

PEACE CULTURE



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A Last Request as Chairman



by **Steven Leeper**
Former Chairman
of this Foundation

I am grateful for this opportunity to write one last article for *Peace Culture*, and I am delighted that I can be the bearer of good news.

In early March, I spent a week in Oslo, Norway. The first two days were spent with Aaron Tovish, Jackie Cabasso, and Pol D'Huyvetter. These three Peace Culture Foundation Executive Advisors are the people who, more than anyone else except former Mayor Akiba, have built Mayors for Peace into the large, effective global network it is today. They will all continue as employees of the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation, and they will be doing their best to advise and build Mayors for Peace. I will not say anything here about our discussions because we covered matters that will be deliberated and decided at the Mayors for Peace General Conference to be held here in Hiroshima August 3 to 6 this year. Stay tuned.

After our internal meetings, the four of us attended the ICAN conference (March 2 and 3). The organizers of this conference were hoping to draw 400 participants. They got over 500 campaigners of all ages from all over the world, including Latin

America and Africa. This group generated an energetic discussion focused on helping the courageous nations of the “new movement” to proceed as quickly as possible toward our common goal: an international treaty that clearly de-legitimizes and bans the production, possession and use of nuclear weapons.

The reason 500 campaigners gathered in cold, distant and extremely expensive Oslo is the “new movement.” This movement emerged in Vienna last May at the first preparatory committee meeting for the 2015 NPT Review Conference. There, Switzerland read a revolutionary statement endorsed by 16 countries. That statement declared that nuclear weapons are too dangerous, that is, they are terrible weapons the use of which would have enormous, horribly destructive consequences for all humanity.

So, you might be asking, “What’s revolutionary about that? Here in Hiroshima we’ve been saying this for 68 years.” From Hiroshima’s point of view, the content of the statement is not revolutionary. What is revolutionary is that the non-nuclear-weapon states, that is, countries with no nuclear weapons, are taking control of the nuclear disarmament process.

At a disarmament conference in Shizuoka at the end of January, Switzerland said openly from the stage that three nuclear weapon states had scolded it for the statement it presented in Vienna. In effect, Switzerland was telling the world that the nuclear-weapon states don’t like the new movement, but it will continue anyway. This is revolutionary.

The Swiss statement was presented again in the UN General Assembly in New York in October. That time, the revolution was endorsed by 35 countries. Then came the conference in Oslo. ICAN activists were quite nervous about this



ICAN Civil Society Forum



Young campaigners from all over the world

conference. What if no one showed up? What if it drew only the same 35 countries that signed the statement in New York? A failure like that could mean death to the new movement.

Fortunately, 132 countries registered for the conference and 127 actually sent delegations. The movement is growing! In fact, the best outcome of the Oslo conference was the announcement by Mexico that it will hold another conference on humanitarian consequences sometime this year. And after Mexico, the next one will be somewhere in Africa.

The statement that came out of the Oslo Conference, like the statements in Vienna and New York, basically said that nuclear weapons are too destructive and dangerous and we should make them illegal. Some activists complained about the content. "We've known this since Hiroshima, and now we're supposed to get excited about 'humanitarian consequences?'" True, the words are not exciting, but the meaning is. I'm excited because a majority of countries are carefully and politely saying to the countries that have nuclear weapons or want them or are hiding under nuclear umbrellas, "Stop threatening us. Don't talk to us about deterrence. Don't talk to us about your national interests or national security. You have no right under any circumstances whatsoever to destroy human civilization on this planet. You have been promising for over 40 years to get rid of your nuclear weapons, and we're tired of waiting. So to help you along, we will make it perfectly clear that those weapons are illegal and immoral, and we want them gone. Now, gentlemen, start your negotiations!"

This revolutionary new movement is being boycotted and actively opposed by the nuclear-weapon states, and yet, it's growing and getting stronger. Eventually, it will lead to a treaty banning nuclear weapons. And when that treaty is written and offered publicly for signature, the campaign for a nuclear-weapon-free world will finally shift into high gear. I can't wait!

This is the good news. The bad news is that the Japanese government is on the wrong side of the revolution. Rather than wholeheartedly supporting the new movement, Japan seems to be defending the nuclear-weapon states. In Oslo, the Japanese representative called for a "gradual, realistic approach." By "realistic" he meant an approach that would be supported by the nuclear-weapon states. Japan's Foreign Ministry has said that the new movement is a distraction from the step-by-step approach that has been working so well. But this step-by-step approach has left us with 19,000 nuclear weapons and a world in which those weapons are spreading and increasingly likely to be used. They have also said that a nuclear weapons ban that does not involve the nuclear-weapon states is meaningless. If that's true, why doesn't Japan just support the new movement to maintain its reputation as a country that seeks a nuclear-weapon-free world? If the new movement is meaningless, why not go along? The fact is, Japan and the nuclear-weapon states oppose the movement because they know it is profoundly meaningful. They are afraid of it.

At this point, the Japanese government has doubts about the new movement probably because they want to avoid conflict with the US. However, they did the same thing with the anti-personnel landmine ban presented in 1997 that now has 162 signatory states. Japan opposed the landmine ban at first,

but when a strong grassroots campaign made it clear that the Japanese people were overwhelmingly in favor of the ban, the Japanese government signed in December 1998.

So this is my last request of you, the readers of *Peace Culture*. Between now and 2015 you will be hearing more and more about the "new movement" or "the ban." As this campaign emerges, please act. Write to Mayor Matsui, Governor Yuzaki, your local City Councilman or woman, your Diet representative, Foreign Minister Kishida, and Prime Minister Abe. Let them know that you want them to support the new movement, the ban, the start of negotiations and a nuclear-weapon-free world.

This campaign is important for the world and for Japan. If Japan wholeheartedly supports the new movement, it will succeed quickly. If Japan refuses to support the new movement, the movement will be greatly weakened, and Japan will be considered a traitor to the cause of abolition.

The stated reason for the new movement is the "catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons." If the country that knows the most about these humanitarian consequences, the country of Hiroshima, Nagasaki, and Fukushima, fails to support this movement, no one will ever trust Japan again when it comes to disarmament. Japan will have chosen the nuclear umbrella over a nuclear-weapon-free world, and many will immediately assume that Japan is planning to obtain nuclear weapons. Japan could lose a lot of friends over this, and in the long run, those friends will be more important than the nuclear industry.

