

Hiroshima Maidens

by Norman Cousins

In 1949, The Saturday Review undertook a "Moral Adoptions" project in Hiroshima for the care of some 400 children who were orphaned by the atomic explosion. Readers of the magazine, responding to the appeal of the editorial page, "adopted" the children at a distance. Their support made it possible to build new orphanages and to enlarge old ones. The "parents" corresponded with their foster children and with the heads of the orphanages. In addition to contributing to the general support of the orphanages, the Americans made it possible for the children to receive special educational training. Eventually, most of the orphans went to college or vocational schools under the Moral Adoptions plan.

A related project in Hiroshima undertaken by the magazine was medical and rehabilitative in nature. The focal point of this program was the treatment of young girls who had been disfigured or crippled by the bombing. The project began in 1953 and continued for four years.

The "Hiroshima Peace Center Associates," referred to several times in this section, was formed by the editors as the operating American agency to administer the Moral Adoptions program and the program for treatment of the Hiroshima Maidens.

A second major project undertaken by the magazine concerned the "Ravensbrueck Lapins," a group of Polish ladies who had been used as medical guinea pigs by Nazi doctors during the Second World War. Aided by the experiences of treating the Hiroshima Maidens, the magazine brought the Polish ladies to the United States for medical, surgical, and psychotherapeutic treatment.

The following two sections are drawn from articles and editorials appearing in the magazine describing both these programs.

It was at the Nagarekawa United Church of Christ in Hiroshima that I first met the "Hiroshima Maidens," Kiyoshi Tanimoto, the American-educated Japanese Methodist minister and one of the central figures in John Hersey's *Hiroshima*, had often referred to the Maidens in his letters to me following my 1949 visit. When my wife Ellen and I arrived at the Hiroshima railroad station in August, 1953, he met us and spoke of the predicament of the Maidens.

The girls, some sixty in number, had drifted together out of common experience and common loneliness. All were survivors of the experience in Hiroshima on August 6, 1945. All were badly disfigured or crippled by the heat and blast of the bomb. Most had been young schoolgirls at the time. As they grew older, they became separated from the kind of expectations that light up the world of teenage girls. The prospect of marriage and children was almost nonexistent.

Adding to this sense of alienation was the fear of being seen in public. The tendency of human beings to shun and even subconsciously to resent human beings with deformities is strong in Japanese culture. The Maidens had no sense of ease in moving about the city during daylight. A few of them had jobs—generally in social welfare activities, such as the School for the Blind. Most of them, however, stayed at home.

Dr. Kiyoshi Tanimoto became their crusader and benefactor. He brought them together, gave them things to do, individually and collectively, and provided focus for their lives. Plastic surgery as a disciplined branch of surgery had yet to be developed in Japan.

All this Kiyoshi Tanimoto made known to Ellen and me on our way from the railroad station to the hotel. He asked whether we would come to his church to meet the girls. We agreed.

The Nagarekawa Church had been partially destroyed by the bomb. Tanimoto had personally supervised the rebuilding. It was a modest structure, brick and stucco, not unlike the type of small church building one might find in the United States. The basement had a fairly large meeting room. It was here that we met the Maidens.

There were perhaps thirty or thirty-five of them. They sat quietly on the hard benches. Each of them came forward as Kiyoshi Tanimoto introduced them, giving a little background. Then he interpreted as the girls spoke of their experiences.

Dr. Tanimoto said the girls had read about advances in plastic surgery in the United States and hoped for the miracle that would enable them to come to America for the operations that might return them, at least to a small degree, to a normal life.

I watched the girls closely as they spoke of their hopes about coming to America. There was something akin to a sense of transport in their voices. I knew I would have to be careful about creating false expectations, so I said I had no way of knowing whether what they wanted to do could be done. At any rate, I would stay in touch with Dr. Tanimoto and tell him what I learned after my return to the States.

It was almost two years before the preparations were completed.

The natural agency in the United States to handle this project, we felt, was the Hiroshima Peace Center Associates, Inc., a group of Americans interested in Hiroshima who had administered the Moral Adoptions Plan. The HPCA board agreed to sponsor the new project.

But during the first six months after our return from Japan, things went slowly—dismally so. We went to foundation after foundation, seeking money for doctors, surgeons, hospital care, home care, transportation. And foundation after foundation turned us down. One was fearful that if one of the Maidens died on the operating table the foundation would be held responsible. Another was concerned about the political views of the girls and was reluctant to furnish ammunition to some future congressional investigating committee. Still another felt that, unless all the Hiroshima victims could be cared for, it might be a mistake to do something for any single group. Any number of foundations expressed sympathy, but said their charters did not provide for mercy projects of this particular nature.

Dr. William M. Hitzig, my personal physician and friend, brought the project to the attention of the director and board of Mt. Sinai Hospital in New York, with which he was affiliated. As a result of these discussions Dr. Arthur J. Barsky, one of the nation's most prominent plastic surgeons, agreed to take charge of all operative work, assisted by his staff. The Mt. Sinai Hospital volunteered to supply operating facilities and hospital bed care free of charge. The contribution of the surgeons and hospital was both substantial and heroic, since four or five operations per patient might be necessary, and each girl might have to spend four to six months in the hospital. It would be a year before the party could return to Japan.

A special committee of the American Friends Service Committee was created to map out a program for the girls when not in the hospital. The girls were to live in American homes, share family activities and responsibilities, and receive special education or training that might be useful in making them self-sufficient on their return to Japan. Mrs. Jeanne Lewisohn, who had served as volunteer executive secretary of the Orphans project, now agreed to act as coordinator for the Maidens.

But the transportation problem held up the project for more than a year. We tried the airlines, only to run into official regulations concerning free passage. We went back to the foundations, with no greater success than before. Then Miss Janet Tobitt, one of the "moral adoptions" parents who had recently returned from a year in Japan, suggested that Mr. Kiyoshi Togasaki, resourceful president of the *Nippon Times*, English-language newspaper of Tokyo, might be persuaded to work on the transportation problem. It turned out to be an inspired idea. After exploring every approach, Mr. Togasaki arrived at a solution as ingenious as it was effective. He went to General J. E. Hull (U.S. Army, Far East Command) and asked whether the U.S. Air Force would fly the girls. After being supplied with detailed information about the project, General Hull said yes. Pan-American World Airways agreed to fly the Maidens back to Japan.

In Hiroshima, Mr. Togasaki met with Mayor Shinzo Hamai and Dr. Tanimoto, who felt that the American doctors ought to come to Hiroshima to pass on the girls being screened for the trip. They would have to rule out girls suffering from

tuberculosis or other diseases that would make their coming to the United States inadvisable. Also, they believed that everything ought to be done to avoid sending any Maiden unless there was a reasonably good chance that her disfiguration might respond to surgery.

Another suggestion made by Mr. Togasaki was that two or three Japanese surgeons be permitted to accompany the party to the United States in order to study American plastic surgery techniques at first hand. Then, on their return to Japan, the surgeons could work with other sufferers.

These suggestions were readily accepted by the American committee. Both Dr. Barsky and Dr. Hitzig seemed startled when they were asked to give up a month's practice in addition to paying all their own expenses in Japan, but they agreed to undertake the trip if we would accompany them. Mt. Sinai Hospital offered full hospitality to the Japanese surgeons accompanying the Maidens. This, then, was the way the venture finally took shape—as a nongovernmental, volunteer citizens' project to bring the girls to the United States for the finest kind of treatment that modern medical science had to offer.

The project group assembled in Tokyo in April, 1955.

News of the project had been prematurely published in Japan. Thus, weeks before we arrived in Hiroshima other Maidens had presented themselves to the local committee for consideration. By the time we arrived there was a total of forty-three. The project had been set up originally to accommodate approximately twenty.

Nor were we prepared for the fact that the project had become page one news, with the press requesting daily briefing sessions. The Japanese press was constructive and friendly, although the questions were often severe. Why were we *really* doing this in the first place? Who was putting up the money? Was there anything to the story that the United States government was secretly sponsoring and paying for the project, as a means of building good will to offset the bad impression created by the radioactive fallout on the Japanese fishermen following the now-famous test explosion the previous year? What about the rumor that the project was only a facade for a sideshow group which planned to take the girls on a coast-to-coast exhibition tour of America at a fancy admission charge?

