

## Article

# From Experience to Anti-Nuclear Convictions: Early Years, Crises, and Evolution of the *Nihon Hidankyō*<sup>1</sup>

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**ABSTRACT:** The anti-atomic and hydrogen bomb movement is a representative peace movement in postwar Japan, underpinned by widespread empathy for the experiences of atomic bombing survivors, the *hibakusha*. However, the experience of being subjected to atomic bombings does not automatically link one to the ideology or movement to ban nuclear bombs. This study aims to examine the period from the establishment of the Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations (*Nihon Hidankyō*), representing the atomic bombing survivors' movements in Japan, which emerged from the anti-atomic and hydrogen bomb movement (*gensuikin* movement). By depicting *Hidankyō*'s movement in relation to the *gensuikin* movement, this study aims to elucidate the principles of the atomic and hydrogen bomb prohibition held during the early *Hidankyō* movement. It explores the circumstances leading to the organization's unique activism in the 1970s, amid organizational crises, including conservative elements drifting away from the anti-nuclear movement around the late 1950s during negotiations on the revision of the Japan-US Security Treaty, and the split of the Japan Council Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs (*Gensuikyō*) in 1963 due to socialist–communist disputes. The findings emphasize a reconsideration of the relationship between atomic bombing experiences, often viewed as the foundation of post-war Japanese pacifism, and the ideals of prohibiting nuclear bombs.

**KEYWORDS:** atomic bombing survivors, Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations (*Nihon Hidankyō*), *gensuikin* movement, Cold War and postwar Japan, ideology and social movements

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<sup>1</sup> This paper is an English translation with some modifications to the original work written in Japanese by the same author (Naono Akiko, "Hibaku taiken to gensuibaku kinshi no aida: Gensuibaku kinshi undō bunretsuki ni okeru hibakusha undō," *Dōjidai-shi Kenkyū* 12 (2019): 40–57).

<sup>2</sup> In this paper, Japanese names are presented in the original order used in Japan, with the family name followed by the given name.

## 1. Introduction

The experience of suffering caused by atomic bombs has played a significant role in Japan's anti-nuclear movements and international anti-nuclear campaigns, serving as a foundational argument against nuclear weapons. However, such experiences do not guarantee an alignment with the principles and actions advocated to prohibit nuclear weapons. For example, nuclear armament has been proposed to prevent the recurrence of victimization.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, as observed in Europe during the 1980s, broad anti-nuclear movements were established without relying on the experiences of atomic bombing victims.

### Pioneering Studies on the Connection between the Atomic Bombing Experience and the Anti-Nuclear Conviction

Although the relationship between the experience of atomic bombings and the principles advocating the prohibition of nuclear bombs is not self-evident, it has frequently been assumed that those who have undergone such experiences would naturally support these prohibitive ideals. However, according to polls conducted among survivors in the 1950s, nearly 20% of the respondents felt that nuclear bombs were necessary, and 7% supported the nuclear armament of Japan's Self-Defense Force.<sup>4</sup> As revealed through life history research by Ishida Tadashi and historical studies by Ubuki Satoru, the anti-nuclear sentiment among *hibakusha* (atomic bombing survivors) is a product of historical construction rather than being directly derived from their experiences.<sup>5</sup>

Ishida, in his analysis of the life histories of several *hibakusha* during the late 1960s and 1970s, identified two ideal types of existential responses to the violence brought by the atomic bombings: "drifting" and "resisting." He defines "drifting" as a passive state, where individuals are overwhelmed by the catastrophic events, feeling lost in the enormity of human destruction caused by the bombings. In contrast, "resisting" represents an active stance, involving fighting against the aftermath and implications of the bombings.

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<sup>3</sup> The discourse on nuclear armament in countries such as India and Pakistan is a prime example. Furthermore, Shimizu Ikutarō argued that Japan has the right to nuclear armament precisely because it has experienced atomic bombings (Ubuki Satoru, "Nihon ni okeru genseuibaku kinshi undō no zentei," *Nihon-shi Kenkyū* 236 (1982): 83–103).

<sup>4</sup> Genbaku Hibakusha Kyūen Iinkai ed., "Genbaku hibakusha jittai chōsa hōkoku," August 1956; Nihon Genseuibaku Higaisha Dantai Kyōgikai ed., "Genbaku higai no jissō to hibakusha no kurushimi," August 1959.

<sup>5</sup> Ishida Tadashi, *Han genbaku: Nagasaki hibakusha no seikatsu shi* (Mirai-sha, 1973); Ishida Tadashi, *Genbaku taiken no shisōka: Han genbaku ronshū* (Mirai-sha, 1986); Ubuki Satoru, "'Hibaku taiken' no tenkai: Genseuibaku kinshi sekai taikai no sengen/giketsu wo sozai toshite," *Geibichihō-shi Kenkyū* 140/141 (1983): 1–19; Ubuki, "Nihon ni okeru."

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However, Ishida emphasizes that they are not exclusive categories into which *hibakusha* can be neatly classified. The violence brought by the atomic bombing thus continuously compels each *hibakusha* to struggle and fluctuate between “resisting” and “drifting.”<sup>6</sup> Ishida’s observation helps us understand that *hibakusha* do not inevitably develop anti-bomb convictions by being exposed to violent effects.

While Ishida focuses on the psychological and intellectual struggles of *hibakushas* and examines their memories after a few decades had passed, Ubuki’s pioneering research, supported by other preliminary studies, delves into the historical progression of the discourse on the experiences stemming from atomic bombings and how they relate to anti-nuclear movements, mostly between the immediate postwar period and the mid-1950s. Within this historical scope, the interpretation of these experiences shifted from the immediate aftermath of the atomic bombings to Japan’s transition to postwar independence. Originally, atomic bombings were viewed as contributing to the end of the war and thereby indicating peace, even in bombed cities. However, as international initiatives against atomic warfare, notably the Stockholm Appeal campaign, gained momentum, these experiences began to be associated with the prohibition of atomic bombs.<sup>7</sup>

Ubuki and his colleague Funahashi Yoshiie underscore that the nexus between the harrowing experiences of atomic bombings and advocacy against such weaponry solidified with the inception of anti-atomic and hydrogen bomb movement (*gensuibaku kinshi* movement, hereafter *gensuikin* movement). This movement was catalyzed by the 1954 “Lucky Dragon No. 5 Incident” (also known as the “Bikini Incident”).<sup>8</sup> Prior to this, small organizations representing atomic bombing victims existed, with some even proclaiming the pursuit of peace in their charters.<sup>9</sup> However, it was the momentum of the *gensuikin* movement that truly galvanized a broader organization of victims, advocating fervently against the use of these weapons. Without the emergence and influence of this movement, Japan’s atomic bombing victims might not have been unified in opposition to nuclear weapons.

As Ubuki and Funahashi have shown, the anti-nuclear sentiment among *hibakushas* has developed largely through social movements over the years. Moreover, these move-

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<sup>6</sup> Ishida, *Genbaku taiken*, 134–135.

<sup>7</sup> Igarashi Yoshikuni, *Haisen no kioku: Shintai/Bunka/Monogatari 1945–1970* (Chūō Kōron-sha, 2007); Naono Akiko, *Genbaku taiken to sengo nihon: Kioku no keisei to keishō* (Iwanami Shoten, 2015); Ubuki Satoru, *Hiroshima sengo shi: Hibaku taiken wa dou uketomerarete kitaka* (Iwanami Shoten, 2014).

<sup>8</sup> Ubuki, *Hiroshima sengo shi*; Funahashi Yoshiye, “Shōwa 30 nendai shotō no hibakusha undō,” *Hiroshima Heiwa Kagaku* 13 (1990): 15–31.

<sup>9</sup> Naono Akiko, “Hajimari no 10 nen: Genbaku higaisha undō no sōseiki,” in Hiroshima Shiritsu Daigaku Hiroshima Heiwa Kenkyūsho ed., *Ajia no heiwa to kaku: Kokusai kankei no naka no kaku kaihatsu to gabanansu* (Kyōdō Tsūshin-sha, 2019), 28–33.

ments espoused principles advocating for the prohibition of nuclear bombs, predominantly because of the historical and social conditions surrounding Japan during the formative phase of the movement.<sup>10</sup>

### Core Literature on the History of the Gensuikin Movement

The gensuikin movement began as an initiative that transcended social strata and political affiliations. However, around 1959, amid disputes concerning the revision of the Japan–US Security Treaty, the conservative faction began distancing itself from the movement. Later, the debate over opposing “nuclear tests by any country” intensified the rivalry between the Japan Socialist Party (JPS) and Japan Communist Party (JCP). By 1963, this contention had caused a split within the movement.<sup>11</sup>

Despite being one of the largest peace movements in postwar Japan, a comprehensive historical study on the gensuikin movement has not yet been conducted. Details regarding how the movement spread nationwide can be found in the research of Ubuki and Fujiwara Osamu.<sup>12</sup> The circumstances and factors leading to the split have been contemporaneously examined by researchers such as Imabori Seiji, Takabatake Michitoshi, and Sakamoto Yoshikazu.<sup>13</sup> Recently, alongside Fujiwara, research by Michiba Chikanobu and Aoki Tetsuo has emerged.<sup>14</sup> Fujiwara and Michiba’s analyses, which build upon the

<sup>10</sup> Naono Akiko, “Genbaku higaisha to ‘sengo Nihon’: Higai ishiki no keisei kara han-genbaku e,” in Yasuda Tsuneo ed., *Shakai no kyōkai wo ikiru hitobito: Sengo Nihon no fuchi* (Iwanami Shoten, 2013), 220–247.

<sup>11</sup> Imabori Seiji, *Gensuibaku kinshi undō* (Ushio Shuppan-sha, 1974); Itō Shigeru, *Heiwa undō to tōitsu sensen: Gensuibaku kinshi undō no rekishi to tenbō* (Ariesu Shobō, 1974); Iwadare Hiroshi, *Kakuheiki haizetsu no umeri: Dokyumento gensuikin undō* (Rengō Shuppan, 1982); Kumakura Hiroyasu, *Gensuikin undō 30 nen* (Rōdō Kyōiku Sentā, 1978); Yoshino Genzaburō, “Shisha wo shite shisha wo hōmurashime yo: Gensuikin mondai no kihon ni tsuite, Abe Yasukazu shi eno shokan,” *Sekai* 384 (1977): 136–167.

<sup>12</sup> Fujiwara Osamu, *Gensuibaku kinshi undō no seiritsu: Sengo Nihon no heiwa undō no genzō* (Meijigakuin Kokusai Heiwa Kenkyūsho, 1991); Ubuki, *Hiroshima sengo shi*.

