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The Case of the A-Bomb Footage

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Erik Barnouw

In 1970, a quarter of a century after the footage was shot, the documentary film *Hiroshima-Nagasaki, August 1945*, which I produced, had its premiere and won an audience—an international one, as it turned out. In recounting the case history of this film, I want to emphasize the extraordinary 25-year hiatus. This seems to me to have implications for filmmakers and perhaps for the democratic process.

I became involved in this story in its later stages, almost by accident. Before I explain how, let me go back to the beginning of the story as I have been able to piece it together over the years.

In August 1945, after the two atom bombs had been dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, a Japanese film unit named Nippon Eiga Sha was commissioned by its government to make a film record of the effects of the devastating new weapon. Nippon Eiga Sha was an amalgamation of several prewar newsreel and documentary units which had been nationalized for war purposes.

The man entrusted with the making of the film was Akira Iwasaki, a film critic, historian, and occasional producer (who died on September 16, 1981). The choice of Iwasaki for the assignment was significant. During the 1930s he had been the leader of a leftist film group called Prokino, or Proletarian Film League, similar to the Workers Film and Photo Leagues in the United States. Being antimilitarist, Prokino had been outlawed shortly before the war, and some of its members had been jailed under a preventive-detention law. Iwasaki himself had spent part of the war in prison. The fact that he had regained standing and was given the film assignment reflected the turbulent situation in the final days of war and the extent to which the military had already lost status.

Because of the breakdown of transport and the difficulty of obtaining adequate supplies, it took the Nip-

pon Eiga Sha film crews some time to reach their locations. But they were at work in Hiroshima and Nagasaki when the American occupation forces arrived. What happened then has been described by Iwasaki: "In the middle of the shooting one of my cameramen was arrested in Nagasaki by American military police. . . . I was summoned to the GHQ and told to discontinue the shooting." The filming was halted, but Iwasaki says he remonstrated, and "made arguments" with the occupation authorities. "Then," he writes, "came the group of the Strategic Bombing Survey from Washington and they wanted to have a film of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Therefore the U.S. Army wanted to utilize my film for the purpose, and changed its mind. Now they allowed me or better ordered me to continue and complete the film."

During the following weeks, under close United States control, much additional footage was shot, all in black-and-white; there was no color film in Japan at this time. As the shooting progressed, the material was edited into sequences under the overall title "Effects of the Atomic Bomb." There were sequences showing effects on concrete, wood, vegetation, and so on, emphasizing detailed scientific observation. Shots of the effects on human beings were sparse. Survivors on the outer fringes of the havoc were photographed in improvised treatment centers, but the guiding supervisory principle was scientific data-gathering rather than human interest. The interests of the camera teams were to some extent at variance with this aim.

When the edited material had reached a length of somewhat less than 3 hours, occupation authorities suddenly took possession of the film—negative, positive, and out-takes—and shipped it to Washington. Film and all related documents were classified "Secret," disappearing from view for almost a quarter of a century. Most people, including those in the film world, remained unaware of its existence. Although a few feet were released for Army-approved uses, and the project was briefly mentioned by Jay Leyda in *Films Beget Films* (1964) (a book that began as a memorandum for the Chinese government on the values of film archives), the existence of the earliest Hiroshima and Nagasaki footage remained an American military secret. With later color footage of the ruins making an appearance and to some extent satisfying curiosity, the missing footage did not become an issue in the United States.

Until 1968 I was oblivious to its existence. But early that year a friend, Mrs. Lucy Lemann, sent me a newspaper clipping she had received from Japan which excited my interest. It was from the English-language *Asahi Evening News*, which reported that the footage shot in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 by Japanese cameramen had been returned to Japan from the United States and that the government would

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arrange a television screening "after certain scenes showing victims' disfiguring burns are deleted." The item also stated that the film would later be made available on loan to "research institutions," but it added: "In order to avoid the film being utilized for political purposes, applications for loan of the film from labor unions and political organizations will be turned down."