The Japanese government MUST support the new abolitionist movement, and your voices will be crucial. The only force that can cause the Japanese government to support a treaty opposed by the US and the nuclear industry is a determined demand from the overwhelming majority of the Japanese people. If you truly want to see a world without nuclear weapons, the time has come to lift your voices and tell your government to side with the revolution, not the nuclear status quo.

In closing, I thank you for six years of friendship. I have no words to adequately express my gratitude for your interest, your letters of support, your invitations to speak in your area, and your ongoing concern for the Hiroshima, the Peace Culture Foundation, and a nuclear-weapon-free peace. I look forward to seeing you and working with you again in my new capacity as professor at Hiroshima Jogakuin University. See you in September.

(Contributed March 2013)

Profile

Steven Leeper

Born in the U.S. in 1947; obtained a Master's Degree in clinical psychology from West Georgia University in the U.S. Worked as English instructor at Hiroshima YMCA. Co-President of Transnet Ltd., a consulting, translation and interpretation business, Overseas Liaison Advisor for Moltem Corporation, U.S. Representative for Mayors for Peace, and Expert Advisor for this Foundation. Took Office as chairman of this Foundation on April 23, 2007 - March 31, 2013.

Opening of Schmoe House

Schmoe House, an exhibition facility affiliated with the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum located in Eba, Naka-ku, was opened on November 1, 2012. The name Schmoe House comes from the American, Floyd Schmoe. Shocked by the sight of Hiroshima and Nagasaki after the dropping of the bombs, he started a campaign to build houses for those in Hiroshima who had lost their homes.

Since its construction as a meeting place in 1951, Schmoe House had been used as a base for community activities. With the construction of the Hiroshima South Road the role of the house as a community center came to an end. However, in 2012 the house was relocated from a location approximately 40 meters south-east to its current location and preserved there. It was thus reborn as a display facility to communicate the support received by Hiroshima after the bombing from people all over the world. The displays include Mr. Schmoe's "Houses for Hiroshima" construction activities, as well as medications offered immediately after the bombing, aid for children who had lost their families, and various other forms of support from overseas. The exhibition tells us about the goodwill offered by those from other countries as well as the underlying feelings of those who provided support.



Schmoe House, relocated and opened as an exhibition facility

On August 6, 1945, the city was razed to the ground by the atomic bomb. Food, clothing, and other daily commodities were in short supply, there was a lack of housing, and the people of Hiroshima were forced into a life of hardship. People also suffered from wounds caused by the bombing as well as the sorrow of losing family and friends, leading to feelings of loneliness and despair.

In the midst of such circumstances after the bombing, the people of Hiroshima worked little by little to return to their normal lives. In addition, much support was provided not only from other areas in Japan but also overseas, and such support became a major source of strength for the people, both practically and emotionally.

Houses for Hiroshima

The project is kicked off

Mr. Floyd Schmoe lived in Seattle in the United States and taught forestry studies at university. He named the plan "Houses for Hiroshima", and gathered funds through donations to build the houses. In July 1949, Mr. Schmoe came to Hiroshima together with Mr. Emery Andrews and two others, carrying with them glass, nails and other construction materials.

Housing in Minami-machi

Mr. Schmoe and his workmates constructed two wooden one-story double-eave row houses in Minami-machi. They employed one master builder, and with help from Japanese volunteers, started building the "Houses for Hiroshima". The summer

heat was at its peak, but construction proceeded smoothly and the first house was complete.

Activities continue

The construction of the Houses for Hiroshima continued, and a house was built at the foot of Ebasharayama every year from 1950 to 1952. A meeting place for the people in the community (the current Schmoe House) was also built.

A total of 15 buildings (21 homes) were constructed under the Houses for Hiroshima plan. Large numbers of people of different countries and races cooperated to build the houses, at the same time nurturing a compassion for others, something that had been lost during the war.

Various forms of support offered to Hiroshima

Aid activities immediately after the bombing

Mr. Marcel Juneau, chief representative to Japan of the Red Cross International Committee, negotiated with GHQ to obtain large amounts of medication as aid for Hiroshima. At the beginning of September, he himself came to Hiroshima together with the medication, and was involved in observation and treatment at aid stations in the city.

Spiritual Adoption program

The Spiritual Adoption program organized private "adoptions" between people overseas and children in Hiroshima who had lost their family, where those overseas would send money to look after their "adopted" child.

The article written by Norman Cousins in the Saturday Review of Literature, for which he was a main writer, caused a stir, and applications for adoptions came in from people all over America. In 1950 the first allotment of adoption funds, \$2000 (approximately 720,000 yen at the time) arrived in Hiroshima.

After this, the US arm of the Hiroshima Peace Center, which promoted world peace and welfare projects in Hiroshima, became the contact point for the collection of donations.

Travel to America for treatment

Keloids, or swelling up of burn scars, caused not only physical pain but also great emotional suffering. Treatment for women with keloids spread from Japan to overseas, and in 1955 women traveled to America to receive treatment.

Peace Pilgrimage and World Friendship Center

Ms. Barbara Reynolds organized the Peace Pilgrimage, the aim of which was to have atomic bomb survivors speak about their experiences and call for the abolition of nuclear weapons. Gatherings and talks were held in various cities throughout the United States and Europe. Further, to expand mutual understanding and friendship and more broadly communicate the actual damage from the atomic bomb to those overseas, the World Friendship Center was established in 1965. Even today, the Center offers accommodation for peace activists visiting Hiroshima from overseas, and organizes activities to support the atomic bomb survivors.

A place for cross-generational communication

On October 31, 2012, the day before the opening, the opening ceremony was held, attended by the Mayor of Hiroshima, the head of the Eba Federation of Neighborhood Associations, Floyd Schmoe's second son Mr. Wilfred P. Schmoe, and others.

In his commemorative speech, Mr. Wilfred P. Schmoe said "If my father were here, I'm sure he would have said that it is the greatest honor that you have retained Schmoe House. That's because Schmoe House will remain in this location for future generations".

The speech reaffirmed that Schmoe House was a symbol of hope for Floyd Schmoe.

We hope that many people visit Schmoe House, and understand that it is the wishes of each individual that become the force to build a peaceful world.

(Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum Curatorial Division)

Event Commemorating International Day of Peace



Participants observing a moment of silence in front of the Cenotaph

The United Nations has designated September 21 every year as International Day of Peace, and as a global day of ceasefire and non-violence, has called for the suspension of hostile activities on this day. On International Day of Peace last year, this Foundation held a commemorative event. At midday, a moment's of silence was observed at the Cenotaph for the A-bomb Victims to pray for the abolition of nuclear weapons and perpetual world peace, at the same time raising a Mayors for Peace banner that read "Total Abolition of Nuclear Weapons by 2020".

Thanks to calls by Mayors for Peace, similar commemorative events were held in other member cities.

(Peace and International Solidarity Promotion Division)

Welcoming United Nations Disarmament Fellows



The United Nations Disarmament Fellows group in front of A-bomb Dome

Trainees (Fellows) in the United Nations Disarmament Fellowship Program, which is run by the United Nations to train disarmament specialists, were welcomed to Hiroshima for three days last year from September 28.

The United Nations Disarmament Fellowship Program is a training program that was established by the United Nations in 1979. Trainees have been coming to Hiroshima every year since 1983, and a total of approximately 770 trainees have visited Hiroshima to date.

This time, 25 young diplomats from 25 countries par-

ticipated in the program. After arriving in Hiroshima on the 28th, they attended a welcome reception and met with local participants including atomic bomb witnesses.

On the following day, the group viewed the A-bomb Dome and the Children's Peace Monument, and presented flowers at the Cenotaph for the A-bomb Victims. They also visited the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum and Hiroshima National Peace Memorial Hall for the Atomic Bomb Victims. After listening to an explanation of the Mayors for Peace initiative by this Foundation's Chairperson, Steven Leeper, they watched the film "Hiroshima A Mother's Prayer", and listened to the atomic bomb testimony of Mr. Keijiro Matsushima, thus gaining a better understanding of the actual damage caused by the bomb.

Comments from participants: "The program in Hiroshima was an extremely memorable experience. I now understand the devastating damage caused by nuclear weapons", "The visit to Hiroshima was memorable not only in terms of my work but also in terms of my own life", "I renewed my resolve to do everything I can to create a world free of nuclear weapons".

(Peace and International Solidarity Promotion Division)

Visit to Museum by Seven Youth Educators from German Museums

Seven employees of German museums responsible for youth education projects visited the Peace Memorial Museum on November 13, 2012. The group was in Japan as part of the 2012 Japan-Germany youth instructors' seminar, "Youth Education at Museums".

After viewing the exhibits at the museum, the group held a discussion with the director of the Museum, Mr. Maeda, and other Museum employees. The German participants raised issues such as the aging of the survivors of the Jewish concentration camps and the fact that there are children who do not want to see exhibits related to war, and also asked questions about the situation at the Peace Memorial Museum. There was a suggestion that approaching war from the perspective of family history may enable children to see war as something that they can relate to, by appealing to their humanity.

Although the discussion was short, this was a precious opportunity to hear directly about the current situation at German museums.

(Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum Outreach Division)

Atomic Bomb Testimonial Talks Held

Communicating the actual bombing damage to many

Last year, this Foundation held once again Atomic Bombing Testimonial Talks, where people visiting Peace Memorial Park could hear atomic bomb testimonials without having to apply in advance.

The talks were held a total of 16 times (of which 4 times were in English) for seven days from August 4-6, 13, 14, and October 5 and 6. An animation about the atomic bombing was also shown.

In total, there were 1,343 visitors during the period from within and outside Hiroshima Prefecture, ranging from small children to those from generations who had experienced war, and all listened intently to the talks. Some of the comments

provided on the questionnaire included “This must never happen again”, “This taught me the importance of peace and life”, and “I want to communicate this to children”.

(Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum Outreach Division)



Atomic bombing witness speaking about the actual damage from the atomic bombing

30th Hiroshima Peace Calligraphy Exhibition

Fervent wishes for peace expressed in writing

The 30th Hiroshima Peace Calligraphy Exhibition (sponsor: Hiroshima Peace Calligraphy Exhibition Executive Committee [comprising Mainichi Shimbun, Mainichi Shodokai, this Foundation]) was held October 21-23, 2012 at the Peace Memorial Museum.

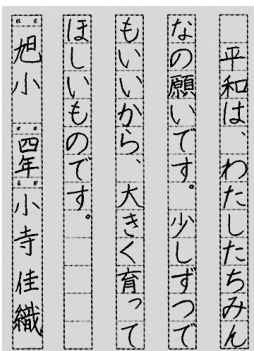
The 5,428 fine works expressing the preciousness of peace and the dignity of life were submitted by a wide range of people aged from 5 to 95, mainly from Hiroshima Prefecture but also other prefectures from Hokkaido to Kagoshima. This year some submissions came from Americans, Chinese and Koreans living in Japan.

Every work received an award: Special Award, Special Selection Award, Award of Excellence, Honorable Mention, or simply Award. The award ceremony for the 113 works that won the Special Award was held on October 21.

The 933 works awarded either the Special Award or the Award of Excellence were on display at the exhibition, which drew 1,149 visitors over the three days. On the first day, many award winners from all over Japan shared their pleasure and took commemorative photos in front of their work with their family and friends.

(Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum Outreach Division)

Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation Chairperson's Award



Kaori Kodera

4th year student,
Asahi Elementary School
Fuchu City, Hiroshima Prefecture



Saya Mizuno

5th year student,
Katsuyama Elementary School
Shimonoseki City,
Yamaguchi Prefecture



Yuki Omori

6th year student,
Hirafuku Elementary School
Okayama City, Okayama Prefecture

Recording of Testimonies of Atomic Bomb Survivors from Outside Hiroshima



During recording

At the Hiroshima National Peace Memorial Hall for the Atomic Bomb Victims, the testimonies of atomic bomb survivors living in Japan (in prefectures other than Hiroshima) and overseas are made as recordings.

This year, the testimonies of atomic bomb survivors living in Chiba Prefecture (6 people), Saitama Prefecture (5 people), Tokyo (6 people), Kanagawa Prefecture (13 people) and Nara Prefecture (1 person), as well as Korea (1 person) and America (2 people) were recorded.

In the testimonies, the survivors spoke about the situation at the time of the bombing, when they moved to other prefectures or overseas, and their life since that time. The films recorded will be edited and then screened in the library (B1) from April of this year.