<sup>13</sup> Fujiwara Osamu, “Nihon no heiwa undō (1),” *Tokyo Keizai Daigakukaishi*, 176 (1992): 15–39; Imabori, *Gensuibaku kinshi undō*; Sakamoto Yoshikazu, “Kenryoku seiji to heiwa undō,” in *Sengo gaikō no genten: Sakamoto Yoshikazu shū 3* (Iwanami Shoten, 2004), 205–227; Takabatake Michitoshi, “Taishū undō no tayōka to henshitsu,” in Kuribayashi Akira and Igarashi Akio eds., *Takabatake Michitoshi shū 1: Seiji riron to shakai undō* (Iwanami Shoten, 2009) 37–100.

<sup>14</sup> Aoki Tetsuo, “Gensuibaku kinshi undō no bunretsu: Soren kakujikken saikai kara dai 8 kai sekai taikai made (1961.9–1962.8),” *Seikei Kenkyū* 99 (2012): 18–32; Aoki Tetsuo, “Dai 9 kai sekai taikai ni okeru gensuibaku kinshi undō no bunretsu,” *Seikei Kenkyū* 103 (2014): 29–41; Michiba Chikanobu, *Senryō to heiwa: Sengo toiu keiken* (Seido-sha, 2005); Michiba Chikanobu, “Gensuibaku kinshi undō to reisen: Nihon ni okeru hankaku heiwa undō no kiseki,” in Sakai Tetsuya ed., *Nihon no gaikō 3: Gaikō shisō* (Iwanami Shoten, 2013), 225–56.

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insights of Takabatake and Sakamoto and elucidate the reasons for the movement's split through theories of political organization and social movement, have significant implications for postwar historical studies. Their work is vital for understanding the richness and limitations of postwar Japanese pacifism. However, there is an apparent lack of analysis on *hibakusha* movements, which are crucial pillars of the gensuikin movement.<sup>15</sup> Seemingly, it is self-evident that atomic bombing survivors possess an anti-nuclear sentiment.

### Primary Studies on the Hidankyō Movement

The Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations (Nihon Hidankyō), representing the atomic bombing survivors' movements in Japan, emerged from the gensuikin movement.<sup>16</sup> From its inception, alongside the demand for the establishment of medical and welfare support systems for victims, Hidankyō advocated for the prohibition of atomic and hydrogen bombs. However, around the time when the gensuikin movement began addressing the revision of the Japan-US Security Treaty, differences in opinions emerged concerning the positioning and nature of Hidankyō within the gensuikin movement. Fears grew that the pursuit of the Relief Law for victims might become more challenging if it were associated with a radical movement. Combined with the increasing distrust of the Japan Council against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs (Gensuikyō), a visible trend emerged within Hidankyō to distance itself from the gensuikin movement. Amid organizational disagreements with Gensuikyō by the mid-1960s, Hidankyō was on the brink of a split. However, Hidankyō managed to maintain its unity and, from the 1970s onwards, continued challenging the Japanese government, demanding the enactment of the Relief Law.

Regarding the Hidankyō movement, a historical account of the movement was published by Hidankyō, in addition to examinations by the central participants of the movement, all of which described the crisis of division.<sup>17</sup> Concerning prior research,

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<sup>15</sup> Fujiwara, "Nihon no," 26.

<sup>16</sup> In this paper, the abbreviation Hidankyō refers to the Japan Hidankyō, not regional victims' associations affiliated with national Hidankyō.

<sup>17</sup> Chugoku Shinbun-sha, *Hiroshima 40 nen: Moritaki nikki no shōgen* (Heibon-sha, 1985); Itō Takeshi, *Hibaku no shisō to undō* (Shin Hyōron, 1975); Itō Takeshi, "Nihon hibakusha undō no 30 nen," in Hiroshima/Nagasaki no Shōgen no kai ed., *Hiroshima/Nagasaki 30 nen no shōgen: Ge* (Mirai-sha, 1976); Moritaki Ichirō, *Hankaku 30 nen* (Nihon Hyōron-sha, 1976); Nihon Gensuibaku Higaisha Dantai Kyōgikai Nihon Hidankyō-shi Henshū Iin-kai ed., *Futatabi hibakusha wo tsukuru na: Nihon Hidankyō 50 nen shi* (Akebi Shobō, 2009); Nihon Gensuibaku Higaisha Dantai Kyōgikai ed., *Hibakusha kara anata ni: Ima tsutaetai koto* (Iwanami Shoten, 2021); Saitō Yoshio, *Watashi no hibakusha undō* (Shin Nihon Shuppan-sha, 1986).

while Ubuki and Funabashi have examined the inception of the Hiroshima Prefectural Confederation of A-bomb Sufferers Organizations (Hiroshima Prefectural Hidankyō), Ubuki has explored the formation process of the national Hidankyō, and Naono Akiko has analyzed the historical developments of Hidankyō's demands and strategies in relation to the Japanese government's war-redress policies.<sup>18</sup> Research concerning the crisis of division of Hidankyō during the gensuikin movement's split period has only recently begun, especially since the inception of the NPO "No More Hibakusha Project – Inheriting Memories of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers" in 2012, which has been working on organizing and preserving movement materials.<sup>19</sup>

### Contribution of the Current Study

This study focuses on the period from the establishment of Hidankyō to its emergence from the division crisis. Building upon Ubuki's historical analysis of Hidankyō's formative years and its connection with the early gensuikin movement, this study delves into the subsequent phase in which Hidankyō experienced organizational turmoil due to ideological and political disputes within the gensuikin movement. This aspect is examined through newly available movement materials. By depicting Hidankyō's trajectory in relation to the gensuikin movement, this study aims to elucidate the principles of atomic and hydrogen bomb prohibition held during the early Hidankyō movement. Furthermore, it analyzes the factors leading to the crisis and explores how Hidankyō managed to remain united, highlighting the significance of the agency and ideational positioning of its participants. In doing so, we hope to contribute to a reevaluation of the relationship between atomic bombing experiences—frequently viewed as the foundation of postwar Japanese pacifism—and the ideals of prohibiting nuclear bombs.

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<sup>18</sup> Funahashi, "Shōwa 30 nendai"; Naono, *Genbaku taiken*; Naono Akiko, "Nationalism under the banner of pacifism: Japanese atomic bombing sufferers' struggle against the state," in Simon Avenell ed., *Reconsidering postwar Japanese history: A handbook* (MHM, 2023), 89–106; Ubuki, *Hiroshima sengo shi*; Ubuki Satoru, "Nihon Gensuibaku Higaisha Dantai Kyōgikai no kessei," in Asao Naohiro Kyōjyu taikan kinen-kai iinkai ed., *Nihon shakai no shiteki kōzō: Kinsei/Kindai* (Shibunkaku Shuppan, 1995), 525–544.

<sup>19</sup> The primary sources referred to in this paper are, unless otherwise stated, collected and organized by the No More Hibakusha Project. I am indebted to Kurihara Yoshiye of the project's secretariat for her assistance in collecting these materials. Further, I would like to express my gratitude to Matsuda Shinobu, Professor of History at the Shōwa Women's University, who guided the organization of documents for the project and provided insights regarding this paper.

## 2. Gensuikin Movement and the Formation of the Hidankyō

### From the World Conference Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs to the Formation of the Nihon Hidankyō

In March 1954, the “Lucky Dragon No. 5 Incident” served as a catalyst, intensifying public sentiment against atomic and hydrogen bombs. Consequently, on August 6, 1955, the World Conference against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs was convened in Hiroshima City. Notably, the gensuikin movement did not initially focus on the current situation of the atomic bombing victims. Therefore, the Hiroshima preparatory committee for the World Conference sought to provide opportunities for participants to hear firsthand accounts of these victims. They organized homestays at the victims’ homes and held discussion sessions with them at smaller gatherings.<sup>20</sup> Encounters with atomic bombing survivors profoundly impacted the participants, leading to the adoption of a conference declaration that positioned the “relief” of these victims as the foundation of the movement to ban atomic and hydrogen bombs.<sup>21</sup> Thus, the dual goals of prohibiting nuclear weapons and assisting bombing survivors formed the “two wheels of the vehicle” for the gensuikin movement.<sup>22</sup> On September 19, 1955, Japan Gensuikyō was formed, and a committee for *hibakusha* relief was established within the standing committee of the council.<sup>23</sup>

Among the victims who were provided a platform to express their post-atomic bombing sufferings for the first time, there were voices saying, “I am glad to be alive.” Encouraged by the World Conference, these victims were invited to organize themselves. The Hiroshima Prefecture Atomic Bombing Victims’ Conference was held on March 18, 1956. Calls were made for assistance toward the “self-reliance and rehabilitation” of the atomic bombing victims, as well as demands for national compensation for the victims. Additionally, a resolution to promote the gensuikin movement was adopted. For the parliamentary petition on March 20, 41 representatives, including Fujii Heiichi from Hiroshima Prefecture, participated, alongside representatives from Nagasaki, Nagano, Saitama, Aomori, and Ehime prefectures. Delegates from Hiroshima deepened their interactions through their journey to Tokyo and, upon returning to their hometowns, initiated efforts

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<sup>20</sup> Hiroshima Daigaku Genbaku Hōshanō Igaku Kenkyūsho Fuzoku Genbaku Hisai Gakujuutsu Shiryō Sentā ed., “Madoute kure: Fujii Heiichi kikigakisho 2, Gensuibaku Kinshi Sekai Taikai,” *Shiryō chōsa tsūshin* 6, separate volume (January 1982): 1–12; Hiroshima-shi, ed. *Hiroshima shin-shi: Rekishi-hen* (Hiroshima shi, 1984), 129.

<sup>21</sup> Gensuibaku Kinshi Nihon Kyōgikai, *Gensuibaku kinshi sekai taikai “sengen, ketsugi, kankoku-shū” dai 1 kai 1955– dai 9 kai 1963* (Gensuibaku Kinshi Nihon Kyōgikai, 1964), 2.

<sup>22</sup> Ubuki, “Nihon ni okeru.”