I was at this time chairman of the Film, Radio, and Television Division of the Columbia University School of the Arts, and had organized a related unit called the Center for Mass Communication, a division of Columbia University Press, for producing and distributing documentary films and recordings. Naturally, the clipping seemed to demand some investigation or action. Mrs. Lemann was a contributor to the World Law Fund, and at her suggestion I wrote for further information to Professor Yoshikazu Sakamoto, Professor of International Politics at the University of Tokyo, an associate of the fund. His prompt reply said that the Japanese had negotiated with the U.S. Department of State for the return of the film but that the Department of Defense was thought to control it. The film sent to Japan was not the original nitrate but a safety-film copy.

Somewhat impulsively, I wrote a letter on Columbia University stationery, signed as "Chairman, Film, Radio, Television," addressed to "The Honorable Clark M. Clifford, Secretary of Defense," with the notations that "cc" should go to Secretary of State Dean Rusk and to Dr. Grayson Kirk, President of Columbia University. The letter asked whether Columbia's Center for Mass Communication might have the privilege of releasing in the United States the material recently made available for showing in Japan. I felt a bit flamboyant in this, but felt I had nothing to lose. I scarcely expected results. But to my amazement, a letter arrived within days from Daniel Z. Henkin, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, stating that the Department of Defense had turned the material over to the National Archives and that we could have access to it there. So it was that in April 1968 I found myself with a few associates in the auditorium of the National Archives in Washington, looking at 2 hours and 40 minutes of Hiroshima and Nagasaki footage. We also examined voluminous shot lists in which the location of every shot was identified and its content summarized and indexed. Every sheet bore the classification stamp "Secret," but this had been crossed out and another stamp substituted: "Not to Be Released without Approval of the D.O.D." There was no indication of the date of this partial declassification. It may have been routine, or perhaps we were merely the first to have inquired about the material.

Some in our group were dismayed by the marginal quality of much of the film—a result, perhaps, of the circumstances under which it had been shot and the

fact that we were looking at material some generations away from the original. But this quality also seemed a mark of authenticity; and it seemed to me that enough of the footage was extraordinary in its power, unforgettable in its implications, and historic in its importance to warrant our duplicating all of it. A grant from Mrs. Lemann to Columbia University Press made it possible to order a duplicate negative and workprint of the full 2 hours and 40 minutes, along with photostats of the priceless shot lists. During the summer of 1968 all this material arrived at Columbia University from the National Archives, and we began incessant study and experimentation with the footage, with constant reference to the shot lists and other available background information.

The footage contained ruins in grotesque formations and endless shots of rubble. At first we were inclined to discard many of the less striking rubble sequences, but when we learned that one had been a school (where most of the children had died at their desks), one a prison (where 140 prisoners had died in their cells), and another a trolley car (whose passengers had evaporated, leaving in the rubble a row of their skulls and bones), even the less dramatic shots acquired new meaning. Eventually a montage of such rubble shots, linked with statistics about the people annihilated or injured, and the distance of each location from the center of the blast, became a key sequence in the film.

The paucity of what we called "human-effects footage" troubled us deeply. We felt that we would have to cluster this limited material near the end of our film for maximum effect, but meanwhile we began a sweeping search for additional footage of this nature. We wrote to the Defense Department asking whether additional material of this sort had perhaps been held back. The Pentagon's staff historian answered, assuring us that nothing was being held back and adding: "Out-takes from the original production no longer exist, having probably been destroyed during the conversion from nitrate to safety film—if they were turned over to the U.S. Government at all." This curious reply made us wonder whether footage such as we hoped to find might still exist in Japan or might be held by people in the United States who were in Japan during the Occupation. Barbara Van Dyke, who became associate producer for our film, began writing letters to a long list of people, asking for information on any additional footage they might have. In the end this search proved fruitless; we found we had to proceed without additional "human-effects footage."

