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Title: Thomas T. Noguchi Interview
Narrator: Thomas T. Noguchi
Interviewer: Naoko Wake
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<Begin Segment 9>

NW: Now, I'm really trying to get the sense of connection here. So, spare me . . . with a few more questions.

TN: Yeah.

NW: So in many ways, you share many things with U.S. survivors because, as you mentioned, many U.S. survivors, even though they are U.S. born, U.S. citizens, speak Japanese as their primary language, which is your case. And then they came to America, in many cases around the same time as you did. So, I know for instance Kaz Suyeishi came to the States in late 1950s, early '60s. And um, that's—that's, that's kind of similar to your experience because you both probably had to get used to a new environment where things are so different from Japanese situations. And uh, you talked about, you know, discrimination against Japanese Americans in general. And I think you're right to mention how there are housing discriminations and memories of relocation camps during World War II were still um, fresh, in many people's thinking. Um, so and then, you know, obviously the bomb is a huge issue. Nobody looks at the bomb and thinks it's a trivial issue. And so, in many ways, a very important event in thinking about U.S.-Japan relationship after World War II. So I'm just trying to get the sense of what was—if there is something special, for you, in this work of helping out the survivors, who seem to share many things with you?

TN: Uh, guess uh, it seemed that . . . we see doctors here practicing medicine in Los Angeles or the State of California. They did not seem to . . . although sympathetic, did not have a means to assure that whatever treatment. What they are getting is [not] comparable to what the Japanese government was providing. Uh, what lacks is I, of course, I understand far more than a Japanese doctors and doctors here in the area of 1970. I'm sure uh . . . doctors are much more aware what needs to be done. They have been treating illness mostly nervousness and headache and none of that. Uh . . . since many survivors feel this might be the symptoms of the atomic blast. Mostly not. Uh, but the assurance and periodic medical survey is the way to go and we were able to provide it. I'm very happy.

[Mr. and Mrs. Noguchi are speaking inaudibly in the background]

TN: I don't know if you heard that?

NW: No, could you please repeat that?

TN: James Yamazaki whom I've mentioned to you. Pediatrician was assigned to ABCC, a lab, and I think he is a—he is a bilingual doctor and a great deal of empathy for the survivors. And . . . their issue.

[Mrs. Noguchi is speaking in the background]

TN: So are we going to do more? Or do you have enough to re—have a second interview later on after you put it all together?

NW: Sure, let me review the interview today and I will surely get in touch with you again to maybe set up another time, if it's ok with you. Um, I have a question for you, however, which I hope we can take care of very quickly. You mentioned Mike Yamaki? A UCLA graduate who is a lawyer and you said that he is still active as a lawyer in the Los Angeles area?

TN: Yes. Mike is a more or less a business law . . . He was practicing. He may still be. I don't know. Uh . . .

NW: I'm wondering if you have any contact information of his?

TN: Okay. I need to contact his wife, who is a television person. With Toyota. Uh . . . she's not on the television now but she . . . I will try. I will send an e-mail to you.

NW: That would be great. That would be wonderful. So, um, thank you for your time and answering my questions. It's a . . . very, uh, honor and pleasure for me to be able to talk with you. So, I really hope that we have another opportunity to, to talk. So let me just look at my record here and I'm sure I have many questions I'd like to ask you, so.

TN: We set it for longer but you just put it all together and contact me and we'll have another session.

NW: Okay. Sounds great. Thank you very much, Dr. Noguchi.

TN: Bye.

NW: Bye-bye.

<End Segment 9> - Copyright © 2014 Densho and Naoko Wake. All Rights Reserved.