Nevada Test Site Oral History Project University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Interview with Katsumi Furitsu

With Janet Gordon

May 13, 2005 Las Vegas, Nevada

Interview Conducted By Mary Palevsky

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Table of Contents

Introduction: birth, background on work as physician on genetic effects of radiation and as an antinuclear activist	1
Talks about survey of and compensation for atomic bomb victims in Japan	3
Discusses diseases suffered by atomic bomb victims, perception of atomic bomb victims as <i>genbaku bura-bura</i> , discrimination against atomic bomb victims	4
Relates discrimination and compensation issues for second-generation atomic bomb victims	5
Talks about Japanese awareness of Pacific testing and its effects, including exposure of the crew of the <i>Fortunate Dragon</i> , mentions lack of health care for atomic bomb victims during the American occupation of Japan	8
Discusses efforts of antinuclear movement to get compensation for atomic bomb victims in Japan	10
Returns to subject of discrimination against first-and-second-generation atomic bomb victims in Japanese society	11
Talks about ABCC and RERF research on atomic bomb victims in Japan	12
Returns to her work as physician and activist with <i>hibakusha</i> (atomic bomb	13
survivors and radiation victims) and talks about the form her activism takes, including CARE and NO DU movements	
Discusses activities of Philip Harrison of the Navajo Nation and attempts to get compensation for uranium miners under RECA	18
Janet Gordon clarifies earlier points, including treatment of part-time workers in Japanese nuclear power plants, less discrimination against <i>hibakusha</i> due to better understanding, and Katsumi Furitsu's work on a global network of activists	20
Reflections on anniversaries – Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Bikini, Chernobyl – and importance of urging victims to speak about their experiences and continuing the antinuclear movement at this historic crossroad	22
Conclusion: remembering the Japanese <i>hibakusha</i> as elder statespersons of the antinuclear movement	23

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[00:00:00] Begin Track 2, Disc 1.

Mary Palevsky: Katsumi, thank you so much for speaking with us today. I thought we could start with you just giving your full name, your place of birth, your date of birth, something of your background, and how you became involved in your activism and your science.

Katsumi Furitsu: Thank you very much for making interview to me today. My name is

Katsumi Furitsu. I came from Osaka, from Japan, and my birth date, I sometimes forget but—

1959 October 22. And as for my background, yes, I myself is a professional. I'm a physician and
I'm now doing some kind of research on genetic effect of radiation. But at the same time, I'm an
activist of anti-nuclear movement, of course including anti-nuclear power plant[s] in Japan. And
I have to tell you why I became interested in this issue. When I was a medical student, I really
wanted to be a good medical doctor to save life of people, and I really wanted to work for
people. But by chance I read a book written by a journalist. In this book—he himself worked in a
nuclear power plant as a nuclear power plant worker. And it was very interesting for me because
I didn't know anything about nuclear power plant[s] at that time. But in that plant, usually in
Japan, many of the workers who have to work in the most dangerous places, most radioactive
places, are usually part-time worker.

Really.

Yes, and they work in such place and sometimes get ill, but they have to leave their work—I mean the boss change him to other place without compensation. So I was very shocked to know that fact. Because I wanted to be a good doctor, but at the same time, in this world, in our own

country, while we are using such electricity and having such comfortable life, such radiation victims are—such victims have been made in that plant. So that's the beginning of my activity on anti-nuclear power plant.

Then, yes, it was just probably one year after the Three Mile Island accident in this country, United States; and also in Japan people began to [be] concerned about the nuclear power plants and, you know, the anti-nuclear power plants movement was started—was—sorry, such movement growing up.

OK. So at that point, see, when was Three Mile Island? You're fairly young then still when—
Not so young. Yeah, at that time I still at university—

A teenager.

Still. Nineteen or a little bit before twenty.

But you were aware of it and you—

Yes, because, after reading such book, I learn by myself and of course my friends tell me [00:05:00] something. So I learn about Three Mile and I learn about the nuclear power plant itself, how they make electricity and—a nuclear power plant is making electricity but actually it's something like the atomic bomb in the ground, they make energy gradually only, so that's only the difference, I think.

