

## Lesson 3

## READ THIS STORY #2, Basic

**Nagasaki**

Every August 9th, the people of Nagasaki, Japan, listen as air-raid sirens begin to wail. They stop whatever they are doing and observe one minute of silence at 11:02 AM.

This marks the beginning of an annual ceremony to honor the memory of the seventy thousand Japanese who died when an atomic explosion occurred in their city in 1945.

In the evening, one thousand paper lanterns float down the river as a symbol representing the desperate people who ran to the river to escape the heat of the explosion.

In an effort to end World War II, the United States dropped two nuclear bombs on Japan in August, 1945. The devastation wrought by these blasts persuaded the Japanese Emperor to surrender, even though some of his military officers wanted to force the United States to invade Japan.

Some people feel it was immoral for the United States to use a weapon of mass destruction. Others argue that it would have been immoral not to use it, because if we had invaded Japan, many more Japanese and American people would have died.

President Harry Truman had to decide whether to use an atomic weapon to end a savage war. Do you think he made the right decision?