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Title: Junko Mizuta Interview
Narrator: Junko Mizuta
Interviewer: Anna Takada
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- AT: 00:43:31 And I wanted to ask you because of course we have the letter from your father requesting to join you. Can you, can you tell me more about what you know of, of that process and exactly what happened?
- JM: 00:43:53 Well, I think that was the second or third attempt in asking for release. And each time he asked for a release, it would say, well that one, it said he's intelligent, he's a great leader, I can't remember what the third was. But the big but, you were in all these organizations and you took, you were chair of the charity group of maybe other Japanese Association, I don't know. But anyway, and because of that you cannot be released. That's what it says in his record. And so, but he was not well. And so, uh, well he went from Missoula to Fort Sill to Fort Livingston and then Santa Fe and I think he was in the hospital at Fort Missoula for a week. And then in Livingston, he was in the hospital for 6 months. And when he wrote that letter he said he was not well. And I don't know whether that made a difference. But anyway, he came home because his prognosis was not good.
- AT: 00:45:36 And so while of course when your sister and your Mom were in camp, you didn't know, you still didn't know where he was?
- JM: 00:45:45 No, we knew because we would get these letters from him full of holes. And I remember my Mom saying there was really no sense in writing to Dad because all his letters and nothing but cut outs and, you know, being censored, and she said probably ours is too. So I know she, she said, well, the only thing I can say is how are you? We're doing okay in um, so he used to write to us, but, you know, wherever, after I read that book, I guess paper was scarce. So I guess he knew he wrote whatever he could get hold of, a writing, you know, paper.

AT: 00:46:38 So that was, um, I actually wasn't familiar with that. That writing, that paper was scarce.

JM: 00:46:45 Oh, I'm sorry?

AT: 00:46:46 I, I haven't, I haven't heard about that.

JM: 00:46:48 Oh yeah, well that's what it said in that book I read yeah, that it was scarce, but you know, they all helped each other. You got the paper to write on.

AT: 00:47:01 Well, and that's, that must've been pretty big then that he had a little notepad. It seems like.

JM: 00:47:08 Yeah, I don't kn, that's why I wondered where he got the notepad, you know, after I read that I wondered, where did he get that notepad? They hit a canteen, I think. I'm not sure. But then according to that book, some families I think, were sending money, but I don't remember whether my Mom sent money or not. You know, these guys are, their assets are all frozen. So when he was taken then you know, we couldn't touch anything but my Dad had an account with me or I had an account with him at a bank. So I used to go every weekend or every month and sneak so much money on until the balance was zero.

AT: 00:48:04 When, at what point were you doing that?

JM: 00:48:10 That was after he was taken. So that was in '41.

AT: 00:48:17 And um, so from the reports that you read after this has happened, um, there were claims that his involvement with the charity work

JM: 00:48:35 Yeah

AT: 00:48:35 Ah, and a couple of other organizations

JM: 00:48:37 Yeah

AT: 00:48:38 Where the reason why he called you at least

JM: 00:48:39 Yeah, he belonged to about five organizations like the hotel organizations, the laundry organizations, the Japanese Association. This charity thing was bad because uh, this group got money to send to Japan, to the soldiers' families, and I guess government felt that was being unpatriotic. You know, he donated more than the rest of the people they claim. But then

he was the head of it, s o maybe he did that just to show, you know, we should all donate money to the families. But those were the things that were against him.

AT: 00:49:38 Were you familiar with that work that he was doing before the war?

JM: 00:49:41 Well, I knew he was in a lot of organization and um, the Japanese Association. I know he started the Boy Scouts in Portland and my Mom was real happy about that because she used to tell me, you know, they finally got a Boy Scouts for the Japanese kids.

AT: 00:50:00 Hmm. And ah, when he was writing, did you have any idea where he was writing from or where he was?

JM: 00:50:14 Well, yeah, because it would say the camp he was from, you know.

AT: 00:50:19 So that part wasn't censored?

JM: 00:50:21 No. So we knew where were he was.

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