So anyway, after I graduated medical college, I studied to work in a hospital. There, the hospital was very, very good hospital. They always think about poor people and they always think about to work for people. In that hospital, we have such experience—know about taking medical care, of the survivors of A-bomb victims also.

The survivors of the A—

Yes. We also did some questionnaire survey of our patients, and not only our own patients of our own hospitals but also many other A-bomb victims who are living in Osaka, and some of them are still living in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. I have [sounds of paper rattling], yeah, so I'll leave it for you, but we made interview to more than one thousand survivors at that time. At that time in Japan, I suppose fortieth anniversary of the A-bomb victims—A-bomb itself. Still the compensation, though, for A-bomb victims was a very, very big concern of the A-bomb victims themselves and also the peace movement in Japan.

You said the what of the—the compensation of the A-bomb victims? No, the condition?

The role for compensation for the A-bomb victims. You know, it's a very long history but I cannot say everything in this moment, but A-bomb victims have been demanding such compensation role of our Japanese government because Japanese government gave up to demand any compensation to your country, though your country actually bombed Hiroshima and Nagasaki. But so A-bomb victims have been demanding such compensation of our government because [of the] A-bombing. Our government did such aggressive war to [against] the Asian countries, and at the end of the war, your country bombed—I think the bombing is not justified from that reason. Anyway, our government did such things, so our A-bomb victims have been demanding to [of] our government the compensation. And at the same time demand [that they] never make such war, so the spirit of our demand is such things. So anyway, we did such survey to support the movement of A-bomb victims.

So let me ask you a question here. And you're doing great. I just want to make sure I understood the compensation, and that helps me understand what's happening, then, in Japan. So you're at the hospital in Osaka and there are A-bomb victims in the hospital. And the survey, though, covers people in other hospitals, or generally, not just in hospitals but everywhere?

[00:10:00] Right. And our hospital is not only for A-bomb victims.

I understand.

And so at that time we usually examine at least twice a year, the number is probably around 200 of the A-bomb victims, only in our hospital.

In your hospital. What kinds of things—can you generally say what kinds of illnesses people are having and what kinds of things you see?

I look to see—people usually think the effect of radiation—I mean radiation cause cancer and leukemia and such kind of malignant diseases, but the thing which we found is A-bomb victims have been suffering not only from such malignant diseases but also from many other nonmalignant diseases, such as hypertension, diabetes, and musculoskeletal disease and endocrine disease in the blood, all such kind of, you know. So according to our survey, our patients have— A-bomb sufferers have higher incidence of such diseases compared to non-exposed Japanese population. And one more thing I would like to say. Because of such harsh conditions, A-bomb victims had a very hard life. I mean they really wanted to work hard as other people but they couldn't. And I'd like to add one more harsh condition named Genbaku Bura Bura. Genbaku means A-bomb, you know. Bura Bura means something—we usually use such expression in Japanese [about] our people who [are] quite idle. Genbaku Bura Bura in Japanese in direct translation means "idle person's disease." Many Japanese A-bomb sufferers have such conditions. They are very easy to get fatigued and have headaches and vertigo and palpitation, and such kind of things people cannot understand from outside. But A-bomb victims are really suffering from such symptoms, and they wanted to work hard but they couldn't. But people couldn't understand the situation, so they think that A-bomb victims are idle, they are always

complaining [about] something; they say A-bomb is a reason or something. And they have been discriminated from other people from such situation and—

Janet Gordon: Question? Do they blame the victims for being lazy and just not trying hard enough so that the discrimination is a double-edge? It's they can't work as hard but then they're also accused of being lazy and not trying hard enough?

Katsumi Furitsu: I suppose both. Yes, both. And one more thing is, ordinary people did not know, even does not know the real situation with radiation effect; so [00:15:00] sometimes, such things happened also in general view, but sometimes victims were discriminated as if such radiation-caused disease might transmit to somebody.

Janet Gordon: Yes. Be contagious.

Katsumi Furitsu: So it's a stupid idea but actually such things happened.

I've read something of some of the discrimination against atomic bomb victims in Japan. I wonder if you as a physician think it's—in my mind, I always connected it to how if someone gets cancer here, you're almost sometimes—not so much anymore, but in the old days, they would be shunned in a certain sense. They would be ignored or—because people are afraid themselves of being in that same position. I wonder if it's a similar kind of thing with the A-bomb victims.

