

Hiroshima deserves far more than a fleeting thought

The Bethlehem Gadfly Uncategorized August 6, 2020

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Gadfly:

As our national leaders continue to expand nuclear weapons and expand the “Defense” budget, this deserves far more than a fleeting thought. See if someone from LEPOCO could provide a more complete statement.

For now, I’ll offer this poem written by Lisa J. Parker, then a sophomore at George Mason University.

Peter

Nine

Nine seconds

of red air

crashing through blood and bone

melting gold caps and wire glasses.

Twisting every bike for as far

as you can see.

If you can see.

Burning flesh, driven by blind eyes

into the relief of scalding water.

Nine.

Nine fingers on a newborn's hands

no thumb to suck for comfort

Mother's milk sour with radiation

crying into ears burned deaf.

Doctors who will never recover from

what they've witnessed:

Skin melted over empty eye sockets

dangling from arms like a shedding

dog with three legs.

Nine.

Nine suns on one spot of earth.

A man coughing ashes

gray and white bone flakes that whirled people apart on

scorched wind.

And we gag at Hitler's crematorium?

I was taught that Hiroshima

was a symbol of American triumph,

The A-bomb made a mushroom cloud, and

World War II ended.

There was no discussion.

There were no pictures of people writhing in agony,
mutated babies and eyeless witnesses.

Only a black and white of the mushroom cloud
reminding me of cotton candy.

In college I learned

Those who can not learn from the past
are condemned to repeat it,

and I'm wondering now why someone taught me nine was just a
number

and the bomb was victory.

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