

The Cost of the Bomb,  
The Cost of Slave Labor:  
Mutual Apology and Compensation  
as a Way to Address U.S. and Japanese  
World War II Atrocities

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# Two Issues - #1: The Atomic Bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki





# Two Issues - #2: Forced and Slave Labor



Korean forced laborers (in Japan, 1944-45 mobilization only): 300,000  
Chinese forced laborers (in Japan, 1944-45 mobilization only): 41,762  
Allied POWs (in Japan): 36,000  
Total forced / slave laborers in Japan: 377,762

Total Allied POWs under Japanese Empire: 140,000  
Sex slaves (“comfort women” – mainly Korean, Chinese,  
throughout Japanese Empire): 200,000

Source for Koreans, Chinese forced laborers: Petra Schmidt, “Japan’s Wartime Compensation: Forced Labor,” *Asia-Pacific Journal of Human Rights and Law*, 2000.

Source for Allied POWs in Japan: POW Research Network Japan. <http://www.powresearch.jp/en/archive/camplist/index.html>



**How are these two issues linked?**

**The example of the Koreans who were forced laborers at Mitsubishi Hiroshima Shipyard at the time of the atomic bombing**

Interviewing in Pyontek, South Korea - 2008



After Japan's surrender, neither issue was addressed – both were pushed aside at the Tokyo War Crimes Trial



The question of war crimes:  
Was use of the atomic bombs a war crime?

## **The Atomic Bombs as Extreme Chemical Weapons**

- Geneva Protocol of 1925 – Chemical Weapons Convention
- Uranium enrichment, plutonium development – chemical engineering under Du Pont Corporation at Hanford Engineering Works
- Pre-existing knowledge by scientists and military officers in Manhattan Project of radiation dangers

The question of war crimes:  
Was use of the atomic bombs a war crime?

## **The Nagasaki bomb – Truman administration failure to use diplomacy**

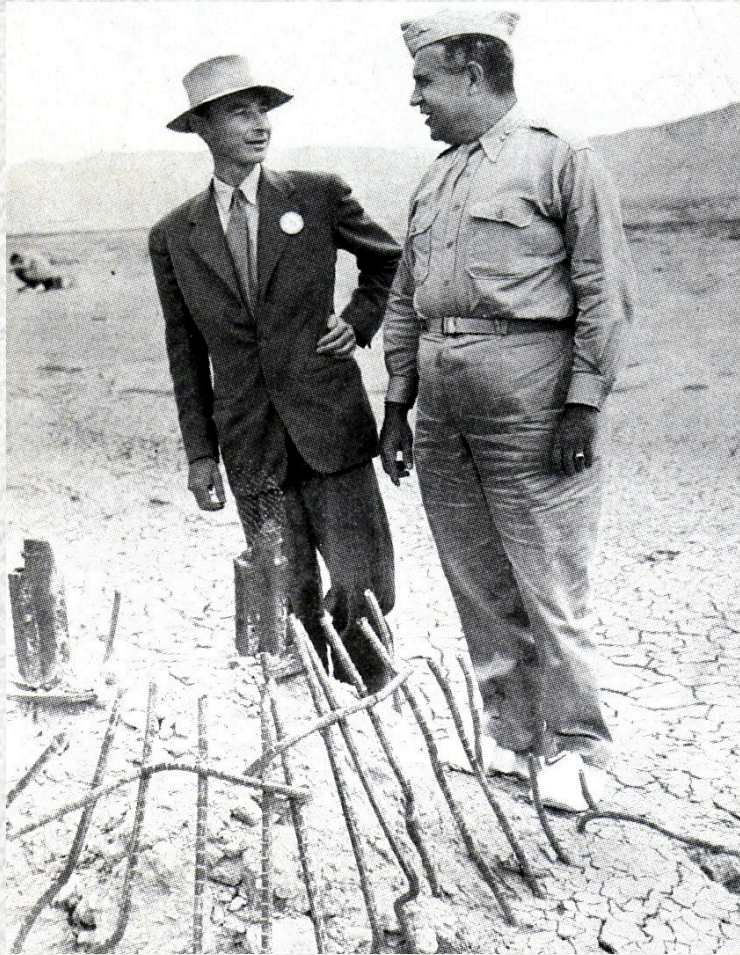
- Truman administration announcement of Hiroshima bombing through public channels but no diplomatic document or contact
- No time given the Japanese government to respond to the Hiroshima bombing

The question of war crimes:  
Was use of the atomic bombs a war crime?