<sup>23</sup> Kobayashi Tōru ed., *Gensuibaku kinshi undō shiryōshū: Dai 2 shū* (Ryokuin Shobō, 1995): 384–387.

to organize victims in their local regions. These initiatives across various regions eventually culminated in the formation of Hiroshima Prefectural Hidankyō in May.<sup>24</sup>

In June 1955, the Nagasaki Atomic Bombing Young Women's Association was established in Nagasaki, and representatives were sent to the World Conference in Hiroshima.<sup>25</sup> In May 1956, ahead of the Second World Conference Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs to be held in Nagasaki, the Nagasaki Atomic Bombing Young Men's Association—formed in October 1955—merged with the Young Women's Association to become the Nagasaki Atomic Bombing Young Women and Men's Association. In addition to the members of the association, Sugimoto Kamekichi, Osasa Hachiro, and others acted as initiators, leading to the establishment of the Nagasaki Prefecture Atomic Bombing Victims Council on June 23.<sup>26</sup>

At the founding general meeting of Hiroshima Prefectural Hidankyō, a resolution was passed to establish a victim's alliance centering on victim organizations from Hiroshima, Nagasaki, Nagano, and Ehime, and to call on atomic bombing victims in each prefecture to organize and create a national organization based on that foundation.<sup>27</sup> On August 10th, the second day of the World Conference held in Nagasaki City, the National Conference of Atomic and Hydrogen Bombing Victims was held, attended not only by representatives of the four prefectures of the victims' alliance, but also by representatives from other prefectures, such as Fukuoka, Saga, Shimane, Hyogo, Tokyo, and Kanagawa. Hidankyō was established at this conference.<sup>28</sup>

As stated in the founding declaration, “The courage to rise up was entirely due to the World Conference last August.” The sense of solidarity felt among the conference participants and their sense of mission as survivors culminated into the determination to “save ourselves and, through our experiences, save humanity from crisis.”<sup>29</sup> At the inaugural conference, immediate policy directions were determined, including advancing the gensuikin movement by disseminating information about the actual situation of the damage and demanding the establishment of the “Atomic and Hydrogen Bombing Victims Relief Law” and “Atomic and Hydrogen Bombing Victims Health Management System.”<sup>30</sup>

Hidankyō was born with the backing of the gensuikin movement, and it had a degree of dependency on Gensuikyō, which was the national center of the gensuikin movement.

<sup>24</sup> Kobayashi, *Gensuibaku kinshi undō*, 136–141.

<sup>25</sup> Watanabe Chieko, *Nagasaki ni ikiru* (Shin Nihon Shuppan-sha, 1973), 19–22; 69–86.

<sup>26</sup> Nagasaki Genbaku Hisaisha Kyōgikai ed., *Asu eno isan: Nagasaki Hisaikyō kessei 35 shūnen kinen-shi* (Nagasaki Genbaku Hisaisha Kyōgikai, 1991), 9–11.

<sup>27</sup> Hiroshima-shi, *Hiroshima shin-shi*, 142.

<sup>28</sup> Hiroshima-shi, *Hiroshima shin-shi*, 143.

<sup>29</sup> Nihon Gensuibaku Higaisha Dantai Kyōgikai, “Sekai eno aisatsu,” August 10, 1956.

<sup>30</sup> Hiroshima-shi, *Hiroshima shin-shi*, 143–144.



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In the autumn of 1956, shortly after its formation, Hidankyō joined Gensuikyō, and by the following spring, Hidankyō's Tokyo office was located within the premises of Gensuikyō.<sup>31</sup> In terms of Hidankyō's approach to the gensuikin movement, the focus was more on materializing Gensuikyō's movement policies than on launching independent initiatives.<sup>32</sup> Moreover, Hidankyō was financially dependent on Gensuikyō, with a significant portion of Hidankyō's budget being covered by relief funds allocated from Gensuikyō.<sup>33</sup> This financial reliance on Gensuikyō later became a significant setback during the turmoil at the Hidankyō between the late 1950s to mid-1960s. Additionally, as these relief funds originally stemmed from domestic and international donations intended to relieve bombing victims, they became a source of dissatisfaction with Gensuikyō.

### Formation of Victim Organizations in Various Regions

Hidankyō began as a council comprising various regional victim organizations united by the shared experiences of atomic bombings. Barely two months after its establishment, Hidankyō was composed of organizations from 15 prefectures. By August 1958, this number had grown to 25, and by August 1961, organizations from 39 of Japan's 47 prefectures had joined Hidankyō.<sup>34</sup> Consequently, as the name suggests, Hidankyō evolved into a truly nationwide council. Considering that many victims were reluctant to reveal their experiences with the atomic bombings as they feared experiencing discrimination and prejudice, it was necessary for them to be identified with the support of Gensuikyō and through health checkups specifically for *hibakusha*, especially in areas where the first organization efforts occurred.<sup>35</sup>

### Model District for Gensuikyō's "Free Health Checkup for *Hibakusha*"

The Nagano Prefecture Association of A- and H-Bombing Sufferers was established in February 1956 and was among the four victim associations that attempted to form a victim alliance in May 1956. Based on the proceeds from the "Fundraising for Treatment

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<sup>31</sup> *Nihon Higaishakyō*, newsletter, 3 (November 19, 1956); Nihon Gensuibaku Higaisha Dantai Kyōgikai Nihon Hidankyō-shi Henshū Iin-kai ed., *Futatabi*, 96.

<sup>32</sup> In the "Activity Plan for Fiscal Year 1958" of Hidankyō, under the "Movement to Prohibit Nuclear and Hydrogen Bombs," it is stated to "concretize the policy of Gensuikyō" (*Nihon Higaishakyō*, newsletter, 7 (October 5, 1958)).

<sup>33</sup> The income for fiscal year 1957 included 1.09 million yen from Gensuikyō's "relief activities funds," while the membership fee amounted to a mere 2,600 yen (*Hidankyō renraku*, newsletter, 5 (August 12, 1958)).

<sup>34</sup> *Hidankyō renraku*, newsletter, 5; Nihon Gensuibaku Higaisha Dantai Kyōgikai Jyōnin Riji-kai, "Nihon Hidankyō Sōkai Gian/Shiryō," August 14, 1961.

<sup>35</sup> Ubuki, "Nihon Gensuibaku Higaisha."

of Atomic Bombing Victims” spearheaded by the Nagano Prefecture Gensuikyō, the prefecture was selected as a model district for the “Free Health Checkups for *Hibakusha*” led by Japan Gensuikyō. These health examinations were conducted in December 1955. Subsequently, with the backing of the prefectural Gensuikyō, the association was formed in February of the following year, primarily among victims who underwent free health checkups. The association’s name and its initial articles of incorporation (“The purpose is to cooperate with the movement to prohibit atomic and hydrogen bombs. For this reason, close communication will be maintained with the Nagano Prefectural Gensuikyō”) indicate that the Nagano association emerged deeply intertwined with the gensuikin movement.<sup>36</sup>

Similarly, the establishment of the Gunma Prefecture Association of Atomic Bombing Victims was also prompted by being selected as a model district for “Free Health Checkups for *Hibakusha*.” In the fall of 1955, with the collaboration of Gensuikyō and the affiliated hospital of Gunma University, the prefecture’s first health checkup for atomic bombing victims was organized. The victims who gathered for the checkups subsequently held a preparatory meeting, leading to the formation of the association in May 1956. While Gensuikyō’s support played a pivotal role in the association’s founding, unlike Nagano, the Gunma association’s main objective was protecting the health and livelihoods of its members through mutual assistance, rather than prominently championing the gensuikin movement.<sup>37</sup>

### Participation in the World Conference

The associations in Fukuoka and Kyoto prefectures were formed by centering the victims who participated in the World Conference. Victims who attended the Second World Conference initiated a call to establish an association in Fukuoka City, leading to the inauguration of the Fukuoka Atomic and Hydrogen Bombing Victims’ Association in September 1956. Subsequently, representatives from the city’s association collaborated with those from the Wakamatsu City Atomic Bombing Victims’ Association (established in 1954 and the first of its kind in the prefecture), the Kokura City Atomic and Hydrogen Bombing Victims’ Association, and representatives from both prefectural and city-level Gensuikyō councils in Fukuoka. They held a preparatory meeting in December 1957; by February 1958, they formed the Fukuoka Prefecture Atomic and Hydrogen Bombing Victims’ Association. Their movement’s guiding principle, which emphasized “actively participating in the gensuikin movement,” reveals that, as in the Nagano case, the asso-

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<sup>36</sup> Nagano-ken Gensuibaku Hisaisha no kai ed., *Ikitsuzuke te: Shinshū no hibakusha wa uttaeru* (Nagano-ken Gensuibaku Hisaisha no kai, 1971).

<sup>37</sup> Gunma-ken Gensuibaku Hisaisha no kai, “Gunma-ken gensuibaku hisaisha no jittai,” 1958.

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ciation in Fukuoka emerged from within the gensuikin movement.<sup>38</sup>

In the process of forming an organization, even if Gensuikyō provided no direct support, the gensuikin movement served as a catalyst for establishing the association in Kyoto. In August 1955, during the local Atomic and Hydrogen Bomb Ban Conference held in Fukuchiyama City, three victims met. With these individuals as initiators, the Association for Atomic Bombing Victims in the Fukuchiyama, Tamba, and Ayabe districts of Kyoto Prefecture was established in September 1955. By April 1956, victims from Fukuchiyama City, Kyoto City, and Uji City took the lead in preparing for an association covering the entirety of Kyoto Prefecture. In collaboration with a newspaper company, contact was established with several victims, leading to the formation of an organizing committee. Consequently, the Kyoto Prefecture Atomic Bombing Victims' Association was founded in August 1956.<sup>39</sup>

### Health Checkups and the Medical Care Law

In November 1954, atomic bombing victims in Tokyo who came for a medical check-up at the Japanese Red Cross Central Hospital proceeded to establish the Association of Atomic Bombing Victims in Tokyo in April 1955. This association primarily focused on providing medical assistance. Consequently, after the Law Concerning Medical Care for the *Hibakusha* of the Atomic Bombings (Medical Care Law) was enacted in the spring of 1957, the association was disbanded in December of the same year. However, just a month later, with support from Shinagawa District Council, Education Committee, and Gensuikyō, the Shinagawa Atomic Bombing Victims' Association was formed. Subsequently, with collaboration between Tokyo Gensuikyō and various district Gensuikyō's, associations originated consecutively in areas such as Suginami, Shibuya, Meguro, and Kunitachi. By November 1958, the Tokyo Metropolitan Atomic and Hydrogen Bombing Victims' Association was established, involving 17 districts, one town, and 13 organizations.<sup>40</sup>

Identifying victims in large urban areas, such as Tokyo, or expansive regions, such as Iwate and Nagano, was a challenging task. Consequently, reliance was placed on local Gensuikyō organizations, newspapers, and administrative offices responsible for assisting atomic bombing survivors. In the case of Tokyo, assistance arrived in the form of the Metropolitan Health Bureau, which allowed access to—and duplication of—the list of

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<sup>38</sup> Fukuoka-ken Genbaku Higaisha Dantai Kyōgikai ed., *Ikiru: 25 shūnen kinen shi* (Fukuoka-ken Genbaku Higaisha Dantai Kyōgikai, 1983).

<sup>39</sup> Kyoto-fu Gensuibaku Hisaisha no kai ed., *Kyōyū-kai no ayumi: Hibaku 45 Shūnen kinen enkaku shi* (Kyoto-fu Gensuibaku Hisaisha no kai, 1991).

