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Interview with Dr. Clifford Uyeda
February 19, 1988

Dr. Uyeda spearheaded the movement with the Japanese American Citizen's League to have Iva Toguri pardoned by President Gerald Ford. He lives in San Francisco. I interviewed him by telephone from Missoula, MT.

(I start by asking him if I can interview Iva Toguri. He explains that she has many requests for interviews, but doesn't give them, as she is working under contract with one person to record her story. So she turned down my request because she thought it would be unfair to the person to whom she is already committed.)

CK: I see. Well, thank you for asking her anyway. And I wondered if I could ask you a couple of questions yourself, about how you got started on the drive to restore her citizenship.

CU: That was - although I was born on the West Coast, I was born in the state of Washington, but I left the West Coast way back in 1936. And so I was in Boston during her trial. (apologizes for his voice, as he has the flu now.) So I was in Boston, and I really knew very little about Tokyo Rose. But once I came to the West Coast in the 1950s, I heard about it and I was still in practice then, so I decide that, gee, this is something that I should look into. So what I did was after work, I used to go to the library, the public library here, and go through the entire trial in the three San Francisco newspapers. The trial was in 1949 from July through September.

So when I went through all that, then I start to ask around to see if anything was being done for her, and when I

heard that nothing was being done I decided that I'll get two people that are interested and see what I can do. At the very beginning, I still remember the first meeting we had, we didn't know what to do. We just - it was an exploratory meeting. And we asked some attorneys, and their advice was that because Wayne Collins and Ted Tamba, who were her attorneys, had also tried to get a pardon for her, a presidential pardon, maybe this would be the most simple thing to do, because that would restore her American citizenship. However, to try to bring the thing back and redo the trial would be impossible, they said, unless you have new evidence, which we didn't have at that time, nothing new, so because of that statement we decided that OK, we would go for the Presidential pardon, just the way Wayne Collins had tried to get and failed earlier. So therefore we went that route.

CK: Was she still in jail when you tried?

CU: Oh no. She was - she went to jail in 1949, and then she came out in 50 - gosh, I've forgotten - she was let out for good behavior without serving ten years. I think she was - she served -however, all told, she served more than eight years of her life. Because she was kept in jail here in San Francisco for almost a year, she was kept in jail in Japan for almost two years before she - so if you put all that together, she served almost ten years of jail.

CK: That's amazing. That's so cruel. I'm wondering, did

she talk to you about doing the broadcasts under duress?

CU: Actually, what she said was that - the way it was told to her, she really trusted Major Cousens, you know, the Australian. Major Cousens was a well-known Australian broadcaster. They even - I don't know how true this is, but they used to call him "the Walter Cronkite of Australia." It was he that recruited Iva. And also, that was frequently justified at the trial, saying that as far as he was concerned, Iva would be the most unlikely Tokyo Rose. Because ..because of her voice. She does not have a soft voice at all. She has a rather sharp voice, which is still evident today. So knowing this, he said that he was going to have a program in which there'd be nothing that would be in the program that would be anti-American. He felt that it would be safe, and because he was the one that was given the authority to put up the programs, and he said "I would do all the writing," and the script was written by him and also there was an American chap by the name of Ted Ince who also did script-writing.

CK: Did she ever ad lib, or did she just read?

CU: No, she went strictly by the script, because it was written for her. Actually when you listen to her speech, almost all of it is really like a disc jockey. All she does is introduce the musical numbers, the recording that she is going to play. And -

CK: Were there many other women -

CU: Oh, there were many others, yes. In fact I've met some of the women, who have said "If anyone should be tried for being Tokyo Rose it would be me." I've talked to a woman - this particular person, she could not be tried, because although she was born in Japan, therefore she was not an American citizen, she had come to Los Angeles when she was a little girl, very young, I think a baby. She grew up and went to school in the United States so for all practical - the way she talked, she was like an American. Her English was very good. She had gone back to Japan, and was in Japan when the war started, so therefore they recruited her as one of the broadcasters. And she said she - her script was quite different. She was much more of the type that people had...accused Tokyo Rose of saying.

