

[WE WILL NEVER FORGET \(PART TWO\)](#)

Cmdr .- How old was your father when he died?

Junko Watanabe .- He's still alive, he's 98.

I would like to promise you, to convey the feelings of my brother, who is now dead, and to convey to you the message that all the survivors have, and so that the new generation transmits our testimony to the next generation, I will continue giving testimony. Thank you (Applause).

Cmdr .- Please excuse me if I ask some questions, because we're interested in knowing everything that she is relating, and, of course, if no-one objects, we will be broadcasting this event via national television (Applause). We are keen that our public knows all this, but not just broadcasting it here, but transmitting it to other countries, sending out the news of this meeting. It is of utmost importance to know what happened there, regardless of what has been published, filmed, and all the new things that are appearing.

I'll explain, then, why I'm asking some further questions.

She said she was in a nearby house, that she was in the yard with her brother when the explosion occurred producing a cloud of dust. She knows, from others who were aware at the time, how long it took to get that dust on people who were there.

Junko Watanabe .- About 30 minutes, but it did not rain everywhere, but just where the wind swept the rain.

Cmdr .- Rain. But there was rain and some ashes.

Junko Watanabe.- Really the rain of ashes did not exist, just that dust mixed with rain was what came to where they were; it wasn't separate, it was just one thing, alone, linked with all the filth and with all the things that came with it.

Cmdr .- And there was no roof where she was, she was in a yard?

Junko Watanabe .- We were 18 kilometers from where the bomb fell.

Cmdr .- Eighteen kilometers!

Interpreter .- Eighteen kilometers.

Cmdr .- That is what I was going to ask, because there is a bridge, I think, that they show as the point, the target where the bomb was dropped. It was 18 kilometers?

Your parents were indoors?

Junko Watanabe .- My mom was holding my younger brother outside the house, and my dad was in Hiroshima, he had been working and at night headed for the house, but, well, he was still inside a building. He even saw the plane circling above Hiroshima.

Cmdr .- Before the bombing. Right.

And your mother was also burned?

Junko Watanabe .- No. Really, where we were, 18 kilometers from the place, what we got was all this quantity of burnt paper, that wave, that wind that came to us; but burned as such, we were not.

Had we been a little closer, that is, near the epicenter, I do not think we would be telling this story today.

Cmdr .- Right.

What I want to tell you is that we recently had a visit from a very prestigious researcher, a professor emeritus at Rutgers University, New Jersey, and he is the author of the theory of nuclear winter. This, in my opinion, is of utmost importance because it relates to the current dangers facing humanity, and there are many things that are unknown.

This professor visited our country and at a meeting of scientists gave an excellent exposition of his theory, a theory with much prestige; it seems to me indisputable, and is related to the consequences of nuclear war. It does not relate, exactly to the destruction it causes, which would be huge, but analyzes the danger that a regional nuclear war, or even a global war, would mean for humanity.

It deals with the current facts, very different from that time when the first nuclear bomb was launched. He takes into account the situation at this moment, when there are 25,000 nuclear weapons in the world. I imagine that many of you know that data. The scientist says that a hundred nuclear explosions would be sufficient to produce what he calls a nuclear winter.

He bases his theory on a series of investigations made by American scientists and Soviet scientists, before the demise of the USSR, on the effects that would be produced by a number of nuclear weapons if a war broke out. They calculated that about 100 nuclear explosions would be enough to obliterate human life on the planet, so a war, for example, between India and Pakistan, with the number of weapons held by each of them would be enough to put an end to our species.

I think that although maybe you have enough information, we can provide you with a copy of the lecture by Alan Robock, -that is the name of the professor who recently gave it here, this month,- which contains data of great value, which would serve you for the disclosure of the consequences, not only about the damage they would cause; of course, the current weapons are far more powerful, more accurate, much faster. The power of the existing weapons is equivalent to four hundred and forty thousand times the power of either of the two bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki Japan; they tested the two, one with uranium and the other with plutonium. Now all these technologies are mastered and the arms can be used with absolute precision.

