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Title: Susumu Mukushina Interview
Narrator: Susumu Mukushina
Interviewer: Anna Takada
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- AT: 00:55:06 As a Japanese American who was in camp. What is your response to some of the rhetoric and the actions of the government today that are targeting specific groups of people?
- SM: 00:55:24 Yeah, stupid, it's one word. It doesn't. I mean, it doesn't work. You know, in a Japanese camp, a camp, you'll say that if you were married to a non Japanese, you know, if you're married to a Caucasian, that person was considered to be dangerous. They were interned. How dumb is that? You know, and, and, uh, uh, it, it's assimilation because of the Japanese were a, um, um, I read some, the newspapers, you know, um, I will call them like the Fox News of 19 thirties, you know, and I, I actually would News Reports but saying that: Those, goddamn Japs, you know, they're not human. They can work 23 hours a day, not sleep, no white man could keep up with them. And then there's, you know, that's, that's, that's a, I would call it Fox News hysteria kind of thing, you know. Uh, um, uh, yeah. Another thing I read was saying is that the, uh, they're unAmerican not one of them is American citizen. You know, not, not knowing that the Japanese people, when they apply for citizenship, couldn't get citizenship but didn't care. And so they demonized that, they says they're all pro Tojo, pro emperor. We got to kick these guys out. So when the camps came, it was a natural progression. We, we don't want these, these unpatriotic, you know, Japanese people, uh, around us, they'll kill us in our sleep, all that stuff. These are articles I actually read when I was doing my research, you know, uh so a, back then I did a lot of research.
- AT: 00:57:08 And why is this history, why is it important to, to remember and?
- SM: 00:57:20 Well, for me personally, I don't want the current situation to get out of hand. You know, it's very easy to demonize a person. Very easy to demonize a religion, you know, my father was supposed to be at all surprised was supposed to be separated

from my mother and a mother before I was born because she was considered to be a terrorist. That's crazy, you know, so they make assumptions, assumptions, and they always have some, uh, some, uh, a message, person say that yeah, I heard him say something. Yeah, I read that he's doing these terrible things, you know. And so, um, uh, I think, um, uh, American, Americans, can assimilate a lot of people, you know, I think every ethnic group from, from Germans to the Polish, to the Irish to the Jews to the, you know, all of all the others, the first generation, they always had a bad, you know, I read reports saying in New York: Irish not wanted. Why? Because you know how they are--they'll say. All they do is beat their wives and get drunk all the time, you know. And that's very easy to demonize people. That's a lazy man's thinking, lazy man's thinking. And so, uh, uh, uh, you have to see each, each person as they are. There's always exception to the rule, you know, that it'd be, it'd be a thing in every group, but the people are demonized. We're always got the get the exception and make them try to make that the rule. And, and on a personal level, I try not to think that there's always exceptions.

- AT: 00:59:09 If you could leave any kind of message or our legacy for the future generations, what kind of message would you want to leave?
- SM: 00:59:21 Well, I think that America is the only nation in the world that can assimilate people from other cultures. You know, we had Barack Obama as president, the only African American president. In Japan, I can't imagine having a prime minister from, who's Chinese or Korean. I can't, it won't happen there, you know, and I can't imagine a, a, not a country having a person from India having a person from Pakistan being a, being a prime minister or people towards, in America it happens. It did happen. And so this is, um, I like to keep that legacy, uh, this, uh, this dream about and even if we have an group, a lot of policies with Donald Trump, you know, but he's not permanent and he's going to be passed on in history, uh, as well we don't know yet, you know.
- AT: 01:00:22 As we wrap up, is there anything that you'd like to add or anything I missed?
- SM: 01:00:28 No, I think we covered everything. Um, I'm proud to be Japanese, I'm proud to be an American and I'm proud to have a fantastic friends.
- AT: 01:00:38 Thank you so much for recording.

SM: 01:00:40 Oh sure. You're welcome.

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