We will continue to record as many of such precious atomic bombing testimonials from within and outside Japan as possible, for communication to future generations. In addition to these testimonial films, visitors can also read the testimonials and other related books. Please visit and experience the feelings and words of the survivors for yourself.

(Hiroshima National Peace Memorial Hall for the Atomic Bomb Victims)

2012 Hiroshima Scholarship Award Ceremony and Reception

The Hiroshima Scholarship Program was established in 1988, and as of 2011 a total of 713 people have received scholarship support.

Last year, thirty privately-funded students studying at universities in Hiroshima City were selected as Hiroshima Scholarship Students.

On July 11 (Wed), the Scholarship Award Ceremony and a reception were held with a total of 46 people in attendance, including the scholarship students, guests (contributors to the Hiroshima Fund for Foreign Students), those from the universities that the students attend and members of the selection committee.

Speeches were made encouraging the scholarship students, and six student representatives spoke of their determination to succeed.

For the students, this was a good opportunity to think about the significance of studying in Hiroshima and the meaning of the scholarship funds that they will receive from the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation, and they fully understood the great importance of the Hiroshima Scholarship.

This was also an opportunity for the donors and scholarship students to interact directly, further enhancing the significance of the Hiroshima Scholarship Program.

(Hiroshima City International House)

2012 Fall Japanese Language Supporter Training Course and Report Session

Good partners for international students

In May of last year, the Japanese Language Supporter Training Course was held at Hiroshima City International House. Due to the many requests received after the course, Fall Training Course was held on October 7 (Sun). For this latter course, the number of applicants exceeded the number being recruited, indicating the high level of interest among Hiroshima citizens in the international students.



Participants listening intently during the course

Associate Professor Kazunari Iwata of the Faculty of International Studies at Hiroshima City University provided instruction on “The position of the Japanese language in the world”, “Language Acquisition” and “Non-Japanese people”. This was followed by a hands-on exercise where participants corrected text written by international students. Participants in

the course diligently took notes as they nodded or showed surprise at what the instructor was saying.

In the next part of the course, two current supporters gave presentations on their regular activities. These were extremely well-received, with participants commenting that they were able to develop a concrete idea of what they would be doing. There were many questions and much lively discussion.

In the report session, ten supporters gave reports on their recent activities and exchanged information with the instructor. The supporters reported that through their activities they were able to rediscover Japan and they learned many things from the international students, demonstrating clearly the significance of the support activities. The session was also a good opportunity for the supporters to get together and talk.

We plan to further enhance this system, which enables the supporters to interact naturally as good partners with international students, while achieving personal growth.

(Hiroshima City International House)

2012 Hiroshima City Naka Waste Incineration Plant Tour

Taking an interest in everyday life

At Hiroshima City International House, a tour of Hiroshima City Environment Bureau Naka Waste Incineration Plant is held every year as part of the living support activities for the international students. This year the tour was held on October 20 (Sat). The number of participants was small due to other events being held, but it was an extremely informative tour.

At the plant, participants first watched an explanatory video on the waste treatment process and environmental protection activities. This was followed by a tour of the facilities, with an explanation provided by an engineer.

Participants expressed their surprise now and then as they viewed the various facilities that they would not normally be able to see. They leaned forward to take photos and continually asked questions. The engineer too was extremely impressed by their interest in the plant.

The students seemed satisfied with this valuable experience, commenting that they had not been interested in waste or the environment up until now and this had been a good opportunity for them to reassess their regular lifestyle. We will continue to set up this kind of opportunity in the future.

(Hiroshima City International House)



Participants looking satisfied with the informative tour

International House Festival 2012

— With Energy! 2012 —

International House Festival 2012 was held at Hiroshima City International House on November 4 (Sun), 2012, with the aim of furthering interaction between international students and other non-Japanese residents, and the people of Hiroshima City.

This year was the twelfth time that the festival has been held. Setting as its theme “With Energy! 2012”, the festival aimed to promote international exchange and cooperation activities at International House, and demonstrate International House’s energy and dynamism.

The opening ceremony was held on the second floor hall at 10:00am. After a speech by Mr. Seizo Sakoda, the Director of International House, there was a performance by Puccina, a citizens’ fanfare group, for a rousing start to the 2012 International House Festival. As with previous years the festival was held at the same time as the Kojin region’s Kojin *Ebisu* Festival, and blessed with good weather, it was a lively, fun day with around 2,800 participants, exceeding last year’s number.

Following on from last year, the international students wanted to use the opportunity of the Festival to make this an event that would encourage those affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake, and for this purpose organized the Fukushima Support section. Working together with members of the Fukushima Prefecture Association of Hiroshima, they set up a stall selling *imoni* (stewed potato), a specialty of the Tohoku region, that they had prepared the day before the festival. They sold 300 dishes of the miso-based stew, full of taros, meat and other vegetables, together with Koshihikari rice from Fukushima, for a profit of 20,000 yen. The proceeds were donated via the Fukushima Prefecture Association to people who have evacuated from Fukushima to Hiroshima.

The annual ANA International Students’ Japanese Speech Contest was held again, on the theme of “My Source of Energy”, and speeches were given by ten international students who had passed the qualifying round. This year, the judging panel also included ten members of the public, and the level of the speeches this year was judged as particularly high. The Grand Prix was awarded to Xing An, from Chinese

Mongolia, who received prizes including a return air ticket from Hiroshima to Tokyo. The Award of Excellence went to Khaldoon Hussein from Syria and Sun Yiwen from China.

At the annual “National Specialty Cuisine World Food Stalls Event”, thirteen organizations from twelve countries or regions set up stalls in the area outside International House and served up a variety of cuisines from their home countries. To ensure that the event was a “clean” event, the Reuse Project was adopted, using reusable plates and utensils that can be used again after washing. Efforts were also made to reduce the amount of waste produced.



A variety of food stalls

Mini-events were also held by the international students in the venue’s hall. There was a *koto* performance, dances from Mongolia, Nepal and Indonesia that are rarely seen in Japan, as well as piano and singing performances.

An event called “I Love My Homeland - Chatting with International Students” was held in the training room, and students from sixteen countries spoke about their home countries. Students who had just arrived in 2012 from Papua New Guinea and Nigeria put great effort into introducing their home countries in a mixture of English and a little Japanese, leaving a lasting impression on the audience. Many of the Hiroshima citizens in the audience commented that having the opportunity to interact with the international students was an enjoyable and valuable experience.

