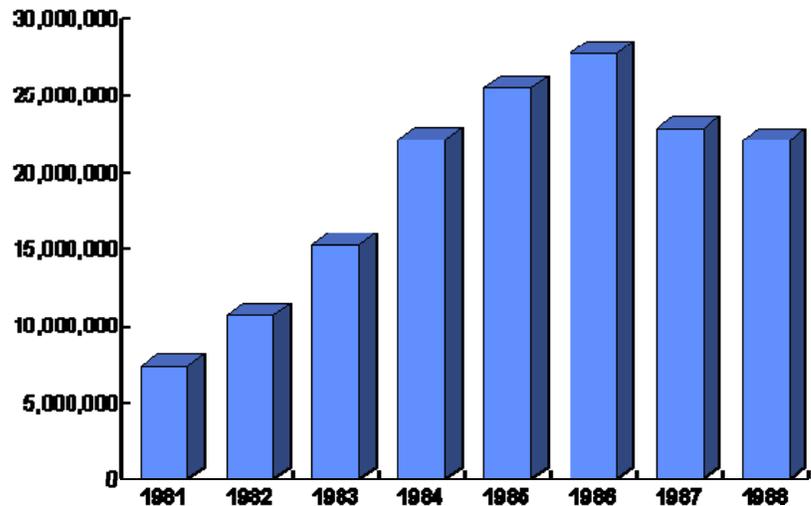
JAPAN-BASHING (TO COIN A PHRASE)

READING 1: JAPAN'S PROPAGANDA BATTLE WITH US PROTECTIONISM

By 1970 Japan was exporting \$19 billion worth of goods worldwide, \$6 billion of it to the USA. Honda and Yamaha only began exports to the US in 1960. By 1966, Honda, Yamaha and Suzuki between them notched up 85% of all US sales. In **1964**, Toyota shipped 50 Coronas to the US. In **1974** Toyota sold 238,135 cars in the US. In **1984**, Toyota sold 482,790 cars. In 1984 Japanese car exports to the US totalled 1.85 million. In 1985 Japan announced a 25% increase in car exports to the US: another 450,000 cars.

At the same time, the numbers for VCR imports to the US were staggering:

HOWEVER, IN TRADE TALKS BETWEEN JAPAN AND THE US, the most sensitive issue was car imports. In the US, the Japan Lobby argued Japan's case first, through the United States-Japan Trade Council (USJTC) and the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO), then in the 1970s and 80s through the Japan Economic Council. The Japan Lobby argued that American



consumers wanted Japanese cars because they were cheap (the \$ was strong), and they were good cars made in factories that were more modern than US factories because they were new (they did not say that the US had bombed all the old ones, but that was the implication). Japanese cars were not the product of cheap, sweated labour: Japanese wages were lower than US car workers' wages, but the US and Japanese standard of living were comparable.

THE US PROTECTIONIST MOVEMENT GREW AS JAPANESE IMPORTS INCREASED. In Washington, the Japan Lobby in Washington racked their brains for a way to stop or weaken the protectionist cause and its exponents. Here's what they came up with.



READING 2: The Japan Lobby in the US and the 'Japan-bashing' campaign



IN THE EARLY 1980s, Robert Angel, President at the Japan Economic Council, came up with one of the most successful campaigns ever used in a propaganda war: '**Japan-bashing**'

The idea of Japan as victim has a long pedigree, nourished some part of the way by Western guilt, and nurtured by the experiences and memories of many Japanese. This is an unspent currency, as we can see from the success of Angel's elegant and ingenious contribution to Japan's informal diplomacy, the expressions *Japan-bashing* and *Japan-basher*.

Angel designed these terms to deflect the force of criticism of Japan by raising doubts about the motivation of the critic. If you criticised Japan, you were a "Japan-basher". You were "Japan-bashing". This meant that you probably disliked Japan and the Japanese in an illogical, visceral way. You might be a simple racist. You might want Japan to suffer more than they already had done. You might just have a psychological problem. Who wanted to be a Japan-basher?