Most of these questions, of course, were quickly and easily disposed of and were seldom repeated at later press conferences. The newspapers got behind the project and gave it strong support. But two questions persisted, and for a good reason. We didn't know the answers ourselves. One question: Why were we

really doing this? The other: What about those who couldn't come to the United States?

The first question was difficult because the key to it was probably lodged deep within our subconscious. We searched our minds in long discussions late each night and didn't spare each other as we probed for answers. As individual citizens we no doubt felt a strong personal responsibility for the first atomic weapon to be used against human beings. Yet didn't the very nature of war place it beyond the control of the individual, whether with respect to the sufferer or the person who is inflicting the suffering? The feeling of guilt, while real enough, was not the whole answer and we knew it.

Was there something in the personal experience of each of us that might furnish a clue? One of us, it developed, had a father who was also a physician; the sacrifices made by the father in caring for people who were too poor to pay left both a strong impression on the son and a feeling of debt to his memory. Perhaps this project was a small payment on the debt. Another one of us had experienced a serious illness as a child. He had been aware that he might never reach adulthood; now, many years later, with his health completely regained, he felt his life was something of an unexpected dividend which he perhaps wished to share. The third member of the trio made no bones about the fact that a feeling of usefulness gave him his greatest satisfaction in life.

All this seemed too personal for public discussion. Finally, we told the newsmen we doubted that we knew the answer ourselves. As it concerned the Maidens, each of us happened to be in a position where we might be of some help and we were responding as best we could, simply because we wanted to. Apparently the answer registered. The question never came up again.

In attempting to find an answer to the second question we went directly to the Maidens themselves. Were we justified in starting such a project, we asked them, when we had only limited means at our disposal? Should individual citizens undertake a task such as this, in view of the fact that they would leave a large part of the problem untouched? Would it have been better to leave the matter to government? What could we say to the girls who couldn't come, either because they were medically unable to do so or because we lacked the means to take care of them? And how could we ease the burden of those who were selected, for their hearts would be heavy with the knowledge that their own selection meant that others could not go?

The answers from the Maidens were to be found in everything they did and said during the days we were in Hiroshima. They were the ones who cheered us up. We had come prepared to be lively in manner in order to lighten the strain of the medical examinations. We wanted to eliminate any aspect of competition between the girls in our dealings with them. But the girls had anticipated our apprehensions. There was nothing hesitant or pathetic about their manner. Their

spirit was independent, alert, gay. The doctors didn't have to put on a professional act of being cheerful and reassuring. Within a day after meeting the girls they had caught the contagion of ease and pleasantness radiated by the Maidens. The examinations themselves were facilitated by the local hospitals. The American Bomb Casualty Commission stood by with whatever medical resources might be necessary. The three Japanese doctors who had been selected to travel to the United States with the Maidens for the purpose of observing modern reconstructive surgical techniques were on hand to help. The Maidens sat on benches in the corridor outside the waiting room chatting happily among themselves.

On the evening before the final selections were made the Maidens went to Mr. Tanimoto's church for special services. The doctors and I were not present, but we learned later what had happened. Each of the girls had a prayer to offer. Most of the prayers had two parts. The first part was for the American doctors, that they might know no anguish for not being able to take all the girls, and that they might understand that the girls themselves understood. The second part of the prayer was that those girls who were selected would know no anguish because others would be left behind.

The following morning some additional decisions were reached besides the ones relating to the final selections. The biggest of these was that this project would not end with the group selected to go to America. We decided that once we returned to the United States we would arrange for the care of those who were left behind. This meant that American doctors would have to be sent to Hiroshima, where they would have to stay for a considerable period in order to provide treatment in this city. Dr. Barsky quietly said he was going to work personally toward this end. It developed that Dr. Hitzig had independently come to the same conclusion.

The next decision concerned Nagasaki. While the problem there was not as great as in Hiroshima, the problem did exist. A message was sent to Pearl Buck, one of the sponsoring members of the American committee, asking whether Philadelphia surgeons and hospital facilities might be available for another group of Maidens. Before the expedition left Hiroshima Miss Buck sent word that Philadelphia was ready and willing; thus the machinery was set up for a similar project in Nagasaki.

The final decision concerned the Hiroshima Maidens themselves. Out of the forty-three girls twenty-five had passed the medical examinations. Rather than attempt to cut the list to the original twenty, it was decided to take the full twenty-five. Individual letters were written to the entire group of forty-three. The Maidens selected to make the trip were asked, though we knew this to be superfluous, to make a special effort to encourage those who were to be left behind. The Maidens who were rejected for medical reasons were given no promises, but it

was made clear to them that the doctors intended to explore the possibilities of future treatment within the city.

Several weeks before the twenty-five disfigured Hiroshima Maidens arrived in the United States the Quakers in the New York area held meetings to discuss the hospitality problem. Since the surgical work would be spaced out over a period of a year or more, with only four girls in Mt. Sinai Hospital at the same time, the Quakers had agreed to provide for convalescent care, for transportation to and from the hospital, for sightseeing and entertainment, for vocational guidance in many cases, and for attending to whatever other needs the girls would have during the year.

At the Friends' Meeting House in Wilton, Connecticut, where one of the advance planning sessions took place, someone got up to oppose the whole project. He said he had lived in Japan for a number of years and was therefore in a position to offer firsthand advice. He said he did not wish to disparage the desire of the Friends to open their hearts and homes, but he felt that the sponsors of the project had very little realization, apparently, of what was ahead of them. He then presented three specific objections.

First of all, he pointed out, the Japanese girls undoubtedly would become homesick after only a few days in their new surroundings. Having been uprooted so suddenly from one civilization, they could not be expected to make the adjustment to a different world.

Second, he said, the food habits of the Japanese were so rigid that the girls could not be expected to adjust to American food.

Third, he continued, the girls would probably suspect the motives of the American families who cared for them. It was very difficult for Japanese to comprehend pure altruism, since so very little existed in Japan among people who are not tied together by family bonds.

Having made these three objections, the speaker sat down. Almost Instantly one of the Friends rose to offer his home for two of the girls, He said he had never been to Japan but could not believe that an act of friendship could be as complicated or as hazardous as had just been described. Besides, he added, the girls were definitely coming to America and he didn't want the Wilton Center to throw a damper on the entire project. The Friends accepted his offer.

On May 9, 1956, the twenty-five Maidens arrived in New York. They looked uncertain and scared as they emerged from the plane on an unseasonably chilly day and huddled together at the foot of the steps. For most of them, it was the first time on foreign soil. Ahead of them was the great unknown—the surgeons,

the hospitals, the strange houses. They carried their wardrobes, most of them, on their backs.

After a brief period of sight-seeing and adjustment, the girls began their appointments with the surgeons. Six weeks later, at the first of a series of summer reunion picnics held for the visitors by their "American parents," I met the Wilton Quaker who had stood up to answer the objections of the expert on Japan, and I asked him about his experiences with the Maidens.

"When the girls moved in," he said, "we looked for signs of homesickness or dissatisfaction over food or uneasiness in their general attitude toward us. The first week was too good to be true. The second week was even better. Here it is six weeks, and not a single one of the dreadful calamities that had been predicted has come to pass. We thought perhaps we had an exceptional pair; and so we checked with other friends in the metropolitan area. Almost everyone else had the same report. The girls couldn't be more cheerful or more delightful as guests. 'Guests' really isn't the word for it. They're really members of the family.

"So far no homesickness. And they love American food, especially frankfurters. We've gone sight-seeing together—to the United Nations, to the museums, and to places in New England. We've gone to concerts and baseball games. My wife and I couldn't be more grateful. I don't know how we're going to part with them."

I learned that that Quaker and his wife, in preparation for the girls' arrival, took lessons in Japanese. Then, at least once a week after the Maidens came, the parents invited a Japanese friend from a nearby town for dinner.

Almost all the "parents" remarked on the ease with which communication was possible across the language barrier. Couples with children told of the devotion between the Maidens and the infants. One of the most familiar sights at the reunion picnics was that of a Maiden with a small child in her arms.

It early became apparent that the non-medical side of the project was as important as the medical in any evaluation of the record. The girls were superb good-will ambassadors from Japan. In community after community they won the affections of all those who met them. As a group, they were not self-conscious about appearing in public, nor were they reluctant to do the things that come naturally to young Americans of the same age. They assiduously studied the English language and managed quite well when they navigated by themselves.