But of course the problem, the real problem was that nobody knew who Tokyo Rose was. People in Tokyo never knew that the Americans had named anybody Tokyo Rose. Because that name was used for almost any female broadcaster. There is a statement broadcast as early as December, 1941, in which a Navy submarine log states that they were listening to Tokyo Rose. Now that was about three years before Iva even went on the radio.

CK: I wonder if the other women were also more or less under duress.

CU: Well - except that there was one who was very much - her statements were much more anti-American, (she) was a

woman broadcasting from Manila. She was...apparently she was a nightclub singer. Very - a beautiful woman, from what I heard. And her statement was much more anti-American in tone, and she was saying a lot of the things from () and she also had a very seductive voice, a very good voice, and so many people would say that, hearing her would give all the impression of what the press calls Tokyo Rose. But...she was also up for trial, but what happened right after the war was that she married an American colonel, after the Americans took over in the Philippines. She married an American colonel and immediately all the investigations stopped right there.

CK: For heavens sake. What was her name?

CU: I think her name was - gosh, I have it in that green book, it's Lipton, or something like that. You have that green book (refers to a booklet he sent me.) Myrtle Lipton. Something like that.

CK: OK.

CU: She was, from what we hear, her statement was much more like what people have accused Tokyo Rose of saying. Also there were other - the person who was on what they called the German Hour was also more anti-America. But there were many, many women broadcasting.

CK: I heard stories that Iva smuggled supplies and provisions.

CU: Well the way she did it was, because - she could not

go into the American POW camps at all. Because they wouldn't allow her to go there, obviously. There were American military personnel, like Captain Ince was one, and also the Australian Major Cousens, they, being former military people, they were POWs. And they could go and see the prisoners of war. So what Iva did was, she said she used to buy the things, and then would hand it over to Captain Ince or Major Cousens. Or Norman Reyes. And what they would do then is that they would put it under their coats, and when they visited, then they would go ahead and give it to the prisoners at the POW camp. Because she herself, they would not let her go ahead. She was the only person that could go out. She said that at one time she became pretty good at - in black market, because she would go out into the country to buy things which ordinary people could not get because of...she was able to get around. And she was able to buy a lot of the things that the ordinary ...you could not get. She could smuggle the things in to her work and then have her co-workers there smuggle it into the POW camp. And they said they were able to do that. She was ...the amazing thing to me is that, of all the people that were broadcasting in Radio Tokyo, she had been the most unlikely Tokyo Rose. Yet she was the only one ever arrested or charged or tried. No one else was ever even touched.

CK: Do you think they wanted her because she was

popular?

CU: No,...

CK: Or do you think...

CU: I think it was just the circumstance of the time. When she was first chosen as Tokyo Rose there was sort of a scramble for recognition. Because after the war, when the country was defeated, it was in shambles, everybody was starving, and to be suddenly, to become a celebrity in this mess, and to be offered money, you know that was a fortune really in those days, \$2,000 in American money. You couldn't get that much money in several years of work. So some of the people at the radio station had hoped that ...I know one person that was also working there, he wanted his wife to be recognized as Tokyo Rose. And he was very miffed when Iva was chosen. And Iva was chosen only because there was - also this is in the green book - the person that was a close friend of the American journalist said "I do know somebody who works in Radio Tokyo," and he introduced her to them as someone from Radio Tokyo. Of course as soon as he introduced her he immediately named her as Tokyo Rose. But I don't think she ever at that time realized what that name really meant.

CK: But she did call herself Orphan Ann and she was popular.

CU: Yes, Orphan Ann. She called herself Orphan Ann, right.

CK: But did she have any idea how popular she had become?

CU: No, I don't think she had any idea. Because she was on, I think, gosh, I've forgotten how often she was on. I know that she never worked on weekends. So that the interesting thing at the trial was that many of the persons, the American soldiers who testified saying that they pinpointed certain Sundays that they heard her, she was not, it would have to be somebody else because she wasn't even broadcasting.

CK: Did she care that - did she want the Americans to win?