In the 1980s, *Japan-bashing* and *Japan-basher* crept into reportage on Japan as if they had always been around. They travelled much the same route as advertising, in much the same way that someone who does not believe in advertising will declare that "I don't care much for the taste, but by God, a pint of Guinness does you a power of good". This at a time when *Guinness does you good* and variations such as *My Goodness! My GUINNESS!* constituted the copy platform for Guinness advertising worldwide. This is how coined phrases get into ordinary conversation and professional shop talk: journalists and intellectuals are no more discriminating than the man in the pub when it comes to telling the planted fact from the common observation.

Academics may be the most naïve of all readers. In the 1990s, *Japan-bashing* began cropping up in academic discussions of Japan. Phil Hammond, for example, made frequent use of the term in his collection *Cultural Difference, Media Memories* (1997) using *Japan-bashing* as shorthand for the unfair criticism of Japan. This intelligent, well-intentioned author of a book designed to take apart and analyse key perceptions of Japan was as susceptible as any journalist to Angel's simplistic construction:

"Some argued that the Japan-bashing of 1995 was simply a hangover from the past..." (p.xiii) and **"However Morley and Robins suggest that this argument is insufficient to explain the outburst of Japan bashing in recent years"** (p.xiv) and **"This is not to suggest that contemporary Japan-bashing is purely a matter of international politics and world economic rivalry"** (p.xv).

And so on. Thus "Japan-bashing" slipped quietly into the political and intellectual critique on Japan. With or without a hyphen, though not immediately, it would do the job it was intended to do.

READING: John B. Judis, "Bashing the Protectionists". In *Columbia Journalism Review*, November-December 1992. **ONLINE [HERE](http://archives.cjr.org/year/92/6/trade.asp):** <http://archives.cjr.org/year/92/6/trade.asp>

White House makes plain need for cutback in Japan car imports

From Frank Vogl
Washington, March 24

President Reagan has decided that a reduction in Japanese car exports to the United States is essential. He is believed to have told Mr Masayoshi Ito, the foreign minister of Japan, at a White House meeting today that Japan should find a way to restrain car shipments to America.

The Administration is seeking to protect the ailing American car industry without formally approving protectionist measures, such as quotas or special import tariffs.

A cabinet level task force, headed by Mr Drew Lewis, secretary of transportation, has concluded that swift action by Japan on voluntary restraints is vital if the United States Congress is to be stopped from passing tough protectionist legislation.

The White House has not yet decided on the desirable level of Japanese car imports. Last year, Japan exported 1.9 million cars to America. The Administration is hoping that the Japanese will take the initiative and set levels of their own, but Mr Ito has indicated

that his government wants a clear signal from President Reagan.

Mr Lewis said that it was his understanding that the Japanese authorities wanted to be told bluntly just what the United States Administration really wanted. He said it was in Japan's best interest to reduce their exports, and it was his personal view that the reduction should be 200,000 to 500,000 cars below last year's level.

Leaders of the American car industry are strongly in favour of restraints on the Japanese. It looks as if the Ford Motor Company might have losses in the first quarter of this year of around \$500m after a loss of \$1,500m last year. Chrysler is also likely to sustain substantial losses.

Each of the United States manufacturers is offering rebates to boost sales.

The White House expects that any deal struck with Japan will bring angry protests from the Europeans. However, officials suggested that countries such as Italy and France had long used administrative methods to block imports of Japanese cars.

The Times March 25
1981: The White House hangs tough. Four years later the Reagan administration would curtail the import quota on Japanese automobiles.

READING 4: JULY 1981, "JAPAN-BASHING" ENTERS THE CONVERSATION

Stop bashing the Japanese in the whale war

For years Japan has been the chief and favourite target of the conservationist countries who assemble again in Brighton today for the annual meeting of the International Whaling Commission. Yet again, determined efforts will be made to stop Japan hunting sperm whales off her coast and to force a ban on all commercial whaling. But the conservationists are now aiming at the wrong target, risking species and stocks of whales that are close to extinction to save Japanese sperm whales that are not.