Maybe I'm wrong. I don't know.

I'm sorry, I don't really understand what you have said.

OK, maybe the better way to ask the question is, I think it's important to understand that there is discrimination, and anything more you can tell me about that would be useful. But you've really explained it pretty well, this notion, and say the—the Japanese word for the A-bomb victim is what? Hibakusha. Is that right?

Yes.

And then—but there's another word you said. What's the name for the A-bomb in Japanese?

Yes, usually *Hibakusha*.

Janet Gordon: The term you used earlier.

And the atomic bomb itself is called what?

Genbaku.

Mary Palevsky: Genbaku. *That's what I'm asking. OK.*

So we sometimes call *Hibakusha*. *Genbaku Hibakusha* or something.

So when you say "atomic bomb victims" you're talking about some people must be sicker than other people, no? Depending on where they were in the scheme of things? Do you see things like that?

Ah—

Or people have obviously died through the years—?

Yes.

I guess is what I'm saying, depending on the kinds of effects that they suffered?

I'm sorry—

Maybe these are bad questions.

I'm sorry.

Janet Gordon: Let me see if I can clarify something. A lot of the people who did survive had physical effects as well as the radiation, so there were levels of effect, and some people had physical injuries and then also later had injuries related to the low-level radiation. They developed diabetes or whatever later on, but didn't have that initially. So you have layers of illnesses, is that correct?

Katsumi Furitsu: Yes.

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7

Janet Gordon: Does that make any sense to you?

Katsumi Furitsu: I don't think so.

Janet Gordon: OK.

Katsumi Furitsu: Sorry.

Well, then, just keep going with your story. Maybe we're not understanding. But I guess what I'm trying to understand is there are a certain number of people now surviving in Japan who weren't killed by the atomic bomb but are suffering long-term health effects, and you did this survey and the survey found that other kinds of things—diabetes, fatigue—were manifested in them at a higher percentage than in the normal population.

Yes, right.

Good. I understand that.

So what shall I say?

Janet Gordon: Next generations?

Yeah, so a part of the discrimination also come from the issue of the next generation.

Mary Palevsky: Oh, OK.

Yeah, I think so. But you know it's very difficult to get the evidence now that genetic effect of [00:20:00] radiation, especially in human beings, even for now, as far as I know. And as for the A-bomb victims, the second generation of the A-bomb victims, we have not yet have enough scientific evidence, I'm sorry to say, or luckily to say, but I myself believe that human beings also have some kind of genetic effect from radiation because we have some evidence from animal experiment; and radiation itself might harm the DNA, and so I myself think that radiation will cause genetic effect, but scientifically we have not yet enough evidence. But you might note that this issue is quite delicate issue for A-bomb victims in the second generation themselves.

Because as I told you, such kind of discrimination came out from such fear to the effect to the genetic—next generation. And so during the past I think ten years, the second generation themselves, some people started such activities to demand some compensation or some health care to our government to the second generation. And I know that it was very hard for themselves to start such activities themselves because of the discrimination and such things, but they are saying that without compensation or without—right now they themselves government have not yet concede the second generation as radiation victims. So they cannot get any compensation or anything. So in such situation, only the discrimination exists with that compensation, and so that demand which—so the second generation, activists of the second generation are demanding compensation and demand research on the genetic effects and demanding following up of the health of the second generation.

That's really interesting. I have a couple of questions. What is the state of compensation for first-generation people? Is there something happening there?

Yes. You know, Japanese A-bomb survivors have been demanding some kind of compensation and they got, just after the war in—I mean probably, trying to think, for about ten years after the bombing, A-bomb victims couldn't say anything about A-bomb itself. [00:25:00] During that time, many A-bomb survivors have died from many illnesses. And just after the nuclear testing in the Pacific Ocean—

Yes. I know about the Bravo test and the Lucky Dragon. That's what you're referring to?
Yes.

Yes, I know about that.

And after that nuclear testing in Bikini, Japanese people [be]came aware about the nuclear bombing.