CU: Oh yes, she had always said - in fact, she got into a lot of trouble in Japan. One of the reasons why she couldn't live with her aunt and uncle was that she was too pro-American, and the aunt and uncle felt very uneasy about that, and also the neighbors didn't like the idea because they said there was an American spy living among them. And so finally she had to leave the place. Then she was alone, she had to go out and find work, and she had a difficult time trying to find work, at that time. And then she obtained work at the Danish legation - the consul - and that's where she was working until she found a typist job at Radio Tokyo.

CK: Did she ever tell you how much she was paid?

CU: At where?

CK: As an announcer.

CU: I think it was something like - oh, I think it was around 80 or 100 something in that area. (Does not specify whether this means dollars - other sources have said as little as \$18.00 a month.)

CK: Was she afraid to - how did she feel? Did she ever tell you at all? How she felt about being chosen?

CU: Well she first refused to, she said that she didn't want to do it because she felt that first of all, she was not a radio personality, she doesn't ...she just went there as a typist. But Major Cousens said that he wanted somebody to work. Since the Japanese workers instructed Cousens to find an English-speaking woman to also be on the program, he said he had to find someone, and he said that there was only one person he could trust at Radio Tokyo at that time, and that was Iva. Because the rest of them, he said he wasn't quite sure. Because Iva had always been anti-Japan and pro-America, this is why, outspoken to all other people who were in Radio Tokyo, also broadcasting. You know Iva was not very popular among those people. Especially Americans who were also stranded there and were working for the Radio Tokyo broadcasting. They didn't like her because they said she was just too outspoken. And after all, they said, the war was going on, you're in an enemy country, and you don't start saying things against the country where you're living. Because Iva would say, "America's going to win the war," and

you don't say that in Japan during the wartime, that's not a very popular thing to do. Even if she thought so, they said they thought she should keep quiet because they would be treated better. But she was very outspoken, even then.

CK: When did she make the remark about the loss of ships?

CU: Well that was in October, 1944.

CK: Was that during the campaign in the Philippines?

CU: 1944 was the battle of Leyte Gulf. In October '44.

CK: Yes. Her remark - was it during that battle, or before it?

CU: It must have been afterward.

CK: It just seems such an odd thing to -

CU: The thing is there's no tape - the funny thing is that the American government had all the tapes of all her broadcasts. And this is what was gone over in detail, in Japan, and they let her go, saying that there's absolutely no evidence at all. And then when they tried to get the same tape back at the time of the trial, the government said the tapes were no longer available. So...they said that either it was destroyed, or it was lost, but they never got hold of the tape. Because the tape they sought, Wayne Collins (Iva's attorney) had said that you could listen to all the tapes and you could tell what the tapes were about, there's nothing treasonous in the tape. And what they said that she said...she states that she never said such a thing

that was stated in the charges. But there's no evidence to ever show that she said anything of that sort. Because the tape is not available. It still is not available today.

CK: That's amazing. One more question. What was the hardest part about getting her free? Was it speaking to President Ford? I mean getting her pardoned, excuse me.

CU: No, I think the most important thing was to get the American public to realize the story. And once they realized it, then I think the pressure was already on the President. Because the San Francisco Chronicle was the first paper to - not the first, because the New York Times in February, ... a person by the name of McDowell, who was ... who knew about the Tokyo Rose trial even in those days, he came out with an article in the New York Times, I think it was in February 1975, '76. Followed by the Denver Post and all the others. All the editorials that I've seen, I do not recall a single editorial, much as I've collected editorials, almost 100 per cent supported pardon for Iva. I think that was the big thing. And also a lot of statements by many people all say that Iva should be pardoned. So I think the President already had a lot of messages, that came to him before he made his decision. I think the one thing with President Ford was that it was difficult for him to make any decision. He had the Nixon pardon still in his mind, apparently. So for him to go ahead and give another pardon, I suppose he had to be careful, I suppose this is why he waited until the

last day to announce the pardon. Because it was announced on the 19th of January, the 19th was the last day that he was in office officially.

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