"If you asked me what I expect to remember most about their visit to our home/' one of the Friends told me, "I should say it was the laughter they brought with them and shared with us. We had feared we might have to make a special effort to keep things from becoming too grim or restrained in the presence of disfigured persons. But these girls have a warmth about them and a gift for laughter that

created an entirely different and certainly much more welcome atmosphere than the one we anticipated.

"One night, for example, after the girls had been with us for perhaps two weeks, I looked up at the clock and said to them: 'It's time for you chicks to get to bed.' Out came the dictionary. They found the word, then looked at each other incredulously for a split second before each pointed to the other and said, 'We chickens!' They started upstairs, peep-peeping and making clucking sounds, My husband joined in the game by crowing like a rooster. The girls dissolved in laughter. Two nights later we went to the movies. There appeared on the screen the inevitable Pathe-RKO rooster immediately preceding a newsreel. Immediately one of the girls pointed to the screen and called out the name of my husband. I think almost half the theater joined in the laughter."

Most of the parents spoke of these humorous episodes when talking about the girls. But they also cited something else: the Maidens' highly developed esthetic sense.

"The girls had apparently been exposed in Japan to all the usual stereotypes about the United States," one of the Quakers said. "They had heard a great deal about American materialism and gadgets. When they discover at firsthand that there is much more than this to America their joy is great. They admire the pride of Americans in their flower gardens or in the arrangement of flowers in the home. They see Americans who have hobbies or who are talented in handicrafts or knitting or dressmaking or painting or who love good music as much as sports, and they are deeply pleased and impressed. When these girls return to Japan they will be able to talk about a much more accurate America than the people they see on the screen."

The relationship between the Quakers and their guests was the typical family one. The girls assisted with marketing and household chores and they shared in the family pleasures. As a whole they were remarkably free of illness. The Maidens thrived despite the emotional and physical strain of their surgical experiences. In the first six months of their stay they underwent a total of one hundred and twenty-nine operations. Dr. Barsky and his staff slowed up the pace during the summer because of the discomfort to patients in abnormally hot weather. But the schedule was soon stopped up again.

In most cases the surgery was extraordinarily complicated. It was not just a matter of cutting out the diseased part and then closing the excision. A keloid scar or a high thermal burn scar called for painstaking tissue reconstruction. The process of regeneration was long and difficult; massive skin grafting required endurance by both patient and doctor.

Following a skin-grafting operation the area receiving new skin sometimes has less lingering pain than the "donor" area from which skin has been taken.

Realizing this, a "parent" who was bringing her girl to the hospital for a second operation asked to see Dr. Barsky, with a proposal she begged him to take seriously. She wanted to give her own skin for the girl and had made arrangements to stay at the hospital as long as necessary for this purpose.

Dr. Barsky said he would have given anything to accept the offer. But skin from one person cannot be permanently grafted to another, except in the case of identical twins.

On August 6, 1955, the tenth anniversary of the bombing, many of the Maidens gathered together in New York for specially arranged short-wave telephonic communication with their families in Hiroshima. Each girl took her turn in reporting her experiences in the United States. In the midst of one of the conversations a girl began to weep.

"It is not only because of my happiness that I cry," she said. "I cry because I am holding the telephone with my own hand and you cannot see it. I can move my elbow—like this—and I can move my fingers very easily."

The girls were free of the many misconceptions about plastic surgery that apparently existed in both the United States and Japan. They were told at the start that plastic surgery could not give them new faces or make them beautiful. It could work wonders in restoring facial functions—replacing eyelids that were burned away; reconstructing portions of the face such as lips that do not move properly; facilitating jaw movements and thus improving speech and mastication; removing much of the pulpy mass left by burns or radiation; liberating neck muscles which prevent a head from turning. The girls knew the value of being able to use fingers that had been bent back on their wrists or twisted out of shape, or of being able to eat without being fed, to bend one's head toward the plate, to turn it to take part in family table conversation, or to hold it erect, physically and symbolically.

Generally speaking, then, the surgical work fell into two categories. One involved direct treatment of the disfiguration; i.e., amelioration of the large facial scars. The other involved reconstruction of faces, hands, arms, or legs, replacing the destroyed surface tissue.

Shortly before one of the girls was wheeled into the operating room she asked an interpreter to give this message to Dr. Barsky, "Tell Dr. Barsky not to be worried because he cannot give me a new face," she said, "I know my scars are very, very bad and I know Dr. Barsky is worried because he thinks I may expect that I will be as I once was. I know that this is impossible; but it does not matter; something has already healed here inside."

Tomoko Nakabayashi, one of the Maidens, died in June, 1956. Her heart stopped following a surgical operation. Two previous operations on her arms had freed the restricted movements caused by injuries sustained during the atomic bombing. This third operation, for the purpose of removing some scar tissue, was one of the most minor of all that were performed on the twenty-five Maidens.

Fifteen months earlier in Hiroshima, when the girls were being selected for the trip to the United States, Tomoko's father had urged her to present herself for consideration. She had no facial disfigurement, as did most of the other Maidens, and she was reluctant to fill one of the twenty places in the quota set for the project. She yielded to her father's urging, at least to the extent of submitting herself for examination. The doctors told Tomoko they believed they might be able to restore the full use of her arms and hands. Besides, the quota was being enlarged to twenty-five; Tomoko qualified and her parents were overjoyed.

Even after the Maidens arrived in the United States, however, Tomoko Nakabayashi seemed self-conscious and uncertain. She wore long gloves to conceal the injuries to her hands and arms. And she was troubled.

"What I still don't understand," she told Helen Yokoyama, the nurse-interpreter-confidante-chaperon who had accompanied the girls from Hiroshima, "is why the Americans are doing all this. Back in Japan I was told that the Americans have a guilty feeling about dropping the atomic bomb and that this is the only reason."

Mrs. Yokoyama said that, while many Americans felt deeply about the horrors of atomic warfare, this was not the only reason for the project. They were helping the girls because they felt it was in their power to do so.

"Suppose," Helen Yokoyama said, "that some people have a philosophy of life which enables them to regard all human beings as belonging to a single family. The same love that members of a family feel for one another can be felt by these people for all others, especially for those who are terribly in need of help. Is this not possible?"

"You mean these people are helping me because they love me?"

"I believe they do," Helen replied,

"Perhaps they really do," Tomoko said. "But I am not sure that I can love them. I was brought up to believe that these people were our enemies. And the war ended for us in a way that made it difficult for that feeling to change. No; I am afraid I cannot return the love. It is difficult enough to try to accept it."

But as the months passed, Tomoko's unbending seriousness, her skepticism, and uncertainty began to change. When the girls had their reunions she appeared less reluctant to talk of the interesting things that were happening to

her. And when, after her first operation, she knew that she would have the full use of her arms again, her entire outlook seemed to brighten.

Tomoko had a natural artistic flair, especially in the field of fashion design. Walter and Pauline Bishop, her American "parents," enrolled her in design courses and were delighted when school officials confirmed the fact that Tomoko had considerable talent. They said she was one of the most promising students to come to their attention in a long time. Later the Parsons School of Fashion Design offered Tomoko a scholarship that would run into 1957 and advised her to plan to pursue her studies after graduation, perhaps in Paris.

When she went into the hospital for the second operation on her arms she told Mrs. Yokoyama that she felt a totally new personality had been hidden inside her and was only now coming to life.

"I think maybe the reason I felt the way I did when I first came here was because I had never before known real happiness. And it is not difficult to love the Bishops. It is difficult not to."

The second operation was completely successful. Not only was any remaining rigidity removed but the long ridge of discolored flesh on one arm was now hardly visible. There remained an unimportant white scar on the inside of her right forearm.

The change in Tomoko brought joy to the other Maidens. Her relationships with the group were now completely relaxed and unreserved. She came to the regular reunions to share her enthusiasms instead of apprehensions. Meanwhile she had won a reputation among the girls for sound and responsible judgment. When, only a few weeks before her death, it came time for the girls to elect new officers, Tomoko was one of the two chosen as co-spokesmen.

When Tomoko came to the hospital for a routine checkup several days later, she told Mrs. Yokoyama that she felt perhaps she ought to have another operation to remove the white scar on the inside of her arm. Dr. Bernard Simon told Tomoko he would be glad to perform the minor surgery if she really desired it. She thought about it for several days and decided that she did,

The day before the operation she checked in at the hospital. She seemed somewhat pale, and when the other girls asked how she felt she admitted to some pain but insisted that nothing be said about it to anyone.