One of those to whom she wrote was the Japanese film critic and historian Akira Iwasaki, the original producer. His name was not mentioned in the documents received from the Defense Department or the National Archives but was suggested by the writer Donald Richie, a leading authority on Japanese cinema, as a



Akira Kiwasaki and Erik Barnouw, Tokyo, 1972.

likely source of information. Iwasaki did not reply to our inquiry; he explained later that he had doubted the "sincerity" of our project.

Her search did produce one extraordinary find. One of the occupants of the observation plane that followed the *Enola Gay*, the bomb-dropping plane, to Hiroshima was Harold Agnew, who later became head of the Los Alamos Laboratory. As a personal venture he had taken with him a 16-mm camera. The very brief sequence he brought back provides an unforgettable glimpse of the historic explosion and the shuddering impact of the blast on the observation plane itself, which seems likely for a moment to be blown to perdition. From Mr. Agnew we acquired a copy of this short sequence.

Our first rough assembly was some 40 minutes long, but we kept reducing it in quest of sharper impact. What finally emerged, after more than a year of experimentation, was a quiet 16-minute film with a factual, eloquently understated narration written by Paul Ronder and spoken by him and Kazuko Oshima. Ronder and Geoffrey Bartz did the editing. We were not sure it would have the effect we hoped for, but our doubts were soon resolved.

After several small screenings we arranged a major preview at the Museum of Modern Art, in New York, in February 1970, to which the press was invited. The auditorium was jammed, and at the end of the showing the audience sat in total silence for several seconds. We were at first unsure what this meant, but the comments soon clarified the response. Later that day the UPI ticker carried a highly favorable report that treated the film as a major news event, mentioning the address of the Center for Mass Communication and the print sale price (\$96). Two days later checks and orders began arriving in the mail and continued, without promotional effort on our part, at the rate of 100 a month. In 5 months almost 500 prints were sold—to film libraries, colleges, school systems, clubs, community groups, and churches. Every screening seemed to bring a surge of letters and orders. Foreign sales quickly mounted.

Two things amazed us: (1) the electric effect on audiences everywhere and (2) the massive silence of the American networks. All of them had been invited to the press preview; none had attended. Early in the morning after the resounding UPI dispatch, all three commercial networks phoned to ask for preview prints and sent motorcycle couriers to collect them, but this was followed by another silence. By making follow-up phone calls we learned that CBS and ABC were "not interested." Only NBC thought it might use the film, if it could find a "news hook." We dared not speculate what kind of event this might call for.

The networks' attitude was, of course, in line with a policy all three had pursued for over a decade, that of not broadcasting documentaries other than their own. Nature films and a few other categories could win exemption, but as an NBC policy statement of 1960 had made clear, where "opinion-influencing" might be involved, only network documentaries were permissible. This was explained as a matter of responsibility, to assure authenticity and objectivity, but independent producers attacked it as a monopolistic ploy designed to secure for a network's own productions the limited sponsorship funds available for documentaries. Independents called it dangerous because, as a result of the policy, the documentary diet of most television viewers was determined by three network executives of similar interests and connections. We at Columbia University were outraged by the network policy. We had half-expected that the his-

Samples of the U.S. Air Force Hiroshima and Nagasaki footage records.

USAF CENTRAL FILM DEPOSITORY		UNCLASSIFIED
NO. 17679-2		CCU NO. USSBS
11		Date Photo'd 1945 ✓
8921	MASTER FILE	
EFFECT OF ATOMIC BOMB ON HIROSHIMA AND NAGASAKI		CROSS REFERENCES
1) LS	Looking along RR tracks showing damaged tracks and electrical wiring.	JAPAN ✓
2) MS	damaged electrical power lines of RR.	ATOMIC; PHYSICAL ASPECT
3) MS	demolished wooden homes.	BONES, HUMAN ✓
4) MS	bent and twisted steel frame bldgs.	BRIDGE, RR
5) CU	Human bones, skull and debris.	DAMAGED ✓
6) MCU	Damaged RR bridge.	BUILDING, CONCRETE REINF
7) MCU	Twisted frame and ties of RR bridge.	DEMOLISHED ✓
8) CU	Animation.	BUILDING, WOOD
9) Pan	Demolished penitentiary.	DEMOLISHED ✓
10) CU	damaged steel frame of concrete building.	DEBRIS ✓
11) MS	remains of cell block.	EQUIPMENT, ELECTRICAL
		DAMAGED ✓
		PRISON, CELL
		DEMOLISHED ✓
		RAILROAD, TIES
		RAILROAD, TRACKS
		DAMAGED ✓
		DoD
		UNCLASSIFIED
NOTY: GOOD		
JAN 21 1945 (9 APR 45)		

