



**South Tyneside
Stop The War Coalition**



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NAGASAKI DAY, 9 AUGUST

Weapons of Mass Destruction: Some Historical Facts

At 8.15 am [local time] on 6 August 1945, the first Atom Bomb used as a weapon against human beings was dropped by the USA on Hiroshima, Japan. Memorials record the number of people killed as 138,890.

The Americans planned to drop a second A-Bomb on Japan on 11 August 1945, but predicted bad weather brought the date forward to 9 August. The original target that day was Kokura, a city in southern Japan, which had been bombed with more conventional weapons of mass destruction the previous day – when about 2,000 people died. As the B29 plane carrying the A-Bomb passed over Kokura, its target-point was obscured by a mix of cloud and smoke from the previous day's raid. After circling the city three times with bomb doors open, the bomber was diverted ... about 100 miles .. to the industrial town of Nagasaki.

At 11.02am [local time] the second A-Bomb used as a weapon was dropped ... it exploded 1,650 feet over Nagasaki. Within moments more than 40,000 people were dead, and many more injured – about 5,000 of whom were to die within a year.

Memorials record a total death toll at Nagasaki of 48,857. Among those who looked down from the bomber on Nagasaki that day was a British airman, Leonard Cheshire, present on the mission as an observer. He described the mushroom cloud he saw developing out of the ruins of Nagsaki as 'obscene in its greedy clawing at the earth, swelling as if with its regurgitation of all the life it had consumed'.

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