**The Nagasaki bomb as second test – on a real target - of a new super weapon**

- Decision by Truman administration to authorize use of bombs made prior to the Potsdam declaration (demanding ‘unconditional surrender’) – momentum of MED
- Truman never officially authorized use in document form, as President – done through Stimson down to Groves

## The Nagasaki bomb as second test – on a real target - of a new super weapon



- Groves wanted clear assessment of results from both types of bombs – for MED the issue was use as much as Japanese response . Grovers insisted the two bombs be dropped separately.

## The Nagasaki bomb as second test – on a real target - of a new super weapon



- Final target and date determined by weather conditions and speed of assembly on Tinian, and by Tinian flight officers – military controlled second bomb decision after August 6.

The question of war crimes:  
Was forced / slave labor by the Japanese  
a war crime?

**“Forced” labor was in fact slave labor**

- Current definition of slavery under international law – total control of a person by force – different forms of slavery, not just ownership of a person
- Dishonesty of the Japanese imperial government – use of the term “conscripted labor” when Koreans, Chinese were kidnapped en masse in their villages
- Coordination of this process at the height of World War II by Japanese military, government, and zaibatsu – court evidence in testimony of Koreans

# The question of war crimes: Was forced / slave labor by the Japanese a war crime?

## **The “wages” controversy – Koreans never received what was promised**

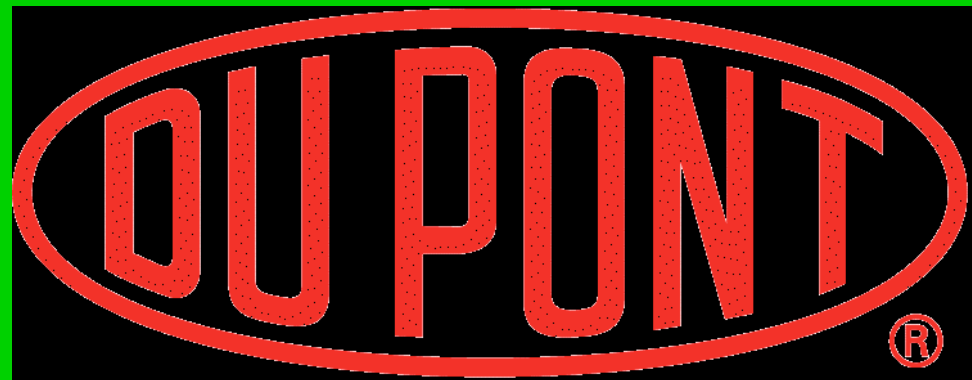
- The 50/50 promise – half of wages to family, half to the laborer – but families in Korea never received anything, and laborers in Japan had to use pay to survive
- Coverup by companies like Mitsubishi – failure to honestly deal with their past by hiding documents
- Complicity of the Japanese government – failure to come forward with official documents from wartime
- Refusal of Japanese courts to compel the Japanese government and companies to provide back pay promised

The question of war crimes:  
Was forced / slave labor by the Japanese  
a war crime?

## **Working conditions of slave labor**

- Working forced laborers to death – the mines and tunnels death rates of Koreans and Chinese
- Confining production workers to company sites under force – brutal punishment for escapees

**Why has there not been more focus on  
the role of companies – US and Japanese  
– in these issues?**



## **Identifying the role of big companies – Determining the cost of the bomb**

Total costs of Manhattan Project: \$1,889,604,000  
(\$21,570,821,000 in 1996 dollars)