In the Exchange Lounge on the first floor were a number of fascinating street performances and workshops by Hiroshima citizens, including *nankintamasudare* (street performance using bamboo blinds), a balloon show, hula dancing, magic, *ikebana* flower arrangement, balloon art, and an environmental awareness section.

On the day, twelve students from Hiroshima City University and Hiroshima Jogakuin University and eleven members of the JICA *Kizuna* Project worked as volunteers with the international students to make this a meaningful day of international exchange.

(Hiroshima City International House)



Speech contest awards ceremony

Step into the world together!

Day of International Cooperation and Exchange 2012

On November 18 (Sun), 2012, thirty-one international exchange and cooperation events were held at International Conference Center Hiroshima, the nature strip on Peace Boulevard, and other venues.

This year marked the 13th time that the event has been held, and attracted a total of 6,850 visitors. Participants learned in a fun way about international exchange and cooperation (sponsors: 2012 International Day of Cooperation and Exchange Executive Committee, comprising seventy organizations including this Foundation and Hiroshima City).



Enjoying the World Kitchen

★“Chikyu no Stage 4” -The long trip home and the future after the disaster

This year once again Mr. Norihiko Kuwayama, a psychiatrist with a practice in Natori City, Miyagi Prefecture, who is involved in international medical aid activities, played the role of guide. Using commentary and enlarged images, Mr. Kuwayama described various incidents happening in Japan and around the world.

①Java Earthquake rescue

Local children had lost all hope as a result of the damage they suffered from the major earthquake that hit Indonesia in May, 2006. Mr. Kuwayama showed images of how he used music to bond emotionally with the children, who then spoke to him about their hopes for the future. Through this he conveyed the tragedy of the damage caused by natural disasters and the noble courage of those who overcome and move on from such tragedy.

②Around Japan by bicycle

Mr. Kuwayama described the bicycle trip he made around Japan as a soul-searching exercise. He spoke of the many people he met along the way and his interaction with his family who met with him when he returned after his trip. He related anecdotes that made him realize that rather than surviving on one's own, it is important to live together with those around us.

③Future after the disaster

Mr. Kuwayama spoke of the current state in the areas affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake, including his activities to care for the emotional health of sick children in Natori City, Miyagi Prefecture, and the efforts of the members of the association for the deceased from Yuriage Elementary School, who have overcome their grief to take their first steps forward.

The audience was deeply affected by Mr. Kuwayama's message and many were moved to tears.

★Something must be done! Project-Talk Show

A talk session was held on the “Something must be done! Project”, the aim of which is to promote throughout Japan the

importance of international cooperation activities, including those of JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency). A JICA international cooperation reporter and overseas teacher training participants from Hiroshima and Shimane who had visited developing nations (four people in total), each spoke about their visits, and held a talk session on the topic of what kind of international cooperation is required from now on.

This was followed by a report by Ms. Maki Hamanaga from Hiroshima City's JICA desk. She spoke about the local people's response and JICA members' comments regarding JICA's Overseas Atomic Bomb Exhibition that was held for the 100th time this year.

★“Do you know? About the returnees from China...?”

This year, the Chugoku/Shikoku Branch of The Support and Communications Centers for People Returning from China, who support Japanese returnees from China, participated in the event for the first time. Panels and other displays were used to describe in a simple way the current state of returnees from China. In addition to the displays, there were also participant-oriented sections organized, where people could try “Chinese knotting”, and take photos wearing Tai Chi outfits and other costumes. The event was hugely popular. Visitors enjoyed interacting with returnees from China through this event.

★ World Kitchen and International Craft Bazaar

Various foods from countries around the world prepared by twenty organizations were on sale in the nature strip on Peace Boulevard on the south side of International Conference Center Hiroshima, named Hiroshima International Village World Kitchen. At the International Craft Bazaar, fourteen organizations sold a variety of international crafts and other objects. Both events attracted many visitors. Proceeds from the two events will go towards the international cooperation activities of the participating organizations.

★ International exchange and cooperation activities

Approximately twenty-five organizations, including civic groups, universities and corporations, set up booths where they explained their respective international exchange and cooperation activities. Visitors commented that this was their first opportunity to learn that there are so many international exchange and cooperation organizations in Hiroshima.

★ Introduction/Experience of Japanese traditional culture

This event is popular with non-Japanese visitors every year, and once again sections were set up for participants to try on kimonos, and experience tea ceremony, *ikebana* flower arrangement, and hand-drawn Yuzen dyeing. This was an opportunity for non-Japanese visitors to experience Japanese culture, and Japanese visitors to reacquaint themselves with the wonderful elements of their own culture.

In addition to these events there was also a quiz rally, where participants could win a present by going around the event venue and answering questions, events for families to enjoy, a visa and legal advice section for non-Japanese visitors, an event to support children from developing nations by donating keyboard harmonicas and foreign currency coins, and more. Each venue was bustling with people.

Many students who helped with the event as volunteers commented on how much they enjoyed the day and said that they would like to do it again next year.

(International Relations and Cooperation Division)

Communicating Tones of Peace

—Interview with Mr. Mitsunori Yagawa, piano tuner, Yagawa Piano Studio—

The Phoenix Tree Peace Concert is held near the Phoenix Trees Exposed to the A-Bomb in Peace Memorial Park on August 6 every year. The beautiful tones are produced by the *hibaku* (a-bomb survivor) pianos. We spoke to Mr. Mitsunori Yagawa, who restores the pianos and holds Peace Concerts throughout the country.

First encounter with a *hibaku* piano

Since starting up my piano studio around twenty years ago, I have been working as a volunteer in activities to take on and restore pianos lying unused in homes, which are then donated to schools and other facilities in Japan and overseas. It was through these activities that I encountered a piano that was found miraculously unscathed in ruins after the atomic bombing, and was entrusted with the piano by its owner. Treating the piano as a precious document of the bombing, I retained as many original parts as possible as I have restored the piano, which means that the tone produced by the piano is almost the same as it was at the time (prior to the bombing). I currently have four pianos in my studio.



One of the *hibaku* pianos, "Misako's piano". It was found in a house 1.8km from the hypocenter. Although it escaped burning due to the concrete structure of the building, innumerable scratches remain on the piano's surface. The piano stool is retained as it was at the time.