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9

Oh, interesting. Interesting.

Janet Gordon:

And radiation.

Katsumi Furitsu:

Yeah. You know, Lucky Dragon was exposed from the hydrogen bomb

and they came back to Japan and one of the crew died from acute effect of radiation. And many

radioactive fishes brought to Japan. So that's why ordinary people came to understand—

Very interesting.

But before that, many A-bomb survivors, even though they suffered from radiation effect,

because of the dictatorship of the U.S. Army—

Yes. Yes, the occupation.

Yes, occupation of the U.S. Army, they pressured [against] the outspeaking of the such—

Yes. I understand.

So that was a history note.

Janet Gordon:

So during that time, they were not given any health care either.

Katsumi Furitsu:

Yeah, any—yes, yes, anything.

Janet Gordon:

Nothing.

Katsumi Furitsu:

Nothing.

OK, so you're saying there was no particular health care for the A-bomb victims during the occupation?

Yes. And even they couldn't tell about anything. For example, school children write about their own story in school, but such things, some kind of police come to them and take out, or such things.

Janet Gordon:

So it was suppressed.

Don't worry about dates. We can always get those later.

Katsumi Furitsu: Yes. But anyway, so we started the anti-nuclear movement and we started supporting the A-bomb victims from that time, and continue to demand government something. And after some more years—I'll tell you later about exact date or year—

Yes. Anyway, so after many years, after the effort of the A-bomb victims and activists of peace movement, through such effort our government finally make some kind of laws to our—

So there is some financial compensation at some point?

At that time it's not really the compensation, and also right now I myself think it's not the compensation any more, but they give some kind of medical care to the—I mean we Japanese people, all of us have medical insurance, so even the A-bomb victims have to pay something to the fund of the medical insurance. But anyway, in the case of the ordinary people, we have to pay, for example, 10 percent or 30 percent of the cost of the medical care, but in the case of A-bomb victims, they do not have to pay at the hospital when they get some kind of [00:30:00] medical care. They have some kind of notebook which qualify that the person is actually the A-bomb victims or not. So we have such system. And at the same time, if a medical doctor writes some certificate of some kind of diseases, they can get not so much but some kind of small amount of money per month for medical care by themselves. And one more thing is at least twice a year, they can get physical examination at hospital or some clinic. So we have such kind of things.

Right. But what you were saying which prompted my question was that the second generation, no.

No. No.

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11

And help me understand a little bit more the way the discrimination works. I'm going to ask a

question. You tell me whether I'm understanding you right. In the case of someone that a child of

a victim, is it that that wouldn't be want to be made public because of the discrimination? How

does that work in the society?

Well, that's a good question, I think. But recently it's a little bit easier to say [in] public. But

before it was very, very hard to say in public that that they are children of A-bomb victims,

especially, in Hiroshima and Nagasaki; there are many, many A-bomb victims, first generation,

second generation, both, but especially in other cities, many people went out from Hiroshima and

Nagasaki for work because of the marriage or something and live in other cities like in Osaka,

and in such circumstances it's very difficult to say such things in public. Not only for the second

generation but for the first generation themselves, it's been very difficult to say they themselves

is A-bomb victims. I myself know such case. For example, they couldn't say even to their own

wife and husband that they were bombed by the A-bomb. And for many years, living in the same

house. And some people say just after the marriage of her son or her daughter, she started to say

she herself was a victim.

After the marriage.

Yes.

Janet Gordon:

What about birth defects?

Katsumi Furitsu: Yes, of course I heard about some stories from the victims, but I'm sorry

to say I cannot say enough scientific—

I think what I understood you're saying is that, and again I'm going to ask a question, you tell

me if I'm right or not, if there is a social taboo, for lack of a better word, reason not to say that,

it must complicate the science when you want to find out, if you're not sure who is and who isn't

the second generation, is that true? Is it hard to find—but you're saying now that people are talking about it more.

You mean for researchers to find out the—

Yes.