<sup>40</sup> Tokyo-to Genbaku Higaisha Dantai Kyōgikai ed., *Shuto no hibakusha undō shi: Tōyū kai 25 nen no ayumi* (Tokyo-to Genbaku Higaisha Dantai Kyōgikai (Tōyū kai), 1982).

*Hibakusha* Health Certificate recipients.<sup>41</sup> Administrative collaboration was not exclusive to Tokyo; it was also evident in other prefectures, such as Miyagi, Gunma, Kyoto, Hyogo, Yamaguchi, and Oita.<sup>42</sup> While such administrative assistance proved beneficial in identifying victims, it inadvertently led to the consideration of all *Hibakusha* Health Certificate holders as association members. This would eventually contribute to the turmoil within Hidankyō at a later stage, as it implied that a certain number of members were registered without a clear understanding of the association's objectives.

### 3. Prohibition of Nuclear Bombs or Assistance for *Hibakusha*

#### Challenges to the Gensuikin Movement

By the end of 1955, labels such as “leftist movement” and “red” were being attached to the gensuikin movement. Political attacks against Gensuikyō became evident after they became an executive body of the National Conference to Block the Revision of the Japan–U.S. Security Treaty in March 1959. On July 9, 1959, in the Hiroshima Prefectural Assembly, which was dominated by the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), a resolution was passed to eliminate subsidies for the 5th World Conference.<sup>43</sup> In the following days, the LDP executive council supported the Hiroshima assembly's decision, and the cabinet confirmed an agreement to halt subsidy expenditures for Gensuikyō by local public entities.<sup>44</sup> While some municipalities outside Hiroshima also stopped or reduced subsidies for the conference, others expressed support for it. The 5th World Conference was the largest ever, with 20,000 participants. However, leaders of right-wing groups continuously entered Hiroshima and engaged in violent acts, resulting in numerous injuries.<sup>45</sup>

On August 8, 1959, immediately after the conclusion of the World Conference, the Hiroshima Prefecture branch of the LDP announced the creation of a new anti-atomic and hydrogen bomb movement organization and association to advance support for *hibakusha*.<sup>46</sup> While the organization was established by the newly formed Democratic Socialist

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<sup>41</sup> *Hidankyō renraku*, newsletter, 36 (April 1, 1961). Under the Medical Care Law, those officially recognized as “*hibakusha*” are issued a *Hibakusha* Health Certificate.

<sup>42</sup> Nihon Gensuibaku Higaisha Dantai Kyōgikai Jyōnin Riji-kai, “Nihon Hidankyō Sōkai Gian/Shiryō,” August 7, 1959.

<sup>43</sup> *Chugoku Shinbun*, July 10, 1959.

<sup>44</sup> *Chugoku Shinbun*, July 22, 1959; *Chugoku Shinbun*, July 25, 1959; Hiroshima-shi, *Hiroshima shin-shi*, 247.

<sup>45</sup> Hiroshima-shi, *Hiroshima shin-shi*, 247–253; Imabori, *Gensuibaku kinshi undō*, 117.

<sup>46</sup> *Chugoku Shinbun*, August 9, 1959.

Party (DSP), the LDP also participated as officers and advisors.<sup>47</sup> The association materialized as the Hiroshima–Nagasaki Atomic Bombing Victims Support Measures Council, launched in October 1959, with the Hiroshima and Nagasaki prefectural assemblies and LDP branches of both prefectures at its core. At the end of January 1960, during its first conference in Hiroshima, the council appealed with the following message: “*Hibakusha* should not be dragged into political struggles.”<sup>48</sup> From this period onward, there was a growing tendency to emphasize relief for *hibakusha*, while attempting to separate them from the gensuikin movement.

### Hidankyō and Its Members’ Varying Political Positions

Amid the increasing efforts of the national government, LDP, and conservative factions to weaken Gensuikyō, voices within Hidankyō began suggesting distancing themselves from the gensuikin movement. During the 1st Regular Board of Directors meeting on April 26, 1959, concerns arose that addressing political issues would make it seem that the Hidankyō was aligned with progressive movements, with some comments even suggesting that some members would leave Hidankyō if the Japan–U.S. Security Treaty became a concern. On the contrary, counterarguments stressed the importance of addressing the security treaty issue to prevent the remaking of *hibakushas* and obstruct Japan’s nuclear armament.<sup>49</sup> Such divergent views risked the fracturing of Hidankyō. By March 1960, the Hyogo Prefecture Atomic Bombing Victims Association had withdrawn from the prefectural chapter of Gensuikyō, leading to intense debates within Hidankyō regarding its organizational relationship with Gensuikyō.<sup>50</sup>

Entering 1961, a prevailing sentiment—especially among representatives of the Kinki region—was that Hidankyō should withdraw from Gensuikyō.<sup>51</sup> This sentiment stemmed from several factors: dissatisfaction with Gensuikyō’s efforts for victim assistance, grievances over the distribution of relief funds, an aversion to becoming involved in “politics,” and conservative factions’ tactics suggesting that if Hidankyō disengaged

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<sup>47</sup> Ikeyama Shigerō. “Seijiteki handōka tsuyomeru *Kakkin Kaigi*,” *Gekkan rōdō mondai* 103 (November 1966): 60–65.

<sup>48</sup> *Chugoku Shinbun*, February 1, 1960.

<sup>49</sup> *Hidankyō renraku*, newsletter, 12 (May 10, 1959).

<sup>50</sup> Gensuibakukinshi Hyogo-ken Renraku Kyōgikai Kaichō Tada Eiji, “Hyogo-ken Gensuibaku Higaisha no kai dattai no kei to koreni kansuru Hyogo-ken Gensuikyō no taido ni tsuite,” May 13, 1960, Hiroshima Kenritsu Monjyokan.

<sup>51</sup> At the 3rd General Assembly in August 1958, Hidankyō’s regulations were amended to divide the national region into seven blocks (Kyushu, Chugoku, Shikoku, Kinki, Tokai-Hokuriku, Kōshin’etsu-Kanto, and Tohoku, which includes Hokkaido), and it was decided to select representative committee members from each block (*Hidankyō renraku*, newsletter, 6).

from the gensuikin movement, they would help enact a relief law.<sup>52</sup> Furthermore, the Soviet Union's resumption of nuclear testing in September 1961 intensified the existing disagreements within Gensuikyō. Consequently, the debate over whether to leave Gensuikyō deepened the rift within Hidankyō.

### Disharmony Within Gensuikyō

After the 1959 World Conference and subsequent departure of conservative factions, Gensuikyō began adopting a clear anti-American stance.<sup>53</sup> Considering the broad spectrum of groups and organizations participating in the gensuikin movement, this radicalization within Gensuikyō was met with internal criticism. On August 14, 1961, following the conclusion of the 7th World Conference, four organizations—JSP, Japan General Council of Trade Unions (*Sōhyō*), National Federation of Regional Women's Organizations (*Chifuren*), and Japan Youth Federation (*Nisseikyō*)—jointly issued a statement expressing their lack of confidence in a section of Gensuikyō's executive committee.<sup>54</sup> They called for reforms in Gensuikyō's approach. This moment crystallized the divide between an "anti-imperialist" stance—largely associated with JCP—and opposition groups, including *Chifuren* and *Nisseikyō*, supported by JSP and *Sōhyō*.<sup>55</sup>

The resumption of nuclear testing by the Soviet Union shortly after the 7th World Conference exacerbated the existing tensions within the organization. While nuclear testing had been halted by the US, UK, and USSR since the fall of 1958, the Soviet Union on August 30, 1961, unexpectedly announced the resumption of its nuclear tests. At the 7th World Conference, a resolution had been adopted stating that any government that restarted testing would be condemned as an "enemy of peace and humanity." This resolution was likely crafted with the US in mind. Following this resolution, Gensuikyō should have promptly protested the Soviet Union's decision. However, some factions within the Gensuikyō leadership regarded the USSR as a "force for peace," which led to internal turmoil and indecision. On September 2nd, Gensuikyō issued a statement expressing "strong opposition" to the USSR's decision to resume testing. However, the statement also alluded to the harsh international conditions that might have pushed the USSR toward resuming tests, highlighting the challenges of reaching a consensus within Gensuikyō.<sup>56</sup> It was an ambiguous stance, indicative of underlying disagreements. The

<sup>52</sup> *Hidankyō renraku*, newsletter, 14 (July 20, 1959).

<sup>53</sup> The term "American imperialism" was used in the resolutions and declarations of the World Conference starting from the 6th session onwards (Ubuki Satoru, "Gunshuku to shimin undō: Nihon no gensuibaku kinshi undō wo megutte," *Kokusai Seiji* 80 (1985): 112–26).

<sup>54</sup> Tsuji Kiyooki ed., *Shiryō Sengo 20 nen shi 1: Seiji* (Nihon Hyōron-sha, 1966), 550.

<sup>55</sup> Iwadare, *Kakuheiki haizetsu*, 27–31.

<sup>56</sup> Tsuji, *Shiryō Sengo*, 550.

JCP supported the Soviet Union's testing, and some Gensuikyō executives aligned with the JCP and openly endorsed the resumption of the tests.<sup>57</sup> This difference in stance toward Soviet nuclear tests intensified the existing divisions within Gensuikyō.

#### 4. Internal Conflict within Hidankyō Concerning the Relationship with Gensuikyō and *Kakkin Kaigi*

##### Demands for Withdrawal from Gensuikyō and the Formation of a New Hibakusha Organization

The internal discord within Gensuikyō extended to Hidankyō as a member organization that had been actively involved in campaigns alongside Gensuikyō. At Hidankyō's 5th Board of Representatives meeting, which was held on September 17, 1961, right after the resumption of the Soviet nuclear tests, some opinions aligned with the Communist Party's stance were voiced, such as, "It is not appropriate to protest against nuclear tests by both imperialist and socialist countries in the same manner." Conversely, some opinions opposed nuclear tests, describing them as "inhumane evils."<sup>58</sup> At the 6th Board of Representatives meeting on October 5, a proposal was made to revoke Hidankyō's membership from Gensuikyō. However, an initial consensus was reached based on Chairperson Moritaki Ichiro's statement expressing a desire to avoid division within Hidankyō.<sup>59</sup> Nevertheless, with the Kinki regional block and Oita prefectural association at the forefront, demands for withdrawal from Gensuikyō intensified, plunging Hidankyō into turmoil. Notably, the sentiment of distancing from Gensuikyō was not solely attributable to the heightened internal conflicts within Gensuikyō.

