

## EAST WIND

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*Stake a claim in your future . . .*

## **Dump Reagan in '84!**

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**By Denise Imura**

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**T**hat cue card-reading actor, Ronald Reagan, must be defeated in November, 1984. Cast in the role of president to carry out the conservative policies of the ruling class, Reagan has given us a close-up lesson on how to destabilize democracy.

Life has always been a test in survival for Third World and working peoples under capitalism. But since Reagan has occupied the White House, life in Reaganland, U.S.A. has worsened considerably. Under Reaganism, we've suffered the highest level of unemployment since World War II. The 1981 median family income dropped to \$8,328 compared to the 1973 figure of \$9,062. And at no time since the Depression have more businesses gone bankrupt. Meanwhile, he entertains the elite with sumptuous dinner parties and his advisors can't figure out why poor people can't fill their bellies with nutritious meals on a mere \$69 a month. "Isn't catsup a vegetable? Well, then, cut the vegetable allotment from the school lunch program. And tell the kids to pray if they start complaining about being hungry."

Reaganomics promised a "miracle cure for the recession/depression." Far from providing recovery, it has left the country reeling under a \$180 billion annual federal deficit which forced the Administration to lobby for a debt ceiling of \$1.6 trillion or face the humiliation of running out of money. Still, Reagan believes the script that says capitalism and the American public will be saved if we give the powers that be more and more tax breaks and the right to cut our wages, dismantle unions, deregulate industries, and throw us out of jobs.

If Reagan remains in office, Asian Americans and other oppressed nationalities who've spent lifetimes fighting for justice and equality, may well find civil rights a thing of the past. In fact, those dreams of

each succeeding generation enjoying more acceptance and success are becoming harder and harder to fulfill. Already, Reagan's appointments to the Civil Rights Commission are busily attempting to unravel the strides we've made toward access and opportunity. Stereotypes touting Asian Americans as "model minorities" — affluent doctors, lawyers, engineers, businessmen — are not being promoted because we've "made it" or have been accepted as first-class citizens. They are used to mask the real problems we face and to keep us locked out.

Racist stereotypes are being revived with a vengeance to drive a wedge between us and other Third World and working peoples. We are once again blamed for the economic problems. Vincent Chin is murdered and his killers, barely scolded because under Reaganism there is an implicit license to kill anything "foreign."

Asian is again synonymous with "alien." Not being able to read and speak English is "un-American." "Can't speak English? Sorry, you can't vote. And if we had our way, you couldn't exercise any political rights," is the message of proponents of the amendment to make English the official language of the U.S.

**W**e must throw Reagan out of office in 1984. The politics and policies represented by Reaganism are the bourgeoisie's remedy to recoup profits and power following the loss of spheres of influence in the third world and the challenge of the competitive second world. With the permanent downward spiral of U.S. imperialism, the ruling class has reached a consensus more conservative than any period since the 1920's. We can kiss traditional liberalism good-bye, and expect cuts in social program spending, increased "discipline of the working class," more domestic spying by the FBI, CIA, and a more belligerent foreign policy.

Thinking he's John Wayne, Reagan has returned the U.S. to the days of undisguised imperialist aggression with the invasion of Grenada. Open U.S. military involvement and covert paramilitary operations are



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once again terrorizing nations of the third world. The CIA-engineered mining of Nicaraguan harbors — condemned as an act of war by even Reagan's ally, Senator Barry Goldwater — claimed 12 vessels and 18 lives. "To hell with the World Court" is the line used to defy international protests. His Administration's priority to return the U.S. to its place of preeminence has meant billions of dollars sunk into more sophisticated, deadly military weaponry which, instead of guaranteeing us a secure defense, propels us closer to nuclear war.

Our struggles for equality and democracy may well depend on the outcome of this election. If Reagan is reelected, the bourgeoisie would boast, no matter how false, that there is a mandate for its rightward policies.

If we are serious about progress, we *must* defeat Reagan. History has shown that with organization and determination, we can prevail. *EAST WIND* believes we can repeat this lesson in 1984 and supports all efforts to defeat Reagan.

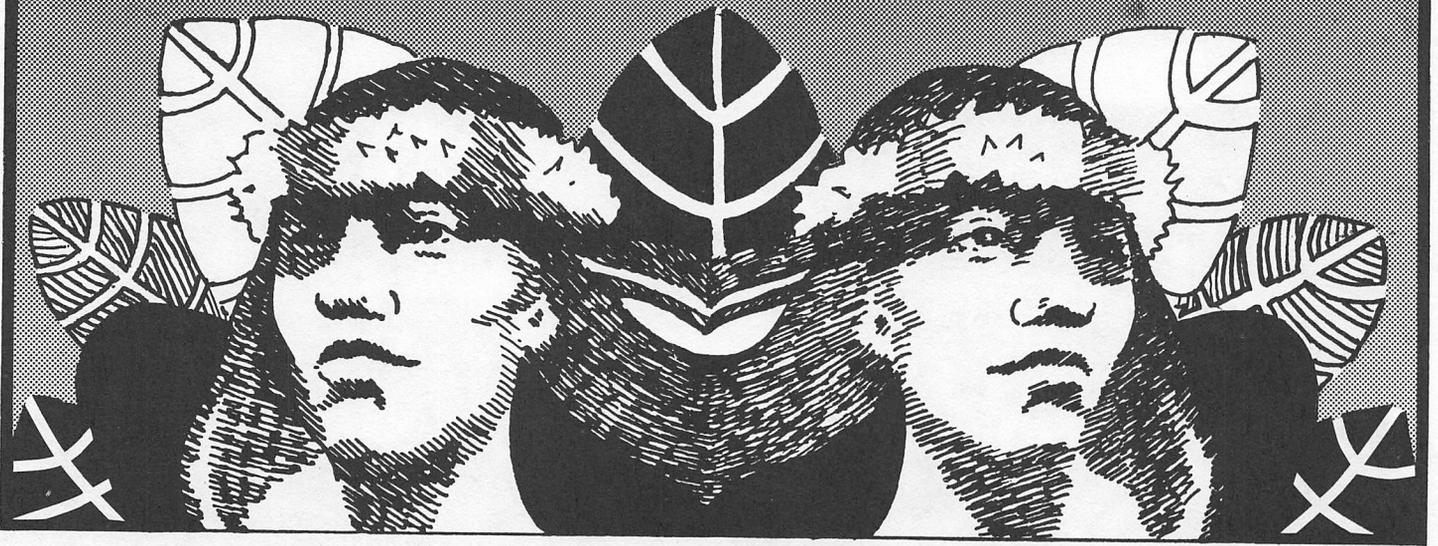
In particular, we back Jesse Jackson's candidacy. He has aroused the people in a way we haven't seen in years. His campaign has united Democrats, women's groups, environmentalists, Third World communities, workers, and revolutionaries to take the country out of Reagan's hands. His meteoric campaign is evidence that we do have the numbers to unseat the incumbent. What we don't hear much of in the media is that in New York, Jackson's showing in some precincts was three times greater than the 1980 voter turnout. Or that during the March 13th Super Tuesday primaries, the number of votes he won in Florida, Georgia, and Alabama exceeded the number of votes that gave Reagan the edge back in 1980.

By registering the disenfranchised, articulating our concerns and forcing the other candidates to address those issues, and by giving Blacks and other minorities a sense of empowerment, Jackson's campaign has given us greater opportunity to build an independent peoples' movement in years to come.

Stake a claim in our future and become part of the peoples' movement. You can *begin* by registering and voting. The time to defeat Ronald Reagan and Reaganism is now! □

**Denise Imura** is an Editor of *EAST WIND*.

# Hawaiian Sovereignty



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By Pokā Laenui

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I am Hawaiian. Many people think of "Hawaiian" as a statement of racial identity or geographic origin, i.e., anyone who comes from or lives in Hawai'i is Hawaiian. For me, it is much more. Hawaiian is a state of mind and being; it is a statement of historical, cultural and political identity. Ultimately, it defines my loyalty and citizenship in the sovereign nation of Hawai'i.

To understand how and why I pledge my allegiance to Hawai'i only and not to the United States, you will need to know the history of Hawai'i, particularly that part dealing with the "annexation" of Hawai'i to the United States. You will also have to understand something about growing up in Hawai'i and the sense of betrayal and anger one feels at learning the true history of Hawai'i. This understanding of history coupled with an understanding of how Hawai'i's people were betrayed by being consciously and systematically colonized, brainwashed and killed by the so-called benevolent United States,

has led today's movement to restore Hawai'i to its status as a free and independent nation.

For me, the movement began with the awakening of my spirit when I read Queen Lili'uokalani's *Hawai'i's Story*. I read first with curiosity followed by confusion, then much anger and finally resolve of what needed to be done. Here is what I discovered of Hawai'i's history.

On January 16, 1893, over 160 American marines landed in peaceful Honolulu armed with Gatling gun, howitzer cannons, double cartridge belts filled with ammunition, carbines and other instruments of war. The protest by Hawai'i's Queen that such landing was a breach of treaty and international law was simply ignored. The troops marched along the streets of Honolulu, rifles facing the Queen's palace.

The following day, the resident conspirators, numbering 18, mostly Americans, sneaked to a government building a few yards from where the American troops lodged the night before. There, an American lawyer who had been a resident of Hawai'i for less than a year proclaimed they were now the government of Hawai'i. Calling themselves the "provisional government" and selecting Sanford Dole president, they were to exist for the

"explicit purpose of annexation, and until those terms could be arranged with the U.S."

Before the full declaration had been read, the U.S. marines marched into the building to protect and support them. American Minister Plenipotentiary and commander of all U.S. forces in Hawai'i, John L. Stevens, gave them immediate recognition as the government of Hawai'i as had been planned. He then joined in their demand that the Queen surrender under threat of war with the U.S.

To place these events in the proper perspective, one should have a brief background of the nation of Hawai'i.

Prior to 1892, Hawai'i was recognized in the international community as a sovereign nation. As early as the reign of Kamehameha I (1779-1819), Hawai'i was dealing with nations of the world on a regular basis. These international activities increased and resulted in the signing of treaties and executive agreements with many nations. By 1882, Hawai'i had established as many as 94 diplomatic and consular posts around the world. Immigrants from all parts of the world came to Hawai'i, many of whom renounced their former national allegiance and took up Hawaiian citizenship. By 1892, Hawai'i was a

multi-racial, multi-cultural nation of Hawaiians.

Early in its exposure to the western world, Hawai'i became the focus of Christian zeal. The first flock of missionaries arrived from Boston in 1820; many remained in Hawai'i and established homes and families. They were welcomed into Hawaiian society and established a stronghold over the people.

As time passed many of these fami-



King Kalākaua

lies saw their children leaving the pulpits of the church and entering those of business and politics. After several decades a "missionary" party consisting of an alliance of missionary offsprings and developing business interests arose. Growing and selling sugar developed as the principal business of that party.

The missionary party made drastic changes in the traditional form of land tenure. Formerly land was under the trusteeship of the *Moi*, (ruling chief) of each island. He allotted the lands to his chiefs who reallocated the remaining lands to their followers and supporters. Under the influence of the missionary party, however, land was parceled out in fee simple estates along the traditions of England and the United States. The Hawaiians, most of whom were unfamiliar with these new laws, suffered and lost land. Less than 1% of the land went to 99% of the population.

Significantly, foreigners could be landowners in Hawai'i.

The missionary party was also able to influence immigration policies, importing many laborers to perform the exhausting sugar plantation work. Hawaiians refused to work at the low plantation wages.

Now that the missionary party had the land and labor problems overcome, it still had to pin down the last step in this commercial circle — obtaining a secure market for their sugar. The U.S. was the logical market. It was geographically closer to Hawai'i than any other major power. Most in the missionary party were citizens of the U.S. and had been in constant communication and trade with the U.S. previously. The problem, however, was the inability to control the Hawaiian government in its foreign affairs.

To secure the American market, the missionary party saw only two alternative solutions: reciprocity or annexation. Reciprocity would permit Hawaiian sugar importation into the U.S. duty free and in return, U.S. products would be imported. Annexation was preferred, however, because reciprocity was temporary and could be revoked at any time. Also, as the years passed, the U.S. wanted more than just an exchange of trade rights. It wanted sovereignty over Pearl Harbor to extend its commercial and military arm into the Pacific.

Kalākaua, the *Moi* during the period 1874–1891, refused to cede Pearl Harbor to another nation. In reaction, the missionary party, began a campaign to discredit Kalākaua through attacks on his character and his lineage. They accused him of being a drunk and a lover of heathenism because he attempted to revitalize the *hula* and preserve the religious practices of his ancestors. They also branded him a womanizer. His character and his activities were continually berated in the press. But the people rallied around him and remained loyal in the face of these attacks.

The missionary party secretly formed an armed league to force the King to surrender the powers of government over to them. In 1887, under force of arms and threat of death to himself, his supporters and

his family, Kalākaua signed the "bayonet" constitution, the name reflecting the method of adoption. This constitution stripped Kalākaua of power. Now with the missionary party in power, they granted the U.S. exclusive right to use Pearl Harbor, receiving in return a seven-year extension of the existing reciprocity treaty which was soon to have expired. The sugar market was temporarily secure.



Queen Lili'uokalani

Kalākaua died in 1891 in San Francisco on a trip to recuperate from an illness advanced by the activities in Hawai'i. Rumors still abound in Hawai'i that his death was assisted by the missionary party's agents in the United States. His sister, Lili'uokalani, succeeded him.

Upon her ascension, Queen Lili'uokalani received a petition of two-thirds of the voters, imploring her to do away with the "bayonet" constitution and return the powers of government to the Hawaiian citizens. On January 14, 1893, she completed a secret draft of a new constitution and informed her cabinet of her intention to put it into effect immediately. Begging her to put off this act for a short time, the cabinet, which was now controlled by the missionary party as a result of the "bayonet" constitution, rushed to report the Queen's intentions to leaders of the missionary party.

It is important to identify two men in particular who were at the head of the missionary party. Lorrin Thurston was the grandson of one of the first missionaries, Asa Thurston. Sanford Dole was the son of Daniel Dole, another missionary. These two men were prime conspirators against the Hawaiians. As early as 1882, Lorrin Thurston had already exchanged confidences with leading American officials on the matter of Hawai'i's takeover.

When Thurston received word of the Queen's intention, he, along with eleven other annexationists formed a "Committee of Public Safety" and arranged an immediate visit to the American Minister in Hawai'i, John L. Stevens.

**L**ittle convincing was necessary for Stevens to join in the conspiracy to overthrow the Queen for he was already one of the foremost advocates for America's takeover of Hawai'i. In writing to his superiors in

1892, he asks how far may he "deviate from established international rules and precedents" in the event of an attempted overthrow.

Thus, when Thurston met with Stevens on January 15, 1893 to plot the overthrow of Lili'uokalani, the conspiracy against Hawai'i was quickly sealed. The U.S. marines would be landed under the guise of protecting American lives (the missionary party's). Hawai'i would then be taken by U.S. forces and given to Thurston's party which would call itself the "provisional government." This "government" would immediately turn Hawai'i over to the U.S. in an annexation treaty. Thurston's missionary party members would be appointed rulers of Hawai'i with complete rein to build their empires as a reward.

The troops did land and Lili'uokalani, forced to surrender. Protesting the U.S.'s role in this conspiracy and receiving promises of an immediate and fair investigation, the Queen, on

January 17, 1893, trusting in the "enlightened justice" of the United States "surrendered" to the U.S. forces until the investigation could be completed and she restored. The conspirators, acting now as the "provisional government" rushed off to Washington, forbidding any of the Queen's supporters from boarding the only ship leaving Hawai'i. Attempting to evade the investigation, a treaty of annexation was hurriedly negotiated, signed and presented by President Harrison to the U.S. Senate for approval in less than a month's time.

**H**owever, Grover Cleveland replaced Harrison before the Senate voted. Meanwhile, the Queen's emissaries managed to sneak to the United States and plead with Cleveland to conduct the promised investigation.

James H. Blount, formerly the Chairman of the House Foreign Relations Committee, was appointed special investigator by Cleveland. Following several months of investigation, Blount exposed the conspiracy. The President, upon receipt of Blount's report, addressed Congress declaring:

*"By an act of war, committed with the participation of a diplomatic representative of the United States and without authority of Congress, the Government of a feeble but friendly and confiding people has been overthrown. A substantial wrong has thus been done which a due regard for our national character as well as the rights of the injured people requires we should endeavor to repair . . . ."*

*"(Lili'uokalani) knew that she could not withstand the power of the United States, but believed that she might safely trust to its justice. (She) surrendered not to the provisional government, but to the United States. She surrendered not absolutely and permanently, but temporarily and conditionally until such time as the facts could be considered by the United States (and it can) undo the action of its representative and reinstate her in the authority she claimed as the constitutional sovereign of the Hawaiian Islands."*

Cleveland refused to forward the treaty to the Senate as long as he re-



Jeff Nishinaka

mained President and instructed the conspirators to restore the Queen to her constitutional authority. These Americans rejected the President's instruction, now denying their American citizenship and declaring themselves citizens of the provisional government and thus beyond Cleveland's authority.

