

Densho Digital Repository  
Naoko Wake Collection of Oral Histories of US Survivors of the Atomic Bombs Collection  
Title: Paul Satoh Interview  
Narrator: Paul Satoh  
Interviewer: Naoko Wake  
Location: East Lansing, Michigan  
Date: August 23, 2015  
Densho ID: ddr-densho-1021-9-10

[Mr. Satoh's son Gordon Satoh was present at the interview, and when he speaks, he is denoted as GS]

<Begin Segment 10>

NW: So, I am trying to figure out what people like you, um, or people, to be more specific, who had family connections to America might have had as an image of America as a country. When you're growing up before the war and maybe some of it might have been changed because of the war, but, it might not have. So, I'd like to kind of know . . .

PS: Interesting thing—I never heard of internment camp until I saw Uncle Harada, my uh—Aunt Sakiko's father. Um . . . the, [kids] were reading about it, ok, sorry, but uh . . . among Japanese after the war, we never heard, you know, things like uh . . . um . . . how much that 125,000 Japanese Americans incarcerated. And various possible, you know, seven internment camps in the United States. And uh . . . no, we didn't really talk about it until I met him. So, things we uh . . . know about the United States when I was a kid was uh, occasionally Aunt Sakiko's relatives said some care pack from the United States she shared with us. So I, I learned about the United States that way. And um . . . so that's one of the reasons why I think it's a very, kind of remote things. In my family . . .

NW: That was before you came to the States that you learned about it?

PS: Before I came to the United States. But you know, I—the—I met my Uncle—the uh, Minoru Harada, um, when I came to the United States . . . in the 1960s. And uh . . . '61 or '2. He invited me to New York. He had an office in New York. They lived in New Jersey, but . . . Uh, he had a branch office of—Odakiri Mercantile. Odakiri, you know, the export, import companies. You can still see those emblems on any of those now. But uh, he told me also the oldest story about how the Americans, that the, incarnated about—the many Japanese Americans and what, and . . . They had a very hard time, in the camp. Mr. Odakiri and he became a very good friend and that's why he became . . . And um, there was—somehow related to the group in Chicago too, but uh . . . That's how I learned about it. But again, he doesn't talk much about what happened in internment camp, either. So I said, what happened? Well, it's a very hard life. You know what, we survived. And he became a very good Presbyterian. Um . . . you know, the Christian. He said forgiveness is very important, that—so he doesn't talk about what detail—what happened to that.

NW: Mhm. So remind me, this uncle—who was interned during World War II—was your . . . relative from . . . ?

PS: The relative—the relatives from—so, what happened is that Uncle—the Uncle Masaru's wife, Aunt Sakiko's father, uh is that the uh, the Mr. Harada. And that's the way that we are related to. So.

NW: Okay. Yeah. Okay. So, this uncle is through uncle—Aunt Sakiko's family?

PS: Yup.

NW: That you were . . . connected to.

PS: Right.

NW: Okay. Um . . .

PS: So, however though, from him we don't really hear much about how he suffered in internment camp.

NW: Mhm. Right.

PS: I always tried to find out. There must be some commonalities there. And uh, so that's what . . . coming . . . Okay.

**<End Segment 10> - Copyright © 2015 Densho and Naoko Wake. All Rights Reserved.**