As observed above, beginning in the late 1950s, conservative forces centered around the LDP had been attempting to establish a new anti-atomic and hydrogen bomb organization and incorporate *hibakusha*. On November 15, 1961, with the DSP and All Japan Labor Union Conference at the forefront, the "National Council for Peace and Against Nuclear Weapons (*Kakkin Kaigi*)" was established, championing "humanitarianism" as its slogan and aiming for the prohibition of nuclear weapons. Moreover, the board of the organization included the Oita Prefectural chapter of Gensuikyō, which had split into two factions.<sup>60</sup> This set the stage for the eventual withdrawal of the Oita Prefectural Atomic

<sup>57</sup> Iwadare, *Kakuheiki haizetsu*, 32–33.

<sup>58</sup> *Hidankyō renraku*, newsletter, 42 (October 1, 1961).

<sup>59</sup> *Hidankyō renraku*, newsletter, 43 (November 1, 1961).

<sup>60</sup> In October 1960, some executives from the Oita Prefectural Gensuikyō had withdrawn from the national Gensuikyō (Kobayashi Tōru ed., *Gensuibaku kinshi undō shiryōshū: Dai 7 shū* (Ryokuin Shobō, 1995), 390).

Bombing Victims Association from Hidankyō.

Six months after the establishment of *Kakkin Kaigi*, a survivor organization was formed in its support. On May 22, 1962, the All Japan *Hibakusha* Council (*Zenhikyō*) was launched; its chair was Nitoguri Tsukasa, a prominent LDP city council member who was also the chairperson of the Hiroshima City Council at that time.<sup>61</sup> This newly formed *hibakusha* organization's name suggests that it was established with the intent of countering Japan Hidankyō. In essence, it was primarily built around the Hiroshima City Atomic Bombing Survivors' Council (City *Hibakukyō*), which organized the *hibakusha* residing in Hiroshima City, and was headed by Nitoguri.<sup>62</sup>

In June 1961, citing ideological biases in Gensuikyō and its neglect of *hibakusha* relief efforts, City *Hibakukyō* decided not to cooperate with Hiroshima Prefectural Gensuikyō's fundraising efforts, and instead, accepted relief donations from *Kakkin Kaigi*.<sup>63</sup> Furthermore, *Hibakukyō* decided not to participate in the gensuikin movement for its umbrella organization, *Zenhikyō*.<sup>64</sup> In other words, *Zenhikyō* was established to counteract Hidankyō, which was closely aligned with Gensuikyō, and to dissociate the survivors from the gensuikin movement.<sup>65</sup>

### Gensuikyō or *Kakkin Kaigi*

After the resumption of Soviet nuclear testing, partisan conflicts intensified within Gensuikyō, and by the summer of 1962, the 8th World Conference against A- and H-Bombs held in Tokyo effectively concluded a state of division. During the conference, in response to the nuclear tests conducted by the USSR, representatives from the JSP and those aligned with *Sōhyō* argued for lodging protests. However, when this was not accepted, they left the conference in dissatisfaction. Subsequently, Japan Gensuikyō came to a virtual standstill.<sup>66</sup>

The day after the World Conference ended, the 7th General Assembly of Hidankyō was held in Hiroshima. In the activity report of the previous year, references were made to the establishment of *Kakkin Kaigi* and internal disputes within Gensuikyō following

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<sup>61</sup> *Chugoku Shinbun*, May 23, 1962.

<sup>62</sup> *Hidankyō renraku*, newsletter, 50 (June 25, 1962).

<sup>63</sup> *Chugoku Shinbun*, June 29, 1961; *Chugoku Shinbun*, September 30, 1961.

<sup>64</sup> *Chugoku Shinbun*, October 12, 1962; *Chugoku Shinbun*, November 8, 1962. Nitoguri, who was the president of the City *Hibakukyō*, also assumed the role of president of *Zenhikyō*.

<sup>65</sup> The closeness of the two organizations can be inferred from the fact that the vice president of *Zenhikyō* was a prominent member of the *Kakkin Kaigi*. By the end of 1963, *Zenhikyō* had received as much as 4.67 million yen in relief funds from *Kakkin Kaigi* (*Chugoku Shinbun*, December 26, 1963).

<sup>66</sup> Hiroshima-shi, *Hiroshima shin-shi*, 283; Iwadare, *Kakuheiki haizetsu*, 34–36.



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the Soviet nuclear test resumption. It was indicated that Hidankyō was facing a “serious trial.”<sup>67</sup> Subsequently, emergency motions were proposed from 11 prefectural associations, including Hyogo, Kyoto, and Oita, suggesting that Hidankyō should either join *Kakkin Kaigi* or withdraw from Gensuikyō. The representative from Oita argued that, if an organization is committed to supporting *hibakusha*, Hidankyō should actively participate and hence join *Kakkin Kaigi*. In response, some representatives countered by stating that *Kakkin Kaigi* was trying to split Hidankyō. However, representatives who co-sponsored the proposal expressed concerns regarding Gensuikyō’s “political bias.” As no conclusion was reached, the decision was made to temporarily entrust the matter to the board of representatives.<sup>68</sup>

At the 10th board meeting, held on September 9, 1962, the first after the general assembly, a report suggested that *Kakkin Kaigi* was trying to divide *hibakusha* organizations. Contrarily, there were criticisms that Gensuikyō exhibited a “political bias.” While showing some understanding for local chapters that had already joined *Kakkin Kaigi*, the chairperson’s proposal was temporarily agreed upon, stating that Hidankyō should “maintain unity and continue its membership with Gensuikyō in its current state.”<sup>69</sup> However, this did not resolve the situation. Immediately after the board’s decision, the Oita Association decided to withdraw not only from Gensuikyō but also from Hidankyō. They opted to join *Kakkin Kaigi* and *Zenhikyō*.<sup>70</sup>

Upon receiving the withdrawal notice from Oita, the central executive committee and directors from the Kyushu regional block attempted to persuade them not to withdraw, but an immediate return did not occur. Moreover, as the repercussions of the split in Gensuikyō centered around the Socialist-Communist conflict, the situation progressed to the brink of a split within Hidankyō.

### 5. The Split in Gensuikyō and the Potential Division of Hidankyō

#### The 9th World Conference and the Split in Gensuikyō

After the 8th World Conference, which had ended in a state of division, Gensuikyō

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<sup>67</sup> Nihon Gensuibaku Higaisha Dantai Kyōgikai Jyōnin Riji-kai, “Nihon Hidankyō Sōkai Gian/Shiryō,” August 7, 1962.

<sup>68</sup> *Hidankyō renraku*, newsletter, 52 (September 1, 1962).

<sup>69</sup> *Hidankyō renraku*, newsletter, 53 (October 1, 1962). Oita Association had already joined *Kakkin Kaigi*.

<sup>70</sup> At the 7th general meeting of the Oita Prefecture Atomic Bombing Victims’ Association, citing reasons such as Hidankyō’s “subservience to the biased activities of Gensuikyō,” a resolution was made to withdraw from both Gensuikyō and Hidankyō (*Oita-ken Kakkin Jyōhō*, newsletter, 18 (September 30, 1962); Itō, “Nihon hibakusha undō”).

issued a statement on February 21 of the following year, which set forth goals such as “opposing nuclear tests by any country.” However, while 13 member and affiliated organizations, including JSP and *Sōhyō*, supported the statement, JCP criticized the Socialist Party and *Sōhyō* by name and negated the statement. Gensuikyō’s National Standing Board of Directors meeting in the following week became tumultuous, and the board of directors declared their collective resignation, resulting in the cancellation of the Yaizu National Assembly planned on the anniversary of the Bikini Incident on March 1.<sup>71</sup>

After these developments, Gensuikyō’s regional chapter organizations, especially those in the Chugoku region, made efforts to host the World Conference. However, during the process of creating the keynote report for the conference, tensions intensified again, with Socialist Party and *Sōhyō* on one side and the Communist Party on the other. The rift between these parties widened over their differing evaluations of the Partial Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, which was provisionally signed by the US, UK, and USSR in July 1963, and their stance on “opposing nuclear tests by any country.” Ultimately, at the 9th World Conference Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs held in Hiroshima, the Socialist Party and *Sōhyō* decided not to participate, making the split definitive.<sup>72</sup>

### Growing Rift Within Hidankyō

At Hidankyō’s 13th Board of Representatives meeting held shortly after the 9th World Conference in August 1963, board members debated for nearly 10 hours regarding whether to withdraw from Gensuikyō. As making a resolution would potentially divide Hidankyō, Chairperson Moritaki’s proposal to uphold unity with a sense of agency was provisionally agreed upon. However, similar discussions were repeated at the 8th General Assembly, held the day after this meeting, which only deepened the divide.<sup>73</sup>

Despite fierce disagreements concerning the relationship with Gensuikyō and the positioning of the gensuikin movement, there was a greater consensus regarding the campaign for the establishment of a relief law. Even the Oita prefectural association, which had previously withdrawn from Hidankyō, participated in joint action.<sup>74</sup> However, the situation had already advanced to the brink of a split within Hidankyō. On November 7, 1963, a letter of request was sent to Moritaki from representatives of prefectures centered around Oita, Hyogo, and Kyoto, which included demands such as the immediate

<sup>71</sup> Chugoku Shinbun-sha ed., *Nenpyō Hiroshima 40 nen no kiroku* (Mirai-sha, 1986), 154–155; Iwadare, *Kakuheiki haizetsu*, 36–38.

<sup>72</sup> Iwadare, *Kakuheiki haizetsu*, 38–41.

<sup>73</sup> *Hidankyō renraku*, newsletter, 62 (September 18, 1963).

<sup>74</sup> Despite the efforts invested by the Hidankyō side, *Zenhikyō* did not participate and obstructed Hidankyō’s parliamentary lobbying campaign (*Hidankyō renraku*, newsletter, 57 (February 1, 1963)).