The conspirators, faced with the predicament of an administration which would not condone the conspiracy, devised a plan to restructure this government so it would appear as a permanent rather than a provisional government. Hopefully, when a new president was elected, the "permanent" government would be able to give Hawai'i away. Thus a constitution giving permanence and validity to these conspirators had to be drafted. Dole announced a constitutional convention of thirty-seven delegates, the majority, nineteen, selected by him, and eighteen elected. But even for these elected positions, the candidates and voters would first have to renounce the Queen and swear allegiance to the provisional government. Less than 15% of the voters participated in the election, the vast majority refusing to dignify this sham by their participation.

The constitution of the "Republic of Hawai'i" — in essence, the design of Dole and Thurston — claimed dominion over all lands and waters of Hawai'i. It claimed all citizens of Hawai'i automatically its citizens. Foreigners who supported the new regime could vote; citizens loyal to the Queen could not; and because the Japanese and especially the Chinese supported Lili'uokalani, they were, as a group disenfranchised. Further, only those who could speak, read and write in English or Hawaiian and explain the constitution, written in English, to the satisfaction of Dole's supporters, could vote. The right to vote was tightly guarded.

On July 4, 1894, Dole, without placing the document before the Hawaiian people, simply proclaimed the "constitution" and thus the "Republic of Hawai'i," into existence; at the same time, he made himself president.

The Republic of Hawai'i remained in control with the continued presence of U.S. war ships. Lili'uokalani,

remembering the warning of Minister Blount not to take up arms lest the marines land and forever squash the hopes of returning Hawai'i to the Hawaiians and believing in the enlightened justice of the U.S., waited in patience.

When William McKinley replaced Cleveland as President, Dole's group rushed to Washington to complete the conspiracy. A "treaty of annexation" was signed. Realizing the "treaty" would not get the two-thirds Senate approval required by the U.S. Constitution, the conspirators decided to circumvent that requirement and settle for only a joint resolution of Congress, which it obtained.

The payoff followed. The U.S. set up a territorial government making Dole governor. The United States had thus made a door for it to walk into Hawai'i. It now began rewarding the missionary party for stealing Hawai'i for it.

**T**wo points should be made clear here. First, history records no event in which the Hawaiians were given the opportunity to determine whether or not to become annexed to the United States. Where we were once a free nation, the U.S. connived through a combination of diplomatic promises, force of arms and economic and political payoffs to extinguish that freedom and replace it with rule by a handful of American residents of Hawai'i. The "Treaty of Annexation" between Hawai'i and the U.S. pretends to be an agreement between proper parties. Yet, the Republic of Hawai'i was nothing more than a cover for the annexation fever of the missionary party. The constitution was a self-serving instrument declaring all Hawai'i under its rule. It was never ratified by the people and the Queen, or in any other form legitimized. Sanford Dole merely proclaimed it one day. Second, the McKinley administration, in its fever to annex Hawai'i ignored the U.S. Constitutional requirement of two-thirds Senate consent. Thus, this "Treaty of Annexation" was never adopted by the U.S. in accordance with its own constitutional mandate.

And so we find the closing of the chapter of Hawai'i's existence as a free and unoccupied nation. Hawai'i



was now to undergo years of American brainwashing, colonization and military occupation. These were to be the pay-off years for the "giving" of Hawai'i to the United States.

In conclusion, the demand for freedom of Hawai'i, for the right to self-determination, for the full control of Hawai'i by Hawaiian citizens is rooted in the history just given, a history so contrary to the principles of liberty and justice for all.

*"I am Hawaiian, not American. Americans stole our nation and threw our Queen in jail. I refuse to pledge allegiance to the American flag."*

— a first grader, Waianae Elementary School, 1979

*"You have no jurisdiction over us. We are citizens of the nation of Hawai'i. We will not dignify this American court by entering pleas."*

— three brothers charged with interfering with governmental operations on Moku Anuenue, 1980

*"Your contempt citation and threat of disbarment is a small price to pay for my Hawaiian citizenship."*

— an attorney replies to a Federal District Judge, Hawai'i, 1979

The Hawaiian renaissance is taking on new dimensions through education and action. The nation is awakening: the sleeping giant is stirring. □

**Pokā Laenui**  
August 16, 1982



Toyo Suyemoto

By Grant Din

**T**oyo Suyemoto was born in Oroville, a town north of Sacramento, California, and grew up in Sacramento. She is the eldest of nine children, and attended Sacramento Junior College and the University of California, graduating in 1937 with a degree in English and Latin. Before the war, she married writer Iwao Kawakami and three months before Pearl Harbor they had a son. Later, the Kawakamis were divorced.

In Tanforan Relocation Center in California their son contracted lobar pneumonia and allergic reactions from the horse stall they lived in, illnesses which would eventually lead to his death in his late teens. As "Mrs. K.," as she is affectionately known at Ohio State, says, "It is for his (her son's) sake that I'm willing to address junior high, high school, and college students, and tell them what actually happened in the camps, that this should not happen again."

Near the end of the war, the Suyemoto family relocated to Cincinnati, where Toyo worked as a librarian for twelve years. After that, she started working at the Ohio State University libraries, where she has been for 19 years.

She is currently finishing up her book about the camp experiences,

Soft silver  
interwoven with  
quick fire . . .

which she has tentatively entitled *In and Out*.

*This interview was conducted in June 1982 in Toyo Suyemoto's pleasant apartment in Columbus, Ohio. The walls are full of books, including many first editions of Asian American classics.*

\* \* \*

**EAST WIND:** How did you start writing?

**Toyo:** Back in the 1930's . . . I started writing at a very young age when my mother and dad — who was an artist — would alert me to things around me. And as I was growing up, you know I had to cope with five brothers, who could bunch up on me, and tease me unmercifully. There were times when they would drive me to tears. My mother would look at me and say, "Why waste your time crying? Why don't you just sit down and write poetry?" So that would take my mind off all that teasing. In a way she kind of led me to find an emotional outlet, and thank God she did. So I've been writing for many, many years. But actually I didn't start appearing in print until I was about seventeen; that was when I got caught up in the Nisei writers on the West Coast. People didn't realize that I was still in my late teens, you know, here's someone who's writing about lost hope, and lost faith, and lost love (laughter), and then they started coming to visit

me: "Gee, you're just a kid!" (laughter). And there I was, bobby sox and long hair, pony tail, you know (laughter). But I got to know many interesting writers of the period, like Yasu Sasaki, Brownie Furutani, Carl Kondo, my former husband (Iwao Kawakami), Larry Tajiri, many of the big names, all in the same group then, and I gradually identified with that Nisei group, back in the thirties.

**EAST WIND:** When the people of the writers group were dispersed into the camps, were you able to keep in touch with one another?

**Toyo:** Yes, it's interesting, because I was living in Berkeley. There was still a good nucleus of writers in San Francisco, and it so happened that this group was shifted from San Francisco, Oakland, and Berkeley into Tanforan Assembly Center and then moved as a body to Topaz. So I think that was one reason why we were able to establish the literary magazine, *Trek*, that Miné Okubo did the covers for. She was in our camp, and Taro Katayama, and Kawakami, and there were others in the writing group there. And it took quite a lot of effort on the part of the young people to get a camp magazine going.

I was asked to contribute poetry then (in Topaz), and it was really interesting because Miné would sometimes stop by and say, "Can you have a poem ready for this issue?" I said,

"How soon?" "Tonight." I said, "You mean I have to write a poem by tonight?" "Oh," she said, "you can do it!" And I said, "When will you pick it up?" She said, "I'll come by at three o'clock in the morning." I said, "I won't be up then!" She said, "Well, tack it on the door, and I'll pick it up." Sure enough, I'd finish a poem, write it out neatly, tack it on the door to the barracks, and along about three o'clock I'd hear footsteps on the path, and I could hear Miné's voice talking to her brother, who always accompanied her, and, you know, the door opened, and a few steps, the door closed, and the poem would appear in the new issue of *Trek!*

**EAST WIND:** After the war, did you continue writing frequently, or did you pick it up again later?

**Toyo:** I have always written poetry, and I still do, although it's not as consistent as when I was still in school. But I still write and this past summer, of course, I finished the first draft of the book about the two camps I was in, and this summer I hope to start the rewriting of that. But poetry has always been something very, very close to me, thanks to my mother's influence . . .

**EAST WIND:** Your book which you're trying to find a publisher for now . . . how long have you been working on it?

**Toyo:** I think I started that book when I was still in camp. I was going to fictionalize it, so actually I had started in the third person. Then someone who had read several chapters said, "Why don't you turn it into a first person narrative that would carry more impact?" So then I had to readjust my thinking on that and take it from personal impressions, and I'm throwing in poetry that I had written in camp.

**EAST WIND:** How do you feel about a lot of these younger writers, like Lawson Inada and Frank Chin discovering your work?

**Toyo:** I think there's a very vital, vibrant group of writers in the Bay region right now, who are doing these plays, and I was really impressed with

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## BARRACKS HOME

This is our barracks, squatting on the ground,  
Tar-papered shack, partition into rooms  
By sheet-rock walls, transmitting every sound  
Of neighbors' gossip or the sweep of brooms.  
The open door welcomes the refugees,  
And now at last there is no need to roam  
Afar: here space enlarges memories  
Beyond the bounds of camp and this new home.

The floor is carpeted with dust, wind-borne  
Dry alkali patterned by insect feet.  
What peace can such a place as this impart?  
We can but sense, bewildered and forlorn,  
That time, disrupted by the war from neat  
Routines, must now adjust within the heart.

---

## HAIKU

Serenity comes  
When heat of day, like passion,  
Cools with fading dusk.

Time passes: seconds  
Measure knowledge of cannot,  
Will not, and never.

Telegrams of thought  
We have exchanged — not only  
Received, but unsent.

Gently, oh, gently,  
Time blesses me with the joy  
Of living seasons.

---

their work when I saw the performance of the Asian American Theater Company. As I told some of the people whom I met that night, "It's up to you people to carry on. My generation's dying out." Actually, the second generation is dying out. Toshio's (Mori) now gone, my husband's gone, and quite a number . . . we don't have too many years left, and it's up to the younger generation to carry on. I think that the third generation and the fourth generation will be seeking for roots. They'll be trying to get through their parents and grandparents to the cultural depth, the roots. And perhaps they will be able to find themselves and their position in this country. Because, after all, we were born and raised here, and there's an innate quality

in growing up in this country that you absorb from childhood on so even though we're hyphenated people, you know, like we're called "Japanese-Americans," there's some throwback to our ancestry. But we are after all rooted in the soil of this country and I try to bring that up too in my poetry, that when we were uprooted, we were transplanted from the West Coast to the desert lands.

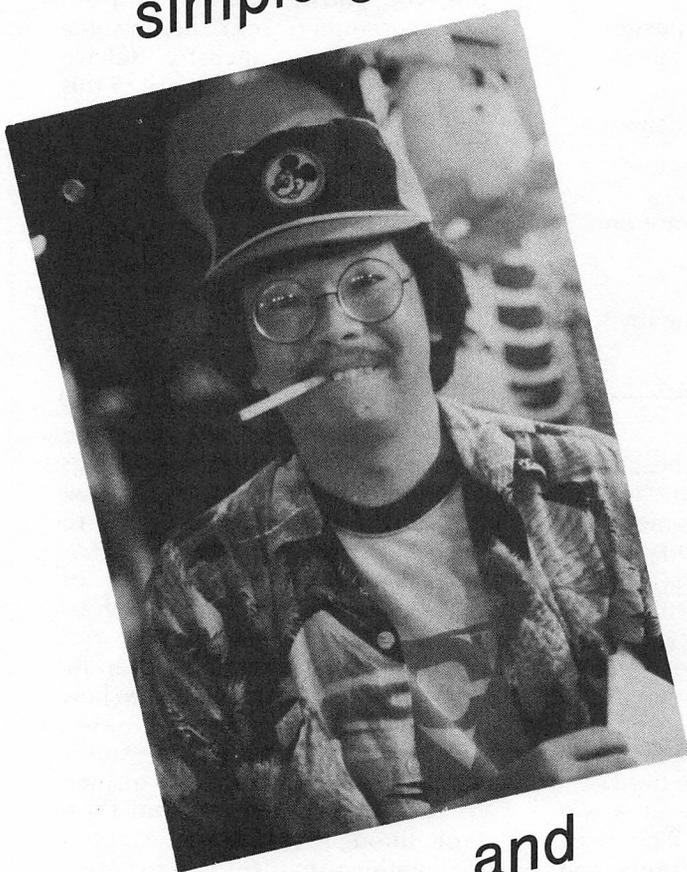
**EAST WIND:** Do you have any advice for struggling young writers?

**Toyo:** Only thing I can say for struggling young writers is stick with it! It's a case of reading widely, assessing what you read, being alive to whatever you experience, to things around you; record that. I feel that each individual has something to contribute, not necessarily in poetry, but also in prose. When I think of some of the other writers . . . (such as) American Indian writers — and there's some powerful American Indian writers today — I could see how terribly they were discriminated against, yet they were able to express themselves and make a gift of their frustration, their hope, and their faith, through their writing. And this is something that will live for other people, other readers. □

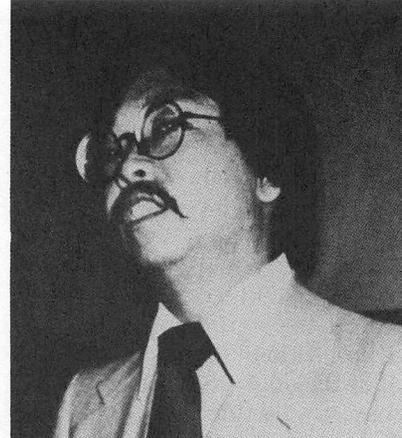
**Grant Din** lives and writes in Oakland, after stops in New Haven, New York, Ohio, and Los Angeles.

# STEVE TATSUKAWA

...leaped through  
life with blinding  
energy,  
simple generosity



and  
infectious humor.



D. Moy

Steve Tatsukawa

---

By Bruce Iwasaki

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Steve Tatsukawa, a contributing editor to this magazine, was at the center of Asian America's drive for political and cultural expression beginning in the late 1960's. He fought against the war and against J-Town evictions; he was part of the movement for reparations and was a national figure among Asian Americans in media. He wrote film scripts and grant proposals, short stories and budgets. He earned an M.B.A. with honors, and devoted his life to progress and change. Steve Tatsukawa leaped through life with blinding energy, simple generosity and infectious humor. While Steve pursued serious goals, he did not take himself too seriously.

Steve Tatsukawa died on February 27, 1984 at the age of 35. At his funeral, fourteen of the groups he had worked with paid tribute, including *Gidra*, Visual Communications, Little Tokyo People's Rights Organization, National Asian American Telecommunications Association, KCET, and *EAST WIND* Magazine. An enormous circle of people was enriched by this gentle, brilliant man.

A week before he died, Steve was helping with the sound system at a rally commemorating the concentration camps and calling for redress. Long before the program began, he was moving amps around, adjusting the mikes, and hopping up and down the stage, to get it right. No one heard him complain of the pain in his shoulder and back that had kept him from work a few days before, and was to move to his heart. The day before he died, slowly eating a sandwich in his hospital bed, he spoke of feeling better, and if that continued, of being able to get back to work the next day.

With Steve's death, this generation of Asian Americans loses its most audacious, creative and vigorous voice. I still see Steve in the fast lane. With work to do, ideas brimming. Racing. Laughing.

\* \* \*

Contributions to the Steve Tatsukawa Memorial Fund should be sent to:

The Steve Tatsukawa Memorial Fund  
c/o Visual Communications  
244 So. San Pedro Street, Rm. 309  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

□

Bruce Iwasaki is a Contributing Editor to EAST WIND.