The morning of the operation she said she felt fine. The operation began early in the afternoon. At 3:45 PM I received a call from the hospital asking that I come immediately. Tomoko was in a respirator in the recovery room at Mt. Sinai. Through the slightly opened door I saw a battery of doctors around the long steel-and-glass tubular device in which Tomoko lay. I could see Dr. Simon, Dr.

Hitzig, Dr. Fujii, Dr. Takahashi, and four or five others whose names I did not know. Among the half-dozen nurses working around the respirator I saw little Lonnie Miller, the project nurse, who was deeply loved by the girls.

Dr. Simon came outside. He said that Tomoko had stopped breathing just after the operation but that the mechanical lung of the respirator was now keeping her going. Everything that could be done for her in a great hospital was being done.

A few minutes later Dr. Hitzig came out to explain more fully. Technically, it was a case of "heart arrest under anesthesia." In such a case the surgeons have but a few minutes to open the chest wall and work directly on the heart. This they had done, massaging it until it had started its beat again, supplementing their action with a defibrillator, a device that helps electrically to activate the heart.

For almost six hours the doctors worked and kept watch over Tomoko. Nurses who were scheduled to go off duty at 4 p.m. begged to be allowed to stay. On top of the respirator was a gauge with its black arm swinging inside a narrow range. Underneath the respirator were the bellows, making it possible for Tomoko to receive the oxygen,

During these six hours there was much to think about—Tomoko herself and her parents in Hiroshima; about the effect, if the worst happened, on the surgeons who had labored through one hundred and fifteen operations so far without a single defeat; about the effect on the people of Japan, who had indicated so much responsive interest in the entire project; and, finally, about the effect on the other Maidens in the hospital and in homes throughout the metropolitan area. There were now only some twenty operations remaining. What would happen if the girl scheduled next for surgery were to decline? Would the entire project collapse? But even more insistent was the thought that kept coming back to me—that I had started in motion something that resulted in what was now happening to Tomoko.

All this time various specialists kept going in and out. Miss Miller, looking frail and fatigued, said that the heart was still beating, very irregularly, and that Tomoko's body was fighting back as hard as it could.

At seven thirty Father Gerald Keohane, of St. Francis de Sales, arrived to administer the last rites.

At twenty minutes past nine I opened the door and looked in. The bellows were still going and the black hand in the indicator was moving slightly. Dr. Simon was standing over the respirator. Then he looked up and shook his head. After another minute the indicator stopped.

Dr. Fujii came out, his arm around Dr. Barsky, Dr. Takahashi put his arms around Dr. Simon and Dr. Hitzig. I went down the hall and telephoned Walter Bishop at

home. Then I sent a long cable to the parents in Hiroshima and to individuals in Japan who were cooperating in the project. Dr. Barsky, Dr. Hitzig, and Dr. Simon, with hospital officials, drew up the official statement concerning the cause of death. Holon Yokoyama went downstairs to tell the other girls.

The next morning I returned to the hospital to see the Maidens who were recuperating from their various operations. Their grief was great but so was their compassion, I had come to console them but it was they who did the consoling. And they wanted the doctors to know how deeply concerned they were for the suffering felt by them. Atsuko Yamamoto kept saying over and over that they knew it could not be helped and that we must not worry about them. Shigeo Niimoto was writing to the doctors and to the Quaker parents.

The girl whose name was next on the schedule for surgery was Masako Kanabe. Masako arrived at the hospital with her little suitcase and asked Helen Yokoyama to inform the doctors that she was ready—immediately, if they wished—to have her operation. And please tell the doctors, she said, that there wasn't a girl who didn't feel the same.

When I think back on the Maidens in America, I think of their experiences in the hospitals, but I also think of their triumphs. For example, I think of the nurses' aide graduation exercises at the Manhattan Center of the American Red Cross. Some of the girls had completed a special survey course in nursing and were now to receive their diplomas. They sat with their American "parents" radiating well-being and a sense of inner ease. They were neatly and attractively dressed: their hair and make-up were American college-girl style. Each girl walked up to receive her diploma and returned to her seat with that look so well known to parents at graduation exercises—an expression compounded both of individual achievement and satisfaction at discharging one's obligations as part of a group.

I think, too, of the farewell party given by the New York Friends Center four days before the scheduled departure for Japan. Some three hundred Friends and friends of Friends came to pay their respects to the girls. Among the Americans were the families with whom the girls had lived in communities near New York. Although most of the girls had changed homes four to six times during the year, the ties to the American families had grown strong and deep. Given their choice of things to do, most of the girls preferred to stay home as long as the family was there, too.

At the Friends Meeting Houses the girls heard Arnold Vaught, executive director, C. Frank Orloff, senior vice-president, and Ida Day, hospitality coordinator for the Friends, speak of their feelings about the project. A single theme ran through their talks. The purpose of this meeting, they said, was to thank the Maidens for one of the richest and most meaningful experiences of their lives.

Downstairs, at the reception following the meeting, the "parents" exchanged notes with one another about their experiences during the year. One of them told of the time her girl returned from the hospital following a second operation that freed her fingers from the contractions and deformation caused by the burns. The girl went upstairs, got a drawing pad and pencil, went outside and sketched the landscape in front of the house, In the days that followed her interest in art continued and her proficiency increased. A nationally known artist who lived nearby said the girl showed considerable promise; a scholarship was arranged at one of the country's leading art schools.

Another Quaker could speak of a similar experience. Reconstructive surgery had been successful and her girl took up drawing and painting. A scholarship was provided at a local art association. After a few months the girl did a painting that was sold on its merits at the fall sidewalk show of the Friends. The girl asked for the privilege of turning the money over to the Mt. Sinai Hospital, and the offer was gratefully accepted.

Then there was the story of another girl who was determined to learn Braille typewriting so that she might work with the blind after her return to Japan. Each of the Maidens was given a small monthly allowance for pin money. This girl had saved every cent in order to make a gift of a Braille typewriter to a Hiroshima school for the blind. She had also developed a remarkable proficiency in English, discussing with her "parents" matters such as religion in America, the structure of government in the United States, and the philosophy of a democratic society.

One of the Quakers had a friend who was a professional maker of jewelry. Twice a week she gave two of the girls lessons in ceramic jewelry making; on their return to Japan they hoped to buy a kiln and other modest equipment. Samples of their work had been sent to Hiroshima in order to ascertain the possibility of a market for it. What especially impressed the teacher was the girls' abilities in original design.

Another girl was looking forward to a job in an importing firm. Before she left Hiroshima she had been told that if she could learn to type in English she would be offered a highly responsible secretarial job on her return. Her American "parent" enrolled her in secretarial classes in the local high school. After only a month or so school authorities informed the parent that the girl had received the highest grades in typing in the class. These grades were maintained despite long absences in the hospital.

The girls experienced the feeling of acceptance and affection and of being able to develop their abilities to the utmost. The same girl who had told the surgeons early in the project not to worry about the fact that they couldn't give her a new face because "something has already healed here inside" later volunteered to forego additional surgery in order to spend more time at school. She pointed to

her head. "What it knows inside will be more important than what it shows outside."

A few weeks before the first group of Maidens returned to Japan, Dr. Hitzig arranged a full day's outing for the girls and their American families, including a boat trip around the island of Manhattan, as guests of the New York City Police Department, a dinner party at a New York restaurant, and reserved seats at a night game between the Giants and the Dodgers.

Baseball being as much a national pastime in Japan as it is here, the girls did not have to be briefed about what was happening on the field. When Sandy Amoros broke a tie in the fourth inning by blasting a triple against the right-field screen, the girls leaped to their feet in unrestrained joy. And as the Dodgers continued to pile up runs it almost seemed as though the universe was exploding with glee. The few Hiroshima Maidens who favored the Giants never despaired. In the ninth inning the first two Giants went down in order. Then Don Mueller singled to left. Even before the ball was returned to the infield the Giant-supporting Maidens were on their feet.

"Here we go! Here we go!" one of them shouted.

"Yoshie," I said, "it is the ninth inning and the Giants are six runs behind."

"But there are only two outs," she sang back. "Here we go! Here we go!"