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cancellation of membership in Gensuikyō and a vote of no confidence in the chairperson and board of representatives.<sup>75</sup>

### One Step Before the Split

In March 1964, regional Gensuikyō organizations of the three affected prefectures—Hiroshima, Nagasaki, and Shizuoka—formed the Atomic and Hydrogen Bomb-Affected Three Prefectures Liaison Congress, with objectives such as “opposition to nuclear tests by any country” and “normalization of the gensuikin movement, centering on the atomic bombing victims’ relief movement.”<sup>76</sup> Moritaki—a leading figure in the establishment of the Affected Three Prefectures Liaison—was expelled from the representative committee of Gensuikyō in June as he was perceived as having masterminded the split.<sup>77</sup>

Driven by the desire to rebuild the movement based on the wishes of *hibakusha*, Moritaki made efforts to form a new gensuikin movement organization. However, he faced condemnation even within Hidankyō.<sup>78</sup> At the 17th Representative Board Meeting in June, Moritaki proposed a set of operational policies to resolve the turmoil within Hidankyō. However, criticism was primarily directed at Moritaki, especially from board members close to Gensuikyō, for his active role in the Affected Three Prefectures Liaison, without consulting Hidankyō’s Representative Board. While board members from Hiroshima supported Moritaki’s proposal, a consensus could not be reached.<sup>79</sup>

Moreover, the actions implemented by Moritaki had repercussions on the administration of Hidankyō. Owing to the resignation of an office clerk who had been working in Hidankyō’s Tokyo office within the Gensuikyō premises, the Hidankyō secretariat was temporarily moved to Hiroshima Prefectural Hidankyō. However, in reality, this move was necessitated by the inability to maintain an office within Gensuikyō.<sup>80</sup> Furthermore, after Moritaki was expelled from Gensuikyō and the relationship between the two organizations deteriorated, Gensuikyō froze the remaining budget allocated for Hidankyō’s head office for the fiscal year 1964.<sup>81</sup> In June, a new Hiroshima Prefectural Hidankyō was established, separate from the one chaired by Moritaki but affiliated with the prefec-

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<sup>75</sup> *Hidankyō renraku*, newsletter, 65 (February 1, 1964).

<sup>76</sup> Chugoku Shinbun-sha, *Hiroshima 40 nen*, 163.

<sup>77</sup> *Chugoku Shinbun*, June 21, 1964.

<sup>78</sup> Chugoku Shinbun-sha, *Hiroshima 40 nen*, 194.

<sup>79</sup> *Hidankyō renraku*, newsletter, 70 (June 20, 1964).

<sup>80</sup> *Hidankyō renraku*, newsletter, 70; Shoki gensuibaku kinshi undō kikitori purojekuto ed., *Shoki gensuibaku kinshi undō kikitori purojekuto kiroku shūsei* (Pipuruзу puran kenkyūsho, 2012), 354, 368.

<sup>81</sup> Nihon Gensuibaku Higaiisha Dantai Kyōgikai, “1963 nendo katsudō hōkoku (August 1963–November 1964).”

tural Gensuikyō. Consequently, Hiroshima's *hibakusha* organizations fractured into three groups, namely, a conservative City *Hibakukyō* and two organizations bearing Hidankyō's name.<sup>82</sup>

Although the general assembly would typically be held in August, it was finally convened in December. At this assembly, extensive debates occurred over a proposed motion for the 1964 campaign policy, which implied withdrawal from Gensuikyō, stating that "Japan Hidankyō will not be affiliated with any gensuikin organizations for the time being."<sup>83</sup> While the majority were in favor of the original proposal, a consensus was not reached. Consequently, the opposing prefectures decided to discuss the matter locally and entrust their opinions to their representatives. The final decision was made at a subsequent Board of Representatives meeting.<sup>84</sup>

In the 19th Board of Representatives meeting held on February 28, 1965, organizational issues in the campaign policy were discussed for over five hours. While some representatives held growing mistrust toward Gensuikyō, others emphasized the history of Hidankyō's birth within the gensuikin movement and its progress in collaboration with Gensuikyō. Moritaki clarified that the proposed campaign policy was meant to reflect Hidankyō's neutral stance and did not imply cutting ties with all organizations. However, considering that Moritaki had recently assumed the role of a representative member of the newly established Japan Congress against A- and H-Bombs (Gensuikin) on February 1st, he was severely criticized for not maintaining neutrality. The contention between the opinions and whether to leave Gensuikyō was intense, and a compromise could not be found. Traditionally, both at board meetings and in general assemblies, decisions were made by consensus without resorting to voting. However, this approach was not feasible. First, a vote was held on whether to vote on the policy; considering majority support, a vote was subsequently conducted on the campaign policy itself. Consequently, the motion to withdraw Hidankyō's membership from Gensuikyō was approved.<sup>85</sup> Nevertheless, dissenting opinions persisted, and the crisis of potential division was not fully averted.

### **Toward the Resolution of the Crisis**

After the 19th Board of Representatives meeting, Hidankyō undertook projects to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the atomic bombing, such as holding memorial ser-

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<sup>82</sup> Gensuibaku Kinshi Hiroshima-ken Kyōgikai ed., *Gembaku hibaku 40 nen shi nenpyō: Hiroshima-ken Gensuikyō sōritsu 30 shūnen* (Gensuibaku Kinshi Hiroshima-ken Kyōgikai, 1986), 50.

<sup>83</sup> Nihon Gensuibaku Higaisha Dantai Kyōgikai, "1964 nen undō hōshin."

<sup>84</sup> Nihon Hidankyō Rijichō Moritaki Ichirō, "Nihon Hidankyō dai 9 kai sōkai kettei jikō no goren-raku," December 12, 1964.

<sup>85</sup> *Hidankyō renraku*, newsletter, 71 (March 20, 1965).

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vices for victims. However, over a year passed without convening either a board meeting or a general assembly. Finally, in the spring of 1966, the 20th Board of Representatives met. As the meeting began, strong criticism against Moritaki and the central executive committee was raised by several regional representatives. Criticisms emerged over issues such as the process of setting agenda items, indicating that the board's proceedings were not being conducted democratically. Even though the central executive committee had been inactive for over a year, the long-awaited Board of Representatives meeting revealed substantial dissatisfaction with the chairperson and secretariat, indicating that the normalization of the situation remained a distant goal.<sup>86</sup>

On June 25th, one day before the 10th general assembly, the 22nd Board of Representatives meeting was held, but the minutes recorded only the names of attendees and proceedings, and the movement policy proposal was recognized with some amendments. The content of this discussion remains unclear.<sup>87</sup> However, according to Moritaki's diary, despite the "unusual atmosphere," they had "prevented a split," implying that previous disputes might have resurfaced during meetings. The following day, at the general assembly, which was held for the first time in a year and a half, two years' worth of financial statements were approved, marking a step toward the normalization of operations. Nevertheless, heated debates regarding the relationship with Gensuikyō arose.<sup>88</sup>

Regarding the selection of the executive board, for the first time, a vote was conducted instead of the usual recommendations. The election caused a showdown between Moritaki, a representative committee member of the newly formed Gensuikin, and Osasa Hachirō from Nagasaki, a representative director of Gensuikyō. After the votes were counted, Moritaki emerged victorious, with a tally of 26–16.<sup>89</sup> Even board members who had been questioning Moritaki's accountability accepted the results and jointly embarked on a journey to revitalize Hidankyō.<sup>90</sup> A factor contributing to the unanimous acceptance was the voting procedure for the chairman election. Furthermore, statements such as "opposition to nuclear testing by any nation" and "in favor of the Partial Test Ban Treaty," which had been opposed by members sympathetic to Gensuikyō, were removed from the movement's policy.<sup>91</sup>

On July 17th, during the 23rd Board of Representatives meeting, organizational

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<sup>86</sup> "March 20, Daihyō Riji-kai (1 nichi me), March 21, Daihyō Riji-kai (2 nichi me)," handwritten memorandum; "Dai 20 kai Daihyō Riji-kai keika hōkoku (matome)," memorandum.

<sup>87</sup> *Hidankyō renraku*, newsletter, 74 (July 25, 1966).

<sup>88</sup> Chugoku Shinbun-sha, *Hiroshima 40 nen*, 210.

<sup>89</sup> Chugoku Shinbun-sha, *Hiroshima 40 nen*, 210–211.

<sup>90</sup> Saitō, *Watashi no*, 78.

<sup>91</sup> Saitō, *Watashi no*, 78; *Hidankyō renraku*, newsletter, 74.

issues were not included in the agenda. Instead, deliberations predominantly centered on enhancing mobilization actions in Tokyo to establish a relief law and intensifying efforts directed toward local assemblies and municipal governments.<sup>92</sup> Furthermore, it was resolved to establish an Expert Committee as a new strategy to achieve a relief law. Three months later, the Expert Committee—comprising academics, including the leaders of Hidankyō—released a document titled “Characteristics of the Damage from Atomic Bombs and a Demand for a *Hibakusha* Relief Law” (commonly known as the “Crane Pamphlet”). Armed with the theoretical rationalization for a relief law outlined in the “Crane Pamphlet,” Hidankyō set forth on a path toward the revitalization of their movement.<sup>93</sup>

## 6. Factors Leading to the Crisis

Hidankyō was buffeted by the split in the gensuikin movement from its early days in the late 1950s to the mid-1960s. Of the two splits that occurred against the backdrop of the Cold War, the first was triggered by conservative forces shaking up Gensuikyō, which had adopted a confrontational stance against the government’s policies. The second was the conflict between the Socialist and Communist parties. The division within the gensuikin movement raised issues within Hidankyō, particularly concerning its organizational relationship with Gensuikyō.

Opinions advocating for distance from Gensuikyō had been expressed since Gensuikyō began intensifying its efforts against the revision of the Japan–US Security Treaty. Representatives arguing for withdrawal from Gensuikyō primarily pertained to the Kinki regional bloc and Oita. The fact that their demands included joining *Kakkin Kaigi* or withdrawing from Gensuikyō indicates the influence of forces that aimed to weaken Gensuikyō by incorporating *hibakusha*. Additionally, there was dissatisfaction with Gensuikyō regarding the *hibakusha* relief movement and distribution of relief funds to the victims.

### Differences in the Evaluation of Gensuikyō: Regional Relationships and Movement Strategies

The pros and cons of evaluating Gensuikyō frequently depended on the ideologies and party affiliations of board members representing various regions. If a board member was a member or sympathizer of the JCP or Japan Peace Committee, they tended to sup-

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<sup>92</sup> *Hidankyō renraku*, newsletter, 74.

<sup>93</sup> Nihon Gensuibaku Higaisha Dantai Kyōgikai Nihon Hidankyō-shi Henshū In-kai, *Futatabi*, 110–111.

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port Gensuikyō. However, notably, not all board members' party affiliations were the primary reasons for supporting Gensuikyō. For instance, some board members joined the Peace Committee after receiving substantial support from their prefectural victim associations.<sup>94</sup> Therefore, the nature of the relationship between each regional victim association and the regional chapter of Gensuikyō played a significant role.