# PARADISE FOR WHOM?

By Craig Shimabukuro

*"We the people of the Pacific have been victimized too long by foreign powers. The western imperialists and colonial powers invaded our defenseless region; they took over our lands and subjugated our people to their whims. This form of alien colonial political and military domination unfortunately persists as an evil cancer in some of our native territories such as Tahiti, New Caledonia, Australia, and New Zealand. Our environment continues to be despoiled by foreign powers developing nuclear weapons for a strategy of warfare that has no win-*

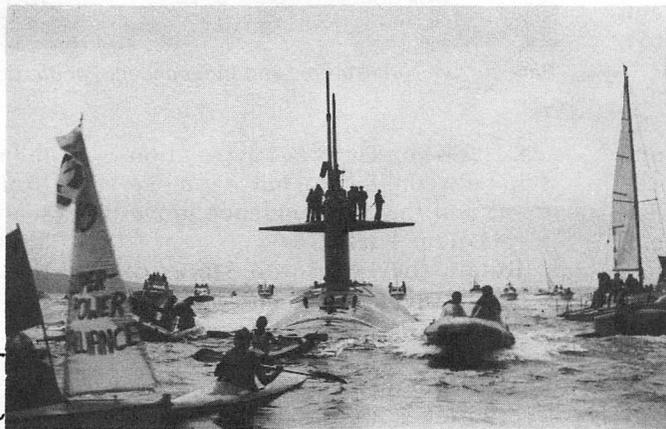
*ners, no liberators, and imperils the survival of all humankind."*

Quote from  
PEOPLES CHARTER FOR A  
NUCLEAR FREE AND  
INDEPENDENT PACIFIC

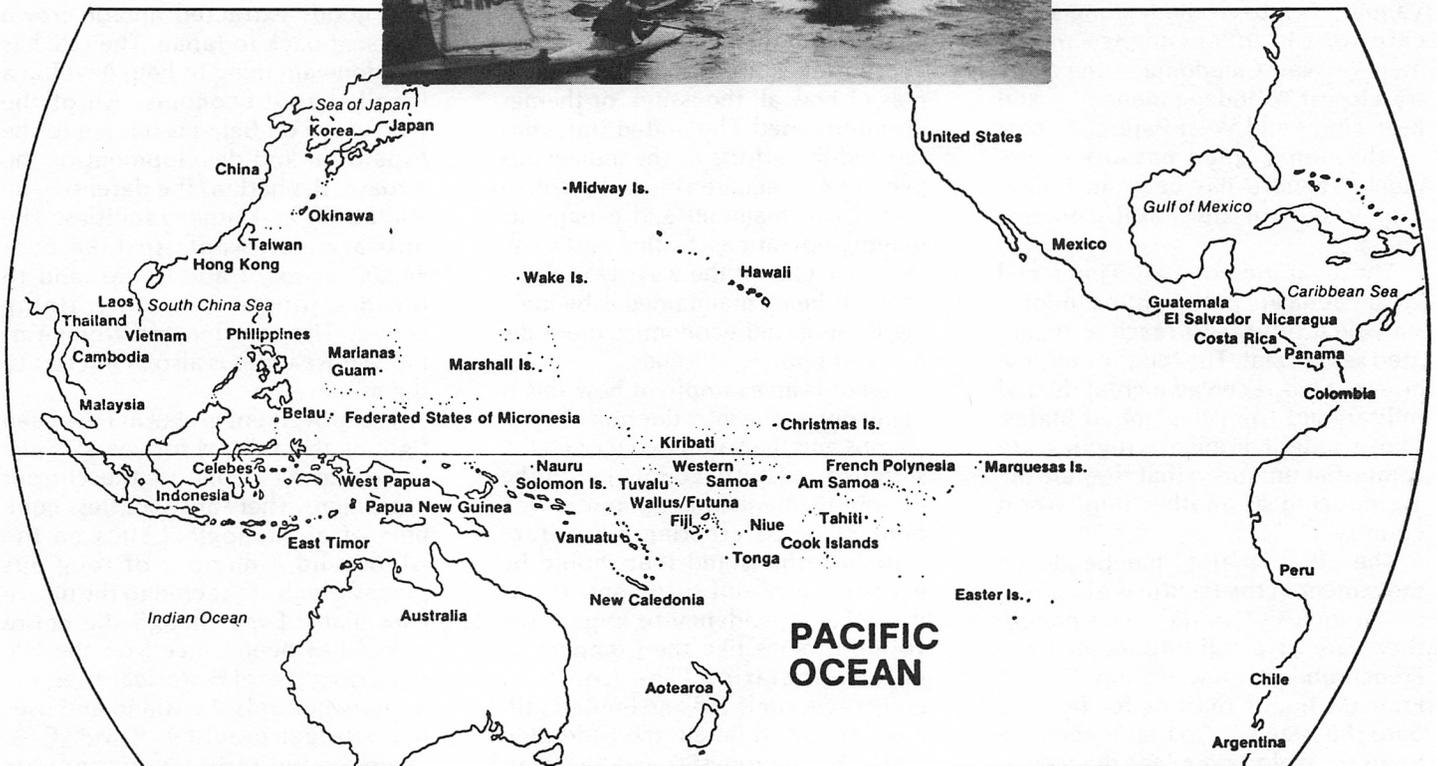
**T**oday the world spends over 600 billion dollars a year for

weapons — over a million dollars per minute. In short, our world lies in the grip of militarism. Militarism has a great impact on all countries; it is especially hard on those third world countries that are small and developing. For the peoples of the Pacific islands and the Pacific Rim, halting the militarization of the region and nuclear proliferation is nothing less than a struggle for survival.

Protecting markets and resources (including cheap, exploited labor) is one of the other major reasons that third world countries are constantly struggling against the world powers. The peoples in the Pacific are no exception. They are organizing themselves to protect their lands and cultures from the domi-



Chris Cooper



Aotearoa (New Zealand) peace protesters in kayaks over the hull of oncoming nuclear submarine U.S.S. Haddo

nation and exploitation of these governments and corporations. In the Pacific, the struggles for independence, indigenous control of the lands and waters, and freedom from the nuclear threat intersect. This article will look at these crucial issues and concerns of the Pacific movement.

### Independence and Movements for Self-Determination

There are a number of very strong and cohesive independence movements in the Pacific; there are others which are more fragmented and further away from achieving their goals. Self-determination — the struggle for more control over natural resources, the political processes, and the reduction or termination of foreign military bases, equipment, and personnel — is of major concern to a number of the islands in the area.

One of the most important countries involved in this area is Vanuatu. This former British-French colony achieved its independence three years ago. I include them here because while their government is still in transition, the people of Vanuatu have been and are serving as a model for many of the Pacific nations. Vanuatu has been the leading advocate for the independence movements in New Caledonia — the country closest to independence — and East Timor and West Papua. As part of the non-aligned nations movement, Vanuatu has been an important voice for the Pacific in this arena.

The countries of East Timor and West Papua are both fighting Indonesia which refuses to reach a negotiated settlement. The Indonesian government has received a great deal of military aid from the United States. These independence struggles are somewhat unique in that they are being directed at another third world country.

The other "major" independence movement in the Pacific is occurring in "French Polynesia." The people there are also fighting against the French underground testing. One of France's major reasons for holding onto the islands is so that it can continue to explode nuclear devices at Moruora, an island in French Polynesia.



Banner from Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific Conference, Tahiti, 1983.

Craig Shimabukuro

nia. This is an example of the relationship between the anti-nuclear movement and the independence movements in the Pacific.

Belau, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, and Guam are some of the more familiar Pacific islands actively seeking more control over their land and resources. These islands are the clearest examples of how all the issues, or themes are interrelated. The United States has resisted the efforts of the indigenous peoples to become self-sufficient so that it can maintain and expand its military operations, testing bases and facilities. One of the ways U.S. dominance is being maintained is by making these island economies more dependent upon U.S. dollars.

Belau is an example of how this is being done. The introduction of food stamps and the handing out of USDA surplus foodstuffs coupled with the discouragement of economic development has/is creating a "welfare state" on the island that should be economically self-sufficient. It has used the dependency to impact the vote on things like the Compact of Free Association. (The Compact grants economic aid and limited self-government to Belau, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Marshalls in exchange for absolute

military authority over the islands.) Ironically, the people of Belau had seen the economic potential of their lands during the Japanese occupation during World War II. The Japanese had military interests, but they had also wanted Belau's resources and goods extracted and/or grown and sent back to Japan. The U.S. has not done anything to help develop a locally-based economy. All of the work done on Belau is related to the expansion and development of the airbase, the harbor, the defensive installation, and other facilities. The military also wants to take over 34,000 acres of additional land to build a jungle warfare training center. The transfer and storage of nuclear weapons is also of interest to the military.

The movement in Hawai'i has been fighting the military for years. "Save Kaho'olawe" is one of the current campaigns. There are countless numbers of archeological sites on the island and a number of religious places which are sacred to the native Hawaiians. Even though the entire island has been placed on the National Register of Historical Sites, the military controls the island and uses it for target practice. RIMPAC — large-scaled military maneuvers sponsored by the U.S. with the armed



Street sign urging "No" vote on Compact of Free Association.

Angela Gennino

and naval forces of Canada, New Zealand, Australia, Japan, France, and South Korea participating — culminates with coordinated bombings and shellings of Kaho'olawe. This makes Kaho'olawe the only nationally recognized historical site or monument that serves as a military target.

### The Military in the Pacific

The people in the Pacific are very concerned about the buildup of conventional weapons, the continued use of island lands for military purposes, the growth of military alliances like ANZUS (U.S.-Australia-New Zealand military alliance), the rearming of Japan, and the threat that the foreign bases pose to their safety, economy and lifestyles. These concerns are in addition to the problems that nuclear weapons, testing, and dumping pose to the peoples in the Pacific.

If every single nuclear weapon, delivery system, base, and related personnel were removed from the Pacific, there would still be a huge military presence in the region. The military takes up thousands if not millions of acres of scarce land in the Pacific. The United States, for example, has 167 bases on Pacific islands. Bases are defined as any discrete military installation, manned or unmanned. The bases include those on Hawai'i and exclude "Rim" countries (the continen-

tal U.S., Australia, the Philippines, etc.). If you add the bases that the U.S. has on the Pacific coast and in other "Rim" countries, the number would increase to more than 500. This makes it practically impossible for some of the islands to develop independent economies. It is also the main reason that the French and American governments — the two major Pacific military powers — have been opposing movements for independence and self-determination.

The United States and France are the only western powers that have significant military presence in the region. The Soviet Union has limited access to the Pacific and does have ships (especially submarines) in the area. Australia, Japan, New Zealand, and the Philippines, to name some of the larger countries in the area, also have military interests.

Turning Japan into an "unsinkable aircraft carrier" to protect the sea lanes has been pushed by the current administrations in Japan and the U.S. The people in the Pacific see this as another threat to the peace and stability of the Pacific. In Japan, there is also great opposition to rearmament.

The buildup of conventional weapons and support systems has been going on for a number of years. But now things are getting worse. The Reagan Administration is pouring millions of dollars into the area for new equipment and weapons, and for more troops and support personnel. The

Tomahawk missile, carrier of both conventional and nuclear weapons, will soon be based in the Pacific. This signifies a qualitative change of weapons systems introduced into the area and yet another threat to peace. Money is being allocated to build and upgrade bases and support facilities. There has been an increase in the number of "training exercises" being conducted there. Many of them are held jointly with other countries such as Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, South Korea, and the Philippines. A growing number of Pacific countries have been invited to participate. Fiji, Papua, New Guinea, Singapore, and Tonga have joined or will join the exercises.

### The Nuclear Problem

The nuclear fuel cycle and one of its major products, nuclear weapons, greatly impact the people throughout the region. Uranium is mined on Indian lands in the U.S. and on aboriginal lands in Australia; missiles land on Kwajalein and other parts of the Pacific. Nuclear testing is done on Moruroa; nuclear-powered ships sail throughout the seas and dock at installations throughout the area; nuclear weapons are stored on many islands. Nuclear-armed planes are based on Guam, the Philippines, and in other places. There are radiation victims on the Marshall Islands and Tahiti. And, the United States and Japan plan to dump massive amounts of radioactive waste into the Pacific.

The Pacific people are not interested in being targets for nuclear weapons. The presence of so many nuclear-related bases, weapons, delivery systems, and communications systems makes these small islands primary targets. The testing has endangered the environment and has made some of the islands uninhabitable. There are hundreds of people who are suffering from radiation sickness and from related illnesses caused by the American and French testing; these victims have been denied proper medical attention.

Nuclear power, colonialism, and racism was the topic of the keynote speech made by the Honorable Barak Sope (Secretary General, Vanuaaku Pati, Republic of Vanuatu)



Cynthia Z. Biddlecomb

Children of Savaii Island, W. Samoa.

justice when it also maintains colonialism. For in a colonial situation there is no democracy or freedom. The people of Tahiti have no choice as to whether a nuclear bomb is tested in their country or not. It is the French government who makes the choice. The Republic of Vanuatu is becoming a nuclear free state, because it is the ni-Vanuatu who have decided on this — not the British or French who were the former colonial powers. As long as Tahiti, New Caledonia, Wallis and Futuna, East Timor and West Papua are still colonized the Pacific cannot become a nuclear free and independent zone. Our total support must be given to our brothers and sisters who are still in chains of the colonial powers." □

at the Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific Conference last summer. The following quote shows the understanding that the people have of the relationship between the issues.

*"It has always been my stern belief*

*that nuclearism cannot be separated from colonialism especially in the Pacific region where many of our brothers and sisters are still under the yoke of colonialism. No nation can preach about democracy, freedom or*

**Craig Shimabukuro** is director of the Disarmament and Human Justice Program for the Americans Friends Service Committee (Seattle), and a board member of the Commonwealth Fund.

*Ed. Note: Japan, Australia, and Aotearoa (New Zealand) withdrew from the 1984 RIMPAC exercises.*

## POETRY

### Mauna 'Ala

The Kaahumanu ladies, in their black lace *mu'umu'us*  
Wearing *leis* made of chicken feathers, dyed yellow,  
And a boy in a blue jacket, embroidered with the words,  
"HAWAIIAN INDEPENDENCE," and I, are among those  
who have gathered on Mauna 'Ala to mourn the passing  
of Hawaiian kings and queens, princes and princesses.

We bring *leis* of *maile*, and ginger, and tuberose;  
We bring prayers which all begin, "O Ke Akua," and end in a wail,  
We bring tears which are strung on a long, silvery thread,  
And lay these in heaps upon the concrete slabs.

An old woman weeps as she chants:

"Stars are buried here,  
each wrapped in a yellow wing  
of the 'o'o."

**Puanani Burgess**  
©1984

## Asians and Political Power:

*The Meaning of Elections '84*

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JUNITY Newspaper

# 1984 Elections and Political Power for Asian Americans

Commentary

By Wilma Chan

**"T**he U.S. is not a country of just one color. It is a place where everyone can fight for equality." With these words, Jesse Jackson captured the minds and hearts of more than 2,000 supporters and community residents who crowded into San Francisco Chinatown's Portsmouth Square to greet and cheer him.

This is the excitement of 1984. An excitement which we hope is captured in this issue of *EAST WIND*.

This exuberance and vitality comes from knowing that in the hundreds and thousands, Asian Americans, many for the first time, are wielding the weapon of traditional electoral politics and using it in new and creative ways to build our peoples' movements and advance our long-range struggle for equality and political power.

Certainly, as our articles will show, Asian Americans have been involved in electoral politics in the

past. However, the 1984 presidential elections have opened up new possibilities for Afro-Americans, all oppressed nationalities and the working class because Jesse Jackson's campaign has brought the cry for social justice, jobs, housing, and peace to the foreground. And to reiterate the point made throughout the magazine, he has moved traditional Democratic Party politics to the left.

For Asian Americans, his campaign has given us a new confidence to organize even more diligently and to join the Rainbow Coalition. The message of the Jackson campaign has hit home — Asian Americans are important; we *do* count and in no way will we be shut out and treated like nobodies anymore.

**B**ut there is even more that can be gained from work in the 1984 elections. Our electoral work should become part of a political strategy for our communities and cities. We should utilize the developing voter blocs in areas where Asians are concentrated, as well as,



the burgeoning expression that we will claim democracy for our peoples. We will make alliances city-wide, regionally, and nationally to take up issues of concern to our peoples and other oppressed sectors. We can begin to better utilize the electoral arena to promote progressive candidates not tied to the traditional bourgeois politicians and those who have come forward through Jackson's grassroots campaign, such as the Jackson delegates who were chosen by popular ballot at the caucuses. We should run for school boards, support anti-intervention propositions, campaign for the retention of the bilingual ballot and work on issues which make inroads into the political structures so the masses can have a say.

