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Title: Constance Yamashiro Interview
Narrator: Constance Yamashiro
Interviewer: Anna Takada
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<Begin Segment 11>

- AT: 00:45:09 One thing I'm curious about is you mentions. The, how strongly your, your father and your grandmother, specifically, how they had kind of, what their response was to the war and the evacuation.
- CY: 00:45:29 Very embarrassing to talk about that, they were very bitter. I mean, that's all I can remember is that I think two of my father's dying day, he was, you know, he might've been suffering from depression and I have no idea such, but I know that, oh, my father had a lot of trouble, with, you know, different races. He had issues, you know, when, I would play with my, different friends, you know, and, he was very, very bitter man. So I, I try and, you know, remember that try to overcome that kind of thinking.
- AT: 00:46:21 Well, and my question was, did he, and maybe your grandmother, if you remember, when you made the move to Chicago. Did they still have or, share some of those feelings with you? Are, maybe about the move or about Chicago itself or did anything change?
- CY: 00:46:53 Well, you asking if they were still bitter about everything?
- AT: 00:47:01 Or, if there was bitterness about being in Chicago, you know, kind of uprooting and starting a new in this.
- CY: 00:47:08 Well, yeah, they did. Yeah. Because it's interesting that when you came to Chicago, I had my aunt around, I had an uncle, I had a lot of relatives. Every single one of them left within a period of year or maybe two years after we got here, they all went back to California. They hated it. They hated Chicago. I think probably the biggest excuse was the weather. But I think they were not used to it. They, you know, they grew up in California and it was entirely different kind of country and, they

want to go back there and they regarded as home. So, so I think, a lot of them eventually went back and my father never would, as I said, you know, until, until he was an old man, you know.

AT: 00:48:07

And did you have any feelings about it?

CY: 00:48:11

About going back to, oh, well I did in the sense that when I was a teenager, I lost a lot of my friends. They were all going back. There was a strong migration of Japanese American families going back, you know, to California. And, I sorta wish, oh, I wish I could go back to, but it was something that when you're a child, you don't really conceive of what it would be like. All you know is that you're here in Chicago, this is your home and you've grown up here all your life. So, it was something that, it never occurred to me, you know.

AT: 00:48:52

And, being a kid in Chicago or you know, of course growing up here. And having those types of experiences where it's, you know, a pretty strong reminder of what happened during the war and kind of how you had ended up in Chicago as a kid growing up here, were you pretty self aware of, you know, like how you had gotten to Chicago, or this kind of. This particular experience, you know, was camp something that people, young people were aware of or thinking about or talking about?

CY: 00:49:37

Actually, they referred to it back and forth, but it was not something that was discussed at any length. You know, it was, you know, how kids are teenagers more interested in the next dance or the next get together. And, I think we all sort of huddled together. You know, we all felt more protected by being very, very close. We are in the organizations where in the interclub council, I remember, you know, it was very interesting because, I think the people that ran, you know, people like the Resettlers Committee, which I think preceded of course the JASC now that I think they worked very hard at trying to establish a cohesive community. And I very grateful for that because I feel rather proud of the way we, integrated into the city and how, I, I believe Chicago welcomed us of for the most part, you know, for the most part. And Japanese were very good at keeping a very low profile. So it's not to rock the boat, so to speak. You know, we were good workers and, a lot of my friends became very, good scholars. They went to colleges, et cetera, and they had a very good life, you know, and that was a, that was part of the nature of the, I think, the personality of the Japanese people.

