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Title: Geri Handa Interview
Narrator: Geri Handa
Interviewer: Naoko Wake
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<Begin Segment 14>

NW: Do you think things could be different or change in the future? Let's say American government attitude towards *hibakushas* or nuclear weapons in general. Either way.

GH: I think that, I, especially the weapons, I think that's beginning to change, and I think because of, there's also, you know, a lot of conflict in the world right now, and part of it has to do with, things are changing very rapidly and I think what we need to do is, is support those changes that, you know, support the people who are in need, and at the same time begin to understand that maybe we need to look at things a little bit differently. Because the world is changing. And, and on top of that, the environment is changing. That's gonna affect everyone! Not just you immediately, your country or whatever. But, the world! What are we going to do if we run out of water, fresh water? And what are we going to do when, when the, you know, the weather changes or the climate changes and then also the temperature of the waters change. Freshwater becomes saltwater. Warm . . .

NW: You can't just be thinking of your national interest anymore.

GH: No, you can't. And I think that's what we have to do. We have to take a more worldly view and I think one of the things that changes your world is because of the internet, because of, you know, just the way things are communicated, you know, Facebook and, there's a whole chain, a social network, right? And I, I think maybe in some ways the world is becoming closer. And so I, I think young people want to communicate in that way. They can't wait to communicate, they wanna communicate now. And, and I think that's even, well, to me, the key would be actually to travel. I would always encourage people to travel.

NW: Right, yeah.

GH: Because that always will probably change your perspective, at least make, you know, makes you look at the larger picture? And maybe appreciate those things that you've taken for granted.

NW: Right, right. Absolutely, yeah.

GH: Because, when I see, you know, like people in the poor countries, they love going to school, you know, but it's so expensive for them or because of the hardship of, maybe their nation is at war or something and can't go. Listen, look here at America! We're struggling to keep schools

open and keeping the teachers, but do people really appreciate education as much as these other poor countries really do.

NW: Right, right, that's a irony.

GH: They walk for miles to go to school.

NW: Right, to go to school yeah.

GH: And I said "People have got to see a bigger picture," you know, especially in America. I think we, we're very ignorant of a, many things and I think, especially of other cultures, and you know, if we can appreciate other cultures, maybe have a better understanding, then we can maybe understand why certain things like whaling and all those things, and um, it's part of the culture, but if you don't understand it, then you look at it a different way. But if you understand it, then you, perhaps you won't take an attack mode, but also maybe better understanding mode.

NW: Yeah. It doesn't mean that you aren't still criticizing what you've been criticizing but there would be at least based on, based on a better understanding of what the other party's doing anyway. I think that's a good way of describing it.

GH: A better understanding, yes, yes, and you can't take away somebody's livelihood, you know, what are you going to replace it with?

NW: So, do you have answer for that? I mean, if you have an answer for that, yeah, then we can converse. Absolutely. I see your point of view.

GH: And I think . . . yeah. Because you have to look at it that way, too. If someone were to take away your livelihood, of course you're going to be upset. I mean, you don't want that to happen, but what else, would you have an alternative, do you have something else for them to do? And in this economy now, you know, people are struggling, yeah, yeah. So.

NW: Right, yeah. You know, how, speaking of, I like what you said about, you know, you encourage young people to travel and get the different perspective on things, because otherwise you'd think that your way is the mainstream and you'll never have the real sense of diversity, I really think, is that true.

GH: In Buddhism, you know, you always look at, there's so many ways to look at one thing, so many different eyes to see a problem.

NW: Right, right. I know what you mean, right.

GH: And finding the, maybe, a way to solve it.

NW: Uh-huh. So that's, that's connected, yeah.

GH: And so, you know, that's why I always think, that's why you need to have more than one person looking at something.

NW: Right, yeah. I see that, yeah.

GH: You have different, you know, different points of view, and then you maybe come up with a different conclusion. You take into consideration . . .

NW: And even your goal might be redefined as well, based on that. Yeah, yeah.

GH: Yeah, yeah.

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