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The Future of Moruroa e Tatou is in Good Hands

Monday, February 7th 2011

The Peace Boat docked in Papeete this weekend.

Teva Doom, Heiava Lenoir, Allan and Régis Gooding formed the Polynesian delegation on the fourth "Global Voyage for a Nuclear-Free World."

Four young Tahitian activists and a former worker on Moruroa and Fangataufa nuclear testing sites ended their two-week voyage in Japan on Saturday morning with a visit to Hiroshima. On-board as far as Tahiti on Peace Boat's fourth voyage docking in Papeete, the former members of the Association of Moruroa e Tatou had the opportunity to exchange ideas with young Japanese students about nuclear issues. Their goal is that the battles of both the bomb victims and testing victims in French Polynesia don't end with the passing of the older generation. Teva Doom, the grandson of John Doom, is a perfect example. It is a rich experience for these young people, who will be forever changed by hearing the experiences of the Hibakushas, the survivors of the 1945 atomic explosions in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. One of them, 75 year-old Hiroshi Suegana, was asked as well to tell his story on Saturday to the Polynesian Assembly, with an attentive Oscar Temaru in attendance. The touching account, accompanied by photos, must have given some encouragement to the younger generation of Polynesians to continue the work of their elders, and to get behind Suegana's message: 'There are only two solutions: either the bomb destroys humanity, or humanity destroys the bomb.'

What did you do during your time in Japan and your time on Peace Boat?

We gave conferences in Tokyo and Nagasaki, and that attracted people. We built connections with the young Japanese students. We didn't think many people would come, but actually the Japanese people were interested in knowing how the nuclear question was dealt with in Tahiti. We shared our stories.

This journey lasted three weeks including a visit to Hiroshima, the museum in Nagasaki, that must have made some impression...

Mainly the museum, you have to see it to believe it. It's an overwhelming feeling, the images, and especially the stories of the Hibakushas. We heard a lot of accounts, we talked with the second and third generations, who are in the process of obtaining compensation. We built good links.

Can we state officially today that you are taking up the torch from your grandfather, John Doom, in the anti-nuclear fight?

Continuing his work? Yes, yes... I think that's safe to say.

How does it feel to see your grandson taking up the torch from you?

It's one of the most wonderful days of my life! Seeing my grandson follow in the footsteps of his grandfather, it's extraordinary. It's time for the youth of this country to stand up and continue what was started.

Did he tell you about his experience?

He sent me emails everyday! He saw a lot of things. The meetings with the Hibakushas really impressed him. He won't soon forget the horrors he saw in the museums at Nagasaki and Hiroshima.