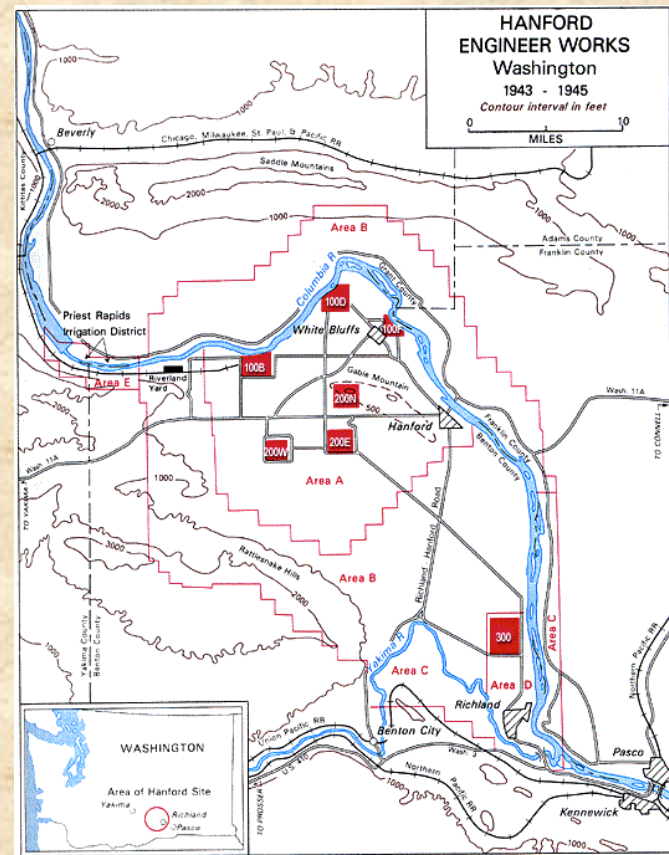
Top Du Pont chemical engineers, Arthur Compton and Crawford Greenewalt, worked with Fermi and others at University of Chicago lab where first chain reaction succeeded in 1942 – involvement was scientific, not just construction, production

## Du Pont Corporation and the atomic bomb:

- Built and operated initial TNX pilot project plant for plutonium, at Oak Ridge, Tennessee
- Sole contractor at Hanford, with offices in many major cities supporting MED
- Processed the plutonium cores for Trinity (first atomic bomb, tested in New Mexico), Nagasaki “Fat Man” bomb, and 4<sup>th</sup> bomb not used

# Du Pont Corporation and the atomic bomb:

Hanford and Du Pont: 428,000 acres acquired along the Columbia River



# Hanford and Du Pont:

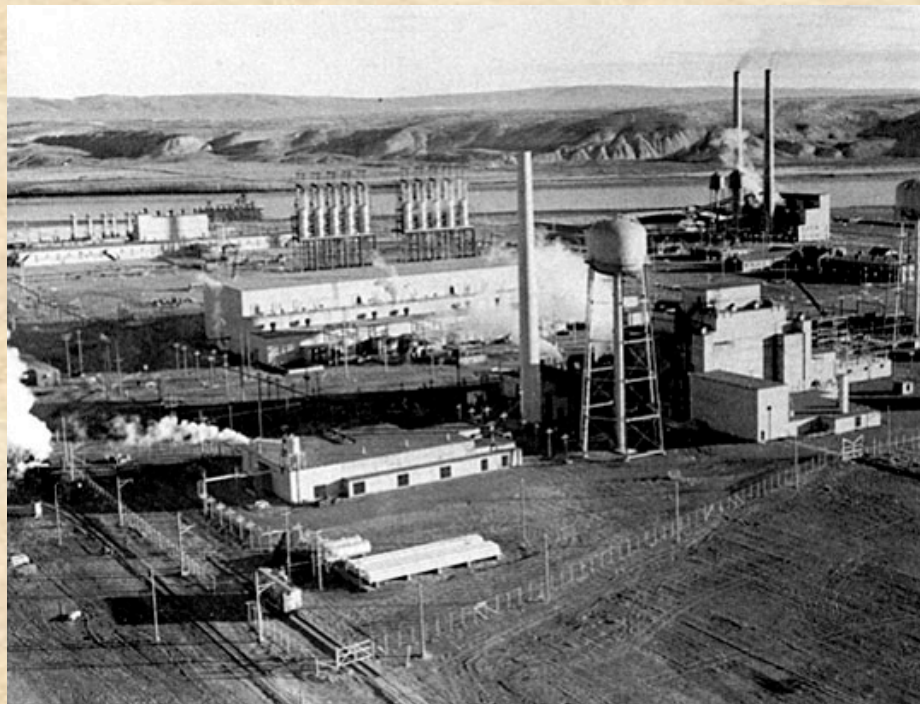
- Constructed 540 buildings, over 600 miles of roads and 158 miles of rail track built