USAF CENTRAL FILM DEPOSITORY		UNCLASSIFIED
NO. 17679-2		CCU NO. UNCLASSIFIED
8651		Date Photo'd SEPT & OCT 1945
MASTER FILE		
EFFECTS OF THE ATOMIC BOMB ON HIROSHIMA AND NAGASAKI		CROSS REFERENCES
1) CU	A piece of a dress then showing how the pattern of the dress was burned onto the back of a woman. Animation.	SKIN ✓
2) MS	Showing burns on the body, arms and head of a man.	ATOMIC; PHYSICAL ASPECT
3) CU	Showing protection afforded by a wrist watch.	CITY: HIROSHIMA ✓
4) MCU	Showing burns on the face, neck and arms of a man.	INJURIES
5) CU	Burns on a man's hand and how the movement of his fingers has been restricted.	FLASH BURN
		NUMS ✓
		BACK ✓
		BODY ✓
		FACE ✓
		HANDS ✓
		HEAD ✓
		NECK ✓
		PATIENT
		FEMALE ✓
		MALE ✓
		PROTECTION
		CLOTHING ✓
		WRIST WATCH ✓
		STRICTURES
		FINGERS ✓
		DoD
		UNCLASSIFIED
NOTY: GOOD		
JAN 21 1945 (9 APR 45)		

USAF CENTRAL FILM DEPOSITORY

REF NO. 17679-2

Reel No: 8
Frame: 739

CCU NO: ~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

Date Photo'd: 1945 ✓

MASTER FILE

CROSS REFERENCES

- JAPAN ✓
- ANIMATION ✓
- ATOMIC, MED ASPECT
- DISEASES
- EPILATION ✓
- RADIATION SICKNESS ✓
- PATIENT
- CHILDREN ✓
- FEMALE ✓
- MALE ✓

EFFECTS OF ATOMIC BOMB ON HIROSHIMA AND NAGASAKI

- 1) CU Animation.
- 11) CU Top of male patient's head showing effects of burn, several angles.
- 12) Animation.
- 13) CU Two jap children showing loss of hair
- 14) CU radiation sickness patient in bed.
- 15) CU jap woman's face who is suffering radiation sickness.
- 16) CU Old jap woman showing loss of hair.
- 17) CU jap male patient's face, several angles.

Not to be released without approval of ~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

QUALITY: GOOD

UNCLASSIFIED

USAF CENTRAL FILM DEPOSITORY

NO. 17679-3

Reel No: 8
Frame: 739

CCU NO: ~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

Date Photo'd: 1945 ✓

MASTER FILE

CROSS REFERENCES

- JAPAN ✓
- ATOMIC, MEDICAL ASPECT
- AUTOYSY
- ADRENAL GLAND ✓
- BONE MARROW ✓
- HYPOPHYSIS ✓
- KIDNEY ✓
- INTESTINES ✓
- LIVER ✓
- LUNGS ✓
- LYMPHNODES ✓
- OVARY ✓
- TESTICLES ✓
- THYROID GLAND ✓

EFFECTS OF ATOMIC BOMB HIROSHIMA AND NAGASAKI
"pathology"

- CU Bone marrow.
- ECU Microscopic shot of human spleen.
- ECU Microscopic shot of lymphnodes.
- ECU Microscopic shot of skin.
- ECU Microscopic shot of testicles.
- ECU Microscopic shot of ovary.
- ECU Microscopic shot of intestines.
- ECU Microscopic shot of lung.
- ECU Microscopic shot of liver.
- ECU Microscopic shot of kidney.
- ECU Microscopic shot of adrenal gland.
- ECU Microscopic shot of hypophysis.
- ECU Microscopic shot of thyroid gland.