In the case of Iwate and Fukuoka prefectural representatives, who opposed leaving Gensuikyō until the end, substantial support from the local Gensuikyō branches was instrumental in the formation of their associations. The Iwate Association not only received financial assistance but also engaged in activities alongside the prefectural Gensuikyō. Even after Hidankyō rescinded its membership with Gensuikyō, they continued collaborating with the prefectural Gensuikyō, such as working on the construction of the Takakurayama Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center for *Hibakusha*.<sup>95</sup> In the case of the Fukuoka Association, Gensuikyō not only invested significant efforts for its establishment but also collaborated on activities following its formation. Even after Hidankyō withdrew from Gensuikyō, the Fukuoka Association conducted a comprehensive survey targeting all victims in the prefecture in collaboration with the prefectural Gensuikyō.<sup>96</sup>

Associations such as those in Kyoto and Shiga prefectures, which had advocated for an early withdrawal from Gensuikyō, did not receive support from Gensuikyō for their establishment. In the case of the Kyoto Association, as indicated in their charter that mentions “cooperation with”—indicating that they were not actively participating in—“the gensuikin movement,” they prioritized “protecting health and life” of the victims in their activism, a focus shared with *Zenhikyō*.<sup>97</sup> Shiga's discontent was largely centered on the distribution of *hibakusha* relief funds. Frequent criticism from prefectural representatives toward Gensuikyō suggests that their relationship with the prefectural Gensuikyō was not amicable.<sup>98</sup>

The Hyogo Prefectural Association, which withdrew from the prefectural chapter of Gensuikyō in 1960, initially had an amicable relationship with them. However, like Kyoto,

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<sup>94</sup> Sugiyama Hideo, “Watashi no gensuikin undō, hibakusha undō 20 nen: Shizuoka-ken Gensuibaku Higaisha no Kai to tomo ni,” in Hiroshima/Nagasaki no Shōgen no kai ed., *Hiroshima/Nagasaki 30 nen no shōgen: Ge* (Mirai-sha, 1976), 40–48.

<sup>95</sup> Saitō, *Watashi no*, 27–36; Ueda Nakao, *Kakuheiki zenmen kinshi no hi made: Iwate-ken Gensuikyō 30 nen no ayumi* (Gensuibaku Kinshi Iwate-ken Kyōgikai, 1985), 24–18; 177–214.

<sup>96</sup> Fukuoka-ken Genbaku Higaisha Dantai Kyōgikai ed., *Ikiru*.

<sup>97</sup> Kyoto-fu Gensuibaku Higaisha no kai ed., *Kyōyū-kai no ayumi*, 54–57.

<sup>98</sup> Nihon Gensuibaku Higaisha Dantai Kyōgikai Jyōnin Riji-kai, “Nihon Hidankyō” (1959); Nihon Gensuibaku Higaisha Dantai Kyōgikai Jyōnin Riji-kai, “Nihon Hidankyō Sōkai Gian/Shiryō,” August 8, 1960.

they emphasized the movement to protect the health and life of the victims.<sup>99</sup> After withdrawing from the prefectural Gensuikyō, they faced a situation wherein no organizational activity relief funds were distributed from Gensuikyō. However, their ability to be financially independent, including in the early stages after their formation, was enabled by the assistance received from urban local governments.<sup>100</sup> After the withdrawal from Gensuikyō, unlike Oita, the Hyogo Association did not join *Kakkin Kaigi*; however, this did not necessarily indicate political neutrality. Distancing themselves from Gensuikyō was financially feasible because they could obtain assistance from the local government, where the chairperson of the Hyogo Association resided.<sup>101</sup> However, while *Zenhikyō* did not include the prohibition of atomic and hydrogen bombs in their campaign goals, and *Kakkin Kaigi* focused on Medical Care Law revisions, the Hyogo Association emphasized the establishment of a comprehensive Relief Law for atomic bombing victims while advancing its unique gensuikin movement. In this regard, the Hyogo Association distinguished itself from *Zenhikyō*, which was influenced by *Kakkin Kaigi*.<sup>102</sup>

#### **Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs Ban and Support for the Victims: Principles and Agency of the Movement**

Despite the differences in party affiliations and ideological beliefs among the board members, as well as varying relationships with regional Gensuikyō chapter organizations, the root cause of the conflict and confusion regarding their relationship with Gensuikyō stemmed from the immaturity of Hidankyō as a social movement organization. The lack of a concrete philosophy and methodology regarding how to theorize and actualize the two movement objectives—banning nuclear weapons and institutionalizing *hibakusha* relief—led to the crisis. This was because Hidankyō’s principles, strategies, and sense of agency were not firmly established in the early stages.

Originating from the gensuikin movement, Hidankyō aimed to not only address the medical and living conditions of the bombing victims but also advocate for the prohibition of atomic and hydrogen bombs. However, the logical relationship between the movement for the establishment of relief legislation for atomic bombing victims and the gensuikin

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<sup>99</sup> Soejima Machiko, *Anohi kara imamo nao: Haha no Hiroshima genbaku sen-shi* (Tōto Shobō, 1956), 151–166.

<sup>100</sup> *Hidankyō renraku*, newsletter, 35 (March 1, 1961); Nihon Gensuibaku Higaiisha Dantai Kyōgikai Jyōnin Riji-kai, “Nihon Hidankyō” (1960).

<sup>101</sup> After withdrawing from the prefectural Gensuikyō, the city council of Ashiya adopted a proposal stating that special consideration would be given for the support of *hibakusha* because “the [Hyogo Association] became independent from Gensuikyō and began to focus solely on pure activities seeking relief and aid” (Tada, “Hyogo-ken”).

<sup>102</sup> *Chugoku Shinbun*, March 3, 1963.



movement was not necessarily well-defined. Even though they were frequently referred to as the “two wheels of a car,” the issue stemmed from the fact that the relationship between the relief efforts for bombing victims and prohibition efforts had not been systematically theorized, even within the *gensuikin* movement.

### **The “Two Wheels of a Car” Theory in the *Gensuikin* Movement and the Othering of *Hibakusha***

Following the First World Conference, *Gensuikyō* positioned the relief movement for victims of atomic and hydrogen bombings alongside its primary mission of promoting atomic and hydrogen bomb ban movements.<sup>103</sup> However, the relationship between these two movements had not yet been explicitly defined. By the Second and Third World Conferences, dissenting opinions had already been voiced by representatives from both domestic and international quarters, suggesting that “globally, the relief efforts for bombing victims and the movement against atomic and hydrogen bombs are not connected” and “[demanding] the relief for *hibakusha* is a social welfare movement.”<sup>104</sup> By the Fifth Conference, there were growing concerns regarding the emergence of an “insurmountable rift” between the two movements. This rift manifested as a tendency to downplay the issues of atomic bombing survivors within the *gensuikin* movement, while among the survivors, it manifested as a growing distrust toward *Gensuikyō*.

Regarding the Fifth World Conference in 1959, which prioritized the revision of the Japan–US Security Treaty and the issue of Japan’s possible nuclear armament, feedback submitted to *Hidankyō* included sentiments such as, “It is regrettable to see the focus on the security issues, leaving little substantial hope for the relief law for *hibakusha*,” and “We, the *hibakusha*, even felt sadness at being treated like a spectacle for a festival.”<sup>105</sup> Both these remarks convey a sense of disappointment with *Gensuikyō*. The former comment suggests that the *gensuikin* movement treats the security treaty and support for *hibakusha* as separate issues, and that *hibakushas* also perceive them as distinct matters. The latter viewpoint concerns the methodological problems in the *gensuikin* movement, hinting at discrepancies between the goals of the ban-the-bomb and relief movements.<sup>106</sup>

Making people aware of the horrors of nuclear weapons would help promote the gen-

<sup>103</sup> Kobayashi, *Gensuibaku kinshi (Dai 2 shū)*, 404.

<sup>104</sup> Ubuki, “‘Hibaku taiken’ no tenkai.”

<sup>105</sup> Nihon Gensuibaku Higaisha Dantai Kyōgikai Jyōnin Riji-kai, “Nihon Hidankyō” (1960).

<sup>106</sup> Regarding the world conferences, concerns were also raised that, even though *hibakusha* were participating in a manner that could be described as “risking their lives,” as many suffered from chronic health problems, insufficient consideration was given to matters such as medical teams or seating arrangements (Nihon Gensuibaku Higaisha Dantai Kyōgikai Jyōnin Riji-kai, “Nihon Hidankyō” (1960)).

suikin movement. The voices of the *hibakusha*—describing the suffering caused by the bombings—wield significant power. However, emphasizing the devastating consequences can not only instill a sense of pity and a “bystander” mentality among those who were not directly affected but also induce feelings of anxiety and alienation in *hibakusha*, potentially even diminishing their will to live. The relief movement was intended to alleviate the “physical, economic, social, and psychological distress” of victims.<sup>107</sup> Considering this, the gensuikin movement’s approach of emphasizing the severity of the damages seems incompatible with the objectives that the relief movement aims to achieve.

The discrepancy between the Gensuikin and *hibakusha* relief movements, according to Itō Tadashi, who became the Secretary-General of Hidankyō in the 1970s, stemmed from the perception that the issues facing *hibakusha* were someone else’s problem. Such an indifferent approach—exemplified by sentiments such as “pity the *hibakusha*” or “Why bring up relief for *hibakusha* now [when urgent security issues are at stake]?”—not only alienated *hibakusha* and turned them away from the gensuikin movement but also played into the hands of conservative factions aiming to weaken Gensuikyō by leveraging *hibakusha*. Itō attempted to articulate the commonality between the relief and gensuikin movements as both of them aim to protect the “lives and rights” of citizens exposed to the “ashes of death.” However, as Itō feared, the gensuikin movement that neglected the perspective of *hibakusha* gave rise to a sentiment within Hidankyō to focus solely on establishing a relief law.<sup>108</sup> This, in turn, led some Hidankyō leaders to form a closer association with conservative groups that prioritized *hibakusha* support.

### The “Two Wheels of a Car” Theory in Hidankyō’s Movement

In addition to the resentment of being treated as an example of nuclear damage that ought to be avoided and the downplay of the relief movement, dissatisfaction with Gensuikyō intensified over the distribution of relief funds donated by citizens and groups domestically and internationally. When Gensuikyō decided on the distribution of relief funds, executives from Hidankyō as a member organization of Gensuikyō were also involved, ensuring that the perspectives of Hidankyō were accounted for. However, considering that these donations were specifically for the relief of atomic bombing victims, early voices of discontent had echoed that Hidankyō could not autonomously decide on the allocation and use of funds.<sup>109</sup> Furthermore, when the Hyogo Association withdrew from the prefectural Gensuikyō, it did not receive the organizational activity relief fund from Gensuikyō. This caused resentment, with many questioning whether relief funds

<sup>107</sup> Ishii Kin’ichirō, “‘Ikiteite yokatta’ ka: Hibakusha hakusho kara,” *Chūō Kōron* 74 (11): 78–88.

<sup>108</sup> *Hidankyō renraku*, newsletter, 17 (November 15, 1959).

<sup>109</sup> *Hidankyō renraku*, newsletter, 10 (January 30, 1959).