[00:35:00] You know, the research, it's also a very long history. But after the war, your government, American government came to Hiroshima and Nagasaki and studied such kind of research, including first generation and second generation. Do you know something about ABCC, Atomic Bomb Casualty Commission or something? They study the effect on A-bomb victims, and they took blood from survivors and gave no treatment, and so A-bomb victims have some feelings for such research, as if they were treated as—

Janet Gordon: Take the blood and don't give anything in return.

Katsumi Furitsu: Yeah, so as if they were used as experimental animal or something. But anyway, they developed such a system of—they have lists now of A-bomb survivors. I will try to figure out what is exact number, but several tens of thousands of people are listed on their lists. And they have been doing a lot of studies, including mortality rate of cancer or something. And they also have some lists of second generation. And I have to say, right now Japanese researchers and some researchers from your country have followed the institute. I mean they are not ABCC anymore. They have a new institute named RERF [Radiation Effects Research Foundation], Radiation Effect—I wrote something up there. So anyway, they are continuing the research on the first generation and second generation. So they also have such lists for research.

Janet Gordon: But that's the researchers that have the lists. The people, your neighbors, don't have the list.

Katsumi Furitsu: You're right. So I must say it's not belong to the RERF, of course, so it's difficult to do such research for us for working as an institute. But anyway, so I would like to move to other subjects, but I was talking about my background. Anyway, I was doing such work and some kind of research and activities when I was working [in] the hospital. And so such activity, not only such professional work but from the activity as an activist, I came to know that radiation victims are not only A-bomb survivors. There are many kinds of other radiation victims like Janet. You know, from the first place, A-bomb were made from uranium and they took out uranium from the land of indigenous people here and in other countries. And indigenous people were exposed from radiation without knowledge of the danger. [00:40:00] And all of the process of making bomb and also with making nuclear fuel for nuclear power plants, they make radiation victims. So I think it's very important for us to work with all of the victims in all of the world. So, the word *Hibakusha*, at first we use that word for only A-bomb victim survivors, but in Japanese language *Hibakusha*, *bak* means explosion or something; at the same time *bak* means exposure to some substances or radiation, so we can use the pronunciation for both A-bomb survivors and both other kind of radiation victims, so we can call Janet *Hibakusha*. So if you have chance to look at the history of the anti-nuclear movement, you can find out such things much more correctly. But I suppose around 1970s, our movement in Japan and also the movement in—

Janet Gordon: In the late seventies.

Katsumi Furitsu: Yes, all over the world, we started to use the name of the *Hibakusha* for all of the radiation victims in the world. So my interest is not only A-bomb survivors. And of course other kind of radiation victims, including uranium miners, including victims from nuclear testing, and victims of our nuclear power plant workers, and victims of Chernobyl victims, and—

Janet Gordon: And Three Mile Island.

Katsumi Furitsu: Yes, of course, and also, victims of uranium weapons. So I myself would like to work for all kinds of radiation victims. Well, so that's my background.

That's great. You've told me a lot. I mean it's really interesting. Tell me a little bit about the form that your activism is taking, both in Japan and internationally. What are the kinds of things that you're doing? I know you were just at a conference. You mentioned the different organizations. What is that movement like from your point of view?

Well, this time I came to have some speech, and actually I myself is one of the organizers of that workshop. But this time, I came to this country to participate in the workshop which was held in the United Nations at the time of the NPT [Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty] review conference. [Seventh Review Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), May 2-27 2005]. And, NPT review conference itself is focusing on nuclear disarmament, as you know. But at the same time, we ourselves wanted to bring this issue of depleted uranium for the activism of the disarmament and also the government people and the foreign media. And so we did such workshop in UN. And we invited speakers such as Dr. Rosalie Bartell. She's very, very famous scientist who has been working for many, many years for [00:45:00] radiation victims. She spoke about health effect of uranium weapons. And the second speaker was a Gulf War victim. She was in duty in the first Gulf War in 1991. Gulf War victim.

Yes. And another one, he came from UK [United Kingdom], he was working on this issue in Scotland. You know, in Scotland one of the veterans got compensation. Anyway, they conceded he was to some extent affected by depleted uranium in the Gulf War. Gulf War or Balkan or something, yes. So—

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15

Janet Gordon:

In the Balkans.

In the Balkans. OK.

Balkans. So I send you the information later. So the other speakers are local people, grass roots

movement activists from Concord, Concord in Massachusetts. No?