The stock of sperm whales that Japan hunts is not in the best of shape. Maybe only 100,000 adults are left. But Japan's present take of 890 a year makes little or no difference to that. The sacrifice may be well worth making in favour of far more urgent issues. Bryde's whales off Peru, for example, may number only 1,000. Yet the catch agreed last year and sought now is 320 — enough to wipe them out in three years. Spain is taking 146 fin whales from a stock that may number only 800. Bowheads and humpbacks, hunted respectively by Alaskan and Greenland Eskimos, are in serious danger as species. These aboriginal hunts present far greater difficulties in both human and conservation terms than today's commercial whaling. Last year, all these species went by the board in the battle over Japan's sperm whales. The same may happen this year.

Japan, of course, is no angel. Dishonest, even dishonourable, would seem the better

by Joanna Gordon Clark

word. She has refused to supply data essential to checking sperm and minke whale populations; she has put pressure on conservationist countries to change their votes or leave the IWC; she has imported whale meat from the pirate ship Sierra and from Taiwan, an illegal whaling nation; in the scientific committee she has urged higher catch limits for Spain and Peru to keep their votes in the main commission.

But Japan has supplied far more data and scientific work than any other whaling country. Part of her behaviour now is a reaction to the incessant and often hysterical attacks on her whaling. These have ranged from her delegates being drenched in red dye in 1978 (with the Chinese mistakenly pelted with tomatoes last year), to more subtle forms of yellow racism.

She is now isolated, and wrongly depicted as the only villain of the piece. Her reaction is to fight harder and dirtier and certainly never to lose face. Rather than that, she may leave the commission. At the very least she will exercise her right under the IWC's rules to object and carry on the hunt.

It is plain bad politics to force Japan that far when other nations, Norway and Iceland, for example, will not stop whaling yet. If she objects, much effort will have been wasted, nothing gained. If she leaves, the consequences are far worse. She can still hunt

Antarctic minke whales, while the Soviet Union will be entitled to the whole quota set for these by the IWC. The result will be over-exploitation of minke whales, and no data worth having.

The IWC would be disastrously weakened, just as it is becoming a real force for conservation. All that we have gained—the ban on factory ships, the Indian Ocean sanctuary, the ban on the cruellest killing methods, lower quotas everywhere—would be lost or jeopardized.

Once out, nothing can bring Japan back against her wishes, and little can influence her actions. The USA will look somewhat foolish if it carries out threats to impose sanctions on Japan one week after itself announcing that it will not ratify the Law of the Sea Convention. All this is risked for a few sperm whales and some minke whales which can take a year more of the hunt.

The approach should be to allow Japan some sperm whales and minke, on condition she provides the missing data; to stop the hunts that must be stopped—Spain's fins and Peru's brydes; and to tackle the difficult issue of aboriginal whaling of species at risk of extinction. It is time to stop simply bashing the Japanese.

The author is a director of the Marine Action Centre, Cambridge, has chaired the Cetacean Wildlife Link, the UK conservation bodies' coordinating committee, and is a former member of the UK delegation.

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The Times of July 19 1981 pleads Japan's case in the language of victimisation. The story is not in the details but in the headline which implies that the victims here are not the whales but the Japanese people..

READING 5: ED LINCOLN ON MEDIA MANIPULATION AND STEERING WHEELS

"PART OF THE PUBLIC RELATIONS CAMPAIGN of any government deals simply with disseminating facts, out of a belief that important information has been lacking or ignored. But public relations also involves manipulating facts into a form favorable to the government's policy stance. This effort can include overt alteration or interpretation of the facts, or a more indirect route of diverting attention to other friendlier topics... This should be no surprise; people are used to the convenient repackaging of information by politicians and political parties in domestic policy battles. Similar manipulation was often painfully obvious to foreign observers of Japan in the prewar period, but the effort continues today.