# Hanford and Du Pont:

- 132,000 hired from 1943-45, with 51,000 working at peak in June 1944
- Total cost to build and run Hanford at time: \$358 million (\$7.16 billion in 2001 dollars)

(source: Robert S. Norris, *Racing for the Bom: General Leslie R. Groves, The Manhattan Project's Indispensable Man* (2002); "Du Pont Project 9536, History of the Project," 4 volumes, 1945, Dept. of Energy, OpenNet).



# Identifying the role of big companies – Determining the cost of slave labor

## The example of Mitsubishi in wartime Japan:


- In 1944, heavy industry division had peak employment of over 380,000
- Profits peaked in 1940 at 20 billion yen, leveling to 10 billion yen through 1944, then rapidly declining but never in loss

(source: Jerome Cohen, *Japan's Economy in War and Reconstruction* (1949), p. 509)

- Domination of Hiroshima and Nagasaki war production

# Awareness of Japanese activists in Nagasaki of city's image of "peace" - reality of war production

奇贈

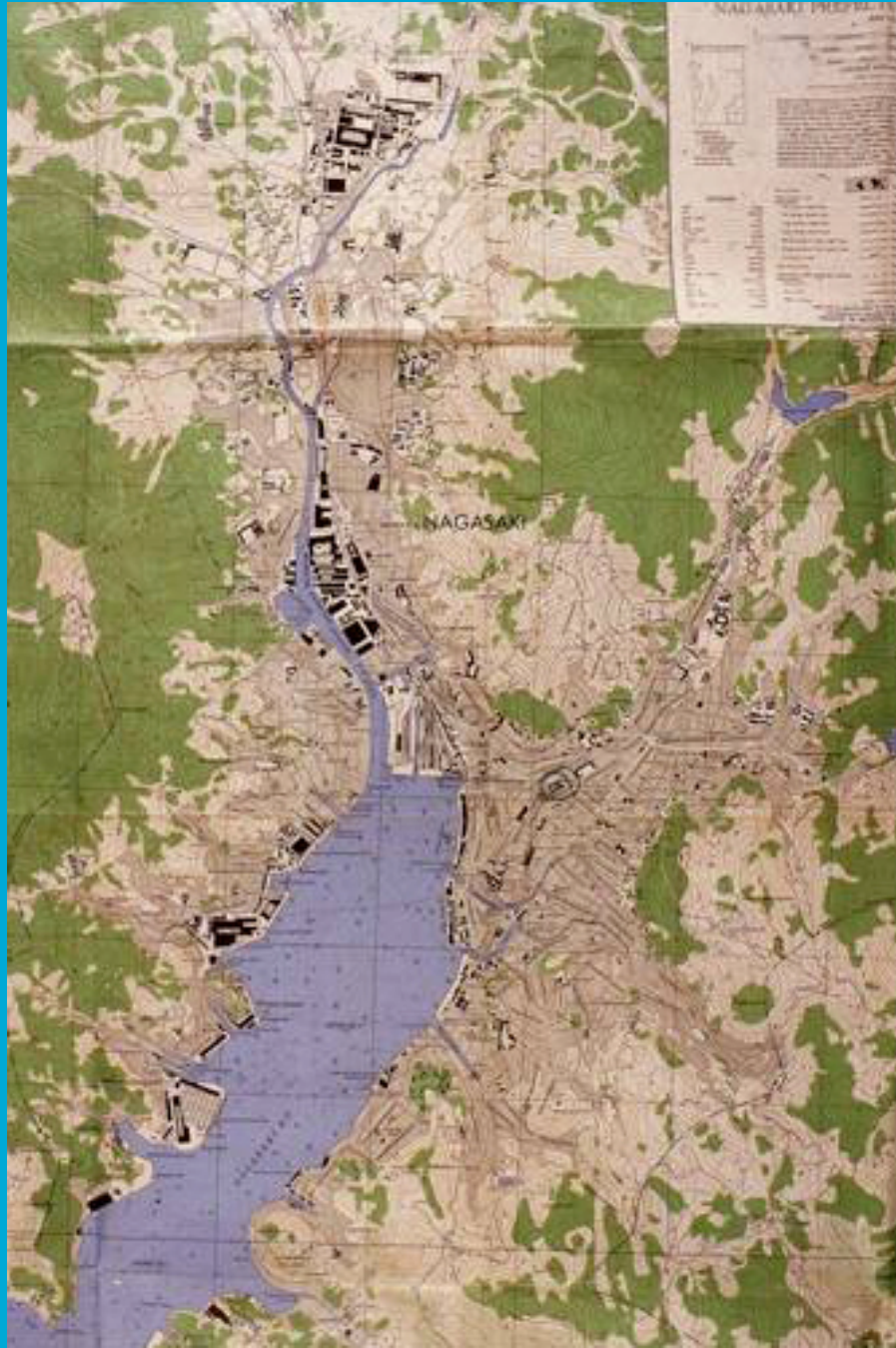


平和都市長崎  
における  
三菱の兵器生産

続編



次期F S-Xとなった日米共同開発のF-16戦闘機（対地対艦攻撃を主任務）  
1988.11.29三菱に決定。1号機は1995.10初飛行。130機生産予定。  
名古屋航空宇宙システム製作所







# Nagasaki – a military-industrial complex: Key role of Mitsubishi production sites

“ Battleship Island ” coal mine – an island adjacent to Nagasaki Harbor



# **Nagasaki – a military-industrial complex: Key role of Mitsubishi production sites**

Mitsubishi Nagasaki Shipyard – where the largest battleship in WW II was built – *Musashi* (sister ship of *Yamato*, Kure Naval Yard)



# **Nagasaki – a military-industrial complex: Key role of Mitsubishi production sites**

Mitsubishi Foundary – munitions fabrication plant – hundreds of meters from the atomic bomb hypocenter



## **Mitsubishi's use of forced and slave labor in Nagasaki**

Allied POWs at the Mitsubishi Foundary – 195 POWs (152 Dutch, 24 Australian and 19 British) were imprisoned at the end of the war. 113 POWs died while imprisoned, 8 of whom were killed by Atomic Bomb.