Yes, it's in Massachusetts.

Yes. There was a factory, a manufacturer [of depleted uranium] —

Janet Gordon:

New Hampshire.

Yeah. And before they call it Nuclear Metals Incorporated. Right now Starmet [Corp.] Anyway,

they made uranium weapons over there and contaminated the environment. And the activists

over there have been doing such work to inform the fact to the local people and watch the—the

factory is now closed but they have to do some cleaning up, so they demanding the cleaning up

and they demanding the health survey and such things. And other speakers came from also a

military toxic project. They have some branches in this country. There are many such dangerous

places near the military facilities. And also, we Japanese people talk about our experience and,

we have been involving in such international coalition to ban uranium weapons—

To ban uranium weapons. Right.

Yes, and we have been collecting such petition to—and we've already collected one thousand

and sixty thousand signatures, more than—already, only in Japan. So I myself spoke a little bit

about such activities in Japan. And also our folks from Gensuikin, the president of the

Gensuikin—

Janet Gordon:

Mr. Wada?

Katsumi Furitsu: No. He retired anyway. Mr. Fukuyama. He spoke about their own activities. They quite were cooperative with ICBUW [International Coalition to Ban Uranium Weapons] and they have helped a lot to collect the signatures.

Janet Gordon: We're going to work on a new petition this afternoon.

Katsumi Furitsu: And also our activists from Hiroshima, they also are doing very active action in Hiroshima also for focusing on DU [depleted uranium] issue. Sorry, their organization is NO DU [Hiroshima] Project in Hiroshima.

NO DU Project in Hiroshima.

How amazing.

[00:50:00] My organization is Campaign Against Radiation Exposure [CARE]. It's my own, but theirs is NO DU Project. Anyway, all such speakers have spoken and—

You know, in that workshop they provided for us a room for fifty people, but many, many people came to workshop and flowed out, and so we have to change to another, bigger—

Janet Gordon: Yaaaaay!

Katsumi Furitsu: Wow! So it's amazing.

Janet Gordon: That's wonderful.

Katsumi Furitsu: Yes, but anyway, we did such workshop. And the next day we have another workshop, "From Hiroshima and Nagasaki to Iraq." So that—it focusing on both Abomb and any kinds of radiation victims, including uranium victims. So yeah, so we did such things in New York just before a week.

Janet Gordon: And then when you left New York, you went—

Katsumi Furitsu: Yeah, I spent a couple of days with Rosalie Bartell.

How nice.

Yeah, and then I visited Steve Wing. Do you know Steve Wing? Dr. Steve—he did a very nice work with local people around Three Mile Island.

What's his name? Steve—

Steve Wing.

Janet Gordon: Steve Wing. Wing is what you said.

Katsumi Furitsu: And we just asked him to be a member of the committee of the RERF studied the study of the second generation, clinical study, but the organization of the second generation does not want RERF do such research only by themselves.

Janet Gordon: Right. They want a wider, more balanced research.

Katsumi Furitsu: I mean the second generation themselves have some influence to they, so they demand RERF have some—

Janet Gordon: Outside?

Katsumi Furitsu: Yeah, outside committee, and so they had right to recommend two persons, two researcher from outside by—I mean the second generation recommended two person, one person from Japan and one person, I myself recommend Steve on that—

Janet Gordon: And did they ask him to be on it?

Katsumi Furitsu: And he has already be a member.

Janet Gordon: Wonderful. Wonderful!

Katsumi Furitsu: Wonderful. So that's why I went there.

Janet Gordon: And then after you saw Steve—

Katsumi Furitsu: I think it's not correct to have a tape. It's personal things, no?

Janet Gordon: No, it's not personal. It's activism.

Katsumi Furitsu: Is that OK?

Janet Gordon: It's outreach.

That's right.

Janet Gordon: Then after you left Steve, then where did you go?

Katsumi Furitsu: Yeah, I went to New Mexico.

Yeah, tell me about what you did in Shiprock, you were saying, weren't you?