The agreements that have been made between the great powers are practically worthless because they do not translate into real arms reduction.

It strikes me that if your organization would make contact with him, and he is a very generous man, he could give you a lecture on this issue.

I asked about the mist, since he explains and demonstrates that as a result of nuclear explosions, everything burns, wood; all that comes from oil, and many other things, as he explains, are burned and mixed with the soil to produce large concentrations of dust. I have studied it all: what would happen if there were two or if there were 10, if there were a 100, and there is a limit. That cloud of dust would spread across the world in a period of time, I think no more than three weeks, and the temperature would drop below freezing. That means, for example, a night months long, not allowing in any sunlight. Food production would disappear and the consequences are horrible; over six billion people would go without food, in addition to the cold.

I asked a question when he finished his hour long lecture, with maps, charts; they've studied all the effects of volcanic eruptions; studied how the dust extends each time one occurs, even a recent one in Iceland in Europe, which created serious problems. They also studied the great fires that have occurred naturally or as a result of war or accident.

I asked: "How many people in the world know the information you are providing?" He said: "Almost no one." I asked, "And in your own country, how many people know it?" And he replied, "Very few." I asked him how he could explain this phenomenon. And I added "Maybe this has to be studied, looking for specialists in psychology and in other fields to explain this phenomenon." And he said, "I have an answer: it is called denial." He reasoned that when horrible things could happen, people rejected the idea of believing them possible.

To the explanation that he gives one could add another, which is connected to the media, the monopoly of the mass media. Things happen in the world, and despite modern means, radio and television, films are handled in a way that news is happening, but not explained, and indeed many of the most important that exist in the world are not known, or are reported as news and not analyzed. There are very important books about the monopoly of the news media; the truth is kidnapped and we don't know. Two phenomena.

I explained to him that we were not pessimistic about the possibility of creating an awareness. I tell you, you can create a consciousness or not. Of course, if the masses cannot read and write it cannot even be attempted; if the society has a level of knowledge as does Japanese society, then with their own means of dissemination, not only written, but with words with images, with music, with many events, you can create an awareness today.

I would say that this was the case in Cuba. If people could not read and write ... What can a person do, who can not read or write? If they reach sixth grade or not, if they graduate from high school or not, if hundreds of thousands made college, if they have good teachers, there are different phenomena. The Revolution has not been defended by force; it has been defended by knowledge by awareness. How could a small country like Cuba, withstand 50 years of blockade and harassment? They thought they could take the country, or they could deceive it, but they could not. It was, in my view, a demonstration that one can form a conscience, because if we give up the idea that consciousness can be created, then what would be your task? Because you are traveling the world and explaining, prompting people who knew about it, and telling facts that are heartbreaking, really. Let me explain still better what you are doing, because they're feeling it, and are carrying people who experienced it, and have the images, have many things.

I was in Hiroshima. I visited the museum. Everything was explained to me there: what withstood, what did not; and one of the terrible images of the human tragedy was the illustration of children not yet born, pregnant mothers with a month, two months, three months to go, these images have been illustrated there, and are of great impact, and I think there is material to do so. I would say that today there is much more awareness, but it takes a lot more. And the fact is that today all of humanity is threatened by something as horrible as what you have related, and even more horrible still, because we've heard from people who were in the area of the first bomb, the pain of the people who died, people who were burned, who were injured or were irradiated and have lived more than 50 years. Actually those explosions occurred 65 years ago, and today there are thousands of them, even more powerful and accurate, threatening humanity.

The scientist supports the theory that the more nuclear weapons a country possesses, the less chance of peace and security it would have. He is in favor of eliminating all nuclear weapons. I would go a little further. I think if you liquidated nuclear weapons and not conventional weapons as well, it is almost same.