Consider the following small example. From the signing of the US-Japan Framework Agreement in July 1993 until the end of June 1995, one of the central issues being negotiated between the two governments concerned access to the Japanese auto market (including finished automobiles, assembly parts, and parts for the repair market). The three American-owned auto companies concerned had a somewhat mixed reputation in Washington, stemming from negative safety, fuel efficiency, and quality issues dating back to the 1960s. The Japanese government built upon this tarnished image by alleging that the American auto companies failed to market cars with the steering on the correct side (that is, on the right hand side of the car for the Japanese market where traffic drives on the left-hand side of the road).

I have personally given public presentations or attended functions at locations all across America where I have been told by Americans about how poorly the American auto companies did

their homework in marketing cars to Japan. The attitude was... that if the American companies are so inept as to market cars with the steering wheel on the wrong side, then they certainly deserve no sympathy from the administration in Washington.

The reality was quite different. When the market for foreign automobiles opened up marginally in the 1970s, cars with the steering wheel on the 'wrong' side of the car carried an exotic cachet. The foreign auto companies (American and European) had accepted the standard advice to seek a niche of the market that would not compete directly with the mass market served by Japanese firms. The market for expensive, exotic, foreign cars with steering wheels on the left was the result. Even the British were marketing such cars! On a trip through the western part of Japan in 1996, I saw tollbooths on highway entrance ramps that had special ticket vending machines on the left of the lane just for those driving foreign cars.

Furthermore, the information put out by the Japanese government was simply wrong. In the 1990s, the market for foreign automobiles began to shift, and at the time that the Japanese government accused the American manufacturers of selling the wrong cars in Japan, the three American manufacturers had some fifty-nine models available for sale in Japan with the steering wheel mounted on the proper side. Nevertheless, observe the beauty of such an approach by the Japanese government. The argument was simple and appealing, particularly to US policy elites who had harbored negative feelings toward the Big Three for decades.”

“IN CONTEMPORARY TERMS, the most common form this can take is to find oneself dismissed as a ‘Japan basher’. The presumption is that the criticism expressed must be invalid because the individual involved has some emotional, irrational dislike of Japan. Thus, the counterattack against the criticism involves undermining the personal qualifications of the critic rather than addressing the criticism itself.

I have been the target of such campaigns upon occasion. In the spring of 1998, for example, I published an article in *Foreign Affairs* that was quite critical of Japan’s handling of macroeconomic policy and the bad debt problem during the 1990s. [[Click HERE](#)]. The situation was heading toward crisis (with the economy in a downward spiral, and with no coherent plan to rescue a banking industry that was edging closer to wholesale collapse), and strong, blunt pressure and criticism were needed to induce the government to alter its policies.

Much of the Japanese reaction to my article focused on personality. Some Japanese acquaintances in Washington asked me (some at the behest of the Embassy) what was wrong — had I had some bad experience in Japan that had prejudiced me against the Japanese government? Subsequently, I heard from others that they had been told by Japanese government contacts that I was just a ‘Japan basher’ and should be ignored. During one discussion of my long personal history of involvement with Japan, an interviewer from a Japanese research institute expressed great relief, and blurted out that he now recognized that I was critical because I loved Japan and not because I hated it! However, the arguments resonated with some Japanese and Americans, who now routinely categorize me as a ‘Japan basher’.

Generally, one can ignore such criticisms and simply get on with the business of analysis and writing. Others, however, apparently find that their access to contacts in Japan is harmed, or even that their careers are jeopardized. These tactics are certainly less harsh than the imprisonment or expulsion some faced before the war, but still a serious issue” (Lincoln in O’Connor [ed.] *Japan Forum* (1) 13, 2001, 112-113).

READING 6. JUNE 1998, CLINTON BYPASSES JAPAN



IN JUNE 1998, President Bill Clinton made an eight-day visit to China. On his way home, Clinton did not stop over in Tokyo and Seoul, as US Presidents had been doing since the early 1970s, although he found the time to take in some rays in Hawai'i en route to Washington.