THE END Not to be released without approval of ~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

QUALITY: GOOD

UNCLASSIFIED

toric nature of the material would in this case supersede the policy. But we were for the moment too busy filling nontelevision orders to consider any particular protest or action.

Then a curious chain of media phenomena changed the situation. On April 5, 1970, the Sunday supplement *Parade*, which generally gave its chief attention to the romantic aberrations of the mighty, carried a prominent item about *Hiroshima-Nagasaki, August 1945*, calling it unforgettable, and necessary viewing for the people of any nation possessing the bomb. This apparently caused the editors of the *Boston Globe*, which carried *Parade*, to wonder why television was ignoring the film. They made phone calls to nuclear scientists and others, asking their opinions on the matter, and reached several who had attended our previews. The result was a lead editorial in the *Globe* headed: "HIROSHIMA-NAGASAKI, AUGUST 1945—NOT FOR SENSITIVE U.S. EYES" which ended with a blast at the networks for ignoring the film. *Variety* featured the *Globe's* "needling" of the networks in a special box in its next edition. This brought sudden action from National Educational Television (NET), which a few days later signed a contract to broadcast the film in early August, 25 years after the dropping of the bombs. No sooner had the contract been signed than NBC announced that it wanted the film for use on its monthly magazine series, *First Tuesday*. When Sumner Glimcher, manager of the Center for Mass Communication, explained that the film was committed to NET, he was asked if we could "buy out" NET so that NBC could have the film; we declined to try.

As the issue of a United States telecast was moving to a resolution, we were aware of parallel, and apparently more feverish, developments in Japan. Our first inkling of what was happening there came at the Museum of Modern Art preview, at which we were approached by a representative of Tokyo Broadcasting System (TBS), one of Japan's commercial systems, with an offer to purchase Japanese television rights. To be negotiating such a matter seemed strange in view of the Japanese government's announced plans for a television screening, but the TBS man was persistent and eager, and we finally signed an agreement authorizing a telecast, with an option to repeat. The telecast took place on March 18, 1970, and the option to repeat was promptly exercised. We gradually became aware, through bulletins from Japan, of the enormous impact made by these telecasts. The government-arranged showing had taken place earlier over NHK, the government network, but had included little except the rubble shots. Human beings had been excised "in deference to the relatives of the

victims," but this action had brought a storm of protest. It was against this background that TBS had negotiated for our film. It also gave our film, which made use of footage that the NHK telecast had eliminated, an added impact. Professor Sakamoto, of the University of Tokyo, began sending us voluminous translations of favorable reviews and articles, one of which paid special tribute to Columbia University for showing the Japanese people "what our own government tried to withhold from us." The reviews included major coverage in a picture magazine following the *Life* format. Viewing statistics were provided. The *Mainichi Shimbun* reported that the film "caused a sensation throughout the country," while in Hiroshima "the viewing rate soared to four times the normal rate." The *Chugoku Shimbun* reported:

At the atomic injury hospital in Hiroshima last night, nine o'clock being curfew time, all was quiet. Only in one room on the second floor of the west wing, the television diffidently continued its program. . . . They had obtained special permission from the doctors. . . . The first scene was of ruins. "That's the Aioi Bridge." "That's the Bengaku Dome." The women follow the scenes. Even the Chinese woman who had not wanted to see is leaning from her bed and watching intently. . . . The scene of victims which has elicited so much comment is now on. "That's exactly how it was," they nod to each other. However, when the film was over they contradicted their words and said, "It was much, much worse."