The electoral arena is not only useful in pursuing short-term reforms, but in realizing the longer range goals of organizing and drawing out the most progressive among our peoples who see the need for fundamental change and revolu-



tion. Needless to say, because of national oppression, Asians in this country have never been granted full political rights. Citizenship laws, land laws, voting laws have all been used to deny us even the most basic civil liberties. The majority of our peoples are still poor and work in the lowest and most demeaning jobs without the basic protection of trade unions and fair labor laws. Looking at our situation as a whole, we are barely second-class citizens.

As Jackson aptly puts it, "They tell you, 'you do not belong.' They tell you, 'you are nothing and deserve nothing.'" It is precisely because of almost 150 years of this treatment that we have not fully utilized the electoral arena of struggle. It is not because we are passive or believe in Confucian ideology. Just look at the People's Republic of China where thousands of years of Confucian tradition did not prevent the people from rising up in socialist revolution.

**T**he fight of Asian Americans is a fight for democracy, for real political power and equality for all our people. Our demands should be made loud and clear.

**We demand real political power in the form of the right to local self-government in areas of concentration of Asian populations:**

1. Full equality of language and culture;
2. An end to all discriminatory immigration practices and policies;
3. The right to unionization;
4. Freedom from racist violence and persecution;
5. An end to the forced destruction of the Asian/Pacific communities;
6. Redress and reparations for Japanese Americans interned during World War II;
7. An end to discriminatory licensure laws for Asian professionals.

While this program of struggle must be fought for in the courts, the

schools, the workplaces, and in the streets, we must fully utilize the electoral realm as part of our fight.

To do so, we must catch and lead the trend witnessed by the anti-Reagan movement and the Jackson campaign. As said before, we must see this motion to expand the electorate, provide a forum for our issues, build a base of support in the areas of concentration, and run for local office to further the struggles of our peoples and all progressive people.

We should begin now. The tasks await us. In San Francisco where more than 20% of the population is Asian, there are no Asians on the Board of Supervisors. Only 20,000 Chinese out of a population of 100,000 are registered voters. There is certainly a potential for an Asian to gain a seat. It remains the responsibility of progressives to expand the Asian vote (through voter registration, education, and fighting for more speedy naturalization laws), and to channel it in a progressive direction. Because of the Rainbow Coalition, our impact will be felt in the not too distant future and we will contribute to key campaigns. In New York City, for example, the massive voter registration conducted during the Jackson campaign before the primary has opened the possibility for Asians, Blacks, Puerto Ricans and all progressives to unite and dump Mayor Koch in 1985.

**T**he struggle, of course, does not stop there. No matter what we gain under bourgeois democ-



racy, it can never truly erase the basis of our oppression which is rooted in historical economic factors and social and political discrimination. Our demands, our program of struggle, have both a short-term and longer term character. The fight for our full democratic rights will inevitably lead to the fight for socialism. There is no barrier between the two.

Thus, the 1984 elections are an opening shot in a longer battle for political power. Organizing our people, using new forms of struggle, building the unity between Asians, Blacks, Chicanos, all oppressed peoples and workers, these are our tasks. And we must do them well, because the stakes are high. Four more years of Reagan would set us back tremendously. Conversely, a defeat for Reagan and the building of our movement will help give us the strength for victory in years to come. □

*Drawings by Tomie Arai.*

**Wilma Chan** is a founding member of the Chinese Progressive Association and an EAST WIND contributing editor.

## Asian Americans for Jesse Jackson and the Rainbow Coalition

# "After Reagan's Storm Comes the Rainbow"

By Ranko Yamada

*This article began as a letter to my mother who called me one day to say, "I read in the Japanese paper that you're working on the Jesse Jackson campaign." Her tone of voice, coupled with a long pause was really saying, "Oh no, what crazy thing is Ranko getting into now?" Since then, others have asked me the same kind of question. I write this now because, knowing my mother and friends, I believe they too would agree that supporting Jackson may be one of the sanest things we can do in 1984.*

*I also thought it appropriate to include information on Asian Americans for Jesse Jackson (AAJJ) and the National Network of Asian/Pacific Americans for Jesse Jackson because at this stage, we need more than passive support. We need to actively help Jackson to win.*

\* \* \*

Jesse Jackson has legitimized the right for all minorities and working people to live here in the U.S. and to fight for equality. Jackson most significantly represents Blacks, Chicanos, and Asians and our concerns in these times because he is the only candidate to inject the interests of the poor and politically powerless into this presidential race. He has brought us together under the beautiful glow of the Rainbow Coalition.

What Jesse has done is no simple task. Asians along with all the disenfranchised, have been painted as unworthy, unwanted and definitely foreign. Too often we are represented as people who are trying to pawn or steal a free ride from "real Americans." Too often these days, I am told to go back to where I came from. (Stockton?!!) With the sanction of Reagan, America's slogan once again is "might and white is right." I agree. It is right-wing, as well as reactionary and life-threatening to our communities.

We may like to think that all our years here in the U.S. should have earned us a right to life, liberty and happiness, let alone equality and dignity. Or that we should have

some material proof to show for our contributions to the GNP and society overall. But when we stare the system in the face, and look at the conditions of the communities, we see recurrent patterns of neglect, poverty, anti-Asian bigotry and stereotyping. Chol Soo Lee's case, redress and reparations, Vincent Chin's murder, and the rape/hanging of a nine-year-old Vietnamese child in San Francisco all make it apparent how far we are from true democracy and political power. If there was one iota of political equality for Asians, these issues would never have arisen nor would justice have exacted such a price.

So when Jackson announced he was taking on Reagan and forming



Jesse Jackson with Mrs. Lily Chin, mother of Vincent Chin

Mike Fong



Mike Fong

Jesse Jackson at May 13 rally in San Francisco Chinatown: the first time a presidential candidate had ever come to Chinatown. Pictured with him are Harry Chen of the Chinese Progressive Association and Mabel Teng, a member of Asian Americans for Jesse Jackson.

the Rainbow Coalition, he was talking, "empowerment" for the poor and minorities, and that struck a chord within me. He was placing our voice on the national agenda that has been monopolized by Wall Street financiers, Pentagon chiefs of staff, Hoover Institute fellows.

Jackson champions civil rights, having been trained by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. He also talks of shifting America's priorities away from the military escalation and reorienting them towards peace, full employment, human services.

As an old Korean immigrant man told me, "Jackson can understand what we go through daily in this country. We don't have to explain everything to him. As a Black man, he knows. We are of the same heart."

I thought, "Asians ought to be in the Rainbow." With our organizing experience we could construct a

base of support for Jackson, and with his receptivity to Third World concerns, our issues could, in turn, be brought to the fore. Not only this, but we *should* work together and build support for the struggles of Blacks and other oppressed sectors with whom progressive Asians have always had a common stake and solidarity.

I met with others in the Bay Area whose convictions mirrored mine and we agreed to sponsor a meeting to initiate a Northern California Asian committee. Contacting friends and organizations we'd worked with over the years, the six of us — Ying Lee Kelley, Carol Ono, David Kakishiba, Steve Hom, Butch Wing, and myself — anticipated an attendance of maybe 60 people. But manning the reception table during the course of this January 12th meeting, I greeted more than 100 people. We gave ourselves a name

— Asian Americans for Jesse Jackson — elected officers, and collected \$500 on the spot!

On that very same night in Harlem, the New York Asians for Jesse Jackson announced its decision to join the Rainbow Coalition. Asian Americans were joining with Blacks, Latinos and others in the Rainbow Coalition which soon saw Asian American committees forming in Honolulu, San Diego, Los Angeles, Eugene, Seattle, and Boston.

Then on March 9, concretizing the motto, "In unity there is strength," our individual groupings formed the National Network of Asian/Pacific Americans for Jesse Jackson. Sharon Hom and Leslee Inaba-Wong (New York), Evelyn Yoshimura and Linda Mabalot (Los Angeles), Michael Liu (Boston), Ying Lee Kelley and Butch Wing (Bay Area), and Cindy Ng (Network coordinator) signed the joint statement

which represented the unity of 75 organizations. A Harlem delegate candidate applauded the Network saying, "I've been to all the rallies and this one is the best one yet! It's good to see Asians in the Rainbow."

Since then, in the San Francisco Bay Area alone, AAJJ registered 1,000 new voters; 50% have been Asian. It wasn't always easy convincing those made cynical by mainstream politics to register, but we did. Others couldn't always see why they should bank on a Black minister, but we won them to the political significance of his running. Those more familiar with the electoral circles thought it best to go with a "winner," but many began to see that the Rainbow Coalition could be a winner. We even got registered voters to switch parties. A Nisei friend who'd been a Republican since World War II (since a Democrat, Roosevelt, had signed the internment order) decided to cast his lot with Jackson.

On a hot May day in San Francisco Chinatown over 2,000 community residents and Jackson supporters began to feel and understand the power of a campaign that took them into account and directly hit out at the sorrow and worthlessness which poor people are made to feel in this country.

Jackson's stand on the issues has been able to turn people around, as has the Rainbow's principle of equality. For the active Jackson supporters, whose numbers are growing all the time, we have had the opportunity not only to go out and build political movements in our own communities, but also to work with supporters of many nationalities by working with groups like Latinos for Jackson, Jews for Jackson, Women for Jackson, and Labor for Jackson in the Bay Area. We have done across-the-board precinct work, learned about each other's issues and built the basis for Asians to speak to and aid the concerns of, not only our peoples, but

of others in our cities and visa versa.

Furthermore, Jackson's headquarters has not just done PR to woo Asians. Just prior to the formation of the Network, we'd seen his sincerity about incorporating us into the process when he endorsed the Concerned Japanese Americans/National Coalition for Redress and Reparations' position on the issue which called for reparations equal to the total number of incarcerated, not just survivors, and to offer parity to the Aleuts who were also incarcerated during the war. His campaign has asked us to develop the Asian/Pacific plank for his platform.

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*"We have had the opportunity not only to go out and build movements in our own communities, but also to work with many nationalities . . ."*

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Through the Rainbow, we are having a significant impact on the '84 elections — an opportunity which will strengthen our peoples' movements.

Many of us were novices in the electoral arena when we started working on the campaign, but we have learned a lot in the past months. We've also gotten our foot in the door to the electoral arena via the campaign. At the California delegate caucuses, 17 members of the Asian Jackson committees from San Diego, Los Angeles, San Jose, and the Bay Area were elected delegates, many of them placing first in

the running. Along with other grassroots community people, Asian Americans were part of the Jackson slates on the June 5th ballot in California.

Asian Americans are also playing important roles in the overall Jackson campaign. Mike Murase is Deputy Field Coordinator and Asian American Coordinator (California); Eddie Wong heads the Northern California management team; Irene Hirano, California steering committee; Butch Wing and Ying Lee Kelley, vice chairs of the Northern California Jackson for President committee; May Joan Louie, Massachusetts Constituency Coordinator.

Through the campaign and the Rainbow Coalition, we've acquired some gains that will have long term residual effects. At a program honoring Mrs. Jackie Jackson in San Francisco's Western Addition — a predominately Black community bordering J-Town — Mabel Teng brought the house down when she described how Asians are treated in this country. Interracial prejudice and mistrust engraved deep in this system tumbled down. Reagan, can you face that?

Joined with the Rainbow Coalition, we have the potential of being the majority in many local elections. His campaign has created the vehicle for all nationalities and progressive peoples to work together, not by accident but intent. More than a campaign, we are forming a movement. The implications are staggering, more so because of the reality that presents itself today. It would be folly and irresponsible not to embrace the opportunity given by Jackson's candidacy to defeat Reagan. It is incumbent upon us to build a people's movement out of the radiance of this Rainbow Coalition. □

**Ranko Yamada** is an advisor to EAST WIND and campaign coordinator for the Bay Area Jackson campaign.



UNITY Newspaper

Jackson and members of his Rainbow Coalition at jubilant Little Tokyo rally.

# The Rainbow Coalition: An End to Racial Division

## *A New Beginning for America*

On May 17th, Jesse Jackson addressed an enthusiastic audience in Little Tokyo, Los Angeles. The following are excerpts from his speech.

\* \* \*

**Y**ou have given me the honor of becoming the first presidential candidate ever to speak in Little Tokyo. I stand before you as one of many who want to use our campaign to change our country's domestic and foreign policies. I ask you to join me as equal partners in our crusade to change the whole direction of American politics.

You, as Asian Americans, have a special role to play in any effort to change our country's policies. For you have seen so much of the worst side of our history. You must bear witness to our national shame: the 120,000 Japanese Americans interned in concentration camps dur-

ing World War II despite every proof of their loyalty to their country; the shame of immigration policies based on racial bigotry; the long history of scapegoating that has forever kept the people of this country from dealing with their common problems. The holocaust of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

We cannot afford, any of us who have been witnesses to the truth, to remain silent. We cannot afford simply to protest. We must do all that we can to achieve power — to change America's foreign and domestic and military policies before it is too late.

We fight not only for ourselves but for the future of humanity. Each individual battle for justice speaks to the truth of the need for a new direction. Each individual battle is strengthened by becoming part of the whole. That is the message of the Rainbow Coalition. The battle

for reparations for Japanese Americans becomes part of the witness against all racially biased government policies from the treatment of Native Americans driven from their homes down the Trail of Tears to the treatment of Haitian immigrants thrown into concentration camps in our time. Bringing home the truth, the horror of Hiroshima and Nagasaki is critical to all efforts to stop an arms race that threatens tens of thousands of Hiroshimas.

Since the Chinese Exclusion Act was first passed in 1882 you have seen 100 years of immigration policy based on racial bias. Families of every Asian nationality have been separated and victimized by discriminatory immigration laws. In 1984, we have an immigration service that "sweeps" the Silicon Valley twice a week checking each worker of Latino or Asian origin. In 1984, we have a new racially biased immigra-

# FOCUS

tion law that does not leave the principles of the Chinese Exclusion Act far behind. The Simpson/Mazzoli bill would make it even harder to achieve the reunification of Asian families.

We must tell the world that we have had enough of immigration law based on race and racial bias. We must tell the world the truth — racial divisions are used by those who would exploit the labor of the peoples of the earth for their own benefit. We must tell the story over and over again until every person in this country understands that promoting divisions among the people has never gotten anyone a job — except the worst of our country's politicians. The story has been repeated over and over again, with Chinese people brought to this country to build the railways, with slaves from Africa brought to work in the cotton fields, with Japanese and Chicano agricultural workers imported and exploited for their labor. The labor of Chinese and Japanese and the Chicano and Black people of this country has made a handsome profit — not for us, but for those who ran the railways and owned the cotton fields, the vineyards and American agribusiness. They have used our desperate poverty, the unspeakable conditions from which we fled or into which they drove us to systematically pay us less than other workers.

**C**leverest of all, they have turned American working people against us whenever it suits their purpose. "They are stealing our jobs" is the message. "Don't organize unions for better working conditions, organize the Ku Klux Klan to protect your community." "Don't blame the American corporations" who used their tax breaks and their profits to merge with one another, to close down plants and to move to slave labor markets abroad. "Protect American executives" while they raise their salaries by 15% a year. That's all Lee Ia-

cocca asks. He said he was willing to make a great sacrifice — to accept a bonus of no more than \$433,000 if the government will renew its restrictions against Japanese imports and if auto workers find ways of cutting their health care costs.

Iacocca used a billion dollars in taxpayers money and a billion dollars in concessions from the workers to "streamline" his company — to close down nine plants and lay off one-third of his work force. In this year of record breaking profits, Chrysler has cut 52,000 workers from its work force, while its directors set aside \$51.6 million in bonuses for 1,400 executives.

I believe that we must have new political leadership that will demand corporate responsibility to all of the American people.

On June 2, 1982, Vincent Chin, a young Chinese man was clubbed to death by two white autoworkers who thought he was Japanese and "taking away jobs." Perhaps it would have been a fairer trial if all the politicians, all the corporate executives, the union leaders, and the journalists who have told the American people to "blame it on the Japanese" had stood trial with those two autoworkers, but Vincent Chin's life is lost forever.

You have witnessed the terrible results of government policy based on racial prejudice. We must do all in our power to seek reparations for the victims of such policies. I call on all members of our Rainbow Coalition to join with me in seeking full redress and reparations for the Japanese and Aleuts interned during World War II. The legislation must not continue to languish in Congress. The message of the Rainbow Coalition is that an injury to one is an injury to all. Fighting our separate battles, none of us is strong enough to see justice done. Together we can.