I'm sorry to say—

Janet Gordon: No, she went to Albuquerque first with—

Katsumi Furitsu: I went to Albuquerque and there is one of my friends. She herself is also involving in the DU issue and she is in New Mexico. I heard that one-fifth of the nuclear weapons of this country are—they have only in the State of New Mexico, and they also have a military base and dumping place of the nuclear waste or something, and so they—

Janet Gordon: At White Sands?

Katsumi Furitsu: Yes. So the activists in New Mexico are focusing on that issue, other than the anti-Iraqi War movement, I'm sorry to say. And so I met some activists there and [00:55:00] learned the situation. And then I went to Shiprock of the Navajo Nation because I have a friend from that tribe. He [Philip Harrison] himself has been working for many, many years for—

Janet Gordon: Many years, for uranium victims. Mining victims.

Katsumi Furitsu: Yeah, uranium victims. And he himself, I think he himself is victim because his father died from lung cancer when he was very young and left small children and left his wife and their family had a very hard life for many years. And that's why he studied to do such activities. And he has been working for his peoples, for—there are many victims who have diseases, lung cancer and other things. And actually I think through such activities of him and his

friend and of course from the activities of Janet and other people, your government made RECA, you know.

Janet Gordon: Radiation Exposure Compensation Act.

Katsumi Furitsu: Addressed a long time after the exposure. But anyway, what he is doing now is to get compensation for the victims. But, you know, it's very, very difficult to get some money from even you have the RECA.

Yes, I've talked to people about that, so I have some stories about the difficulties.

Janet Gordon: There are specific problems related to the uranium miners because of the lack of records, and a number of other indigenous kinds of social questions that don't meet the criteria, and so he's working specifically on that issue now.

Yes, because I have—I know about that. I won't give you the details but that's interesting.

Katsumi Furitsu: So you can ask yourself, too.

What is his name, just so we have it on the tape?

Philip Harrison. Exactly to say Junior, anyway. His uncle is also Philip Harrison, I think. So anyway—

Janet Gordon: Yes, and he does have a Jr. after his name. I think his initial is A, but I'm not certain. I'll check that when I get home and let you know. And I will contact him and see if he has time to visit with you when you go to Shiprock. He's working with the RER—you have—he's working with a law firm now that has a contract to work on RECA.

Katsumi Furitsu: Just started to work because—

Janet Gordon: And he's had a lot of health issues. He had to have a kidney transplant and so forth. But I will contact him and see if—and get permission for you to contact

him. But he's very, very knowledgeable and really a nice guy. You would enjoy him if he has time to meet with you.

OK, you know, we're just at about an hour and I don't want to impose on your time too much longer. I know you have a lot to do today. For just being an hour, you've given me a very nice overview of the world you're working in and the activism that you're doing. So if there's anything that you want to add, or Janet, do you want to say anything?

Janet Gordon: Well, I wanted to—right at the very beginning, when you were talking about when you first got started, you said that the workers in the nuclear plants, I'm not sure whether it was made clear, that they were made part-time workers and then they were shifted—

[00:59:19] [Lights were turned off by mistake and recording reflects breaks to restore lights.]

Janet Gordon: Anyhow, so what I was—the point I was wanting to make was that

[01:00:00] the reason that they did that was because then they would reach their level of exposure that they were allowed, and then rather than give them any help, why, they would shift

them off to some place else.

I understood that, but thank you for clarifying that. I inferred that from what you said, that you remain part-time so that you never could get the kinds of—

Janet Gordon: Assistance and medical and all of that.

Benefits that you would get if you were full-time.

Janet Gordon: The other thing that I—point I wanted to bring up, I remember, if this is correct—*Hibakusha* telling me that one of the initial discriminations was that no one wanted to marry them. They couldn't have a normal life. They didn't dare tell that they were *Hibakusha* or they'd never be able to marry and have a family. So it started from way in the beginning. But it is

better now than it—now that there's a world-wide movement and everybody's learning what the effects are and that it's not the fault of the person who was exposed, it's gotten a little bit better, I think—

Katsumi Furitsu: Yeah, you're right.

Janet Gordon: I just wanted to note that one of the things that Katsumi has been doing—we first met at the fortieth anniversary in 1980, and one of the things that's happened with—

Fortieth anniversary of—

Janet Gordon: Of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the commemoration.