In November of that year I hoarded a Pan-American Airways Clipper with the thirteen other Hiroshima Maidens who were returning to Japan after eighteen months in the United States. (One of the Maidens was still in New York, the recipient of a scholarship at the Parsons School of Fashion Design. Another had been swept off her feet by a suitor, was married, and settled in California.) From where I sat in the rear of the cabin I could survey the entire party. I could hardly believe my eyes, for two rows of seats had been converted into a hairdressing establishment. Suzue Oshima, now a professional beautician after a full course in the United States, had set up a miniature beauty parlor with the aid of a stewardess. Her first customer was Mrs. Richard Day, representing on this homecoming trip the American Quakers with whom the girls had lived. Among those waiting in line, in addition to the girls, were Mrs. Helen Yokoyama, Miss Ronnie Miller, and Jeanne Lewisohn.

Suzue's fingers were incredibly deft; they had been twisted and limited in mobility when she first arrived at the Mt. Sinai Hospital for surgery. I was enchanted as I watched her set hair and put it in curlers, with full command of fingers and hands. The few males in the cabin were totally ignored as the females went about with their hair pinned tight to their scalps. I am certain that Pan-American Airways can

report many unusual incidents in the air over the years, but I doubt that any other line in the history of aviation could boast of a long line of women waiting to have their hair set at 20,000 feet.

Suzue was returning to Hiroshima with modest capital provided by the Quaker Meeting in Fairfield, Connecticut, to help her set up an establishment of her own called the "Darien Beauty Shop," with a framed letter in the window from the Mayor of Darien wishing Suzue well and saying how proud the people of Darien were to have had her among them.

After ten operations in the United States some of Suzue's facial scars were still visible. Suzue, however, could be called disfigured no longer. She had poise, purpose, confidence. You could see it in the way she went about her work. When someone near her in the plane said something amusing, Suzue reacted with the ease of a person who knew she had a place in the world.

I turned from Suzue to look at Michiyo Zomen, whose left arm had been bent and rigid when she arrived in the United States. Now, her surgery completely successful, she reached across the aisle with her left arm to pass an American magazine to a friend. On this flight Michiyo had been writing letters in English to her American families. This meant more to her than the free movement of her left arm. In the United States she had studied English and typing, both skills much in demand in Japan, and there was a job waiting for her as clerk and secretary at the Prefectural Government in Hiroshima. Michiyo was one of nine girls who returned with American typewriters to be put to work.

Then I looked at Shigeko Niimoto who, if this group had had an official cheerleader, would have been instantly elected. She had the bounce and joyous alertness of a character out of Dickens. In many ways her disfiguration represented the most difficult challenge to the American surgeons. Much of the skin on her body that ordinarily would be used for grafts had been deeply burned. Even so, the surgeons were able to reconstruct the lower part of her face and neck and improve its contours. The skin used for the grafting and reconstruction lacked the natural color and texture of the rest of the face, but it was helped by special facial creams supplied by Lydia O'Leary of New York.

Shigeko had five operations in New York, two of which liberated her fingers. She demonstrated a most promising artistic talent and also learned enough at the hospital to want to qualify as a nurse's aide. This had been her ambition ever since she was a child when she had seen what happened when medical attention was lacking.

There was a flurry of excitement in the plane when the stewardess handed out Japanese immigration forms and the girls had to consult their passports. Emiko Takomoto took one look at her Japanese passport photograph and let out an

astonished squeal. "It is someone else," she said. "They will never let me in again!"

Soon the girls were exchanging their passport pictures and exclaiming with the kind of surprise generally reserved for excursions to the attic for the purpose of being alternately delighted and horrified by old photographs. Yoshie Enokawa rushed back to show her passport photograph to Drs. Barsky and Simon, the American surgeons, and to the medical consultant of the project, Dr. Hitzig. "So much difference," she said. The other girls followed her lead, and the surgeons winked at each other over the explosions of pleasant self-discovery.

The surgeons were proud of their work, but they realized that people seeing the girls for the first time might wonder whether any surgery had been done at all. Indeed, only the night before, at the airport in Honolulu, a passer-by had inquired whether something could be done surgically to help the girls. The surgeons winced and said nothing. When they accepted the assignment eighteen months earlier they had known that people would expect miracles—and they had none to offer. But the Hiroshima Maidens understood this; they were elated by the improvement and *ihul* was what counted.

The girls knew, and didn't hesitate to talk about it, that in many ways they were not the same persons who had left Hiroshima. It wasn't merely the improvement in their facial appearances, or the full use of their arms and hands, that made the difference. There had been a creative growth in their response to life and to other people, their ability to give and take emotionally. When you looked at them they no longer seemed to blink back from a half-lit world.

The big thing was that they could circulate freely—not only physically but emotionally. They no longer felt they were cut off from the main stream, no longer awkward about the right to feel the joy and pain of others as their own. I recalled something that Shigeko Niimoto had said some months earlier. "Operations very important. But, more important, I belong to everybody. I feel also everybody belongs to me."

This confidence in being able to move easily in the great human market place was demonstrated during a stop in Tokyo, before the girls emplaned for Hiroshima. A luncheon reception for the entire party was given by the Japan-America Society, one of the most influential and cosmopolitan groups in Japan. Several hundred people attended, among them foreign correspondents, leaders in government, religion, education, industry, labor, communications. Instead of huddling together as a group, as they would have done a year earlier, the girls distributed themselves among the various tables, putting the other guests at ease and taking a gracious part in table discussion.

Following the lunch came the formal speeches. The girls designated Michiyo Zomen as their spokesman to make the appropriate acknowledgments. This was

the same Michiyo Zomen who, when I first met her, was so shy she spoke in anguished whispers. Even now, as she stood in front of the microphone, I could see her trembling, and when she started to speak she did so with pained hesitation. But she held her head high and said what she felt.

She talked about the things the girls would never forget—living with American families they came to love and who had loved them; the adventure of going to school in America and being part of small community life; the care given them by the doctors.

Then she held out her arm.

"I hold out my arm to you," she said. "This is not a simple thing. It means much to me to be able to do this. For years my arm was bent like this"—and she folded it at the elbow—"and then in America they gave my arm back to me."

Again she held her arm open to the group.

"This is what you see," she continued. "What you do not see is the heart that is so full. If the heart could speak it would tell you about this feeling that we girls all now know."

Some four hours later we were in General Hull's plane en route to Hiroshima. I was sitting next to Michiyo Zomen and saw her face light up when the pilot announced we were flying over Hiroshima. You could almost feel the human electricity crackle through the plane. The returning Hiroshima Maidens eagerly pressed against the windows, each wanting to be the first to pick out the city from the air. I have no way of knowing whether we flew over the same spot that had changed the course of history eleven years earlier, or whether the girls pondered the significance of the two U.S. Air Force planes of 1945 and 1946. The girls said very little as they peered intently through the windows at the blinking lights below.

Then the plane passed beyond the city on its descent to the Iwakuni Airport forty miles away. When it rolled to a stop the door swung open and we stared at a modest portion of pandemonium. Reporters and photographers and newsreel cameramen were perched on a scaffolding at the foot of the stairs to the plane. Beyond them was a cheering throng. Here and there we could discern the faces of the Maidens who had returned to Hiroshima several months earlier. As each girl came off the plane she was eagerly grasped by relatives and friends. For fifteen minutes the rejoicing and embracing continued. In the midst of the confusion the Mayor proclaimed his welcome over the loudspeakers.

At the far side of the crowd I spotted little Yoshie Harada of the earlier contingent of Maidens. Yoshie owned the distinction of being the first girl of the group to marry. She pushed her way through the crowd, her husband in tow, then proudly

introduced him. I looked at Yoshie. She had grown up since I had last seen her, She was now a young woman, and, quite obviously, a supremely happy one. She pulled at my coat so that she might whisper in my ear. "We have something to tell you," she said. "That's all right, Yoshie," I replied, after taking one look at her embarrassed young husband. "I think I know."

Each of the Americans in the party was pulled and tugged in different directions. Each girl had parents or relatives to introduce. Then, of course, there were the reunions with the first group of Maidens.

