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Title: Jun Dairiki Interview
Narrator: Jun Dairiki
Interviewer: Naoko Wake
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<Begin Segment 13>

NW: Now, probably, um, switching a gear a little bit, and going back to the internment camp. As I said earlier, that's something many people are interested in and many people think it's an absolute injustice done to Japanese Americans, and that's the reason why there is a huge interest in the subject. You said earlier that your mother was kinda glad about certain aspects of it, but you didn't really . . .

JD: From the stand point of never having to do any domestic stuff at home. I don't know how she really felt about camp over and above that, you know. She never said, and I never asked her. I never thought to ask her.

NW: But you must have heard what other people said more recently, probably, the '70s or '80s or '90s or even today, who talk about the experience of injustice being done to Japanese Americans. Do you think, you know, your view on internment camps changed over time?

JD: Probably, I don't want it to happen again, and it almost did happen when 9/11 occurred. Against the Muslims or anyone who was middle-eastern descent. It did not matter where in the Middle East they came. Or whether or not they were royal or not, but that's something I don't want to see ever to happen again. It's not right, it's very definitely wrong. Just because of our ethnicity, we were thrown into camp, and yet when it was all of the sudden done, there was no evidence that we were gonna harm the U.S., even among the Issei, you know, I mean I am sure there were some radicals and what not, but it was proven that we intended no harm against the U.S. This became their home, and this is how they were behaving. The unfortunate part was that they could not get U.S. citizenship until 1952. So they were aliens in this country after living here many years and in 1952, a lot of them have passed on or what ever, but yeah it was in 1952 they were able to get the U.S. citizenship. Surprisingly my mom and dad never went and got it. And I don't know why. Maybe we should have encouraged it. They were there by themselves, we were scattered all over, because 1952 was when I graduated from high school, you know. But if I thought about it over the years, maybe I should have pushed them to get the U.S. citizenship. But I never did. None of us kids did, and I don't know why.

NW: So, you are, you are . . . not citizen now?

JD: No, I'm talking about my parents.

NW: Your parents, okay, sorry about that.

JD: See, they were aliens, and they could not get citizenship until 1952.

NW: That's right, because you were born here, you have the natural citizenship. But, you know, in the 1970s, or even late '60s, there are, especially Japanese Americans and Chinese Americans as well, who are starting to think about their past more seriously, how, what did you think of that sort of, the rise of that sort of social awareness?

JD: See, the thing is that Niseis are known as quiet Americans, because they don't say too much, but Sanseis are very vocal. They're the ones pushing for social justice and civil rights, all this, that and the other. So if you are talking about the 60s and 70s, and certainly into the 80s, it was Sanseis who were doing that. Sanseis and from that generation on, they were more vocal than we Niseis.

NW: What were, you must have had opinion about what Sansei generation was doing.

JD: Did I? I don't know. Because my niece is very active.

NW: Was she a university student at that time?

JD: No, not in the '60s, she was born in 53.

NW: She was too young.

JD: You know, I don't know. Maybe because I wasn't too much into being vocal, at that time, I wasn't into being very vocal about social injustice and what not. I wasn't vocal. I might have felt that this was all wrong, but I might not have said much, you know. I was just glad that Sanseis decided that it was wrong and they decided to do something about it. I am glad that they have done that. And of course now that Yonseis doing the same thing. So I am happy about that.

NW: Do you think your relationship, or you yourself as a second generation Nisei, do you think because of this rise of the civil rights movement among Sansei, the relationship between people like yourself, Nisei generation to Sansei generation, changed?

JD: The relationship? Oh I don't think so. I don't think the relationship changed. I think that if anything I think that we respect them for, you know, having the gumption to do it, that we didn't do. So I don't think the relationship changed any. If anything, probably, giving them a lot of respect for being so vocal. Because if it weren't for them, there might not be, I mean, we still have some discrimination issues in the U.S. even amongst us, you know, even though you are U.S. born, there are still some discrimination. It's a lot better than what it was, but it's still here.

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