So '85. That would be '85.

Janet Gordon: Yes. Wasn't that when we first met? No, it was before that. I first went to Japan in 1982, so it was probably in '82. Anyhow, one of the things that has happened is there has become a global network of activists working together, and Katsumi is a very important instigator and keeps people tied together, as I try to do and a number of other people work with—

Katsumi Furitsu: Even within this country, you don't have contact with Philip. It's amazing.

Janet Gordon: Well, I have contact with him. I just haven't talked to him for a while. I've had a lot of illness in my family and I've just been really out of it for a couple of years. I haven't really—my mother passed away and the lady I was taking care of passed away and my physical condition has gotten more difficult and things have just gone—so I haven't kept up. But having Katsumi visit, all of a sudden, well, now how long has it been since I've heard about Steve Wing, for crying out loud? That's just wonderful. So this network, this international network that we have managed to acquire and hang onto, it is so tiring, and I know that Katsumi gets very tired. I know that she's had a struggle to keep going.

Katsumi Furitsu: I'm not tired.

No, she's not tired right now, but it's, you know, you fight a battle and you win a battle and then they redefine the war and you fight it again and again. Now we're looking at starting testing again. We fought that battle and won it! And yet here we are having to gear back up in our old age to fight the battles again. But Katsumi keeps us focused on the science and on the international aspects, and it's a really exciting thing. I'm so happy to have her here. We did not get a chance to visit last night because her plane was three hours late. It was after midnight, after 12:30, before she even got into the airport. So we haven't had a chance to—we just got ourselves to bed last night, because I live clear over in North Las Vegas over on the northwest side, and so we haven't even had a chance to visit yet.

OK, I'm going to turn this off, then.

[01:05:00] End Track 2, Disc 1.

[00:00:00] Begin Track 3, Disc 1.

Katsumi Furitsu: [Recording resumes mid-sentence]—something, so. Well, yeah, this year is the sixtieth anniversary of the A-bombing and last year is fiftieth anniversary of the Bikini test. So last year we did something. We did some discussion on the issue of nuclear testing and as I told you, that was the beginning of our anti-nuclear movement in Japan and also probably in the world. And this year is the sixtieth anniversary and I think—I'm sorry to say, but I think that for the first generation of A-bomb victims, it might be our last chance to speak out their own experience and their own demand by themselves to stop such stupid things to the world, to stop nuclear development and using nuclear weapons. So anyway, so this year is such year, and next year the twentieth anniversary of Chernobyl. So we are thinking about such strategy. I think for these three years, very, very important for us, for all of us to think about the issue, to look back

our history of the nuclear age, and we think about what we did for the past century and how many people killed and how many people have been suffering from such things. And we have to go to the next step through such discussion. We have to do—of course, we have to protest against nuclear weapons and we have to stop the nuclear power plants and we have to stop the nuclear cycles themselves. And so I think it's a historical point, how to say, very, very important—

Janet Gordon: Crossroad.

Katsumi Furitsu: Yeah, crossroad—

Janet Gordon: Or turning point.

Katsumi Furitsu: Yeah, turning point for human beings and for this planet to stay forward, to stick to the future, and we have to leave a more beautiful world and more beautiful planet for the next generation. So that I want to add.

Thank you very much.

Yeah. And so for that purpose, we have to unite all the victims in the world and all the people, peacemaking people in the world and so that's what I want to, how to say, in the next thing or two or years and the rest of my life.

Yes. Thank you very much.

Janet Gordon: And that's what I said—

[**00:04:17**] End Track 3, Disc 1.

[00:00:00] Begin Track 4, Disc 1.

Janet Gordon: In terms of what Katsumi has just said, the overall perspective of what we're looking at right now, the turning point that we're at, I think that it is really an important thing to remember the importance of the *Hibakusha*, the Japanese *Hibakusha*, because

whenever radiation victims get together, whenever we work together, the Japanese *Hibakusha* are the elder statespersons of our movement. Always. Always honored as the elder statespersons. And there aren't very many of them left, and they won't be around for very much longer. That's all.

[00:00:55] End Track 4, Disc 1.

[End of interview]