A letter came from the mayor of Hiroshima. The city would mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the bomb with a major observance, including a long television program, and wanted to include material from our film.

The most gratifying response came from Akira Iwasaki, who after a lapse of almost 25 years had seen his footage on television. His role in the project was not credited, and he might have been expected to resent this, but no sign of resentment appeared. He wrote us a long letter expressing his appreciation for how we had used the material. He also published a long review in a leading Japanese magazine, describing his reaction:

I was lost in thought for a long time, deeply moved by this film. . . . I was the producer of the original long film which offered the basic material for this short film. That is, I knew every cut of it . . . yet I was speechless. . . . It was not the kind of film the Japanese thought Americans would produce. The film is an appeal or warning from man to man for peaceful reflection—to prevent the use of the bomb ever again. I like the narration, in which the emotion is well controlled and the voice is never raised. . . . That made me cry. In this part, the producers are no longer Americans. Their feelings are completely identical to our feelings.

Inconsistent with the Networks

Robert J. Cray

The impact of the film was further illuminated by a bizarre incident. A delegation of three Japanese gentlemen was announced at my Columbia University office, and ushered in, all impeccably dressed. One member, introducing the leader, identified him as a member or former member of the Japanese Parliament, representing the socialists. The leader himself then explained that he came on behalf of an organization called the Japan Congress Against A and H Bombs, also known as Gensuikin. In this capacity, they had three requests to make. First, as a token of appreciation for what we had achieved with our film *Hiroshima-Nagasaki, August 1945*, would I accept a small brooch as a gift to my wife? Puzzled and curious, I accepted.

Second, would I consider an invitation to speak in Hiroshima on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the dropping of the bomb, in the course of the scheduled observances? I hesitated—the suggestion raised endless questions in my mind—but I said I would consider. The leader seemed reassured and said I would receive a letter.

Then came the third request. Would he be permitted to purchase six prints of *Hiroshima-Nagasaki, Au-*

gust 1945? I explained that we sold prints at \$96, for nonprofit use, making no discrimination among buyers. With an audible sigh of relief, he suddenly unbuttoned his shirt, ripped out a money belt, and produced six pristine \$100 bills. We handed him the six prints. One member of the delegation had a camera ready; photographs were taken and the group departed. A few days later we received a letter from another organization with a very similar name—the Japan Council Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs, or Gensuikyo. It requested the right to translate our film into Japanese, without editing change. Again we wrote to Professor Sakamoto of the University of Tokyo for enlightenment. Again he responded promptly:

... the movement against atomic bombs has been split into two groups since early in the 1960's, the immediate cause being the difference in attitude toward the nuclear tests carried on by the Soviet Union. The Japan Congress Against A and H Bombs, which politically is close to the Social Democrats, is against all nuclear tests, regardless of nation. The Council Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs, the other body, is close to the Communist Party, and is opposed to nuclear tests by the United States, but considers tests by the Socialist countries undesirable but necessary. . . . The Council is a somewhat larger organization than the other. Many efforts have been made in the past to merge the two bodies but none have been successful to date.



Flaherty Seminar, 1970:
(on couch) Barbara Van Dyke, Paul Ronder, and Erik Barnouw, discussing the making of *Hiroshima-Nagasaki, August 1945* with sound recordist.

In the following weeks we were bombarded by both Congress and Council with cabled requests about prints, translation rights, and 8-mm rights. To our relief the issue was resolved, by Professor Sakamoto's revelation that in 1945 a Nippon Eiga Sha technician, fearing that the American military would seize and remove the footage, had secreted a duplicate set in a laboratory ceiling. For 25 years, fearing prosecution, he had not dared to mention this. Now at last he made known its existence. We now referred Japanese inquiries to this "newly available" resource. Apparently the Defense Department's suspicion, expressed in the letter from the Pentagon historian, had had some validity.

