

Densho Digital Repository
Naoko Wake Collection of Oral Histories of US Survivors of the Atomic Bombs Collection
Title: Yuriko Furubayashi Interview
Narrator: Yuriko Furubayashi
Interviewer: Naoko Wake
Location: Kailua, Hawai'i
Date: June 21, 2013
Densho ID: ddr-densho-1021-7-25

<Begin Segment 25>

NW: Now, this is something I probably neglected to ask you earlier. This is also related to you being a US survivor of the bomb. Do you think that your experience of the bomb might have been different because you still had a cultural connection to America or Hawai'i in your case? And I ask you this question because some people, not everybody, but some people I talk to told me how even after the war started out, they felt really friendly to America, which, my impression is that, listening to your stories, probably more or less was true in your case as well. And some people even told me that when they looked at B-29s in the skies, they felt like, "Oh, this is the airplane from my country, this is my friend," while other people told me that, well, this is really a particular example, but she told me how, when the bomb exploded, only thing she took away with her when she was running away from her house, which was burning, was a blanket that she took back from America and she was like, very attached to this blanket that's made in America. Do you have any stories like that? I'm thinking of something that probably connects your experience of the bomb and your origin in Hawai'i. I mean, if you don't have anything like that, that's fine. I just wondered if you have something that comes to your mind.

YF: Well, I thought well, maybe finally, I can see my parents or my family.

NW: When the bomb was dropped.

YF: Yeah. I mean, you know, no, not exactly when the bomb was dropped. After a while, you know? They surrendered, yeah. For me, it was, you know, I said, "Oh, what are we doing now?" I can see my family." And then, when I was able to, I wasn't that anxious, I said to myself, "Oh, my poor auntie and uncle, I better come back really soon." I had mixed feelings.

NW: Yeah, right. But your auntie and aunt must have missed you because they were thinking of you as if you were their daughter, right?

YF: They thought I still was going to go back. That's what my intention was.

NW: Right, but you never did.

YF: I didn't. Well, you know, and then I got married. I was 23 only. I got married, but then I said to myself, "Wow, I'd hate to go back to Hiroshima." It wasn't a good experience for me, seeing everything that such a traumatic . . .

NW: Disarray.

YF: And, wasn't too anxious. Although, I was obligated.

NW: Yeah, I understand that, I think.

YF: It was a long time and over ten years that Hiroshima was not moving. They said they couldn't do anything because of the fallout. But it's recovered. Seems like everything's okay now, but you know how long ago, 50 years it took them. You know, the funny thing is, but I went, my husband and I, went to this Hiroshima, the last time we went, we went, once, he went to Japan, but my classmates, somewhere around 20 or 30 of them got together at the hotel, we had a chat, lunch, you know? You know, I hear the stories and all that and I say to myself, "You know, those people, they were my age, 50, 60, they build the Hiroshima, after that." You know, they may have only been 20 years old when I was 18 or 20 and then 10 years later, of course they suffer for 10 years or stuff, but 10 years later, you know, they grow up and they have a business or did that and lot of success story, you know? I hear. So, the war, of course they went to fight outside, but you know, after the burning, you would think that Hiroshima would be a dead place but [it's] not.

NW: It wasn't.

YF: Yeah. Those people really worked hard.

NW: To revive the city.

YF: Yeah. The city's really, you know, booming now. Survived, I mean. And then, those people, my friends, their husbands, they're doing fine.

NW: Right, right.

<End Segment 25> - Copyright © 2013 Densho and Naoko Wake. All Rights Reserved.