Willie Togashi, the Mayor's interpreter, told me that Mrs. Nakabayashi, whose daughter Tomoko had died during surgery, was sitting alone in the airport waiting room. We managed to work our way through the crowd to her side. For months I had tried to prepare for this meeting, planning what I would say to the parents of the girl who died while under our charge. And now, when the moment came, I lost the words. Then, just as months earlier the Nakahayashis had wired their heartfelt condolences to us even before we could write fully concerning what had happened, so now Mrs. Nakabayashi eased the pain of my awkwardness. She pressed her hands over mine and told me it was not necessary to say anything and how happy she was that we had come. I think she knew that our purpose in coming to Hiroshima was not only to escort the Maidens and to explore the surgical and medical needs of other citizens, but to pay our respects to the parents of Tomoko and to answer any questions they might have about what had happened. But in the warmth of her hands she made me understand that no explanations were needed. She apologized for the fact that Mr. Nakabayashi had not come to welcome us; he was ill, but he had asked his wife to say how grateful he was that we had arrived safely and that his every thought was for our health and well-being.

When the loudspeakers announced that the buses and cars were leaving for Hiroshima, I saw Mrs. Nakabayashi to a car provided for her by the Mayor, then rejoined the others. A long array of buses and cars had been commandeered by the city for the large number of well-wishers who wanted to greet the Maidens, and the procession started off on its two-hour ride to Hiroshima. The vehicles drove directly to the Cenotaph in Hiroshima, the memorial monument for the 230,000 people who had lost their lives in the explosion.

Hiroko Tasaka, representing the Maidens, placed a wreath under the arch. Then the Americans went to their hotel and met briefly with the four Japanese doctors who had been brought to the U.S. to observe techniques in plastic and reconstructive surgery—Dr. Tomin Harada, Dr. Guru Ouchi, Dr. M. Fujii, and Dr. Sadam Takahashi. We reviewed our schedule for the week, giving top priorities to a visit with the Nakahayashis and to consultations with city officials and local medical authorities 011 a new joint Japanese-American program for survivors of the atomic bombing who required medical and surgical treatment.

A supplementary schedule was worked out to enable Mrs. Day and Miss Miller to spend considerable time with the girls and their families. We were especially anxious to help the girls make the necessary adjustments —psychologically, socially, economically. As Mrs. Day said: "Ibs asking a great deal of a girl who has lived in prosperous America with all its advantages and openness to go back to poverty that is the lot of the average Japanese. And think of the big difference in the customs of the two countries."

But just as our earlier fears about the difficulty of adjusting to a strange culture were quickly dispelled, so now our worries about readjustment proved to be unfounded. The girls themselves seemed to sense our apprehension, for the very next morning, when we came down to breakfast at the New Hiroshima Hotel, they were all waiting for us in the lobby—all of them dressed in their best Japanese kimonos and sandals. It was as if they were saying to us:

"You see, there is really nothing to worry about. We are back in Hiroshima and it is still home to us. This is where we belong and where we are going to stay—and it is right that it is this way."

The next night, at the same United Church of Hiroshima where three years earlier the girls and Dr. Kiyoshi Tanimoto had met us to discuss their dream about coming to the United States, they congregated again to review what had happened. In addition to the returning Maidens were most of the eighteen disfigured girls who had failed to pass the screening examinations conducted in 1955.

Hideko Hirata, whose high spirits had impressed all who knew her in the United States, got up to say, Quaker-meeting style, that there were no sharp lines or divisions in her life as the result of her experience,

"Each nation has its own advantages," she said. "In the United States we were part of a wonderful way of life and we saw and did many things different from Japan. We grew because of it. But now we are back in Japan and we see our own country with fresh eyes, and we see many advantages we never saw or understood before. And so I hope to make comparisons between the two countries. Each has its own blessings. How fortunate we are to know both."

Hiroko Tasaka, who called herself the "champion surgery girl" because she had had the largest number of operations in the United States of any of the Maidens—eleven—spoke of a visit to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. She was walking from one exhibition room to another when she suddenly came upon several display cases of Japanese art.

"I was fit to burst with pride," she said. "I stood there a long time. And then some American students walked by and looked at the exhibit and seemed to like it. And T had all T could do to keep from putting my thumbs under my arms with my

fingers outstretched and saying to them: Isn't it wonderful? That art you are looking at is from my country. And I am Japanese. "

The girls who had been unable to come to the United States listened hungrily to the adventures of the returning Maidens. Then Misako Matsu-bara, one of "The Eighteen," as the girls who had stayed behind were known, stood up.

"It is such a wonderful world you have been telling us about" she said to the other Maidens. "Ever since you left we have been reading your letters and talking to your families. The wonderful picture would grow and grow. And our prayers each night got larger, too. We prayed so loud we were certain the Americans would hear us across the oceans and cause our dreams to come true. Now we look at the beautiful new dresses and coats of the girls who have come back and we see new light in their faces and we wonder if these things will ever happen to us."

It was difficult for us to say right then that the same medical reasons which prevented the Eighteen from coming to the United States in the first place still stood in the way of their dream. But the next day we asked Mr. Tanimoto to take us to visit Misako Matsuhara so that we might tell her exactly what was possible. He took us to a small, dingy store front not far from the center of town. Inside was a home for blind children. Despite its obviously impoverished condition—cracked walls, poor lighting—it was clean and tidy. Misako worked here. In a small-sized room on the second floor blind tots no older than four or five played with each other by running around in circles. Ever) once in a while Misako would put up a deflecting hand to keep them from running into a wall. Then the children became aware of our presence and they were steered in our direction so they could kneel and bow in the most courteous Japanese fashion.

In an adjoining room a blind older girl of about twelve was practicing on a samisen, the Japanese three-stringed guitar. She was extremely talented, and Misako took pride in her accomplishment. Then we went into a small classroom where Misako pointed in awe to a new Braille typewriter, one of two brought back from the United States by Masako Wada and Keiko Kawasaki, two Maidens in the first contingent. The typewriters were working miracles in the education of the youngsters.

The tour of inspection over, we went downstairs for a frank talk with Misako. We explained that nothing was more difficult for the American doctors when they first came to Hiroshima than to be compelled to leave some girls behind. But we had all come back to assure the Eighteen that we now had the means to provide for their treatment within the city itself. Dr. Harada and his colleagues, who had gone to the United States as part of the project, would now start at once in their treatment of the Eighteen. We told Misako that all expenses, inside and outside the hospital, had been provided for.

Misako's fingers had been badly twisted and her arms badly scarred as the result of the explosion. We told her that while her hands would not be so beautiful as they once were, they could be made to function fully.

As for the experience of living with an American family and taking part in American community life, we said frankly that this would not be possible. But we told Misako that Quaker families would be happy to adopt her at a distance, would help provide such vocational training as might be useful, and would send her clothes and other things from time to time.

What we said was intended for all the Eighteen, and we wanted Misako to tell the others.

She replied that this was more than she wanted or felt she deserved. She had gone to bed with a heavy heart the night before after returning from Mr. Tanimoto's church, because she allowed herself to be carried away by wonderful visions; but she understood that some things were not to be. And what had now been told her, she said, was more than she could have wished for,

We rode back in silence from the school for the blind children, regretting that we couldn't give Misako what she had dreamed about and fully deserved. Yet some things, at least, were possible. These were carefully explored with the Mayor and with the Atomic Bomb Patients Treatment Council, a quasi-official group of local surgeons and hospital officials with the Mayor as chairman, not to be confused with the Atomic Bomb Casualty Commission, a research and investigatory group set up by the United States government for the purpose of studying the effect of atomic bomb radiation on human tissue. ABPTC could study and treat, with the emphasis on treatment. ABCC could only study, though it made the results of its examinations available to local physicians who used it as material in their own treatment.

In our meetings with the Atomic Bomb Patients Treatment Council we made it clear that we were not attempting to superimpose our ideas concerning treatment in any enlargement of the original project. We wanted to offer such cooperation as might be required and as might be within our means. One thing, however, was firm in our minds. We had made a specific commitment to the Eighteen, and we hoped that the ABPTC would be willing to consider treatment of this group as the first phase of any continuing program. We said that we were prepared to underwrite this phase with contributions left over from the original Maidens project.

The Mayor assured us that ABPTC would be willing to work at once with the Eighteen, and that a budget for this purpose was already being prepared. We then proceeded to more difficult questions:

First, what could be done for other people in Hiroshima who needed surgical and medical treatment? How many were there? What had been happening to these cases? What was required to treat them?

Second, was there any way we could help establish plastic and reconstructive surgery in Japan on a specialized basis? Should this be done through medical schools or hospitals or both?

Concerning the first question, Dr. Tomin Harada went to the blackboard and began to write down some figures. He started with the fact that the population in Hiroshima at the time of the bombing was approximately 340,000, including military troops stationed in the city and people from nearby areas who were assisting in the construction of fire barriers. The survivors in the city numbered 98,102—meaning that considerably more than 200,000 persons had been killed.