On August 3, 1970, *Hiroshima-Nagasaki, August 1945* had its American television premiere over NET, giving the system one of its largest audiences to date. "Hiroshima Gets Numbers," *Variety* reported. NBC's *Today* program and the CBS *Evening News with Walter Cronkite* had decided, at the last moment, to carry news items about the event, using short clips and crediting NET and Columbia University. NET's Tampa outlet did a delayed telecast via tape, after deleting some of the "human-effects footage." So far as we could learn, all other stations carried the full film. The telecast won favorable reviews across the nation, and NET's decision to show it was acclaimed.

To my disappointment, NET coupled the film with a panel discussion on the subject, "Should we have dropped the bomb?" It was an issue I had deliberately excluded from the film, even though most members of our group wanted the film to condemn Truman's action. This seemed to me an issue irrelevant to our film, already endlessly discussed. To me the Hiroshima-Nagasaki footage is meaningful because of its implications for today and tomorrow, rather than as an escape into the past.

During the research for my books on the history of American broadcasting—especially *The Image Empire*—I became chillingly aware of how often in recent years men in high position have urged use of atomic weapons. French Foreign Minister Georges Bidault has said that Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, during the Dienbienphu crisis, twice offered him atom bombs to use against the beleaguering Vietnamese forces, but he demurred. Oral histories on file at the Dulles Collection in Princeton make clear that Dulles made the offer on the advice of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Apparently Bidault's refusal (not President Eisenhower's as some writers have assumed) averted another holocaust. During the Quemoy-Matsu confrontation, use of an atom bomb was again discussed. In 1964 Barry Goldwater felt that use of a "low-yield atomic device" to defoliate Vietnamese forests should be considered (he later emphasized that he had not actually recommended it). More recently various commentators have made themselves sound-

ing boards for proposed world strategies based on "tactical" nuclear weapons—a term meant to suggest a modest sort of holocaust, but actually designating bombs equivalent in destructive power to the Hiroshima bomb. (A more advanced bomb now equals 2,500 Hiroshima bombs, as our film makes clear.) Such proposals can be made only by people who have not fully realized what an atomic war can be. When I first saw the Hiroshima-Nagasaki footage, I became aware how little I had previously understood. To win a war with such weapons is to win an uninhabitable world.

Why—and by what right—was the footage declared "Secret"? It contains no military information, the supposed basis for such a classification. Then why the suppression? The answer is probably clear enough: It was feared, in that postwar time, that if people saw this, they might not support proposals for increasingly more powerful nuclear weapons, and Congress might not so readily appropriate the billions of dollars needed to create them. The film was seen not as a military threat but as a public-relations and Congressional-relations threat. Hence the misuse of the classification device, a habit perhaps as dangerous as the weapons.

I produced the short film *Hiroshima-Nagasaki, August 1945* with the hope that it would be seen by as many people as possible on all sides of every iron curtain. If a film can have the slightest deterrent effect, it may be needed now more than ever. Because of its continuing meaning, *Hiroshima-Nagasaki, August 1945* still wins new audiences. When Columbia University Press recently decided to discontinue its film activities, the distribution of *Hiroshima-Nagasaki, August 1945* was taken over by the Museum of Modern Art for rental and long-term lease. Meanwhile I have assembled the correspondence and documents relating to the film—some 300 items—and placed them with my papers in Special Collections in the Columbia University library. A photocopy of the entire file has been placed in the research library of the Museum of Modern Art. The documents I have mentioned and quoted can be found in both places.

I did not accept the invitation to the 1970 Hiroshima observances. But since then I have visited Japan twice, had long talks with Akira Iwasaki, met one of the cameramen in his 1945 unit, and visited the generously helpful Professor Sakamoto. I continued to correspond with Iwasaki. In 1978 he published in Japan a book whose title can be translated as *Occupied Screen*; one chapter concerns the story of the Hiroshima-Nagasaki footage and its final emergence as *Hiroshima-Nagasaki, August 1945*. In 1980 a brief afterword was added to the film: "The original Japanese footage was shot by Nippon Eiga Sha under the supervision of Akira Iwasaki."