This nation must have a new foreign policy. A new domestic policy. We must change our relationships with the nations of the earth. In our

debate in Texas, Walter Mondale stated that the solution to our immigration problems was to put more guards at our borders. There is perhaps no statement that better summarizes the difference between my candidacy and his. His is the old direction, trying to convince the American people that they must protect themselves from the peoples of the earth. We will feel the pressure at our borders as long as our 6% of the world's population continues to consume more than one-third of the resources of the entire globe. As long as we continue to waste the world's resources on a deadly and devastating arms race. In the last five years, we have poured \$1.8 trillion of the world's resources into our military budget. A world in which 2 billion people live on incomes below \$500 a year; 600 million people have no jobs; 11 million babies die before their first birthday because of inadequate health care. I believe that we can only become more secure as a nation when we cut this military budget.

As Asian Americans, you have also seen the worst of this country's foreign policies in Vietnam and Cambodia and Laos, in the Philippines and Korea. You have seen what our country's support of dictators has done to war-torn lands. We must stop supporting dictators like Marcos. We must stop supporting death squads in El Salvador. Your generation must bear witness; your generation must make the change before we see our country repeat in Central America what it did to Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia.

**W**e must begin with a vote for a new direction, for jobs, peace, and justice. Your Rainbow Coalition can do it. California can send the world a message it will never forget. The Democratic Party will never be the same again. We must take our message to San Francisco in July, and we must never stop. □

# Asian Students Against Reagan

*Hands on lesson in 1984 reality*

By Enrique Sy

I am Chinese American, born in the Philippines, grew up in the Pacific island of Guam, and went to a public high school in San Francisco. In high school, even though I saw the problems of the community (crowded housing projects, poor educational system, students constantly cutting classes, smoking pot in the hallways, drugs, rising rents and crime, low wages) I never really thought anything could be done about them. Besides, I thought, then, that the problems faced by many of the people were attributed to their lack of hope and spirit. It is up to the individual to make something out of his or her own life. After all, that's what's being perpetuated by the media and this so-called democratic capitalistic society of ours.

It was during my first year in college, at the University of California at Berkeley, that I took several Asian American studies courses and a sociology course which I thought gave me a critical and somewhat realistic view of American society and its system. They were good courses but they only seemed to broaden my intellectual awareness and revealed causes of the problems, not solutions. Being critical of a failed system is essential but not doing anything to change it is being hypocriti-



Student registering new voter in Chinatown.

cal and cynical. I definitely didn't want to be cynical but I didn't know what to do.

It wasn't until my second year that I started getting involved through the Asian Student Union in campus and community activities. Lucky for me, I got involved at the right time (there's actually no wrong time to get involved). It was the beginning of election year '84. At first, I thought it would just be another election year where a "donkey" and an "elephant" would run against each other for the presidency.

But the past four years have not been good for Asian and Third World people both here and abroad. Under Reaganism, Affirmative Action, financial aid, and ethnic studies programs have been constantly cut and threatened. We can clearly spell disaster: R-E-A-G-A-N, and if we add I-S-M to it, we'll have a program for human and world destruction. As an Asian student, I cannot afford four more years of Reagan. Make that, one more day. No, make that one more second. Make that, NO MORE!

But before I get too excited, let

Mike Fong

## FOCUS

me explain why I chose to get involved in the 1984 elections. Jesse Jackson's idea of the Rainbow Coalition was probably the main impetus. The Democratic Party, before Jesse Jackson announced his bid for the Democratic presidential nomination, seemed at times, no different from its Republican counterpart. Jackson's presidential campaign is the only one which has actually reached out to try to represent the poor, the working class, and Third World people. These people deserve a voice. These are the people who built this country and yet, who do not have a say in the political system. Don't anyone tell us that there is an abundance of freedom in this country. The fact is there is oppression in the United States and there is tremendous poverty in the richest nation in the world. Jackson's campaign is important in making that voice heard. It is important because it has given many people a sense of hope, struggle and unity.

**B**eing a student at a major university means being constantly separated from the community. For me, this separation has somewhat decreased my awareness of what is actually happening to my community, the Asian community. Working with the Rainbow Coalition has provided me with insights not found in the classroom. Doing voter registration has actually made me go back to the community. It has reminded me that the problems I left behind when I went to college are still there and are not getting better.

Doing voter registration has also shown me that the struggles of Third World people have convincing parallels. As I went off campus into the communities to register voters, it became evidently clear to me that Asians, Blacks, and Latinos are systematically placed in crowded ghettos or communities where the cost of living is sky high contrasting with dire poverty, and where there's

enormous pain and suffering. As I saw the common problems, the message of the Rainbow Coalition began to take on greater meaning.

Sometimes being Asian, I have this illusion that Asian people can solve their problems and gain Asian political power alone. Of course, my illusion is just what it is, an illusion. It is very important that Asian people understand the important role that the Black Liberation Movement has played and is playing in changing the system and trying to gain political power for all oppressed people. Blacks and Latinos make up a large percentage of the U.S. population. They have been struggling for democracy and equality for centuries. Combined we make a strong political force that cannot be ignored. For Asians to gain political power, it will take serious organizing of the masses and the unity of Third World people. It must be stressed that the struggle is not for political superiority but political equality.

**O**rganizing students is very essential for change to occur. Within the broad coalition of anti-Reagan groups are students. When I attended the Campaign for Jobs, Peace and Equality Caucus at the Students Against Reaganism (STAR) Conference, I was impressed by a large turnout of students representing many different groups and movements — Central American support groups, peace movements, women's movements, Third World movements, Freeze movements, Jesse Jackson's campaign, student government groups, and Young Democrats. The common denominator that all these students shared was they all were sick and tired of Reagan and Reaganism. They wanted Reagan removed, hopefully permanently, from the White House.

This network, STAR, has been successful in uniting students from all over the state of California to do just that — defeat Reagan. Just get-

ting the chance to meet and see so many students was really inspiring. I know that despite what happens in November and whoever wins, the campaign will continue to work towards the ultimate elimination of Reaganism and any political ideologies similar to that. The full potential of political power that students can achieve is only possible through unifying the masses of students. The more students get involved, the more voice and power the people will have.

The fact that 18-24-year-olds — the student age group — have the lowest voter registration rate shows that students are also "locked out" of the political process of this country. We, as students, should not believe that our votes do not make a difference this year. Students must vote, and they must vote against Reagan.

Reagan and Reaganism do not care about what happens to Asians or other Third World students. The fact is he does not care about our dreams; he just cares about corporate interests. If we believe that we are the model minority, we are not following a dream but an ugly nightmare. As Asian students, we should break away from the passive image that has tried to pacify us and keep us from struggling alongside other oppressed nationality groups. The media has described us as apathetic individuals who only care about our own selves and getting good grades and high paying jobs. I don't believe that all of us, or even the majority of us are apathetic. I think many Asian students are just unaware of what is really happening; or because of our oppression, we have a sense of hopelessness and the feeling that our participation is of no importance. We, Asian students, must unite with all students to fight Reagan. □

*Enrique Sy will be a third year student at U.C. Berkeley in the fall. He plans to major in psychology/social welfare.*

# Speak Out:

## How the 1984 Elections Impact Asian Americans

Interviews by Tom Eng,  
Sasha Hohri, Tom Izu,  
and Eddie Wong

Judging from the media coverage, voter registration drives, and the turnouts at the Democratic Party primaries and delegate caucuses, whole sectors of the American public are keenly interested in the outcome of the 1984 presidential election. And, in a manner reminiscent of the early '60's, they have been moved to act. Simply, people are sick and tired of Reaganism and its \$1.9 trillion five-year military budget, economic policies that sacrifice working and poor peoples' livelihoods while benefiting the super rich, and rapid erosion of civil and human rights.

The other dynamic at work is Jesse Jackson's bid for the presidency. He has captured the imagination and enthusiasm of Third World and progressive peoples. In expanding the electorate, Jackson has increased the potential that exists to remove Reagan from office, and build a far-reaching peoples' movement.

EAST WIND has drawn upon its ties in the Asian American communities to investigate this anti-Reagan sentiment. We asked Democratic Party politicians and organizers, and grassroots activists — Thomas Hsieh, Vera Ing, Jan Kumasaka, Louis Hop Lee, May Joan Louie, Norman Mineta, Mike Murase, Irene Natividad Dolores Sibonga and S.B. Woo — what they believe is at stake for

Asians in 1984; how this electoral participation can assist us in our efforts for political power. We also asked them for their opinions as to the question of why Asians haven't actively participated in electoral politics in years gone by, and how this disenfranchisement can be remedied. A sampling of answers is printed here providing a sense of the broadness of the movement.

**EAST WIND:** What is at stake for Asians in 1984? Why should we be involved in the elections?

**Louie:** 1984 is incredibly important. It's a key opportunity to say "No" to Reaganism. Reagan foreshadows much worse things to come so we have to send a very clear message to the powers that be. We have to fight to stem the move to the right. If we don't defeat Reagan, he and the ruling class will see it as a go-ahead to tear our lives apart.

**Woo:** I believe it is crucial to the long-term welfare of our people as a small and easily identifiable minority to be involved in these elections. The time is now for our educators or scientists to seek public office. It's in the nation's interest to have people from various walks of life hold public office.

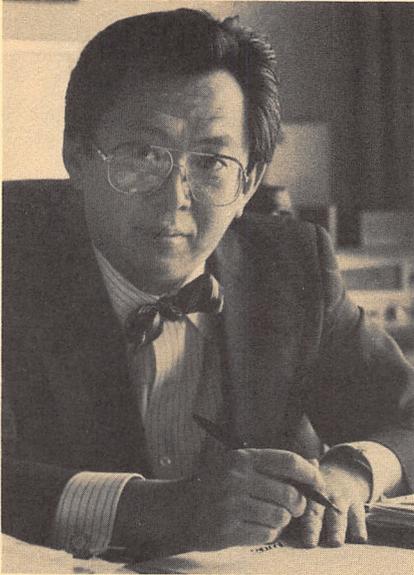
**Natividad:** I think that since we don't have that many Asians running for office, what is at stake in

1984 is political visibility. In '84, when there is a lot of favorable attention being paid to groups like ours, we have to use that momentum or I don't think it will help us in the future.

**Sibonga:** On the federal level with the presidential election, it seems to me that what we're looking for is the maintenance of the strides that have been made in civil rights. So many federal laws, regulations are set by the president and so I think it's extremely important that we get somebody in there who's not only receptive to minorities but certainly to Asians and realizes that we are a growing political force. Asians have been known as the silent minority. That cannot continue any longer.

**Murase:** The 1984 election is the first time that I'm campaigning actively for a presidential candidate. In the past, I didn't think that either the Democratic or Republican parties provided much leadership in fighting for social justice and peace. They haven't represented the interests of those of us in the Asian American community or of other common folk.

I decided to support Jesse Jackson's candidacy because we cannot afford to have Reagan reelected for another four years. Jackson is contributing to the possibility of defeating Reagan. In 1980, Reagan's margin of victory in many states was much smaller than the number of unregistered Black voters. Each



Architect **Thomas Hsieh** is the California Democratic Party vice chairman and a member of the Democratic National Committee. Due, in part, to his lobbying efforts, the party officially expanded its delegate selection's affirmative action policy to include Asians, and established the Asian Pacific Caucus.

new voter that Jackson involves is a potential anti-Reagan vote. Without his participation in the presidential race, I'm afraid the American people might have had little interest in the outcome. Four years ago, many of us saw little difference between Carter and Reagan.

And in 1984, Mondale, Hart and the others offered little in terms of strong stands on the real issues of the day. They kept the debate within the narrow confines of what's always been debated between traditional Democrats and Republicans, for example, whether to increase the military budget over the next five years to \$1.9 trillion (Reagan), \$1.8 trillion (Mondale), or \$1.6 trillion (Hart). But let me just add that since the defeat of Reagan

is so critical, I would support whomever is chosen in July as the Democratic nominee.

**EAST WIND:** What has been the impact of Reagan's Administration on Asians?

**Lee:** Reaganomics affects different people differently. The Asian community and Chinese American community are pretty diverse, and correspondingly, their views of government and policies are very diverse. So I think that in terms of economics, the Reagan Administration has probably benefited one segment and hurt another. But I think in the area of civil rights, affirmative action, and representation of Asian Americans in government, there's probably no question. I think you would get agreement maybe not publicly, but certainly privately, from people all across the spectrum who will agree this Administration has not been good in those areas.

**Hsieh:** I don't think Reagan knows that there is a difference or feeling or sensitivity about minorities. As far as the Republican Party is concerned, I don't believe that it has paid any attention to minorities. They have, within their national party structure, an advisory council on minorities. Asians, Hispanics, Blacks, whatever, all fit into one pot. As long as you're advisory, you're on the outside.

**Louie:** Reagan represents a very serious rightward leap in this country toward aggressive militarism, blatant anti-minority views, government money and legislation for big business, actions against labor and trade unions, and assaults on very basic social problems.

**Sibonga:** His practice has been extremely hurtful to the Asian community. The laws, the regulations, the assistance that we need in business and employment, Reagan has just about demolished the structure



**Vera Ing** is running for state representative from Washington's 37th district. She's been fighting for the community's interests as an urban planner and Democratic Party organizer for 20 years. Her current priority is to rehabilitate the International District.

that we were just beginning to get. I think that if anything, Asians have to make this election their number one priority in order to get Reagan out of office. He is a dangerous man who has damaged all of us, maybe irreparably.

**Ing:** Reagan is putting too much emphasis on defense and foreign intervention and economic stability in place of social needs.

**EAST WIND:** What have been the obstacles limiting Asians' involvement in electoral politics?

**Lee:** On one hand, there's not full acceptance of Asian Americans in the political mainstream as of yet by the public who really are the



The Democratic Party offered **Jan Kumasaka** a philosophy she could believe in and the mechanism to advocate for minority and poor people's rights. She has run state representative Gene Lutz's campaign, co-founded MOVE — Make Our Votes Effective — in the 35th and 37th legislative districts, and even taken a hand in drafting Washington's Democratic Party platform.

ones who choose. That has to do with some remnants of racism and just unfamiliarity with Asian Americans. Also, the lack of a true community culture based upon many diverse roles is another factor. You know, this has been a bachelor society until recent times. There haven't been second, third, fourth generations as in other communities. We've only been able to vote and own property and run for office since about the '40's.

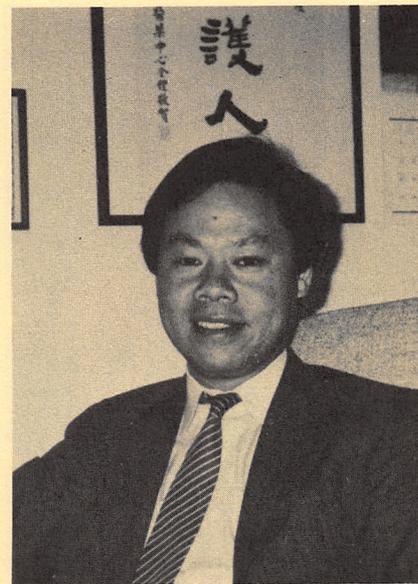
**Hsieh:** One of the foremost reasons is the attitude of our culture which says that the good, solid citizen should not be involved with politics. Politics is dirty. The second

one is politics takes money, time, energy and really does not bring monetary benefits. The third factor is our people's nature as passive, non-aggressive. The aggressive ones are in business, in professions. They're making good money and they don't mix with making good politicians. Finally, the older generations were mistreated and second-class, absolute second-class citizens.

**Kumasaka:** As the minority in the United States, it's difficult without the background, money, networking systems, people in powerful, influential positions. Things happen back in the "boiler room" and that's also a handicap for minorities. Money is hard to get. You might be able to depend on your own ethnic group, but that's not where the money is. Money is with the big packs and corporations.

**Mineta:** I think it comes because our parents avoided visibility; their main goal was working hard, trying to save enough so that their kids could get a good education and make something of themselves. Survival was the first thing on their minds because the Issei went through extreme prejudice. They had laws against them owning land, against them becoming citizens, and against them holding certain kinds of jobs. They faced some of the most blatant forms of discrimination you could find. I think that got translated into how Nisei felt about community service outside the Japanese American community. With the evacuation and camps, you had total removal. Once the war was over and people started returning in 1945-46, they came back with nothing and they had to start from scratch. Again, they're talking survival. They couldn't be concerned about being involved in electoral politics.

**Natividad:** We don't have the numbers yet in terms of votes. Very few



Growing up in San Francisco Chinatown, **Louis Hop Lee** experienced social and economic injustice and felt compelled to work for change. While in law school he entered the political arena. In 1975, he worked on Mayor Moscone's campaign. He joined the Chinese American Democratic Club and authored the Democratic Party's Asian Pacific Caucus' bylaws.

of us are registered voters and those who are do not vote. Most of our population is young or are not citizens and that even reduces our political clout.