Of the survivors, approximately 30,000 were within the area of potential radiation damage. Of these 15,037 had presented themselves to the Atomic Bomb Patients Treatment Council for examination and possible treatment. As of the present moment, ABPTC said that 1,575 of this number ought to be treated within the near future. These cases were broken down as follows:

Radiation and internal medicine cases, 931. Cases requiring plastic and reconstructive surgery, 644. Dr. Harada spoke frankly of the fact that ABPTC would continue to do all within its power to provide surgery and medical treatment, but additional specialists were needed. Also, the ABPTC was operating under limited means. Formerly, he continued, there had not been much enthusiasm among the Hiroshima surgeons for suggestions that American specialists be invited to join in the work. But the experience of the Japanese surgeons working with Dr. Barsky, Dr. Simon, and Dr. Kahn was so favorable that the position of ABPTC had now completely changed. There was now strong support for any surgeons who might be recruited for this purpose by Dr. Barsky and his associates.

As for the second question—the establishment of plastic and reconstructive surgery in Japan on a specialized basis—it was felt that it might be useful to have qualified Japanese surgeons come to the United States for much longer periods of time and with specific university commitments. On their return they would both teach and work in hospitals.

The sum involved for such undertakings would be considerable, as was emphasized at the time. But we promised to attempt such fund raising as might be required. The entire program would take a minimum of three years. In an effort to anticipate the kind of problems that would be involved, Dr. Barsky and Dr. Simon examined a cross section of cases requiring surgery, and Dr. Hitzig did the same with radiation cases.

One of the most heartening developments of the trip to Hiroshima was the unqualified offer of cooperation made by Dr. Robert Holmes, head of the U.S. Atomic Bomb Casualty Commission, Dr. Holmes described the work of the ABCC as well as the facilities that might be available to us in any general project for the treatment of Hiroshima survivors. This was a towering asset when the program got under way.

When I think back on all the things that happened during a busy week in Hiroshima, one picture stands out from all the rest. It is of the visit to the Nakabayashis.

The Nakabayashis lived in a small, frail house at the end of a narrow lane. They had decorated their home for our coming, concealing large cracks in the walls with freshly laundered bedsheets that lined two sides of the room. In the center of one wall they had constructed a little shrine for Tomoko, and the mourning candles were burning. There were pictures of Tomoko sent from the United States by her American Quaker parents, Walter and Pauline Bishop.

We crowded into the small front room and sat on the *tatami*. Mr. Nakabayashi had prepared a short and deeply moving speech about Tomoko and the great joy her experience in the United States had brought to her. He wept as he spoke. He was not well; a stroke several years earlier had paralyzed his right side.

Mrs. Day acknowledged his greeting and conveyed the affectionate good wishes of the Walter Bishops. She told of the love Tomoko had for them and they for her. Each of the Americans then spoke briefly.

Mrs. Nakabayashi thanked us again for coming. She apologized for her tears and for the tears of Mr. Nakabayashi.

"Please know," she said, "that our tears are not tears of grief but of gratitude."

Then Shigeko Nakabayashi, Tomoko's twenty-year-old sister, began to bring in hand-carved models of sailing ships on which Mr. and Mrs. Nakabayashi had worked for many months during every spare moment they could find. They were scale models of the Spanish galleons that took part in Columbus's voyage to the new world.

"It would make us happier than we could say if you would accept these little ships as very inadequate gifts from us," Mr. Nakabayashi said.

We left the Nakabayashis and went back to our hotel, each of us convinced, no doubt, of his own inadequacy in trying to take it all in. We had gone to offer solace for a lost life that had been entrusted to us. What we found was more than

complete understanding; we found the kind of human warmth that created a sense of lasting kinship.

We drove through the streets of a city that was regenerating itself, with very little remaining evidence of the fact that eleven years earlier it had been reduced to an open smoke-filled plain. But none of the regeneration we saw around us meant more to us than the human nobility we had just found in a small house at the end of a narrow lane.

We had also learned something about the ease with which men can build bridges to each other when the strands are woven of compassion. What the Nakabayashis represented could be understood and felt everywhere.

When I returned to Hiroshima in 1964, Mayor Shinzo Hanai was back again at City Hall. We drove around a city that had seen strong change since my last visit. Wide, tree-lined boulevards dominated the area. The Exposition Building, retained as a symbol of the bombing, was still identifiable from the air but all around it were bright, sturdy, modern business buildings. Off the main streets I could see the crowded living areas and public markets. And Hiroshima's trademark, its fabled rivers, cut into the city like outstretched fingers pressed into sand.

Mayor Hanai said the population was now higher than it was before the bombing—close to a half million against 400,000 before August 6, 1945, when over half the population was killed. As we approached the heart of the city, I observed dozens of glass-and-concrete office buildings recently built or under construction. The air was filled with the staccato, stuttering sounds of steel riveting and ironworkers. The rising skeletons of the new buildings were covered with large colored plastic sheets, protecting construction crews against wind and rain.

The big change in the city, however, was represented not by broad avenues or modern buildings but by people. Their faces were no longer dominated by harrowing memories; they didn't walk as though out of the past. A new generation had come of age since the bombing, a busy generation with work to do and a living to make. The fact that most of the citizens in Hiroshima today are young people is the key to its personality and its psychological horizon.

The Mayor said that he now found himself preoccupied with the conventional problems of a mayor's office—social welfare services, expanding educational facilities, taxation, trade, etc. Hiroshima still had a fairly substantial population of *Hibakusha*, the term used to designate people affected by the bombing, and the Mayor had a strong concern for their needs; but his job, on the whole, was no longer predominantly that of a disaster-area administrator.

One of the milestones in the personal and psychological recovery of Hiroshima, he said, had been the passage of national legislation in 1957 providing free medical and surgical attention for all atomic-bomb survivors in need of it. Until that time virtually the entire burden had fallen on the city's own private and public medical facilities, plus such voluntary help as was made available from outside. The Hiroshima Maidens project helped to focus Japanese attention on the moral obligation to provide adequate care for survivors.

Mayor Hanai said that the consciousness of Hiroshima's place in his work of the ABCC as well as the facilities that might be available to us in any general project for the treatment of Hiroshima survivors. This was a towering asset when the program got under way.

When I think back on all the things that happened during a busy week in Hiroshima, one picture stands out from all the rest. It is of the visit to the Nakabayashis.

The Nakabayashis lived in a small, frail house at the end of a narrow lane. They had decorated their home for our coming, concealing large cracks in the walls with freshly laundered bedsheets that lined two sides of the room. In the center of one wall they had constructed a little shrine for Tomoko, and the mourning candles were burning. There were pictures of Tomoko sent from the United States by her American Quaker parents, Walter and Pauline Bishop.

We crowded into the small front room and sat on the *tatami*. Mr. Nakabayashi had prepared a short and deeply moving speech about Tomoko and the great joy her experience in the United States had brought to her. He wept as he spoke. He was not well; a stroke several years earlier had paralyzed his right side.

Mrs. Day acknowledged his greeting and conveyed the affectionate good wishes of the Walter Bishops. She told of the love Tomoko had for them and they for her. Each of the Americans then spoke briefly.

Mrs. Nakabayashi thanked us again for coming. She apologized for her tears and for the tears of Mr. Nakabayashi.

"Pease know," she said, "that our tears are not tears of grief but of gratitude."

Then Shigeko Nakabayashi, Tomoko's twenty-year-old sister, began to bring in hand-carved models of sailing ships on which Mr. and Mrs. Nakabayashi had worked for many months during every spare moment they could find. They were scale models of the Spanish galleons that took part in Columbus's voyage to the new world.

"It would make us happier than we could say if you would accept these little ships as very inadequate gifts from us," Mr. Nakabayashi said.

We left the Nakabayashis and went back to our hotel, each of us convinced, no doubt, of his own inadequacy in trying to take it all in. We had gone to offer solace for a lost life that had been entrusted to us. What we found was more than complete understanding; we found the kind of human warmth that created a sense of lasting kinship.

We drove through the streets of a city that was regenerating itself, with very little remaining evidence of the fact that eleven years earlier it had been reduced to an open smoke-filled plain. But none; of the regeneration we saw around us meant more to us than the human nobility we had just found in a small house at the end of a narrow lane.

