

twenty-five cents

January, 1973

# GIDRA

MONTHLY OF THE ASIAN AMERICAN EXPERIENCE

GIDRA  
P.O. Box 18046  
Los Angeles, CA 90018

BULK RATE  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
Los Angeles, Calif.  
Permit No. 29127





JANUARY 1973

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notes on this month's writers

LINDA FUJIKAWA, 22, is a graduate student in social welfare.  
JEFF FURUMURA, 22, is in both the Creative Children's Workshop and the Asian Pride Program involving elementary school children.  
PETER HATA, 22, is a guitarist, formerly associated with several bands, including Hiroshima, and is currently involved with a jazz group.  
BRUCE IWASAKI, 21, has been a member of the *Gidra* staff for the past two and a half years.  
GLEN IWASAKI, 20, has been studying art for five years.  
MITCHELL MATSUMURA, 18, is a recent graduate of Dorsey high school.  
AMY MURAKAMI, 25, is a teacher at Samuel Gompers junior high school in Los Angeles.  
MIKE MURASE, 25, is one of the original *Gidra* staff members.  
ROY NAKANO, 20, is coordinator at the Asian American Student Center at California State University, Long Beach.  
ALAN OTA, 26, is a former furniture mover affiliated with the American Federation of Teamsters' Local 389.  
ALAN TAKEMOTO, 20 has been drawing seriously for the past five years.  
STEVE TATSUKAWA, 23, is a former film student and advertising copywriter.  
EVELYN YOSHIMURA, 24, was a visitor to the People's Republic of China for two months during the past summer.

The mad rush of last-minute shopping; a few surprises, and mostly what you expected to get for Christmas. "Hey, where's the party on New Year's eve?" Then, back to school, to work. There's so little time to just stop, to look at, and to really feel, the life and the death that goes on around us.

With fake forests of pink and blue-flocked pine trees springing up out of nowhere, everywhere; and peaceful-manger scene and jolly-Santa scene played out on front lawns, it's so hard to imagine making preparations for the Tet (Asian Lunar New Year), with a rifle nearby, glancing up at the sky, waiting for the now-familiar roar of B-52s. "The heaviest bombing raids yet," boast the headlines.

A black brother, 15 years old, with a promise of a "brilliant sports career," died in a pool of blood on his way home from the local rollerskating ring. The Sacramento police mistook him for a black gunman.

Armed guards patrolling the campus at "Fort" Crenshaw (High School). Gangs are not a new phenomenon (see p. 4), and neither is the way they are being dealt with.

And Asian sisters and brothers are still stumbling on streets, still dying off drugs.

We at *Gidra* are rolling (and sometimes wearily walking) toward our fourth year of print. What began as a bunch of youthful, bright-eyed, inexperienced, idealistic individuals who had a lot of answers, has slowly, sometimes painfully, developed into a little more experienced group, that is beginning to ask pretty real questions of itself. Like: How can we become stable enough to begin planning five, ten years from now?—because we're beginning to understand "revolution" is a long, hard process. The whole concept of "protracted struggle" has become more real since most of us need to hold regular jobs—many which are the full-time kind. So far, we have many such questions we are asking ourselves, and discussing on a regular basis. But answers come slowly. Not only from long discussions, but from the actual day to day living out of ideas. There are a few things that have become pretty clear though.

To really make change, we must survive. In order to survive, we must look at our lives and *Gidra* in long-range terms. Survival also necessitates an awareness of the conditions that surround us. Sometimes they can be a real bring-down, but if we get together with other people and try, we really can make good things happen.

Humble example. Last month, December, was one of our most trying. All the articles we printed came in nearly a week late. We had to really hassle to get things together enough to go to press. So this month, inspired by our near defeat last month—and by you, who make the hassle worthwhile—we decided not only to come out on time, but to try for two weeks early, to get to press before Christmas. Well, we all got together, determined to do it. With a little nagging and a lot of mutual support, we got all the articles in and are going (went?) to press four days before Christmas.

A small victory, amidst the painful realities of 1973. But an important lesson nevertheless: together, with determination, and each other, we can do what seems impossible. With each other.

