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Title: Chiyoko Chiyo Omachi Interview
Narrator: Chiyoko Chiyo Omachi
Interviewer: Anna Takada
Location: Chicago, Illinois
Date: March 30, 2018
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<Begin Segment 6>

- AT: 00:28:42 Before the war broke out, did you ever experience any kind of discrimination or--
- CO: 00:28:51 Yeah, we were on Terminal Island and, they give us 48 hours to leave--
- I2: 00:29:00 She's asking before. Remember you told us about not being able to go to the swimming pool?
- CO: 00:29:08 Oh, that was-- [overlapping dialogue] You know, all, all Asians were not invited. [overlapping dialogue] Blacks were not invited [overlapping dialogue] Mexicans were not invited [overlapping dialogue]
- I2: 00:29:20 She wants to know before the war. Did you guys experience any discrimination? Before you were taken to the camps as a child, did you experience discrimination?
- CO: 00:29:31 Not really because we lived in the homogeneous, you know--
- I3: 00:29:39 Isolated.
- CO: 00:29:40 Yeah, mostly, mostly Asian. Although Terminal Island it was a mixed group, but there were more Asians-- more Japanese, I think, even on our side of the island, than white. We had a Russian family and I was very curious about them. Never found out much about, you know, where they came from or what-- I think the father was a fisherman somehow, but he would have been an odd bird, you know
- I3: 00:30:19 Where you weren't allowed to go to the, the swimming pool?
- CO: 00:30:21 There were no swimming pools there anyway.

I3: 00:30:25 What is she talking about? [Overlapping dialogue] You weren't allowed to-- to somewhere

CO: 00:30:27 Well, wherever there were swimming pools, Asians were not, you know, invited. They were excluded, let's say, they were not invited. They were excluded and Mexicans.

I3: 00:30:44 Were there other examples of things that you couldn't do because you were Asian?

CO: 00:30:50 Yeah, I'm sure there were.

I3: 00:30:57 Like places you couldn't-- you weren't allowed to go.

I2: 00:31:05 Did you ever come into Los Angeles or did you stay in--

CO: 00:31:10 Yeah, well my Father had those cars and we, we drove around [laughs].

I2: 00:31:13 I know, but came into LA [overlapping dialogue]

CO: 00:31:16 We would go to Los Angeles [overlapping dialogue] about 25 or 30, I don't know how many miles it was. It's just, some childhood numbers I had in my head and it must have been further. We would go to a Japanese and Chinese restaurants in little Tokyo, you know. There was no such restaurant in, in Terminal Island, although there was a place called the New York Cafe and Papa and I used to go there for clam chowder.

AT: 00:31:54 That was on the island? [overlapping dialogue]

CO: 00:31:55 Very, very good. [laughs]

AT: 00:31:57 That restaurant was on the island?

CO: 00:31:59 It was on the island yeah. When, when he would be working and I would go with him. And I would be about 10, 11, 12 when I was helping him because I could do a number of things. And he taught me-- oh, he used to tell me about all these differences in Japanese and American tools, you know, and how can you sharpen the saws this way. And then in the American way you go to do it from the other side. I have all manner of stuff in my head about tools. And he had planes, the Japanese planes were different and you drew them instead of, you know-- American planes you use, I don't know which way it goes, but anyway, the Japanese did it the other way.

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