YANK
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This is what was left of the industrial city of Nagasaki after the atomic bomb hit it.

A GI eye-witness report on metropolitan landmarks of the air campaign that brought Japan to her knees—Nagasaki, where the second atomic bomb fell, Tokyo, gutted by incendiaries, Hiroshima, where the first atomic bomb leveled 4 square miles.

IN A B-17 OVER NAGASAKI—Looking down on the vast stretches of level reddish-brown earth that used to be the smoky and crowded industrial section of this big steel city, you can understand why Japan decided to quit the war a few hours after the second American atomic bomb landed here on Aug. 9.

The heart of the city of Nagasaki was squeezed empty by the flash of the bomb, which threw out heat waves estimated by some scientists at 3,600,000,000,000° F. And even from the windows of this Fortress, as it soars unmolested over the remaining rooftops and dips down to 25 feet above the water along the shipyards and docks, you get the impression that the hearts of the people of Nagasaki are empty, too. A few of them on the streets and at the ferryboat terminal pause to look up at the plane. But most of them just keep on walking, paying no attention. Seemingly they wouldn't give a damn one way or another if 10,000 American planes came over and buzzed their homes.

A popular GI opinion concerning the atomic-bombed cities has been that no American soldier, especially a soldier from the American Army Air Forces, would be able to set foot near Nagasaki or Hiroshima for the next 20 years. They were saying how people here must be filled with bitter longing for vengeance and how they would surely tear to bits any American they could get their hands on. We won't know for sure until we go into Nagasaki on foot, but it doesn't seem that way from our 200- and sometimes 100-foot altitudes. Ours is one of the first unarmed American planes to fly over Japan and at these low altitudes we'd make a nice target for any kind of firearms. But we haven't seen anything below beyond docile indifference.

Eight miles down the bay from Nagasaki there's an Allied PW camp on a small island called Koyagi Shima. Capt. Mark Magnan of Milwaukee, a veteran ETO combat pilot who was flying the *Headliner*, our Fortress, buzzed low over this camp several times while T/Sgt. Jack Goetz of Fayetteville, Pa., engineer, and S/Sgt. George A. Kilzer of Richardton, N. D., tossed 10-in-1 rations out the rear door. The prisoners had rigged up British, American, Chinese and Dutch flags on their buildings and were scattered outside the enclosure, apparently unguarded. If the people of Nagasaki had been filled with bitter hatred of their enemies after the atomic bombing, it seems logical that they would have stormed every nearby PW camp and lynched the inmates.

And every inch of Nagasaki wasn't completely demolished, either. This may have been a result of the geographical layout and the terrain of the city rather than because of any limitation of the atomic bomb. Nagasaki is divided in half by a bay and a river. Part of its residential and downtown section lies in a valley between two hills. The reddish-brown atomic destruction covers almost everything outside the valley but it apparently didn't get inside. About 40 or 50 percent of the town seemed to have been utterly demolished.

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NAGASAKI

The Mitsubishi Steel and Arms Works, the same thing to Nagasaki that Jones & Laughlin or U. S. Steel are to Pittsburgh, won't be paying a dividend to its stockholders. Some of its buildings are mere twisted piles of girders. Others are not around any more.

The destruction in Nagasaki looks nothing like the debris in Cassino or Leghorn. The strange thing here is the utter absence of rubble. You can see a couple of square miles of reddish-brown desolation with nothing left but the outlines of houses, a bit of wall here and half a chimney there. In this area you will see a road, and the road will be completely clean. It is too soon after the bombing for the Japs to have done any cleaning of the roads and you can't see a single brick or pile of broken plaster or lumber on any street or sidewalk in the town. Evidently the bomb blast demolishes the wreckage as well as the buildings themselves, just as the scientists say it does.

Flying over Nagasaki, as we did for a full half-hour, circling roof tops and diving so low that you could see clearly the faces of its people, you get a much more convincing impression of the power and the finality of the atomic bomb than you can get from any photos that have been taken to date. The great empty areas, covering so many square miles of city blocks, almost take your breath away when you first see them. The thing that hits you is not the terrific bomb damage but the terrific nothingness. It's a tough job to describe in writing what Nagasaki looks like today because there's nothing much to describe.

The bomb blast does strange things. Like that of the V-1s in London last year, it sweeps an area but skips some buildings there altogether. Here and there in the middle of the leveled section of town we could see factories standing alone and looking like hollow boxes, with their roofs, doors and windows gone but with four concrete or stone walls still up. Most of the bridges across the river that divides Nagasaki are still intact. So are the railroad tracks spiderwebbing its good-sized freight yard. According to reports, most of the railroad cars came into Nagasaki from other parts of Japan with relief supplies after the atomic bombing, and it is obvious that they wouldn't have been able to make it if the blast had destroyed the tracks they had to travel on.

The atomic blast spread out over plenty of distance where it wasn't halted by hills or water. We could see fields far on the town's outskirts burned brown.

More than anything else, Nagasaki looks right now exactly like the place the war ended.

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