Source: Fukuoka Camp #14 – Nagasaki

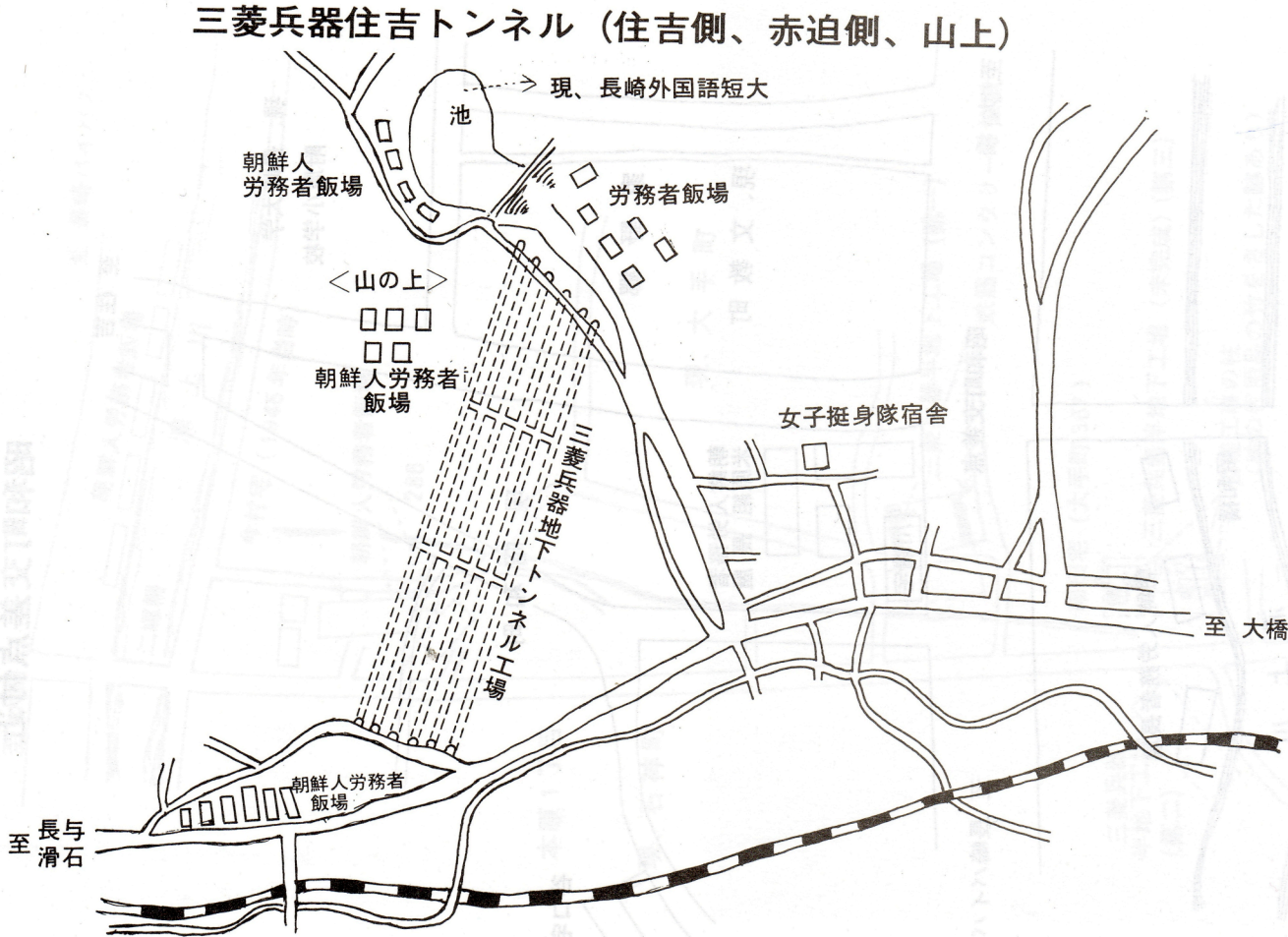
[http://www.mansell.com/pow\\_resources/camplists/fukuoka/fuk-14-nagasaki/fuku\\_14\\_nagasaki.html](http://www.mansell.com/pow_resources/camplists/fukuoka/fuk-14-nagasaki/fuku_14_nagasaki.html)

# Nagasaki – a military-industrial complex: Key role of Mitsubishi production sites

Mitsubishi's underground tunnel and production network in Nagasaki – coordinated with the military



# Mitsubishi's underground tunnels, links to Korean forced labor dormitories, and underground production and storage for the military



How can a strategy of “mutual apology and mutual compensation” by the US and Japan be implemented, given this history?

Establish an Asian Pacific Foundation along the lines of the German “Foundation: Remembrance, Recognition, and Future”



# Begin with an initial project....

- Coordinate networks and existing data and

Investigate institutional history further

# Implementing the strategy....

- Expand litigation internationally – go beyond current US and Japanese courts where progress has been blocked
- Involve support groups internationally, advocating linkage of the two main issues

# Implementing the strategy....

- Involve national governments and institutions beyond the US and Japan, starting with South Korea – particularly its Truth and Reconciliation Commission
- Expand national government contacts to those countries with affected people – such as China, Taiwan, Australia, New Zealand, Indonesia, Britain, and the Netherlands

# Implementing the strategy....

Highlight the relevance of this historical settlement to current crises....

- The need for nuclear disarmament, not just “non-proliferation”
- The continued problem of slave labor in today’s global economy – and the need to eliminate this practice
- The centrality of addressing historical grievances of nations and people to advance reconciliation among nations

Thank you...