Opportunity leading to concerts

In 2001 I started the Phoenix Tree Peace Concert together with Ms. Suzuko Numata, an atomic bomb survivor. This is an initiative that combines Ms. Numata's atomic bombing testimony with the *Hibaku* Piano concert, under the Phoenix Trees Exposed to the A-Bomb.

I was invited to the Nagasaki Peace Music Festival in 2004, and this became the opportunity to hold *Hibaku* Piano concerts in other prefectures. We held a concert at Aichi Expo in 2005, which was the 60th anniversary of the atomic bombing, and we have held concerts in 43 prefectures to date.

The *Hibaku* Piano concert that was held in New York in 2010 in memory of those who lost their lives in 9.11 became the start of our international concerts. We were criticized by some in Japan for holding a concert in America, the country that dropped the atomic bomb, but we received full support from the New York Fire Department, partly due to the fact that my late father was a firefighter himself. (343 New York City firefighters lost their lives as they worked on rescue efforts after the terrorist attacks in America on September 11, 2001.)

My father was at the Hiroshima West Fire Station in Otemachi (approximately 800m from the hypocenter) when the atomic bomb was dropped. He survived by using the knife that firefighters carried in a holster at the time to break through the collapsed ceiling and escape. The details of my father's experience are recorded in "Firefighting History of Hiroshima after the Bomb" (issued by Hiroshima City Fire Department, 1975).

In New York I had many opportunities to hear directly

about the experiences of the local people. Although they may have felt obligated to say so, I felt that around 70-80% of the people I spoke to are opposed to nuclear weapons. I think that this is the reason that no atomic weapon has been used since they were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It seemed to me that people understand that nuclear weapons are horrific weapons that must not be used. I believe that this is the result of what Hiroshima and Nagasaki have continuously stated up until the present.

Leading up to the concerts

In addition to the piano tuning, I also do basically all piano transportation and arrangement of pianists myself. I cannot carry the heaviest grand pianos by myself so I contract them to a transportation service company, but for the other pianos, I dismantle and package them in my studio and put them in my truck, then drive them myself to the venue. I then reassemble them, set them up at the venue, and once the concert is over I take them back to my studio in the same way. Recently I receive around 140 requests for concerts each year, and I have held over 900 concerts in various regions to date.

Lately I have been holding around 40 concerts a year for students on school excursions. When they ask for a talk before the concert, I take care to summarize and make sure that it does not go on for too long. This is because I do not want to depress the children, by making them feel that they were made to listen to a long talk on a painful subject when they went to Hiroshima. There are painful stories, but I want the children to have hope, and come back to Hiroshima again.



A grand piano found in an elementary school 2km from the hypocenter. It has six legs and weighs over 600kg. Greatly damaged, the piano was extensively restored by Mr. Yagawa (front).

Future activities

The reality of the damage of the atomic bombing has still not been fully communicated even in Japan, to people living in prefectures other than Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Sometimes I am asked whether radiation is emitted from the *hibaku* pianos. Even when I am asked questions that come from ignorance or prejudice, I make sure that I have studied the basics of the atomic bomb so that I can answer the questions properly. Continuing with the *Hibaku* Piano concerts is like sowing seeds of peace.

However, I do not want to pass on these activities to my son. Although my son has studied piano tuning and restoration, I believe that these activities should end with his generation, the third generation after the atomic bombing. It may not be feasible while the atomic bomb survivors are alive, but I hope that in my generation, the second generation since the bombing, we can achieve the abolition of nuclear weapons and then a peaceful era with no nuclear weapons.

(Interview conducted August 2012)



by **Syunichiro Arai**
Atomic Bomb Witness
for This Foundation

Involved in building demolition work

In the spring of 1945, when major cities throughout the country had been destroyed in the indiscriminate bombing attacks by the US military, an order to mobilize was sent out to 1st year junior high school students who had just started at school. All 1st year junior high school students were then mobilized to forcefully tear down buildings in the shopping districts, in order to create a firebreak zone of a width of 100m passing from east to west of the Hiroshima City metropolitan area.

We were 1st year students at the Junior High School Attached to Hiroshima Normal High School, and we too were mobilized. Our role as junior high school students was to carry away the waste materials from buildings that had been cut down with saws by adults.

Mobilization of volunteer corps from rural areas

At the beginning of July, to encourage building demolition work, representatives from junior high schools were called to the prefectural government office. In the presence of senior officers from the military and the government, one teacher spoke. "The air strikes are getting worse all over the country, and on top of that, making young junior high school students work in the scorching heat is extremely dangerous. Our school's students will be going to rural villages to increase food production". Although high-ranking military officials raised their voices, yelling and threatening that teacher, apparently no-one opposed what the teacher said.

On July 20, leaving a few behind, eighty of us 1st year students were taken by our teacher to Hara Village, Kamo-gun (the name at that time), and started work to support the farmers there who had lost workers to conscription.

We ended up surviving

In this way, although myself and the other 1st year students at our school escaped direct damage from the bomb, we suffered the misfortune of losing the ten students who were left behind as well as almost all the 1st year students from other schools who were involved in building demolition work.

The 1st year students who died in the bombing were actually our classmates from elementary school, friends who had gone on to different junior high schools after graduation. And we ended up surviving.

Permission for gradual return home

We 13-year-olds were staying at various temples and shrines, and our job was mainly to weed the rice fields. We were sometimes given rice balls from the farmers, who pitied us because we were so small. We carefully ate every morsel, not leaving even a single rice grain. Even today I cannot forget the taste of the white rice that I ate during the food shortages.

It was at that time that our teacher said that they would gradually let us go home, starting from the ones who had worked hard. I was one of the fortunate group of five to be chosen to go home. The date was set as August 6.

The sky flashed

It was 8:15am when I was waiting for the train home to Hiroshima on the platform at Hachihonmatsu Station on the Sanyo Honsen line.

Suddenly there was a flash and the sky burst. I immediately threw myself to the ground. When I finally raised my head, what I saw was a huge mushroom cloud billowing up into the void.

The train to Hiroshima that we boarded stopped operating

at the next stop, Seno. The five of us started walking to Hiroshima, where huge amounts of smoke were rising up.