Why did Clinton decide to bypass Japan and South Korea? There is speculation that he did so under pressure from China. However, many in Tokyo saw Ed. Lincoln's 'Japan-bashing' Foreign

Affairs article as the real cause, taking into account the President's reputation as a 'policy wonk' and his sensitivity to the publications of Washington think-tanks, among which Lincoln's Brookings Institution was a major player.

However, Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs put a good face on Clinton's non-appearance and in July Madeleine Albright, Clinton's Secretary of State, put in an appearance in Tokyo, "to reassure officials in Tokyo who are uneasy about a closer relationship between the United States and Beijing" (Time). In September, Obuchi himself went to New York (above). This is how the BBC reported the Obuchi visit [BBC News: UK Tuesday, September 22, 1998]

Business: The Economy.

Clinton tells Obuchi to speed up reforms

US President Bill Clinton has told Japanese Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi there was "virtually unanimous support in the world" for financial reforms to restore growth in Japan and Asia. But he urged a speedy response to the crisis. The two leaders held talks for around two hours in the Waldorf Astoria hotel in New York on Tuesday. The summit came amid growing international concern about the fragility of the Japanese financial system and its potential disastrous impact on the rest of Asia.

Mr Obuchi was asked if he thought he would succeed in persuading the Japanese parliament to pass economic reforms. He said: "I am neither optimistic or pessimistic on this." Mr Clinton said the United States wanted to help Tokyo find a way out of its problems but avoided any public comments pressing Japan to accept specific policies.

The US president said he realised the Japanese government would have to work out what was "politically possible". He added: "We want to do what we can to be supportive to help do whatever we can to create the climate which would permit a quick restoration of economic growth in Japan and therefore in Asia." He said he had invited the Japanese prime minister to come back for a formal state visit early next year.

Whatever the influence of Ed Lincoln's Foreign Affairs piece, the Japan-bashing campaign succeeded in its objective of making Americans think twice about raising trade tariffs against Japan. Another factor, perhaps the most important factor underpinning the campaign was the deep sense of guilt many ordinary Americans felt over the 1945 atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. These bombings became the strongest cards in the 'victim' suit held by the Japan Lobby in post-war Washington and Japan did not hesitate to put them on the table.



A REPORTER AT LARGE

HIROSHIMA

—A NOISELESS FLASH

AT exactly fifteen minutes past eight in the morning, on August 6, 1945, Japanese time, at the moment when the atomic bomb flashed above Hiroshima, Miss Toshiko Sasaki, a clerk in the personnel department of the East Asia Tin Works, had just sat down at her place in the plant office and was turning her head to speak to the girl at the next desk. At that same moment, Dr. Masakazu Fujii was settling down cross-legged to read the *Osaka Asahi* on the porch of his private hospital, overhanging one of the seven deltaic rivers which divide Hiroshima; Mrs. Hatsuyo Nakamura, a tailor's widow, stood by the window of her kitchen, watching a neighbor tearing down his house because it lay in the path of an air-raid-defense fire lane; Father Wilhelm Kleinsorge, a German priest of the Society of Jesus, reclined in his underwear on a cot on the top floor of his order's three-story mission house, reading a Jesuit magazine, *Stimmen der Zeit*; Dr. Terufumi Sasaki, a young member of the surgical staff of the city's large, modern Red Cross Hospital, walked along one of the hospital corridors with a blood specimen for a Wassermann test in his hand; and the Reverend Mr. Kiyoshi Tanimoto, pastor of the Hiroshima Methodist Church, paused at the door of a rich man's house in Koi, the city's western suburb, and prepared to unload a handcart full of things he had evacuated from town in fear of the massive B-29 raid which everyone expected Hiroshima to suffer. A hundred thousand people were killed by the atomic bomb, and these six were among the survivors. They still wonder why they lived when so many others

died. Each of them counts many small items of chance or volition—a step taken in time, a decision to go indoors, catching one streetcar instead of the next—that spared him. And now each knows that in the act of survival he lived a dozen lives and saw more death than he ever thought he would see. At the time, none of them knew anything.