**Sibonga:** There are many Asians who have been involved in countless campaigns, contributed hours, dollars, ideas and yet, do they ever become campaign chairs? Do they ever get the positions once the person is elected? No. I think even now people tend to write off Asians. I had been vice-chair of the King County Democratic central committee. But in the primary, the organized party structure supported a white male over me. That tells me



Inspired by the 1960's Black Power movement, **May Joan Louie** has devoted more than 15 years to Asian student and community organizing. Ballot measures like a referendum for district representation made her realize the political implications of electoral politics; personal involvement came when Black candidate Mel King ran for mayor of Boston. Today, she is Jesse Jackson's Massachusetts Constituency Coordinator.

there is some racism and sexism there.

**Murase:** Some people think Asians "weren't interested" or that it wasn't "in their nature to be political." Some people have even said that because we came from feudal countries we wouldn't understand democracy or how to govern ourselves. But that view is wrong because we did set up local associations and through these leadership groups, trade unions, and community groups resisted racism and discrimination. And when we were blocked from using electoral avenues, we pressed on using direct action.

I think Asians in the U.S. have been historically shut out and accorded unequal status. When the Chinese began coming in the 1850's, they were wanted as sources of cheap labor; they were never welcomed as members of this society. The same is true of all the other Asian and Pacific groups that followed, just like the Blacks and Latinos. Look at the exclusion acts and other anti-Asian legislation: Chinese Exclusion Act, Foreign Miners' Tax, Oriental Exclusion Act, Tydings-McDuffie Act, and the concentration camps. Remember, we were classified as "aliens and ineligible for citizenship" and denied the right to become naturalized, to vote or to own land. It wasn't until 1943 that naturalized Chinese were given the right to vote, and 1952 that Issei who became citizens were able to vote.

Insidious laws, party rules and procedures have been institutionalized to prevent minorities from having the right to govern our own affairs and have a say. Gerrymandering, the double primary system, the patronage "old boy" system, red tape and delays in becoming naturalized are some of the barriers facing us.

**EAST WIND:** How can Asians increase their political presence and influence?

**Natividad:** Political clout comes out of voting and so there are all these voter registration drives. Voter registration is about the unsexiest part of political activity and in my view, the most critical. Everybody wants to do the glamorous candidate-type activity. But I think registering people to vote and getting them out to vote is where our focus should be.

**Sibonga:** Although we are composed of different ethnic groups, when we are viewed by the majority society it doesn't matter whether I am Filipino and you are Chinese.



Congressman **Norman Mineta** (13th Congressional District), first Japanese American from the mainland to be elected to Congress, is currently working on a bill to implement the recommendations of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians. He sat on the Human Rights Commission and was instrumental in forming the San Jose Housing Authority. In 1967, he was appointed to the city council; in 1971, he was elected mayor. His congressional career began in 1974.

We're all Asians. So we have to be unified in whatever we do. We have to get more people to run for office, contribute to the campaigns not only in hours of volunteer work but in dollars. We have to make white or other candidates accountable to us. Asians have to start asking those hard questions and making sure there is follow-up. We need to understand the process to work the process.

**Mineta:** It's one that involves con-



**Mike Murase** is Deputy Director of Field Operations and the State-wide Asian American Coordinator for the Jesse Jackson campaign. He is also running as a Jackson delegate to the Democratic Convention. His credentials include membership in Little Tokyo People's Rights Organization, chair of Asian Americans for Nuclear Disarmament, and advisor to EAST WIND.



stancy in terms of being involved in community activities not only within the Asian Pacific American community but the total community as a whole. Because if we're not talking to the chair of the county central committees so that they become familiar with who we are, then we are not making any gains. If people only come out once every four years to do something for a presidential campaign, then, it's not going to be enough to sustain.

**Lee:** The Chinese American Democratic Club (CADC) is involved in supporting other candidates because those coalitions, those

linkages are what make the city work. There's no group in San Francisco that can be so dominant and so powerful so that it can do what it wants regardless of what other people say. The demographics show that the Third World vote can be a swing vote in a lot of key elections. People aren't winning by large margins.

The value of what the CADC is doing is to expose people and raise their political awareness of the electoral process and knowledge about how they can effect changes through the process of government and political events. We're now grooming a whole series of people to run for future office.

**Louie:** We should do a lot of organizing and education in our communities so people know what our rights are and can fight to get full voting rights. This includes getting voter registration and literature in the Asian languages. Political machines shouldn't be allowed to undermine fair voting practices. We must be vocal in expressing our stands on Asian concerns.

We should run Asian candidates and not restrict ourselves to the roles that society has defined for us. Asians should strive to not just represent Asians but to run on a citywide, statewide, and national basis.

**Murase:** In 1984, there are over four million Asian Pacific Americans in the U.S. and about 1.3 million of them are in California. The growth rate among Asians in the remainder of this century will be phenomenal. So, if Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders can articulate a progressive platform which not only benefits Asians but is in the interest of the vast majority of minorities, women, and working people, we can make a great contribution in the political arena.

We need to be organized into a broad united front within the Asian communities and unite in a stra-



**Irene Natividad** describes herself as a "political activist who's also a feminist who happens to be Asian." A partial listing of her organizational affiliations includes vice chair of New York's Asian Women's Political Caucus, Asian Women's Network, and New Jersey Council of Continuing Education Deans and Directors.



tegic alliance with other minority groups and working people to consolidate the gains made in 1984. We're just beginning, but I like Jackson's idea of the "old minorities becoming the new majority."

We should continue to be active in community organizing and providing leadership to the various movements for social change. We should encourage others to play an active role in shaping their own lives.

**EAST WIND:** What do electoral politics hold in store for Asians? How can this participation and involvement affect our future?

**Woo:** The lieutenant governorship may not be a very high office in true



*As the first woman of color on Seattle's city council, **Dolores Sibonga** has numerous credits to her name. She agitated for a standard affirmative action operating procedure, and introduced an ordinance to compensate Japanese American city workers who were dismissed because of the internment.*

standards. But to put my running in proper perspective, this is the highest office on the state level ever sought by Asian Americans in the continental U.S. While Hawai'i has an Asian governor and lieutenant governor, and there are Asian American senators and congressmen, they are concentrated on the West Coast where we have a significant population. On the East Coast, there hasn't been anything. So my running is a beginning.

**Hsieh:** Asians have come a long way since the time I remember 20 years ago. Even eight years ago, Asians were not considered within the mainstream of the Democratic Party. In 1980, people like myself

began to put together the statewide network for Asians. We established a state Asian Pacific caucus within the party structure. But still, we were not given the opportunity to be part of the presidential delegate selection process. In the last two or three years, after having been unanimously elected state vice president of the California Democratic Party, I've been putting a lot of pressure on the party to change the delegate selection process. Last year, the party officially changed its delegate selection's affirmative action policy. Asian Pacific Democrats have officially become part of this program along with Blacks, Hispanics, Native Americans, and women.

The Democratic Party has established the official Asian Pacific caucus. After four national conferences we finally got ourselves accepted by the party. Now, because it's underway, we're going to make sure this caucus is going to be long-standing.

**Murase:** Jackson's candidacy has an objective impact on American politics because the Black masses are becoming a real force in the electoral arena and despite what the media says, the Rainbow Coalition is beginning to be built. We can begin to build a permanent progressive voting bloc that will have an impact on national and local political races for years to come. But I'm not expecting miracles. Jesse Jackson will not be able to solve all the problems in this country. We need a more fundamental change in the entire structure of society for us to really achieve social justice at home and peace abroad. That can't be done through the ballot box alone. We need to take an active part in every arena of struggle and use every means to gain more political representation and political power for the majority of Americans. Election '84 is one of the arenas of struggle for long-term change.



*The acclaim of being the first Asian American to run for lieutenant governor in the continental U.S. goes to **S.B. Woo**. His campaign has won bipartisan support from Asians across the country. He is a professor of physics at the University of Delaware. In 1972, he became the founding president of that collective bargaining chapter of the American Association of University Professors. Woo wants to promote excellence in education and preeminence in technology — fundamental strengths of our society.*

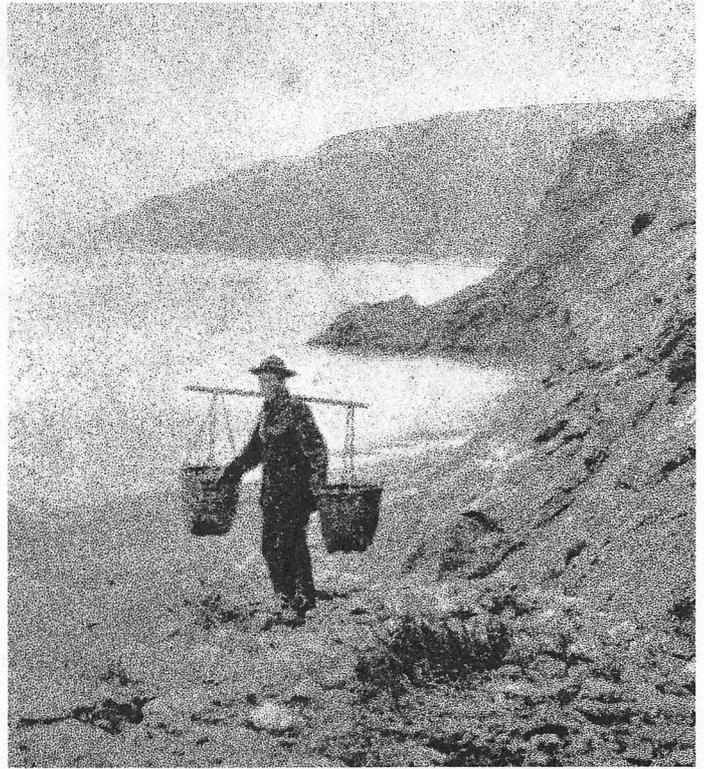
**Louie:** While we should learn to be masters at using the electoral weapon we must realize that it's only one weapon in our arsenal. History has shown that much of what we've gained has not come from the ballot. We had to fight for the right to use the ballot. We must combine our electoral work with grassroots organizing. Our central concern should be justice and we must be prepared to use every means available to reach that goal. □

## Welcome Spring

for Hor Chun

Hor Chun, your body is a taut-stringed *chang*, light as April wind in Peking. A web of tenacious silk, you bind me to our land of spice, uncoil this thread from your spinning wheel as I drift from Mexican cornfields to the Cascades, leeching this soil for coal, beans and cucumbers. Nights I spent in California mines, coal caking in my lungs, my fevered dreams echoed your butterfly step, until breath eased back, soft as your voice at dawn.

The Gam Lam hills hold our mark, tattooed in the raw curve of valleys. Hor Chun, across oceans, this weighted sun drowns early in the mountains of granite. Everything I have shaped is folding in front of me; the mines are filling with dirt, and sand does not float from my nails. Seasons have died, leaving my legs bowed inward, knees stained with clay.



The ink strokes I pen on tissue, hand delivered to you by returning miners, dry dark as the ebony of your leaf-shaped eyes. This brush is slipping, so I will mouth these words, fourteen years muted, "I love you, Hor Chun," decorated in sequins, silk and scarves of incense smoke like the dolls in Hong Kong windows. Reel back these strings; weave a dress of blood silk, a veiled headdress, a ring. Find me on the next freighter home.

Shalin Hai-Jew  
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# The Phoenix

by

*Leslee Inaba-Wong*

*with accompanying photographs*

by

*Mike Fong*

*Janet Yoshii*

*Crystal K.D. Huie*

## New York, 1982

**M**rs. Eng looks like my grandmother . . . oval of her eyes, the fullness of her mouth, the way her white hair sweeps back. I noticed it when we were at the Community Planning Board meeting.

The tenants from 109 Madison Street were sitting next to me; Mrs. Eng was among them. At one point amidst the noise and commotion, she turned to me and said something in Chinese.

"I don't understand," I replied. "I'm Japanese."

She giggled and put her hand to her mouth.

*My grandmother would have done that.*

That meeting turned into a small battle. The issue: the proposed Henry Street Towers — 21-story condominiums built in the heart of Chinatown: \$150,000 for a single unit.

We were jam-packing the Boy's Club auditorium. From the moment we stepped into the building, we were hassled.

A beet-faced man pointed his finger in our faces and yelled, "Fire regulations. You can't go in."

People clumped around him and argued. He managed to turn some people away, but a door opened for

us, and we bogarted our way into: the lights, the people alert, straining to hear, the verbal tug-of-war the atmosphere simmering, like water about to churn and burst into boiling.

On one end, *the community* — Puerto Rican, Chinese, working class Jews — Many voices saying the same thing:

*"We do not want high-priced high-rises in our community!"*

At the other end, *the developers* — their proposal: luxury condos and promises of a 'Y' and swimming pool, concessions to the community (carrots dangled at the end of a string).

Many appointed Community Board members, dazzled by the carrots, approved the proposal.

Those who favored the proposal all spoke. Then in one slick move they attempted to cut off further discussion.

We fought, "Let the tenants speak!"

More verbal skirmishes. A compromise struck: three more speakers for

each side. Mrs. Eng was asked to speak.

She did not want to speak. She could only speak in Chinese. Her hands were shaking; her lips were quivering. She did not want to speak. And she spoke.

*"For many months we had no heat, no hot water. Then no water at all. Many old people live in my building. We call up the landlord, Thomas Sung. Tell him to turn on the water, fix the heat.*

*"Then we call the city people. They do nothing.*

*"We make a tenants association and call the Chinatown People's Association."*

A couple sitting in front of me fidget. "This is a landlord/tenant's grievance," she hisses. "It doesn't belong here."

I cannot stay quiet. "Thomas Sung, that lady's landlord, purposely cut off the water and heat to try and get the Health Department to evict those tenants so that he could tear down their building. His plan was to erect more luxury condos that we can't afford."

The couple look at me in wide-eyed amazement, surprised that I not only understand English, but speak it.

*"The Chinatown People's Association come to help us," continued Mrs.*



Untitled

Mike Fong

Eng. "We go on television . . . talk to the newspapers. We have the rent strike, and carry the signs around the building. Everybody help us, the neighbors come out too.

"Pretty soon, the water gets turned on. Pretty soon the boiler gets fixed. We still live in the 109 Madison Street. It is our home."

She said this not in one smooth, steady stream of words and thoughts, but in haltering starts and stops. She said this despite her hand shaking, her lips quivering. She said this facing the developers, the Board members, despite eyes that poked her, pushed and shoved her with their glares,  
*"You have no right to speak, Chinaman. Get off the floor!"*

She said what had to be said, biting her lips as she paused, but refusing to stop.

And when she was done, a bubble burst. Voices whistled, hands clapped.

And I sat, blubbering like a baby.  
 She is 80.  
 She is courageous.  
 She is like my grandmother was . . . before the fire went out of her eyes.

\* \* \*

#### Fresno, 1950

**W**hen the FBI took my grandfather away and stuck him in some Federal prison, the fire in my grandmother's eyes was clouded over with worry, but it did not go out. Her courage stayed with her when she was torn from her home, pushed in-land at gun point, forced into some desolate desert prison, then released without so much as an apology.

Our family resettled on the West Coast, *Ba-chan* picking up pieces of her life as she went along.

We were a large family in a small

house on 'B' Street: my mother and father, eventually six children, my grandfather dying of pneumonia, and my grandmother.

She was independent then. She would walk half a mile in 105 degree weather to the Buddhist Temple with her friends, Mrs. Doi from 'C' Street and Mrs. Ikawa from Elm. They would walk, wearing dark dresses, carrying paper parasols to shade the sun,  
*chattering warm — like the air  
 and earth —  
 surrounded by familiar syllable  
 and sounds,  
 swirling dust around their dark  
 shoes,*

*thickening their cotton hose.*

My grandmother had visitors then. Friends to be entertained in our faded-maroon living room with sunlight slanting through dusty venetian blinds, shadowing blades on the worn rug and sofa. She served tea and *sen-bei* as unfolded fans sliced into the light.



Janet Yoshii

After my grandfather died, an elderly man would come to visit. "Ba-chan's boyfriend," we'd call him; and she would give us that look, beginning from one side of her mouth, spreading upwards, touching the nerve in her eye that sent us warning glares.

When the visitors were gone, we would wash dishes together. I, standing on a box, wiped each tea cup with a rice-bag dish cloth bleached white. She would tell me how poor she was, how she really wanted her own home.