I hope they survive

We entered Hiroshima City from Higashi Ohashi Bridge, around three kilometers from the hypocenter. The narrow wooden bridge was covered in bomb survivors dragging the skin that had peeled away and was hanging down from their fingertips. Around their feet two young children appeared like a vision.

A girl who looked around the age of a 2nd year elementary school student was pulling the hand of her sister, who was probably around three years old. Their faces were swollen up like balloons, with small dimples that must have been their eyes and mouth. We could hear a faint voice. "Hold on tight". The girl was encouraging her younger sister, and that voice remained with us as the two young sisters disappeared into the crowd.

I hope they survive. All I could do was watch them go, and that was my prayer.



**"Little sisters gone...
I wish they were still
alive"**

Created by:
Manami Nakasuka
(Motomachi High School,
Standard Stream Creative
Expression Course) and
Syunichiro Arai
(Eyewitness to the atomic
bombing)

My school was gone

On the afternoon of the next day, the 7th, I managed to reach Senda-machi, the place where my school should have been. The area had turned into a field of devastation, with a single red-brick building of Bunriku University remaining. I could see some people involved in what appeared to be aid activities.

I saw a person there who looked like a teacher from my school, and I shouted "I have a report to submit!" I then gave the teacher the document that I had been given by my homeroom teacher. I found out later that the bodies of three of my classmates and two teachers were discovered in the burnt ruins of the school.

As a 1st year junior high school student, I loyally obeyed the orders of a teacher. Although I had fulfilled my duty, I have absolutely no recollection of how and where I passed through to return home after that.

Our testament: we must communicate our stories!

The site of the building demolition work in what is now known as Peace Boulevard is the grave of six thousand people, including all the 1st year junior high school students who were killed. They were mainly our classmates, people who spent their elementary school days with us, the survivors.

We have continued to avoid dredging up memories of the tragedy and speaking about the circumstances, and now we are old, almost eighty years old.

I hope you understand these thoughts, the thoughts of a junior high school student who survived and has finally started to open up and talk. This is our testament.

Profile

Syunichiro Arai

Born in Yamagata Prefecture in 1931. Lived in Chichibu in Saitama Prefecture and moved to Hiroshima at the age of eight due to father's work transfer.

Witnessed the explosion of the atomic bomb as a 1st year junior high school student at Hachihonmatsu Station in Kamo-gun (currently Higashihiroshima City) where he was mobilized at the time. He was then exposed to the bombing in the Hiroshima City, entering the city from Higashi-Ohashi Bridge over Enko River, before going to the burnt ruins of his school.

After graduation from Hiroshima University, employed at Radio Chugoku (currently RCC Broadcasting). Responsible for production of radio and television programs including drama series and documentaries.



by **Mitsuo Kodama**
Atomic Bomb Witness
for This Foundation

Escape from collapsed school building

I experienced the atomic bombing in a classroom around 850m from the hypocenter. I was a 1st year student at Hiroshima Prefectural Junior High School No. 1 (Hiroshima 1st Junior High). The old wooden school building collapsed in an instant, and around half of the 1st year students who were waiting to take over building demolition work or were studying there (just over 150 students) were trapped under the rubble.

I miraculously managed to escape by myself. I pulled out a number of my friends who were asking for help from under the collapsed school building, but there were still many other friends who could not move and were calling for help. There were some who had had their head split open and some who had been crushed to death. Once the gloom immediately after the bombing gradually lifted, I could see many human figures by the pool in the schoolyard. When I went to the pool to get some help to rescue the others, I found that the people there were the remaining half of the 1st year students who had been involved in building demolition work behind the city hall. They were burned and in a terrible state.

Many of the injured had come to the pool looking for water. They were in the pool and the water had turned a cloudy brown color. Surprised at the sight of the seriously injured, I gave up on finding help and returned to the school building, but the flames were getting closer. Schoolmates who had maybe noticed the smell of smoke and realized that they could not escape started singing the national anthem and the school song. The voices of my friends, burned alive, that I could not help, are seared into my memory forever.

Lines of refugees in tatters

I fled blindly, surrounded by smoke, and arrived at the main road in front of the Red Cross Hospital. It was there that I came across a line of people in rags, covered in burns and looking like ghosts, with their hands held out in front of them. I joined the line too. I moved forward with them, watching a young man walking unsteadily, holding in his palm his left eyeball, which had fallen out. Suddenly a woman's hand grabbed my leg. I tried desperately to brush her aside. She was trapped to the waist by a collapsed wall, and was asking for help. The injured soldiers walking beside me also passed by, pretending not to see her. Vomiting many times along the way, I mustered all my energy to cross Miyuki Bridge, but passed out near Tanna Station on the former Ujina line. When I came to I had been brought into a nearby home. That evening I made my way back to my evacuation home in Hesaka on the Ujina line, changing to the Geibi line. By the time I got there it was close to midnight.

Viewed from Hesaka Station, the sky over Hiroshima was blazing a bright red color. Facing the direction of the school, I put my hands together and apologized continuously to the friends I had left behind.

Hovering on the brink of death

I was suffering from a high fever when I heard the Imperial decree announcing Japan's defeat on August 15. At that time almost all my hair had fallen out, and my gums were continuously bleeding. My mother had heard a rumor that the atomic bomb (or "flash-boom" as we called it) had contained poison, so she boiled the medicinal herb *dokudani* and gave it to me to drink, as well as baking the leaves and applying them to my festering wounds. Around August 20 the fever reached 42 degrees. Purple spots appeared all over my body, and even the doctor gave up, not knowing how to treat it. However in

September the fever mysteriously started going down.

Cancer attacks surviving friends

Of my 300 classmates at the time, only nineteen managed to overcome acute radiation sickness and go back to school.

When we were in the second year of high school, one classmate passed away from uncontrolled hemorrhaging, and just before graduation from university another passed away from leukemia. After that, the illness that has taken all of those friends who have passed away as we get older is cancer. There are already sixteen who have passed away, and the three surviving, including myself, are suffering from compound cancer.

My "abnormal chromosome" resulting from the bombing

My friends contracted cancer when they were young, but mine was late-occurring cancer, from the age of 60. First was rectal cancer. I was told that the stomach cancer that came three years later was not metastasis but rather primary cancer. I was also told that the thyroid cancer that I contracted when I was 70 was not metastasis but compound cancer peculiar to atomic bomb survivors. Since the age of 65 I have had operations in 16 places for skin cancer.