THE Reverend Mr. Tanimoto got up at five o'clock that morning. He was alone in the parsonage, because for some time his wife had been commuting with their year-old baby to spend nights with a friend in Ushida, a suburb to the north. Of all the important cities of Japan, only two, Kyoto and Hiroshima, had not been visited in strength by *B-san*, or Mr. B, as the Japanese, with a mixture of respect and unhappy familiarity, called the B-29; and Mr. Tanimoto, like all his neighbors and friends, was almost sick with anxiety. He had heard uncomfortably detailed accounts of mass raids on Kure, Iwa-

kuni, Tokuyama, and other nearby towns; he was sure Hiroshima's turn would come soon. He had slept badly the night before, because there had been several air-raid warnings. Hiroshima had been getting such warnings almost every night for weeks, for at that time the B-29s were using Lake Biwa, northeast of Hiroshima, as a rendezvous point, and no matter what city the Americans planned to hit, the Superfortresses streamed in over the coast near Hiroshima. The frequency of the warnings and the continued abstinence of Mr. B with respect to Hiroshima had made its citizens jittery; a rumor was going around that the Americans were saving something special for the city.

Mr. Tanimoto is a small man, quick to talk, laugh, and cry. He wears his black hair parted in the middle and rather long; the prominence of the frontal bones just above his eyebrows and the smallness of his mustache, mouth, and chin give him a strange, old-young look, boyish and yet wise, weak and yet fiery. He moves nervously and fast, but with a restraint which suggests that he is a cautious, thoughtful man. He showed, indeed, just those qualities in the uneasy days before the bomb fell. Besides having his wife spend the nights in Ushida, Mr. Tanimoto had been carrying all the portable things from his church, in the close-packed residential district called Nagaragawa, to a house that belonged to a rayon manufacturer in Koi, two miles from the center of town. The rayon man, a Mr. Matsui, had opened his then unoccupied estate to a large number of his friends and acquaintances, so that they might evacuate whatever they wished to a safe distance from the

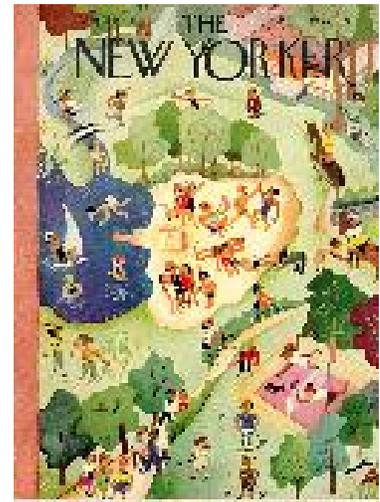
TO OUR READERS

The New Yorker this week devotes its entire editorial space to an article on the almost complete obliteration of a city by one atomic bomb, and what happened to the people of that city. It does so in the conviction that few of us have yet comprehended the all but incredible destructive power of this weapon, and that everyone might well take time to consider the terrible implications of its use.

—THE EDITORS

READING 8: US WAR GUILT AND THE IMPACT OF JOHN HERSEY'S "HIROSHIMA"

THE ARTICLE "HIROSHIMA" BY JOHN HERSEY took up the entire 31 August 1946 issue of *The New Yorker*. There were no advertisements and no other articles. Hersey interviewed people in Hiroshima and wrote about what happened to them in a documentary style, reporting the facts of their experience in flat, plain language. The article caused a sensation and that issue of *The New Yorker* sold out within hours. The Book-of-the-Month club sent a free copy in book form to all its members. The text was also broadcast on the radio in the US and Great Britain and continued to be broadcast into the 1950s.



ATOMIC BOMBS

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES

Sir,—I have just been reading John Hersey's account of the effects of the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. They make an interesting footnote to Mr. Churchill's claim that the atomic bomb is now, fortunately, only available to a nation which can be trusted (I quote from memory) "only to use it in the interests of peace and justice." Would Mr. Churchill now explain how the interests of peace or justice (or whatever were the virtues he mentioned) could ever be served by the massacre, in circumstances of unspeakable horror, of tens of thousands of defenceless women and children?