The destructive power of such conventional weapons is huge today. A bomb bearing tungsten

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fragments, carried in a heavy warhead, with no use of nuclear energy, can reach the speed of 25,000 kilometers per hour, 20 times the speed of sound; it later falls at no less than 20,000 kilometers per hour. A whole area below it is fully devastated. No command posts or government remains, nothing of the target site remains on its feet. This has been published and explained. The past world war claimed 50 million lives, who were the victims of conventional weapons, excluding the victims and human damage from the two nuclear bombs, which caused over 150 thousand deaths and a greater number of people suffering from burns, radiation and many other injuries. Destruction, hunger, disease affected a large part of the world in that war. If another world war occurred, it would be the last one, there could be no other.

Einstein himself said that he did not know what a war in the atomic era would be like; but the next one would be with bows and arrows.

I had brought a letter that Robock sent me, the scientist already referred to, in reply to a question I asked him when he was at the airport ready to return to his country. In his lecture, he had given some data about the Planet Mars; I called him on the phone and asked him where I could get more information on that planet. He explained to me that Mars had its atmosphere, something that given its small thickness I ignored. He promised to send information.

And he sent it two or three days later.

Mars has a thinner atmosphere than that of the Earth—he said-- with only 7 % of air...It is equivalent to the density of the air on the Earth at a height of 21 kilometers.

The Martian atmosphere—he said—is made up mostly of carbon dioxide.

The information is related to what we are talking about: the effects of nuclear explosions. The impact on the climate. What has been said about the environment? What has been said about climate change? Is it that such a serious problem does not exist? Is it that it has not been studied? Is there is not a prestigious film made with the cooperation of the most eminent scientists on climate change, its effects on rainfall, the economy and human life?

This has been studied as a second problem regarding climate change. That is, we do not have to wait for a nuclear war to see life disappear from the planet. That is what I am telling you, for life to disappear from the planet.

The economy and life of nations are currently based on the consumption of non renewable raw materials, among others the most important one, oil, which is a raw material being consumed at a pace of nearly 100 million barrels a day.

Bear in mind that oil took hundreds of millions of years to form from living matter.

Some 400 million years were required to form oil, gas and coal. How fast is man consuming the oil that nature accumulated during 400 million years? In just 130 years, human beings have already used up more than half of that fuel, whose consumption also has a huge impact on the environment. The Carbon Dioxide that is so abundant in Mars' atmosphere precisely is the result of oil consumption. These are factors that humanity must be aware of, face and resolve. This is the price of its existence.

The human population cannot grow without limits, since the planet where we were born and where we live has its limits. Calculations, if I remember right, say that by the year 2050 the population will reach 9 billion inhabitants. Just 200 years ago that figure was one billion. The consequences this has regarding water, food, energy and raw materials are really extraordinary.

Japan has quite a limited land surface for its population; its population has nearly reached 130 million inhabitants at present, as I understand; it is said to be the nation with the highest life expectancy and

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with a high culture, and that its population growth will stabilize at little over 100 million people. Then, it is possible to reach population stability.

A neighbor country of yours, China, is currently implementing a rigorous population-related policy; if they had not adopted such a policy, at present China would have some 3 billion inhabitants. China and India alone have nearly half the inhabitants of the world.

These are facts. People must have the courage to face the realities, to know them, like you are doing with respect to the terrible consequences of nuclear explosions. Those who will be born should have the essential living conditions to enjoy a life as fully and naturally as possible. This is not what is happening now. Some 8 or 10 million people die every year as a consequence of hunger and lack of health care. Who talks about that? Some scientists and some politicians do. Such news is hardly mentioned; the big transnational companies are not interested in that subject.

I know that on this trip you asked us to send you a doctor with internationalist experience, but not someone who was thinking of being internationalist. There are thousands of those Cuban doctors in many countries. You would surely be amazed if you knew, for instance, what our small country can do to help other nations. I am not talking about impossible tasks.

Matsumi Matsumura.- Comandante, look, what I wanted to comment on our part, when you mentioned the internationalist...

Cmdte.- And is he here?

Matsumi Matsumura.- Yes.

Cmdte.- Where is he? Can he raise his hand?.

So I can see you better.

They told me you had been in Haiti, is that right?