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*Gidra* is published monthly by *Gidra, Inc.* Our mailing address is P.O. Box 18046 (until the end of this year), Los Angeles, California 90018. Our phone is (213) 734-7838. Subscriptions for individuals are \$2.50 a year. Institutions like libraries and schools pay \$5.00. Additional postage of \$2.00 for Canada and \$4.00 for all other foreign countries. Printed in the U.S.A. Copyright 1972 by *Gidra, Inc.* All rights reserved. January, 1973 Volume V, number 1

cover by Alan Takemoto

# GIDRA GLOBAL GOODIES

## JAPANESE COMMUNITY REJECTS STATE RULING AGAINST USE OF TERM "CONCENTRATION CAMP" AT MANZANAR

LOS ANGELES - The California State Landmarks Advisory Committee ruled against the use of the term "concentration camp" to describe the location of a former World War II camp site which was designated a State historical landmark earlier this year.

Manzanar Committee, composed of concerned Japanese American community people and former inmates of Manzanar, issued a statement in which the committee called the decision of the Landmarks Advisory Committee "a blatant disregard for the suffering of Japanese American victims of internment and a refusal to face the realities of history."

The State committee has stalled in its negotiations with the Manzanar Committee for more than a year, insisting that the landmark inscription not include the words "concentration camp." Manzanar Committee members and other Japanese Americans have registered a formal protest against the recent decision, and is issuing an appeal to the public: "If this issue touches you in any way, please make your feelings known to the State Committee. Address all letters to: Mr. John H. Michael, Executive Secretary, Historical Landmarks Advisory Committee, Department of Parks and Recreation, P.O. Box 2390, Sacramento, Ca. 95811. Send copies to Governor Reagan and your state representative in Sacramento, as well as to the Manzanar Committee, c/o 1556 Curran Street, Los Angeles, Ca. 90026.

The original text as written and submitted by the Manzanar Committee to be placed on a plaque designated the Manzanar, California camp site as a State Historical Landmark is as follows:

*From war hysteria, racism, and economic greed One Hundred Ten Thousand persons of Japanese ancestry were directed by Presidential Order on February 19, 1942 to leave their homes and to relocate to America's Concentration Camps.*

*Manzanar was the first of such camps built during World War II bounded by barbed wire and guard towers in a mile square confining 10,000 men, women and children of whom the majority was American citizens.*

*This plaque is laid in the hope that the conditions which created this camp will never emerge again - For anybody, at any time.*

*Then may this plaque always be a reminder of what Fear, Hate and Greed will cause men to do to other men.*

TONDEMONAI!

Tokyo - Signs of deterioration of Kakuei Tanaka's traditionally conservative Liberal Democratic Party became clear as the Socialist and Communist parties made their best showing at the polls in twenty-five years.

Although the Liberal Democrats still maintained a majority in the Diet, the Communist Party tripled the number of seats under their control by winning 40 seats as 5.5 million (11% of total) went to the polls for them. The Socialist Party also achieved a new high by placing 118 candidates (24% of the seats) in office.

In passing up the middle-of-the-road Komei Party and the Democratic Socialists, who lost eighteen and thirteen seats respectively, the Communists gained strength as Japan's third largest party behind the ruling Liberal Democrats and the Socialists. Their popular vote gain, representing a 71% increase over the last three years, was credited to the daily activities and contact with voters. Tanaka admitted that his Liberal Democrats had been "merely giving preference in party endorsements to incumbent Dietmen" while his party failed utterly to relieve the congestion in the cities, the isolation in remote areas, or improve welfare programs and economic security of the Japanese people.

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The Social Welfare Students from both UCLA and USC, and several community workers held a "Feed-In" Saturday afternoon, December 9, at the Senshin Buddhist Church in Los Angeles. The idea for a "Feed-In", which had been mistakenly thought of as an adventure into epicurean activity, was originally conceived of as a "teach-in" but after lengthy discussion, the sponsoring group realized that the program was not to "teach" people but rather was an opportunity to open lines of communication between people working in the community. It was thought that a "Learn-In" might be a more appropriate name but this connoted a "teach-iness" for those coming to the program. The group wished to convey the idea that we would be coming together to give one another information and opinions and, hopefully, learn from one another but it was hoped that those coming would be prepared to "Feed-In" into the program as well as perhaps take away new ideas and a spirit of furthering communication. Hence, the "Feed-In" came about.

Approximately one hundred community workers, students and professionals came together to discuss questions of vital importance to those working or intending to work in the Asian American community. Questions such as: "What is community?"; "What is commitment?"; "What is 'serving the people'?"; and "What are the implications of federal funding for the Asian American community and various programs?" were the major focal points of the day's program which included panel discussions, small group discussion sessions, and a summarization, evaluation and planning for future action. Many questions were brought up; many opinions given; no answers but this is a start.