There are the makings of another interesting speculation here—in fact, of several. We are, for example, continually being told that it is no defence of the soldiers and sailors on trial at Nuremberg to say that they were merely obeying orders; in fact, that they should have disobeyed orders which were clearly opposed to humanity and the "laws of war." What then about the airmen who were ordered to drop this token of progress on the nurseries and maternity homes of Hiroshima?

Finally, I trust that when the first atomic bomb is dropped on London we shall all be "sporting" enough to concede that the enemy too has a perfect right to "save the lives of thousands of his gallant fighting men."

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

S. V. POLLOCK.

20, Telford Avenue, S.W.2. Sept. 23.

Hersey had been sent to Japan by *The New Yorker* in May 1946. He spent three weeks interviewing and collecting material in Hiroshima and elsewhere, then returned to the US to finish the article.

Steve Rothman, an American student of Hersey's article, assessed the effect of the article on world opinion: **"The direct effect of "Hiroshima" on the American public is difficult to gauge. No mass movement formed as a result of the article, no laws were passed, and reaction to the piece probably didn't have any specific impact on U.S. military strategy or foreign policy. But certainly the vivid depictions in the book must have been a strong contributor to a pervasive sense of dread (and guilt) about nuclear weaponry felt by many Americans ever since August 1945."**

This sense of guilt contributed directly to the conversion of Japan from the Menace of the 1920s and late 1930s to the postwar Victim, a process which itself contributed to Japan's recovery (the post-war Phoenix 不死鳥) and status as the world's most committed anti-nuclear nation. Managing this process required a skilful change of focus: away from the experiences of Japanese civilians burned and maimed by US carpet bombing in Tokyo to their counterparts in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. .

"In some sort of crude sense which no vulgarity, no humor, no overstatement can quite extinguish, the physicists have known sin; and this is a knowledge which they cannot lose." ~ J. Robert Oppenheimer

READING 9: THE OTHER VICTIMS. THE TOKYO BOMBINGS OF 1945



The atomic bombing of Hiroshima on August 6 instantly resulted in about 80,000 deaths from the bomb and its effects, and a further 120,000 deaths in the years that followed.

The atomic bombing of Nagasaki on August 9 killed 26,000 instantly and injured 40,000 more.

The incendiary bombing of Tokyo in the 8 months January-August 1945 killed 500,000 people in Tokyo and caused 10,000,000 people to flee

the city. On one night alone, March 10 1945, 100,000 Tokyo civilians were killed.

The first “fire bomb” raid was on Kōbe on February 3, 1945 and following relative success the AAF continued the tactic. Much of the armor and the defensive weapons of the bombers were also removed to allow increased bomb loads, Japanese air defence in terms of night-fighters and anti-aircraft guns was so feeble it was hardly a risk. The first such raid on Tokyo was on the night of February 23-24 when 174 B-29s destroyed around one square mile of the city. Following on that success 334 B-29s raided on the night of March



Aftermath of the Tokyo firebombing

9-10, dropping around 1,700 tons of bombs. Around 16 square miles (41 km²) of the city were destroyed and over 100,000 people are estimated to have died in the resulting “fire storm”. It was the most destructive conventional raid of the war against Japan. In the following two weeks there were almost 1,600 further sorties against the four cities, destroying 31 square miles in total at a cost of only 22 aircraft. There was a third raid on Tokyo on May 26.

In 61 years (1945-2006) the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki have had a far higher news profile than the fire bombing of Tokyo. The Hiroshima mushroom cloud and the skeletal epicentre building have become global icons and the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki is commemorated (Peace Park, novels, films, stamps, school visits) on a far greater scale than the bombing of Tokyo, where so many more died. Why? It is not cynical to point out that while Japan is the only nation to have suffered attacks by atomic weapons, it was also among the first nations to bomb civilian populations, most notably in China. Thus we can surmise that the higher profile granted to the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, compared to the low-key commemoration of the Tokyo bombing, may not have been accidental.