After the camps she always lived with us: six grandchildren, always sharing a room with one or two or three of us. I told her, "I'll buy you a house when I grow up, Ba-chan."

Her needs were simple. She had change money coming in. She could walk to Rudy's Variety Store in Germantown and buy nylon hair nets and Pond's Cold Cream.

In those days, *Ba-chan* could walk to the *shibai*, the mid-summer festival complete with make-shift stage, and rows of folding chairs in the parking lot of the Buddhist Church.

The MC would begin by blowing into the microphone, and in that suspended time,

*when the desert inhales the day,  
holds her breath for a second  
before  
releasing the night —*

two pieces of bamboo would  
click, click,  
click together faster and  
faster,  
as hands peeled curtains  
open at their seams.

I have been in several of the *shibai*'s. I've danced Japanese folk dances. I've sung with the other kids in my Japanese school classes and my sisters and brothers have taken their turns. We'd hang around the

back stage catching different words and phrases we understood.

But the highlight of the evening was the play: a combination comedy/tragedy. Ordinary men — Toshi, the mechanic from the garage, and Mas, who worked at Fresno Fish Market — would transform themselves with white paint and become the heroines and villains. And *Ba-chan* and her friends would laugh and cry and applaud the scenes.

Afterwards we'd go home, lulled by murmurs of satisfaction, and sink into our dreams.

Her gardens flourished, flowers and fruit came up bright and sweet, and after the bitterness of the war and camps, she settled into her own pattern of things:

Otera on Sunday afternoons;  
Japanese movies at the CAL

Theater on Tuesday nights;  
seeing six grandchildren off to



A Favorite Place  
Berkeley, CA

Janet Yoshii

facing page:

My grandmother is the cornerstone to our family. Here she is at home surrounded by pictures and mementos from her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Berkeley, CA

school, then sweeping  
swirls of dust through light  
tubes  
formed by shadows and sun.

\* \* \*

Then the Freeway came in.  
The unseen hands of the enemy  
drew a line with a scalpel,  
swerved to miss the down-  
town businesses,  
sliced through the main ar-  
tery of the Japanese  
community, cutting it wide  
open.  
And the blood, having no  
central pathway,  
spilled into all parts of the  
city,  
clumping together in  
smaller coagulations.

Next to the Buddhist Church in  
the parking lot that housed so  
many carnivals, and plays, and *obon*  
practices was a deep, empty hole.

"The Freeway," people said.  
Gone are Okamoto's Jewelry and  
West Fresno Drugs.

No more Happy Hut where teen-  
age *Sansei* hung around  
the juke box dedicating  
songs to the ones they  
loved.

Bill has since retired Bill's  
Flower Shop,  
and packaged *tofu* has replaced  
back alley entrance-ways  
into the Hashimoto's where  
water fermented soy-beans  
and seeped dampness into  
every corner of the room.

My friends scattered: Dorothy to  
the east side, Sandy to the west. We  
moved and built our sprawling ranch-

style home on what used to be grape  
vineyards owned by Armenian farm-  
ers and worked by Japanese, Chinese,  
Filipino and Chicano labor.

Our development was new: no  
shops, no buses, nothing but empty  
lots and more houses. The Ikawa's  
moved down the road, but like every-  
thing else, we could only get there by  
car. We were miles from the Buddhist  
Church; too many minutes from  
everything.

We had a Japanese garden land-  
scaped in the back, complete with  
bamboo tea house and water falling  
naturally into a *koi*-filled pond. And  
on the east side in hard pan where  
"nothing will grow," my grand-  
mother planted clippings of flowers  
and fruit from 'B' Street, and here  
they thrived.

But for *Ba-chan* the uprootment,  
dependency and isolation were taking  
their toll. Imperceptible at first, the  
fire was leaving her eyes, filling them  
with smoke from reliving yesterdays.

In her *enryo* manner, she stopped  
pestering us about driving her to  
church on Sundays. Her hair would  
stay uncombed for a couple of days.  
She didn't bother doing her laundry.  
She stopped taking walks around the  
long, long block.

No visitors came. She didn't ask to  
be taken anywhere. We didn't volun-  
teer. She was like a shadow, sliding  
along the walls, softly spoken no-  
answered voice.

She was 76 when she had her first  
stroke;  
80 when she died.

\* \* \*

My grandmother came from a  
strong lot of Issei. From them we  
learned to persevere. Finding them-  
selves the target of racism and big-  
otry, they protected themselves and  
their families by weaving their lives  
into the tough fabric of the Japanese  
communities in America. It gave  
them strength and independence;  
room to be themselves.

With the community split, the  
blood was spilt.

For *Ba-chan* and other Issei like  
her, the move into the suburbs was  
the final move.

\* \* \*



*I-Hotel Series*

*Crystal K. D. Huie*

### San Francisco, 1977

It was the *Ba-chan*-type people that drew many of us into supporting the fight for the International Hotel. Through the years, nine blocks of Manilatown, San Francisco had been eaten away by the corrosive acid of urban renewal, replacing voices that mixed English and Tagalog, vinegar simmering adobo on

*stove tops,  
faces grained-brown and eyes  
shining-dark;  
with obscene pyramids and  
towers.*

The single block containing the I-Hotel, its tenants and storefront businesses and community organizations, was the last hold out.

Our fight against its eviction grew and gained momentum as it flowed from the community to the cam-

pus, then rolled back to the community again:

as students volunteered to clean and paint and stand watch, and buses brought grade school kids for tours and talks about arson and attempted evictions. Later, the children crayoned drawings, and block printed:  
"LONG LIVE  
THE I-HOTEL!"

*We played the melody of unity,  
and struggled over the  
essentials,  
building the movement  
to crescendo  
the night they evicted  
the I-Hotel.*

\* \* \*

For days everytime I closed my eyes I would see steel-blue helmets, and the roar would rush through me again. We had been 1,000 and more on one city block, chanting and picketing in the ghost-like night somewhere between 1 AM and 2.

There was a thickness in the air — an expectancy, adrenalin rushing through veins, multiplied by 2,000 — our bodies outlined by orange-tinted lights and haloed by the San Francisco fog.

We were there to defend the tenants of the International Hotel. We were one army readying to face another.

Our side:

Our monitors; behind them, a wall of people; behind them, barricaded into the hotel, 100 or so tenants and their supporters:

many courageous Pilipino and Chinese men and women who, along with others, had been fighting for over 9 years, in the tangled webs of the courts, on the floors of planning and city boards and community meetings, on the campuses; tonight, the fight spilling into the streets.

Their side:

An eviction notice; served by a sheriff; backed by blue helmets wielding night sticks, killers on horse back; all backed by the "Corporation," men who bought the building, owned the property.

When the picketing stopped, we milled around, too nervous to stay still. There was an edge to our talk, voices pitching sentences upwards ending with pointed wires of laughter.

Information threaded its way through the crowd like mending string at the end of a sharp needle.

"There is a lot of activity in the Sheriff's Department. All leaves have been cancelled."

"They are going to try it tonight. It's evict now or never."

They began to prepare the battle ground.

"The police have cordoned off the side-streets first. Now they're blocking off Grant, Kearny, and Montgomery."

"They have stopped all vehicular traffic."

"No one can come through. We are barricaded in."

We milled around for a moment longer, finding people we could count on in a pinch.

Our instructions began to filter in. "Pass the vinegar around. If there is tear gas, breathe into your sleeve. It won't stop the sting, but it may help for a while."

We found a place somewhere by the Chinese Progressive Association store front and Kearny Street Workshop.

I looked out. No traffic on Kearny Street. An eerie sight.

More information filtered in. "They have brought out the mounted police in full riot gear. Horses are lining-up down Kearny."

"The TAC Squad is unloading 4 buses, all fully armed special police."

Voices turned their attention to the crowd.

"We are going to form the Human Barricade. If you don't want to participate, you should leave now."



I-Hotel Series

Crystal K. D. Huie

Words blown out of a bull horn, shaping a thousand bodies. We got up and linked arms. We were towards the back in a blanket of people, a dozen rows deep, a city block wide. I could see through the triangular spaces between people's heads and shoulders.

We were strong.

We were at war.

The sharp clicking of hooves on pavement pierced through the din from the crowd. They slid out of shadows, illuminated by orange particles of light. They are deathriders on horses: plastic bubbles bulging out of steel-blue helmets; dark leather striding horses trained to charge, to mash.

They merge, shoulder to shoulder, and face us head-on.

(In one corner of the crowd, there is a commotion. It is the Revolutionary Communist Party, their cowardly stripes glowing as they tried to push the monitors into the horses. Then they slither into the gutters.)

Mounted deathriders stand, ready.

We hold, ready.

Both sides — balanced for a second.

The horses charge.

I can see the lights bouncing off steel-blue helmets. We are pressed

together feeling the weight of the beast. Some people in the front are hurt, and helped off the street. The rest of us stay.

"WE WON'T MOVE!"

They pull the horses back. They charge again and whirl their night sticks like propellers of helicopters. They aim for heads, eyes, ears.

Hands go up to protect the head; to reach for the stick; to pull the weapon out of the enemy's hand.

"WE WON'T MOVE!"

A third time they charge. By now, I can smell the beast — animal smell mixed with evil. I can feel the moisture from his nostrils; can see the deathrider, his face shielded by tinted helmet — lights bouncing, nightstick whirling.

From across the street, observers and friends are yelling, outraged. A couple of them run out, grabbing at the horses. Deathrider, who did not notice at first felt the tug on the beast, turned, night stick swinging.

Hands go up to protect the head, the eyes.

"WE WON'T MOVE!"

A signal is given. The horses are pulled back. There are many heroes, some hurt.

We are still strong. There are less of us. We will not move.

*Somewhere on television away from the beasts, from the deathriders and their sticks, the liberal sheriff is heard saying, "This is a tough crowd."*

The attention shifts. The war escalates.

They stand in formation like T.V. caricatures of an invading army . . . from Mars? of insects?

The TAC Squad in blue jumpsuits, blue helmets, thick bubbles covering their faces.

They march in rows. They are in battalions, their leaders measuring out their orders behind them.

Each trained; each will kill.

They have become animals, robots, easily are not men.

Without compassion, they have lost the ability to think.

From somewhere a thin whisper tries to work its way through the steel, through the bubble.

*"And what about the old people?"*

*"What about these men and women who pulled the fruit from the branches so it could be on your table? Whose hands have become the hands of the earth, the vines, the trees? Are they not like the mothers and fathers of your mothers and fathers? Do they not deserve to live amongst friends and familiarity? Do they not deserve to die with dignity?"*

The whisper, long ago encased in glass, suffocates, chokes, then vanishes. In its place, the mindless glare — lights bouncing off helmets, nothing behind the helmets, nothing behind the eyes.

They have formed a 'V.'

They come at us.

Their aim: to drive themselves through us like a wedge, using their nightsticks as hammers.

*Choose someone, that hippie-looking kid, the scared one. Focus on him. Beat the crap out of him. Beat him to the ground, then shove through his spot. Split the crowd.*

More people are hurt. They chip away at us like an ice pick at a block of ice.

The girl next to me is hurt and helped out.

I stand there, face to face with the real cops. Television cops tumble out from somewhere within my mind. Clowns who are the good guys chas-

ing bank robbers, drunken drivers and other bad guys.

And what are we doing that is so bad? What have we done to deserve the wrath of the entire San Francisco Tactical Squad?

We are defending the rights of some 60 or so people to live and die in peace.

We are right.

*I will not move.*

*I will not budge.*

*They could beat me. They could break both of my legs. They could shoot me.*

*But when I sift the pebbles from the rocks, and look truth squarely in the eye, we are right.*

The crowd has thinned. The human barricade, shrunken by assaults, still stands. Fewer of us pull in to cover the door of the hotel.

A fireman's ladder is hoisted over our heads.

Blue evil climbs the ladder; begins banging down the windows.

Inside (I learned later) a woman — one of the strongest tenants — begins to weep softly, no hysterics. She knows what we are coming to know

on the outside. We must retreat. The signal is given.

We move orderly to a side street. We are almost dreamlike, playing real parts in a real movie about ourselves.

We form a picket line; our chanting resumes.

Sledge hammers and axes are brought out. The liberal sheriff makes the first blow. Blue evil, swinging wildly, breaks through the door.

Monitors inside, still resisting, sit on the floors of the hallways. Blue evil must carry them out, removing the last barrier between the tenants and the night.

Reluctantly, slowly, the tenants file out.

I see Felix.

*Felix, who held every crack and corner of the Hotel in the wrinkles of his face.*

His expression: resolution, dignity, determination.

*"You may have won the battle, but I will not crawl!"*

It is 6:30 A.M.

\* \* \*



*I-Hotel Series*

Crystal K. D. Huie

Later that morning, they nailed  
boards on the outside of the Hotel,  
and we called more meet-  
ings,

They put up a fence  
we formed picket lines,  
our voices shouting  
for the whole world to  
hear,  
to learn.

They brought in a wrecking crew  
to knock down pieces of walls  
while the building was still warm.

We helped the tenants  
move  
to unfamiliar parts of the  
city . . .

We had fought a major  
battle.

**T**he people had spanned them-  
selves across the Hotel like the  
wings of the mighty Phoenix,  
and a fire that had been smolder-  
ing for years  
sparked and burst  
into flame, sending blue  
green fingers upwards,  
scorching feathers,

releasing acrid  
smells into the air; grabbing  
bones, bending them to crackle;  
melting the flesh and marrow  
of dozens of lives, lived dozens  
of years,  
trying to reduce all to rubble.

But hearts beat on:  
Like the Phoenix  
the struggle of the people  
re-emerges, changes  
shape,  
dusts itself into ashes,  
thickens into smoke,  
mixing with voices of despair  
and anger, to rasp  
against the emptied walls,  
into voices of purpose,  
voices of promise:

*"They must all be  
destroyed.*

*"Speculators drooling  
as they rub  
their hands together  
over a prime  
piece of property:*

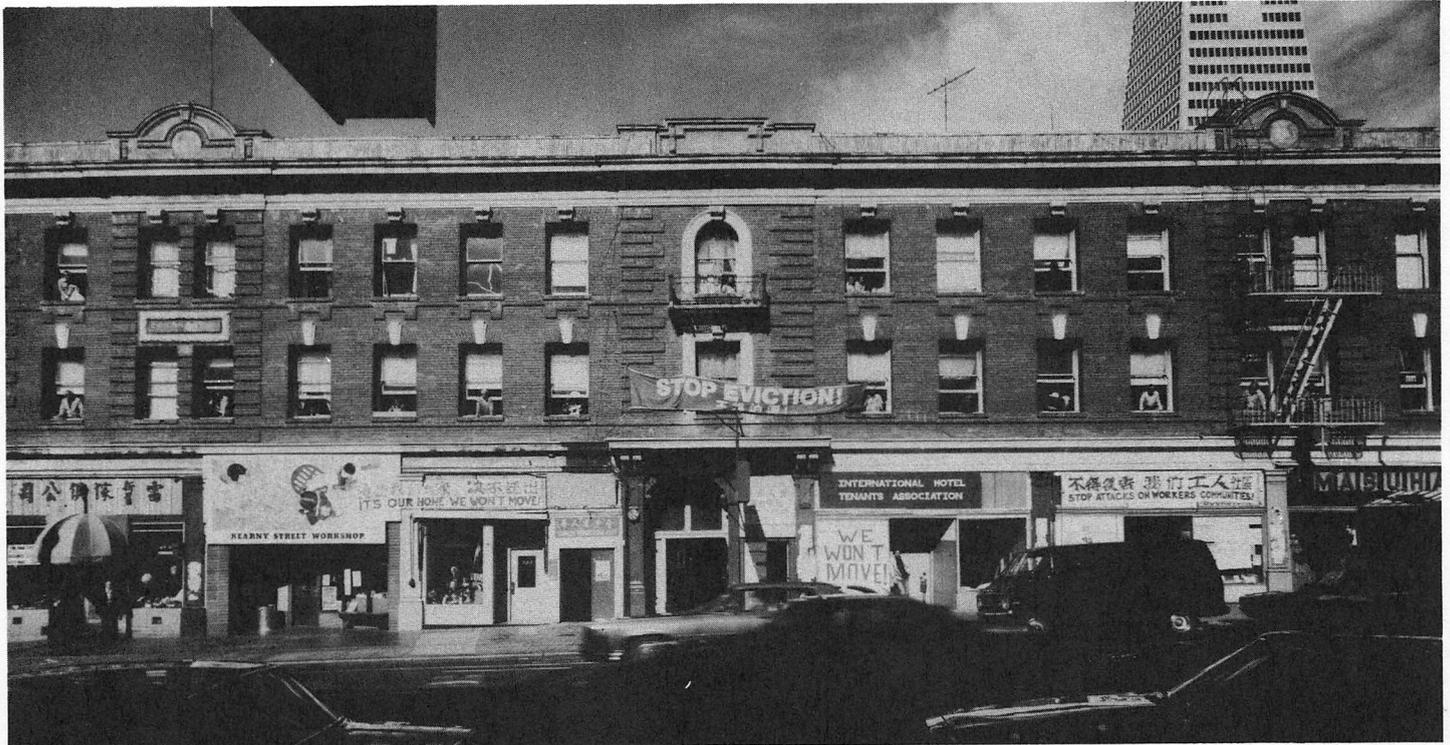
*"Government agen-  
cies that try and  
blueprint  
us out of existence:*

*"The army of goons.  
"They must all be  
destroyed.  
"We must build a new  
life.*

*"We owe it to the  
tenants,  
"We owe it to our  
Ba-chans and  
Ji-chans,  
our mothers and  
fathers:  
"We owe it to our  
children."*

And the promise,  
weighted by our  
struggles,  
seeps into our  
conscious,  
etches itself deep  
into our hearts,  
into our minds;  
To prepare us for the  
next battle;  
To help us win the  
war. □

**Leslee Inaba-Wong** is a member of  
Concerned Japanese Americans in  
New York City.



I-Hotel Series

Crystal K. D. Huie

---

By Peggy H. Yorita

---

**H**onolulu's "Silver Anniversary Cherry Blossom Queen Pageant" was dedicated to my mother, Mrs. Eiko Yorita. On the 40th year since she launched her professional life in the kimono culture in Hawai'i, she was recognized as a significant contributor to Japanese American cultural relations.