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would be provided only to those who adhered to Gensuikyō's activities.<sup>110</sup>

Even if issues existed on Gensuikyō side, dissatisfaction with the distribution of relief funds highlighted the immaturity of Hidankyō, marked by its fragile financial foundation and dependence on others. From its inception, membership fees, as a proportion of revenue, remained below 10%.<sup>111</sup> This was not only attributable to the economic struggles faced by several of its members, but also occurred because Hidankyō's objectives and policies had not permeated its membership, causing a lack of awareness. There were some cases wherein individuals were treated as members simply because they possessed the *Hibakusha* Health Certificate, implying that not all registered members were necessarily aligned with Hidankyō's principles and objectives.<sup>112</sup> Consequently, the collection of membership fees stagnated. The lack of self-awareness among members may have contributed to their financial dependence on Gensuikyō and the narrow perspective that viewed the gensuikin movement solely in terms of relief for *hibakusha*.<sup>113</sup>

The lack of individual agency among members is not the only concern. The tendency to distance oneself from Gensuikyō's ban-the-bomb movement, which prioritized security-related issues, and focus solely on relief measures, suggests that Hidankyō lacked a well-established sense of agency as a social movement organization. As the gensuikin movement became the primary platform for political struggle, the initial determination of "saving ourselves and, through our experiences, save humanity from crisis" began to waver. Consequently, Hidankyō failed to engage in their own ban-the-bomb movement with firm conviction.

In addition to Itō, other leaders within Hidankyō harbored a sense of crisis regarding the emerging tendency in Hidankyō to distance themselves from the gensuikin movement that emphasized security issues and, instead, to focus solely on the Relief Law. Protecting the lives and health of victims of atomic bombings was an urgent issue. However, as Kubo Nakako, the president of Ehime Prefecture Atomic Bombing Victims Association, highlighted, atomic bombing damage was a result of the war pursued by the state, and the victims' suffering was exacerbated owing to postwar government policies that neglected the victims. Expecting support for *hibakusha* is unrealistic, Kubo contended, from an administration pushing for nuclear armament.<sup>114</sup> Yamaguchi Kiyoshi, the

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<sup>110</sup> *Hidankyō renraku*, newsletter, 35.

<sup>111</sup> By contrast, the relief funds donated by China constituted the majority of the budget (60% in fiscal year 1959 and 75% in fiscal year 1960) (*Hidankyō renraku*, newsletter, 34 (February 1, 1961)).

<sup>112</sup> Nihon Gensuibaku Higaisha Dantai Kyōgikai Jyōnin Riji-kai, "Nihon Hidankyō" (1961).

<sup>113</sup> Nihon Gensuibaku Higaisha Dantai Kyōgikai Jyōnin Riji-kai, "Nihon Hidankyō" (1960).

<sup>114</sup> *Hidankyō renraku*, newsletter, 26 (June 1, 1960); *Hidankyō renraku*, newsletter, 27 (July 1, 1960).

secretary-general of the Tokyo *Hibakusha* Association, held a similar view. He pointed out that “the forces that have neglected *hibakusha* relief for more than a decade after the war are the same as those hindering the banning of nuclear weapons.” To protect the lives and health of the victims, he argued that efforts should be directed toward not only the establishment of relief laws but also Gensuikyō’s ban-the-bomb movement.<sup>115</sup> Itō, Kubo, Yamaguchi, and other leaders called for logically linking relief efforts for *hibakushas* with gensuikin movement. They aimed to prompt a “transformation of consciousness” among *hibakusha* and approach the gensuikin movement with a rationale unique to the survivors’ organization.

Representatives who advocated for withdrawal from Gensuikyō placed greater emphasis on the establishment of relief laws than on the gensuikin movement. They did not share Gensuikyō’s objectives or strategies regarding the ban-the-bomb movement. However, they were not opposed to the gensuikin movement. Even within the Kinki regional block, which had openly expressed distrust toward Gensuikyō since 1959, they agreed on “fully cooperating with the gensuikin movement.” Soejima Machiko, president of the Hyogo Association, for example, wanted to distance themselves from the increasingly radicalizing Gensuikyō. Instead of vocally opposing the government’s security policies, *hibakusha* organizations, Soejima argued, should adopt an approach unique to *hibakusha* toward the gensuikin movement, which emphasized “quietly conveying their sufferings.”<sup>116</sup> Moreover, Soejima played a leading role in various efforts, such as providing consultations to survivors and collecting their testimonies, which drove the initiative to elucidate the actual conditions of their suffering.<sup>117</sup>

Even if differences in opinion existed regarding the organizational relationship with Gensuikyō and the direction in which to channel their efforts, a shared understanding was that clarifying the damages caused by the atomic bombings was crucial for promoting the prohibition of nuclear bombs. However, in the initial decade of the movement, owing partially to the chaos within the gensuikin movement, Hidankyō did not sufficiently deepen its understanding of the key issues. These issues include defining the nature and scope of the damages caused by the atomic bombings and identifying where the responsibility for these damages lies. A comprehensive understanding of these aspects was crucial for providing a foundational basis that logically tied together Hidankyō’s two major demands—namely, “saving ourselves” (through the movement for the establishment of the Atomic Bombing Victims Relief Law) and “saving humanity” (through the gensuikin movement).

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<sup>115</sup> *Hidankyō renraku*, newsletter, 24 (April 10, 1960).

<sup>116</sup> *Hidankyō renraku*, newsletter, 27.

<sup>117</sup> Hyogo-ken Gensuibaku Higaisha Dantai Kyōgikai, *Inochi aru kagiri* (Hyogo-ken Gensuibaku Higaisha Dantai Kyōgikai, 1991), 120–132.

Even in the face of a potential split, Hidankyō continued its efforts to record *hibakusha* testimony. On a regional scale, initiatives such as surveys of victims' actual conditions, consultation activities, and collection of testimonies were implemented to examine the damage from the atomic bombings. These grassroots efforts in local areas became the foundation that would lead, from the 1970s onwards, to a more robust pursuit of responsibility from the entities that caused the damage and a more intensified movement to prevent its recurrence.

## 7. After the Crisis

### Connecting the Atomic Bombing Experiences to the Principles of Atomic and Hydrogen Bomb Prohibition

The inaugural World Conference against A- and H-Bombs brought forth profound interactions between participants and survivors. These encounters, emotionally charged, fostered a deep sense of solidarity with the victims, galvanizing many attendees towards a dedicated involvement in the anti-nuclear movement. From the victims, a palpable sense of mission—a feeling that they should stand as “bastions protecting humanity’s life and happiness”—emerged.<sup>118</sup> After leaving Gensuikyō, Hidankyō established an independent movement, aiming for the enactment of the Relief Law. They lobbied the government and political parties, held sit-ins, demonstrated, and appealed to the public in a manner and on a scale not witnessed before. The focus on the Relief Law, emerging after avoiding an internal split, likely represented a strategic choice, as it was a more unifying cause compared to broader anti-nuclear advocacy.<sup>119</sup> Additionally, they continued with their unique approach to the anti-nuclear movement, which focused on the testimonies of living witnesses regarding the true horrors of atomic bombings.

By the mid-1980s, Hidankyō’s objectives evolved into tangible demands, such as nuclear disarmament and a reevaluation of Japan’s security policies. After analyzing the damages and accountability for the atomic bombings, they directed demands at both the US and Japanese governments. From the US government, they sought an apology and a commitment to lead nuclear disarmament as a token for apology. From the Japanese government, they insisted on the enactment of the Relief Law as compensation, framing the bombings as consequences of the war and holding the Japanese state primarily responsible. Hidankyō argued that, to realize the survivors’ wish of “never creating another *hibakusha*,” both the abolition of nuclear weapons and state compensation to the victims

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<sup>118</sup> Nihon Gensuibaku Higaisha Dantai Kyōgikai, “Sekai eno.”

<sup>119</sup> Matsuda Shinobu, “Nihon Gensuibaku Higaisha Dantai Kyōgikai (Nihon Hidankyō) kanren bunsho no gaiyō,” *Gakuen Kindai Bunka Kenkyūsho Kiyō* 935 (2018): 10–22.

of atomic bombings were necessary, thereby securing the Japanese citizens' rights to reject nuclear warfare.<sup>120</sup> Here, we observe the intertwining of the two major demands that Hidankyō had been advocating for since its establishment.

### **Inheriting *Hibakusha's* Struggle for “No More *Hibakushas*”**

Experiencing the impact of an atomic bombing does not necessarily lead one to support the prohibition of nuclear bombs. Even among those who advocated for their prohibition, opinions differed regarding whether the focus should be on banning their use or testing them, as highlighted by the fierce debates surrounding the resumption of nuclear testing by USSR. The commitment of *hibakushas* to advocate for the prohibition of nuclear bombs has been significantly shaped by their activism. However, within the sphere of *hibakusha's* collective action, some organizations, such as *Zenhikyō*, have specialized, not in advocating for the prohibition of these weapons, but rather in providing support to survivors. Despite being buffeted by divisions within the gensuikin movement, the continued commitment of Hidankyō to uphold the banner of prohibition can be attributed to their origins within the broader nationwide movement against nuclear bombs.

For *hibakushas* to develop personal conviction against atomic bombs, a sense of solidarity with others was critically important. Unfortunately, the intense factional conflicts of the gensuikin movement overshadowed efforts to address *hibakusha* relief and restore *hibakushas'* human rights. However, after the popular foundation for the gensuikin movement was lost, new agents emerged, including journalists, scientists, and educators, who, alongside *hibakusha*, assumed the role of elucidating the damages caused by the atomic bombings and disseminating the true nature of their devastation. Through the collaboration between *hibakusha* and non-*hibakusha*, the experience of atomic bombings became anchored as a “national experience” in Japan, underpinning the consciousness against nuclear bombs.<sup>121</sup>

The anti-nuclear movement—rooted in the experience of *hibakusha*—has garnered support from a wide range of individuals in the Japanese society. Undeniably, the movement has grown to rely heavily on compelling personal narratives from *hibakusha*, elevating them to a status of moral authority on an international stage, particularly in efforts like the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. This reliance on the *hibakusha's* poignant stories has been instrumental in advocating for peace and nuclear disarmament.

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<sup>120</sup> Nihon Gensuibaku Higaisha Dantai Kyōgikai, “Genbaku higaisha no kihon yōkyū: Futatabi hibakusha wo tsukuranai tame ni,” November 18, 1984. Naono, “Nationalism under the banner.”

<sup>121</sup> Ubuki, “Gunshuku to.”

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Hidankyō, to this day, perseveres in its mission to enact the Relief Law and to advocate for the eradication of nuclear weapons. However, the aging *hibakusha* community poses a challenge for their continued leadership in the movement toward nuclear disarmament. Therefore, it becomes crucial to understand the historical developments that linked their experiences to the anti-nuclear philosophy. This understanding will help ensure that the movement, formed and led by both *hibakusha* and non-*hibakusha*, continues to evolve, not solely relying on the experiences of *hibakusha*.