I was told by specialists at the Radiation Effects Research Foundation that because I experienced the bombing at close range, a chromosomal abnormality known as "translocation" was found. There were 102 instances of translocation found in 100 cells, and because of this the amount of radiation I experienced was 4.6Gy gamma rays. Apparently a half lethal dose is 4.0Gy gamma rays (mortality rate of 50%).

What I want to communicate

People who experienced the atomic bombing at close range had their genes throughout their body split by the huge amount of radiation they were exposed to. The experts told me that abnormal chromosomes occurred because they connected in the wrong way when they were restored, and will never return to the original form. I was also told that abnormal chromosomes are more likely to contract cancer.

I have personally experienced the horror of radiation, and as one who has outlived friends who died bitter deaths, I know that it is my mission to continue to tell people on their behalf that nuclear power and humankind cannot coexist.

(note)

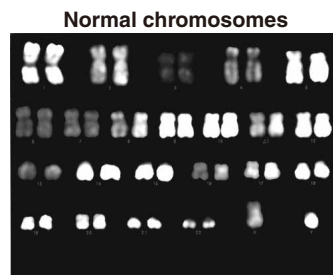
(*1) chromosomes: biological matter comprising DNA with genetic information.

(*2) translocation: a part of a separated chromosome joins another chromosome. Two abnormal chromosomes are created in one translocation.

Profile

Mitsuo Kodama

Born in Kojin-machi, Hiroshima City in September 1932. Graduated from Hijiya Elementary School. Experienced the atomic bombing as a 1st year student at the former Hiroshima Junior High School No. 1. After overcoming acute radiation sickness was generally healthy. Following graduation from Hiroshima University, employed at local government office in hometown. Travelled to Switzerland for a study tour dispatched by the Ministry of Agriculture's International Farmer Friends Association, and after returning to Japan operated a farm. Later changed career to be employed at Seibu Distribution Group. Operation for renal cancer at the age of 60, retired. Since that time, underwent 18 cancer operations.



Photos of the chromosomes sampled from Mr. Kodama. Compared with the photo on the left, ten abnormal chromosomes can be seen in the photo on the right (indicated by arrows).



Abnormal chromosomes

The Birth of the Green Legacy Hiroshima Initiative



by **Tomoko Watanabe**

Executive Director of ANT-Hiroshima

Are you familiar with the gorgeous animated film “THE MAN WHO PLANTED TREES” by Frédéric Back, which won the Grand Prix at the 2nd Hiroshima Animation Festival (1987)? It is a beautiful, poetic and moving animated film about a man who spends his life quietly planting trees, transforming wild land into a green forest.

The act of planting trees is simple yet beautiful and joyful. And it is something that anyone can do. In the process of protectively raising the trees that one has planted, we are encouraged and strengthened by the trees, and learn so much about life - life and death, the importance of coexisting with nature, diversity and generosity. I believe that planting trees is equivalent to building peace.

On August 6, 1945, Hiroshima was reduced to rubble by one atomic bomb, and at the time it was said that vegetation would not grow there for 75 years. However, in that same year canna and oleander flowers appeared, and charred trees once again produced buds, a sight that encouraged and gave hope to live to many Hiroshima citizens. Currently, there are approximately 170 *hibaku* (atomic bomb survivor) trees in 55 locations within a 2km radius of the hypocenter in Hiroshima City.



The *hibaku* camphor tree near the moat at Hiroshima Castle. Approximately 1.1km from the hypocenter.

Ms. Nassrine Azimi, Senior Advisor for UNITAR Headquarters, says the following about the *hibaku* trees. “For many years, as I walked the streets of Hiroshima, I came to know the power of recovery, the generosity, beauty, and especially the important significance of the special residents of Hiroshima - the trees that survived the atomic bombing and the descendants of those trees. The *hibaku* trees, which are survivors of the nuclear tragedy, communicate an important message not only to Hiroshima residents and visitors to Hiroshima, but to all humankind”.

Ms. Azimi and I worked as joint founders and coordinators to implement the Green Legacy Hiroshima Initiative, with support from UNITAR and the NPO ANT-Hiroshima, in the year from July 2011 to June 2012. The aim of the initiative was to sow seeds and shoots from Hiroshima’s a-bomb survivor (*hibaku*) trees throughout the world, and by doing so protect these trees and broadly communicate their existence and meaning.

We set a pilot period of one year for this activity, and succeeded in sending the seeds of Hiroshima’s *hibaku* trees to almost all continents throughout the world. This was done

thanks to the support of many people and organizations: in particular, the currently irreplaceable working group members of Green Legacy Hiroshima – Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation, Hiroshima City, Hiroshima Botanical Garden, Hiroshima University, Hiroshima Prefecture - as well as horticulturalists and other volunteers.



Tree-planting ceremony on March 30 this year. 2nd generation *hibaku* saplings (persimmon trees) were planted in the nature strip on Peace Boulevard.

I am certain that the success of Green Legacy Hiroshima Initiative is due to the efforts and progress made by many, including the tree surgeon Mr. Chikara Horiguchi, all those who have protected and nurtured the *hibaku* trees for such a long time, and the many citizens of Hiroshima who, like the a-bomb survivor Ms. Suzuko Numata who passed away last year, loved the *hibaku* phoenix trees and sent out a message of hope to people all over the world. It is not possible to thank each person individually, but I would like to express my sincere respect for and gratitude to all for their efforts and support.

On July 1, 2012, we established the voluntary organization Green Legacy Hiroshima Initiative, to fulfill this ideal and activity that is spreading globally in a more coherent and organized manner. (<http://www.unitar.org/greenlegacyhiroshima>)

I pray that many partners throughout the world will participate in this initiative, and become ambassadors to proactively spread Hiroshima’s message of peace and the green legacy in their respective countries.

Let’s plant trees together!

(August, 2012)

Profile

Tomoko Watanabe

Involved in international cooperation and peace education activities. Based in the peace city, Hiroshima.

Also conducts her own peace-building activities, including international understanding and peace education for Hiroshima citizens, children, overseas trainees visiting Hiroshima and others.

Information

Our Newsletters Are Accessible on the Internet

You can read our newsletters (Japanese version and English version) on the Internet.

[URL] <http://www.pcf.city.hiroshima.jp/hpcf/paper/>

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