My mother has had the sole responsibility for dressing the contestants of the Cherry Blossom Festivals all these years. All of the kimonos worn by the contestants are from her vast collection. She not only provides the kimonos, *obis*, undergarments and accessories, but teaches the kimono etiquette to the young women.

### My mother and the kimono culture in Hawai'i

My mother, a product of the Meiji era, with all its manifestations of a rigid and traditional upbringing, seems to have demonstrated the essence of the effective and harmonious blending of the East and the West in Hawai'i through the kimono culture.

My mother arrived in Hawai'i from Japan in 1917 and promptly went to school to learn English and music. Although she met and married my father soon after her arrival, she seemed to have wanted to express her own identity in some creative way. Her dream was to become a musician or a writer. Since her life as a wife and mother did not offer her much time to develop these musical or writing talents, she decided to pursue a profession in the kimono culture in Hawai'i. As soon as she felt comfortable about leaving for Japan for training in the art of kimono dressing, she returned to her home country. After intensive training in the kimono culture, Japanese hair styling, and makeup in Osaka and Tokyo, she returned to Hawai'i.

Her achievement-orientation, her sense of duty to her community, her outer-relatedness, her sense of competitiveness and her fierce motivation to be an effective ambassador between the East and the West seem to have propelled her to promote the kimono as an art form.

**P**ride in being able to effectively promote the kimono culture in Hawai'i has motivated my mother to seek whatever professional development activity she is able to pursue. One of the most pleasant ones seems to be her frequent trips to Japan where she continues to consult with leading kimono experts and consultants. She has studied under Mrs. Aiko Yamano, one of the most successful kimono and beauty consultants, as well as, Mrs. Masuko Chiba who is the kimono dresser/consultant of the Japanese Imperial household.

### Brief history of the kimono

Lady Murasaki's *Tale of Genji* is full of commentaries on the kimono. The kimono form, a square-cut body



*k i m o n o*  
*p a g e a n t*

with square-cut sleeves, essentially has not changed since its introduction to Japan.

While the earliest beginning of Japanese legendary history (660 B.C.-552 A.D.) has only the *haniwa* (terra cotta figurines which were used to guard the dead) to document the historical costume of the times, it seems clear that the *haniwa* were dressed in tunics resembling the kimono. During the Asuka period (552-710 A.D.) when Japan's written history began, the Chinese prototype of the kimono was generally accepted by the Japanese. The eighth to twelfth centuries reflected an extremely voluminous and layered adornment of a multi-colored kimono called *juni-hitoe*. It was during the Kamakura period (1185-1333 A.D.) that the kimono, as it is known today, seems to have developed.

Toyotomi Hideyoshi called the "Napoleon of Japan" was the great patron of the art. During the Momoyama



Linda Doami

tent traditions in design such as the *kanako* motif and the tie-dyeing or *shibori* which is one of the most popular forms of textile decorations.

In the long history of the kimono, there was one critical period which drove the kimonos off the streets. This was during and immediately after World War II. The devastating defeat in the war forced the women to improvise the *mompei*, a coarse cotton kimono in dark colors with baggy pants which ended with a cord at the ankles.

### My mother's legacy

In spite of my Japanese cultural upbringing which taught me to be humble and self-effacing, I momentarily become very expressive and even aggressive when extolling my mother's creative talents and zeal in promoting goodwill between the two countries which she loves. While we have all had to take a backseat occasionally, especially when my mother was applauded and honored, my father and all of us children have been most supportive of her kimono activities. Although not many personal feelings were expressed, we knew that my father was always proud of his talented wife.

I have often reflected on her great energy and motivation as she prepared for her "next fashion show." Although she is approaching her 85th birthday, she seems to be able to keep up the same compulsive pace that she had some 45 years ago. Watching her dress the kimono is like watching an artist pour out her creative soul on the canvas. To me, it's more than an art form for my mother. It goes beyond her ego's needs being met; her commitments are personal, community, national and international in scope.

She pours out her gut-level creative feelings as she dresses anyone. She is precise, genuine, pure and creative. My mother's missionary zeal in promoting the kimono culture as an art form seems to transcend nationality, race, creed and color lines. She has also given of herself to all requests for her services to charity, religious, cultural, educational organizations as her gesture of appreciation to her community which she claims has given her a wonderful, creative, and productive life.

While my mother does not necessarily verbalize any profound philosophy as she literally loses herself in the art of kimono dressing, she always manages to create a masterpiece and at the same time brings pleasure and happiness to the people involved. Perhaps somewhere in the process of attaining these goals is the essence of human existence. □

**Peggy H. Yorita** is an administrative assistant at the University of Hawai'i.

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period (1573-1615) he restored the silk weaving industry which made the *kosode* (short sleeve kimono worn by young women, brides, and geishas) the canvas of the creative skills of painters, dyers, weavers and embroiderers.

**Y**uzen, the household word among the textile industry in Japan revolutionized the art of dyeing in 1700. The *Yuzen* method is similar to that of the Indonesian *batik*. In Japan, the woman goes to the master dyer, not to a seamstress for her kimono. The kimono gets its uniqueness and distinction not from its form, but from its decorations, colors and designs. It is finally given the family crest which is prominently displayed on the kimono.

With the Western influence, the kimono has undergone changes in some areas, but there are some persis-

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By Vicky Seid

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The Flowing Stream Ensemble plays music — classical, regional/folk, and contemporary — from China. Founded in 1972, this San Francisco-based group has since had a wide range of performance experience — from playing for soundtracks of film documentaries such as Sarat-Light Producers' "Mitsuye and Nellie" and Arthur Dong's Oscar nominee, "Sewing Woman," to performing for the Chinese elderly, for students, for annual community events such as the Hop Jok Fair, and even for the Chinese Premier Zhao Ziyang during his 1983 visit to the United States. Flowing Stream has also taught Chinese music to hundreds of students.

Inspired by an eight-week workshop on Chinese traditional instruments, sisters Betty and Shirley Wong co-founded the Flowing Stream Ensemble twelve years ago. Its longevity and success stem from the tenacity of its co-founders, and from the collective efforts of talented individuals who have made up the Ensemble.

Both Betty and Shirley are classical pianists by training and profession. Their father, a grocer in San Francisco Chinatown, wanted them to study Western music. While growing up, Chinese music filtered through their lives from the radio and Chinatown streets and from their regular attendance of the local theater, which featured Chinese opera films. Betty recalls her father warning them to stay away from the "licentious music clubs" from which Cantonese folk music could be heard streaming out of basements and second story storefronts.

In 1972, after finishing intense graduate training at Mills College, Betty and Shirley were so enthused over the Chinese instrument workshop that they were "in a cloud over the next year" learning to play "these sounds which we heard all our lives." They "hung out" at one of the basement music clubs while members, im-

migrants from Hong Kong and China, played. There, they met Mr. Leo Lew, an authentic Cantonese folk musician who, at an early age, had left his music and arts in China to become a laborer in the U.S. to help support his family. Mr. Lew accepted these "jook sing" (American-born) and later persons of many ethnic backgrounds as his students. He left his own music club to become the music director of the Flowing Stream Ensemble for the next 11 years. Under his guidance, each member learned to play two or three instruments such as the butterfly harp, the *erhu* (Chinese violin), and the *chuen kum* (folk banjo).

For the first six years, the Flowing Stream Ensemble concentrated on learning and playing Cantonese folk music. Since that time, the Ensemble has also included in its repertoire other Chinese regional music, e.g., *Xinjiang* music, and contemporary/new music from China. It has branched out to incorporate the use of Western instruments such as the double bass and European recorder in the pieces.

In February, 1983, Mr. Lew's departure to return to China was a significant loss to the Ensemble, not only for his musical expertise but also for his spirited personality and stabilizing presence. Prior to leaving, he passed his teachings on to Betty, Shirley, and others.

Ensemble members are currently gaining further training in classical Chinese music under the tutelage of Sun Zhongjian and Liu Weishan, renowned classical Chinese musicians visiting from Beijing. Previously they had to study from books and recordings. When Premier Zhao Ziyang came to San Francisco, Sun and Liu requested

# Flowing Stream Ensemble

that the Flowing Stream Ensemble be invited to play for him during a state dinner hosted by the governor.

From its inception, the Flowing Stream Ensemble has been multi-racial and multi-cultural. Ensemble members have included jazz musicians, conservatory-trained musi-



Mr. Leo Lew

cians, and lay people without formal musical training. The present Ensemble includes both immigrant and American-born Asians.

While pursuing his personal study of Black, Latin, and Asian music during his San Francisco State University days, Sansei jazz musician/composer, Mark Izu, took lessons on the *sheng*, a mouth organ made of bamboo pipes. He joined the Ensemble. "Learning Chinese music really opened my ears a lot to how differently you can phrase the same melody . . . I learned a lot about musical expression," explains

# Stream Ensemble

Mark. From his five years with the Ensemble, Mark gained a better understanding of different kinds of music and culture. The experience solidified his view that "music has to come from a cultural background."

Another Ensemble member, Arthur Dong, a Chinese American filmmaker

The diverse backgrounds of its members give the Ensemble its own distinct flavor. While they strive for the traditional sounds in a music piece, they are open to using Western instruments. Learning to play Cantonese folk music, as in the style of Mr. Lew, is usually achieved by playing the same piece over and over until it "sounds right." Betty and Shirley, however, use their classical training to analyze folk pieces.

The group has also had to reconcile the different learning styles and playing priorities of its members. As Betty put it, "We had some very hot times!" But through the years and changes,

sions. But, as Betty sees it, "It is our parents' music . . . . When we play for the old folks, it's kind of like they feel that their culture hasn't died out. They aren't a memory to themselves." For Betty and her peers, she says, "It is our childhood. It is keeping that alive because we don't have too many chances to express that side of us . . . . For some of us who have never been to China, that is all we are going to get of that piece of China."

As a performer, Betty feels that playing to different audiences who acknowledge Chinese music as legitimate music is important. The Flowing Stream Ensemble was one of the first groups to play outside of Chinatown. But as manager, Betty has also tried to keep the group tied to the Asian community. New members are told, "We are going to play a lot for the community because that's where we come from and that is sometimes more important."

For Betty, the Flowing Stream Ensemble will go on "as long as there is an interest" and as long as "we keep teaching and have students." As far as Chinese music goes, the Flowing Stream Ensemble knows that "there is always someone doing it somewhere."

\* \* \*

The Flowing Stream Ensemble will be performing two different Chinese programs for free. The first will be held on July 29, 3:00 p.m. at the United Methodist Church, S.F.; the second, August 26, 2:00 p.m., de Young Museum, San Francisco. Call the Community Music Center, Richmond Branch, (415) 221-4515 for information.

*Flying Dragons, Flowing Streams: Music in the Life of San Francisco's Chinese* by Ronald Riddle provides additional information. □

**Vicky Seid** is a closet hyperactive who is trying to calm down so she can write poetry and learn to play the flute. She is a member of the Friends of EAST WIND, S.F. Chapter and Paper Angels Productions.



Flowing Stream Ensemble reunion, 1983.

recalls that as a youth, the sounds of the butterfly harp, heard in Chinese movies and on records, fascinated him. On impulse, he bought a butterfly harp in Hong Kong, turned to Shirley and Mr. Lew to learn how to play it, and then joined the group. He feels that his experience in the Ensemble has strengthened his filmmaking, both being "temporal arts presented in time and rhythm." His film, "Living Music for Golden Mountains," portrays Mr. Lew's life in America.

the Flowing Stream Ensemble has survived, much to the credit of Betty. Arthur Dong states succinctly, "If Betty were not around, Flowing Stream would not exist."

According to Betty, much of the Chinese music that the Flowing Stream Ensemble plays is "anachronistic" compared to the music generated from China today. In fact, some of the instruments they now use are considered outdated and have been replaced in China with modern ver-

Zand Gee

## Time Has Come . . . .

"So you quit school?  
Where's your pride now . . . GAMAN?  
What'd you do? . . . trade it in for a little TIME —  
to look for another American dream?  
All those years of hard work,  
putting off today for tomorrow,  
paying dues . . . being humble and respectful.  
Have you forgotten?

You going to be a 'worker' now?  
Just another blue-collar digger wrestling for that single  
dollar . . . .  
You coulda been a doctor, lawyer, professor —  
Save face . . . .  
RECONSIDER."

You know . . . I thought if I did reconsider,  
I'd be a "better American" . . .  
no — better yet . . . a "good Japanese American."  
An example of all those virtues handed down  
generation by generation . . .  
recast into a 21st century *samurai*,  
armed with an intellectual identity.

Doesn't work though.

I want to find my place . . . NOW.  
Tried to do it "their" way by being academic.  
Tried to do it "your" way by achieving . . .  
*ishokenmei* . . .  
didn't work, though.  
Just another 21st century warrior without a home  
to call my own.

"Sorry . . . no 'twinkies' wanted here.  
Gotta be Nikkei all the way through.  
So you know a little Japanese?  
What about twelve years of history . . . the struggle  
OUR community has been committed to . . .  
Here in OUR town.

You able to relate to *that* . . . to *us*?  
Sorry . . . no 'twinkies' wanted here."

Okay . . . okay . . . okay!  
But what is a 21st century warrior supposed to do?  
I can't turn back time and retrace unknown paths.  
What's that you say? . . . Go back to school? . . .  
Get that Ph.D.?!?  
Reconsider . . . reconsider.

No . . . Not this time . . . .  
You may *think* I'm a "twinkie" . . . but I haven't lost  
my gut-sense, *GAMBARE*.  
Yeah . . . I'm a late-bloomer, a "Johnny-come-lately."

Haven't much "related-to" the struggle to date . . .  
was a loner . . . idly fantasizing  
about ivory-tower mystique.

But . . . I have sense of direction NOW.

To be a 21st century warrior . . .  
a daughter of an Issei woman,  
and of a Kibei man . . .  
armed with a sense of *GAMBARE*.

My time has come . . . NOW . . . will *you* reconsider?

Lory Kitamura

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Puanani Burgess is an advisor to EAST WIND and an activist in the Hawaiian national movement.

Shalin Hai-Jew is the 1983 Hugh Paradise Scholar. A prolific poet, she has appeared in *Breaking Silence*, *Matrix*, *U.S.A. Today*, and other publications.

Lory Kitamura at 27, has found her "niche on this earth in the field of Gerontology." She is rediscovering the solace of playing the flute and piano and writing, writing, writing.

## Announcement to our Subscribers

Dear Subscribers,

In the Fall/Winter '83 issue, we announced that EAST WIND would be published three times in 1984. As the year progressed, many of us on staff felt compelled to take a part in the presidential election campaigns. We felt that by getting involved we could better understand the issues and bring you more comprehensive coverage and analysis, and in the long run, advance the Asian American movements.

So, there will be just two issues in 1984. However, for those of you who've subscribed this year, you will still receive three issues.

Thanks for your support.

Denise Imura and Eddie Wong



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