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Title: Thomas T. Noguchi Interview  
Narrator: Thomas T. Noguchi  
Interviewer: Naoko Wake  
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<Begin Segment 2>

TN: Now, after, I would say, uh . . . 1969 or '70, I had a visit. And I had two ladies who were uh, and one was Mrs. Okai. O-K-A-I. Ms. Okai, who was, uh, a group leader of Friends of uh, Hibakusha group, and accompanied by another lady, Kaz Suyeishi. And they told me basically that there were a large number of *hibakusha*.

NW: Uh-huh.

TN: Mostly, they had [?] *hibaku* [bee exposed] in the Hiroshima and some of the survivors from Nagasaki. Not a lot though, because you may know, most of the immigrants' parents are from Hiroshima. So, naturally you would have a large number of Hiroshima descendants here.

NW: Right. Right.

TN: Now, uh . . . the best I could do is to—of course, you might appreciate, 1970 is about twenty year after World War II ended and there is a ceremony [?] here to bring out some of the issues, war-related issues. And it seems to have patients, uh . . . quietly suffering. And they did complain to me, as uh, many of them were not English-speaking because they're children of the immigrants here and went to Japan for their education in the war. And then the survivors were principally Japanese speaking.

NW: Mhm.

TN: And as a result, they thought that the medical advices to the practicing Japanese American doctors, I'm talking about 50 . . . 40 or 50 years ago. So, that uh, American doctors, or, Japanese American doctors might not be fully aware of the duty of ABCC in Hiroshima.

NW: Right.

TN: I was in Japan until 1952. I was fully aware of the activity of the ABCC. Some of that later I learned, Dr. James Yamazaki, he was a [?] pediatrician. He was a member of the ABCC, many of them were Nisei. Doctors were dying there who were by the [?]. And uh . . . um . . . I thought the best way is to . . . have two, three things.

NW: Mhm.

TN: The, well, organization that were loosely arranged should be formally assembled and the name choose, the Committee of the Atomic Bomb Survivors of the USA.

NW: Right.

TN: And I also suggested . . . of course I'm being a county department head and uh . . . what would a city mayor and city legislators and some of the US doctors and US . . . uh . . . representatives. So I can do a number of things for them, but uh, most important thing I thought then, that the organization should be self-sustaining and should be self-motivating, and I cannot stress that as long as one [?] organization they tend to rely on . . . you do not develop [?] leadership. I don't think I agreed with everyone but to Mrs. Okai and Mrs. Suyeishi have a number of occasions to stress the importance that they should have without me. To have own meeting and their relations and so forth. What I did is things that I can do right away, is I informed that, in fact, I uh . . . called the president of Los Angeles County Medical Association then would Dr. Sankowitz [?] that by the way was fifty years ago. But he was very receptive . . . So far I have learned that everyone seems to present their theories as physical, uh . . . disease. It seems to have a continuous uncertainty and they expected to have it. Similar survey, biannual checkups and so forth. Subjects in Japan and that's what they call the *hibakusha techō*, uh the certificate you get to certify them as atomic survivors.

NW: Uh-huh.

TN: And I thought that that way to have, experimentally . . . well I don't mean experimentally at the type of project, regarding, uh . . . atomic bomb survivor, I mean the ABCC specialist. But and especially the University of Hiroshima Medical School and uh . . . my job was to make sure that we LA medical group was ready to accept. I think that the Japanese physicians have no medical licenses for the State. California you have to have our doctor and probably the organizations and medical associations and so forth. And that I was able to uh . . . arrange for Los Angeles County. And . . . um, the general hospital is still there. And the large outpatient clinic associated [?], to be used, probably [it] was two, three times, so we used that same facility two days and mostly what they had was individually just listen to the people, their plight, their problems, and concerns, and showing them that they are . . . they are getting the type of . . . examinations and checks. Now, LA County, without any asking for any costs . . . they did laboratory tests. The complete blood test and all these things and I believe X-rays and so forth.

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