

【70 years after the war】

Hello, I'm Omori, Mayor of Okayama.

It has been 70 years since the Okayama air raid was happened and more than 60% of the city was destroyed early that morning of June 29, 1945. This year, it is the turning point, and the Okayama City war victim memorial ceremony was held yesterday as usual.

When I was listening to the greeting such as those of the War-bereaved Family Association representative among the ceremony proceeded in a solemn atmosphere, I was recalling my father incidentally.

My father was giving me all kinds of story about the war when I was a child.

Talking about the Okayama air raid,

- The city of Okayama was just bright red because of incendiary drenched from B29.
- He went to Okayama station the next day, there was none of things left and he could see Higashiyama just in front.
- Although people from the same town was escaping to Hiroshima, my father and his family had nowhere to go, so they stayed in Okayama. Eventually the people who went to Hiroshima encountered an atomic bomb.

I have a memory of those stories above.

The comics of the war thing such 「Zerosen Hayato」, 「Shidenkai no Taka」 were popular at that time. I used to avidly read those books. I overlapped with stories of my father and had a nightmare to be attacked by the B29 and fighters, and I found myself soaked with sweat when I woke up.

It's been 70 years since the last world war, and my father who told about the stories passed away already. Those who pass down the stories from generation to generation are becoming less.

Approximately 200 elementary and junior high school students in the city also attended in the ceremony. Rena Miyamoto gave memorial words as a representative junior high school student. A passage from her speech that is "When I went to Nagasaki for a school trip, I saw the scars of the war are still left in the beautiful town in places" was deeply engraved in my heart.

I suppose this is the words students talked and derived which is based on their teacher told. Although the place where we do not notice at a glance, "the past" that you should hand down in history is still left many, and it reminded me again that the memory of such "past" must not let us ever weather.

I would like to take over the misery stories of war and the preciousness of peace to generations of children and grandchildren. I refresh my thought to contribute for the world peace to deepen interchange with all the people as the head of the municipality and as one human being.