We had also learned something about the ease with which men can build bridges to each other when the strands are woven of compassion. What the Nakabayashis represented could be understood and felt everywhere.

When I returned to Hiroshima in 1964, Mayor Shinzo Hanai was back again at City Hall. We drove around a city that had seen strong change since my last visit. Wide, tree-lined boulevards dominated the area. The Exposition Building, retained as a symbol of the bombing, was still identifiable from the air hut all around it were bright, sturdy, modern business buildings. Off the main streets I could see the crowded living areas and public markets. And Hiroshima's trademark, its fabled rivers, cut into the city like outstretched fingers pressed into sand.

Mayor Hanai said the population was now higher than it was before the bombing—close to a half million against 400,000 before August 6, 1945, when over half the population was killed. As we approached the heart of the city, I observed dozens of glass-and-concrete office buildings recently built or under construction. The air was filled with the staccato, stuttering sounds of steel riveting and ironworkers. The rising skeletons of the new buildings were covered with large colored plastic sheets, protecting construction crews against wind and rain.

The big change in the city, however, was represented not by broad avenues or modern buildings but by people. Their faces were no longer dominated by harrowing memories; they didn't walk as though out of the past. A new generation had come of age since the bombing, a busy generation with work to do and a living to make. The fact that most of the citizens in Hiroshima today are young people is the key to its personality and its psychological horizon.

The Mayor said that he now found himself preoccupied with the conventional problems of a mayor's office—social welfare services, expanding educational

facilities, taxation, trade, etc. Hiroshima still had a fairly substantial population of *Hibakusha*, the term used to designate people affected by the bombing, and the Mayor had a strong concern for their needs; but his job, on the whole, was no longer predominantly that of a disaster-area administrator.

One of the milestones in the personal and psychological recovery of Hiroshima, he said, had been the passage of national legislation in 1957 providing free medical and surgical attention for all atomic-bomb survivors in need of it. Until that time virtually the entire burden had fallen on the city's own private and public medical facilities, plus such voluntary help as was made available from outside. The Hiroshima Maidens project helped to focus Japanese attention on the moral obligation to provide adequate care for survivors, Mayor Hanai said that the consciousness of Hiroshima's place in history was still a prime fact of life but no longer an obsession. There was far less disposition than there had been ten years earlier to display or exploit personal and municipal scars. The atomic bombing, like life itself, had become matter-of-fact, and the sense of any special destiny or mission seemed to have diminished in Hiroshima.

As in four earlier visits to Hiroshima since the end of the war, I was impressed most of all with the absence of antagonism toward the United States, whether on the private or the official level.

A decade or more earlier there had been some feeling that the U.S. Atomic Bomb Casualty Commission, with a large establishment in Hiroshima, was less interested in the health of the survivors than in compiling statistics. The criticism was largely the result of ABCC policy in examining but not treating bomb victims. This policy was the result not of official indifference to the medical needs of human beings but of reluctance to interfere with the practice of Japanese medicine.

Negative feelings produced by the no-treatment policy were largely dissipated by two developments. First, ABCC was able to enlist the cooperation of the city's physicians and surgeons in working out a program under which the diagnostic reports and laboratory facilities were made available to the personal physicians of survivors. Second, the 1957 legislation providing free treatment for atomic-bomb victims gave a boost to the moral climate. In any event, ABCC had long ceased being a favorite target. The value of its work—not just to Hiroshima but to the human species as a whole—is now being increasingly recognized.

Among the major findings of ABCC so far has been the discovery of a direct connection between the nuclear explosions and a significant increase in the incidence of leukemia; evidence of a 100 per cent tumor increase in survivors within 1,500 meters of the bombing as compared to the non-exposed population; observance of "a significant loss of visual acuity" in youngsters aged seven to ten who were in the critical zone and an increase in microcephaly—smaller heads than normal with a corresponding increase in mental retardation—in children who

were in embryo at the time of the explosion. These are only a few of the particularized studies carried out by ABCC with the full cooperation of the Japanese National Institute of Health.

In attempting to assess these findings one basic fact must be taken into account. The bomb dropped on Hiroshima was small, as nuclear bombs go; it contained the destructive equivalent of about 20,000 tons of TNT as against the 20 million tons of TNT in larger bombs tested later. Moreover, the radiation in the Hiroshima bomb was incidental to its blast-and-fire effect. Later bombs have been produced expressly for their radiological effects. And it is not now possible to give civilian populations assurance that, in the event of a major war, only one bomb will be dropped on each city. Another limitation in the study of Hiroshima's experience is that it doesn't tell science anything about the phenomenon of fire storms resulting from thermonuclear explosions.

Even so, the research projects of ABCC are developing a large and important body of information about human health, the benefits of which will apply to all people. Indeed, it is doubtful whether anywhere else in the world is there now being gathered more data on human health in general rather than radiation disease in particular.

Hiroshima citizens who come to ABCC for periodic examinations are aware of their important contribution to the world's supply of medical knowledge. Dr. Tomin Harada, who participated in the Hiroshima Maidens project, believes that this awareness has had a tonic effect on the outlook of many Hiroshimans.

"It is hard for anyone who has been through the bombing to believe that any good can come out of it," he said. "But the one thing the people have hoped for is that the rest of the world might learn a little from what happened here. This is happening in medicine and it gives us some satisfaction. And we are hopeful that the political lessons may be even more instructive."

In 1964, although close contact had been maintained with both the Maidens and the leaders of the orphanage program in Hiroshima, it had been almost seven years since our last visit to the city, and we were grateful for the opportunity to renew old friendships.

Soon after we arrived we were submerged in an affectionate tidal wave. Hideko Sumimura, the youngest of the Maidens and hardly more than a child herself at the time of her arrival in the United States, now met us with two babies of her own. Terue Takeda came with her three children, Yoshi Harada with two, Suzue Oshima with two. This earth contains a substantial number of wonders, but few of them can compare with a Japanese infant fully swathed in traditional Japanese

dress. After a generous round of baby-bouncing and baby-kissing, we concluded that running for political office wasn't so bad as we had thought.

The term "Maidens" was now largely symbolic. Many of the girls were married, and they had a total of sixteen children. Fifteen of the twenty-five girls who made the journey to the United States were now living in Hiroshima; five were in other parts of Japan; two were living in the United States.

One of the girls, Toyoko Minowa, was an expert fashion designer and dressmaker with a small establishment of her own in Tokyo. Miss Minowa had helped train several other Maidens for careers of their own. Emiko Takemoto and Michiko Yamaoka were teaching advanced classes in design and dressmaking in Hiroshima. Yoshie Enikowa operated a small yarn and knitting shop, with occasional help from Chieko Kirmira, who would have liked to spend more time at the store but had to earn for her mother, who was extremely ill. Masako Wada had a job as caseworker at the *Hiroshima* Christian Social Center and was involved in community relations work.

Suzue Oshima was still chief beautician at the beauty parlor established with the help of her American friends, but her husband and two little girls now represented primary responsibilities, Miyoko Komatsu was employed at the city hall as social worker and interpreter. Takako Hurada worked in a similar capacity for the Prefectural Government in Hiroshima, Michiko Zomen was in vocational guidance work. Atsuko Yamamoto had worked variously as a telephone operator, receptionist, and business executive. Masako Kanabe was studying ceremonial wig-making and had been asked to become the manager of a new Tokyo beauty parlor specializing in preparing young women for marriage ceremonies. (Shigeko Niimoto, who studied practical nursing in the United States, was now in Darien, Connecticut, helping to care for the distinguished photographer, Margaret Bourke-White, who was suffering from Parkinson's disease.)

It is difficult, and perhaps not too consequential, to attempt to assess the significance of the projects involving the orphans and the Maidens of Hiroshima. Comments made by two of the Maidens, however, are perhaps pertinent.

"Our problems are really good problems," Toyoko Minowa said. "They are the problems of most people. Before, our problems were mostly special problems. They were the problems that came from being apart from other people. Now they are the problems that we share with most other people —how to make a living, how to meet ordinary responsibilities, how to care for other people. It is a blessing to have such problems."

And Michiko Yamaoka said she had come to the United States to have something done about the terrible disfiguration of her face. This was done, and it

made a profound difference. But she hadn't realized that something even more important was going to happen.

"I came back with a new heart. It is more important than anything physical. And it has made for me an entirely new life."