Matsumi Matsumura.- Dr. Livan Torero, worked a lot to help the people in Haiti after the earthquake and we invited him on board the Peace Boat so that he can tell us about his experiences in Haiti. And we also have Salsa dancer Jose Ramon with us, since learning about your culture is very important for us; I think it is a traditional dance and we have learned a lot about Salsa.

Indeed, thanks very much for this invitation. Thank you very much, Comandante (Applause).

Cmdte.- I congratulate you and thank you. I mentioned it because I know what they are doing and I was going to mention the case of Haiti, as a proof of what consciousness can achieve.

In Bolivia there are nearly 2,000 Cuban doctors; they are in many places. In Ecuador, with a 15-million population, they are helping to study and treat all those people who, due to genetic or other problems, are physically impaired, who were born blind or deaf. When a child can't hear he can become dumb; if he does not learn the sounds, he cannot reproduce them. Many problems can be solved with a small instrument, just by providing them with an earphone they could speak and communicate.

But if they are born blind and deaf the situation is more complicated. What would the life of a blind or deaf-mute person be like, someone who has never heard a sound or seen anything?

I know the results of cochlear implants and how people learn to hear, speak, listen to music and meet the world; their lives change.

I think that society must make parents aware, try to foretell risks that, in certain cases they should not

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have offspring. I consider that every human being that is born must come to the world with their potentialities. And if for any reason they are born with non-hereditary vital deficiencies, we must make all possible efforts to enrich the lives of those people. Those who can't be fed, those that can't be taught, those that cannot develop a normal life, a life worthy of living, should simply not be conceived.

I understand that not everyone can think exactly the same way, there are religious influences, I respect all that; though I am frankly expressing my opinion and why? For the human race, at present this really has to do with the famous problem of be or not to be, if survival is possible for this species, that has inflicted lot of damage on the rest of the living beings. Since the human species was born, it stormed everything; intelligence has thus far been a tragedy to nature, and now nuclear weapons could create a problem as serious as that famous asteroid that fell—they say—on the Tehuantepec isthmus, in Mexico, tens of millions of years ago, and caused a prolonged winter.

No other species achieved this, but they maintained a balance with nature through billions of years, about 4 billion years. Man is new. This thinking species emerged less than 200,000 years ago—now this thinking I would say is still to be proven, if the species does not prove it is able to survive. Excuse me for being somewhat strong about our foolishness. The only thing that has been proven up to now is that there is not the slightest proof that it was preceded by another one.

In the end, all these problems are combined, and I think they must be associated to win the battle, which must be the goal to reach by the human beings. Then, perhaps many marvelous things could be created.

How many scientifically well prepared people, how many eminent people are there in the world? Some 80 percent of engineers in the United States are dedicated to the military sector, creating means and science to destroy and kill, by virtue of a perfidious system that led them into that fate.

Our aspiration is that people reach high intellectual levels. By chance, on my way here I took a news bulletin and I read that Cuba occupies the first place in the world as to the percentage of students in higher education centers. Venezuela occupies the fifth position; the second, third and fourth places were occupied by the Republic of Korea, Finland and Greece; while the United States was behind us in the sixth position.

I cited the doctor, because those men and women—most of them are women—are working in Bolivia, Nicaragua, Venezuela, in many Third World countries. But, why? I am amazed: they come, for instance, on vacations for 15 days and they get anxious to return to their work, they miss their patients; you have to listen to what their patients say. It is a product of consciousness, which was not purchased anywhere; it is not done for money.

The task being undertaken by those comrades in Haiti is a product of consciousness. Therefore, I dare talk about consciousness, because I have seen that consciousness made the Revolution possible, made resistance possible, aside from any criticism they can make of us or the mistakes we can make, because no human work is perfect. We do not have the slightest fear of speaking of mistakes, because what can't really be admitted is what is done unconsciously against others.

There is no perfect human work, but we believe in it, and if we did not believe in it, we would not be doing what we are doing, or what you are doing in such a noble manner.

I am sorry to have used up too much of your time.

To be continued tomorrow

Fidel Castro Ruz

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