AKADAMA-ALMENDEN '71

As an interesting side point, it is now possible to walk into a rather ordinary looking Japanese restaurant in one of the more posh sections of Manhattan and have an everyday Japanese waiter bring you a full course French dinner. French dinner, right. Shiro Aoki has recently opened the Chateau Tokyo in which, one might honestly say, the twain has met. According to Shiro, "People just love a Japanese atmosphere but when it comes to the food? Well that's another thing." So instead of being stared down by some cold sashimi, the diner can expect crepes and escargot.

By the way, Shiro's big brother is none other than Rocky Aoki, the owner of the now-famous Benihana restaurant chain, that specializes in steak dinners.



## U.S. STALLS NEGOTIATIONS; INTENSIFIES BOMBINGS

It has been a month since Henry Kissinger announced that "peace was at hand." But as the political and military situation of the Thieu regime deteriorates, the U.S. has moved to obtain more concessions from North Vietnam. This has strained negotiations and threatened the signing of the peace agreement. North Vietnam peace negotiator Xuan Thuy said that the U.S. has asked for 126 changes in the draft cease-fire accord the two sides drew up in October.

Instead of seeking peace, the U.S. has rained the heaviest aerial bombardments ever upon the Hanoi-Haiphong area. Yet the 11-month Vietnamese offensive retains the battlefield initiative; it has put half of the Saigon army out of commission, and, as one foreign diplomat observed, "the liberation forces are 100 times stronger than in 1968." This is reflected in the rise of U.S. casualties. Until last month, according to the U.S., not one of the huge, eight engine B-52s had ever been downed over Vietnam. In the last few weeks however, the liberation forces have shot down as many as nine of the high flying stratofortresses. Nixon will soon have to choose between trying to save Thieu and thus face an ignominious defeat; or sincerely seeking peace with the Vietnamese people.

TOKYO, (AP) - A Japanese antiwar group claims it has discovered a "secret sea route" to transport medical supplies to North Vietnam despite the U.S. mining of North Vietnam ports.

The Japan Committee for Support of the People of Vietnam said about \$256,000 worth of medical supplies will be shipped to Hanoi on this route.

The 2772-ton Japanese freighter Kobe Maru left for Hong Kong with the supplies donated by the committee, the Japan Federation of Labor Unions, and an American pacifist group.

The committee would not disclose the route but the newspaper Asahi Shimbun said the supplies will be transferred at Hong Kong to a ship chartered by North Vietnam and then to a third boat at Hainan Island off southern China before being carried along the Chinese coast to a small port in North Vietnam.

## THE LONG MARCH FIREBOMBED AGAIN

Los Angeles - The Long March, a progressive bookstore and distributor of political films, was firebombed again on the morning of December 7. The estimated damage in contents alone was over \$5000.

This was the eighth and worst bombing.

Over the past two years, the Long March has attempted to provide the people of Los Angeles with educational programs that are not available through establishment sources. They have provided a radical perspective on the various struggles of Asia, Africa and Latin America against imperialism.

At this point the Long March is closed. However, they have definite plans to continue. The group is soliciting contributions from those that have utilized the facilities in the past as well as from other who want to see it continue.

The Long March is located at 715 Parkview St., Los Angeles, CA 90057.

## PILIPINO YOUTH CENTER IN WILMINGTON OPENS

Wilmington - One-hundred fifty Pinoy youth from the surrounding communities of Carson, Long Beach and San Pedro participated in the grand opening of the Pilipino Youth Center on December 8 at 323 N. Mar Vista Av., Wilmington. (Wilmington is located about twenty-five miles south of Los Angeles.) The program entitled "Pilipino Youth Involvement: Golly! Gee! We got a PYC!" included community and youth speakers, skits on identity, a demonstration in Eskrema (Pilipino martial art) and dancing, with music provided by "Barkada." The entire program was enjoyed by all and was particularly appreciated by older members of the Pilipino Community of the Harbor area.

On-going programs of the center will be held Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 4p.m. and will include education, recreation, creative arts, and employment programs. PYC has extended an open invitation to all Pilipino youth in the harbor area communities to make use of their facilities. The sponsors of the center, which includes Harbor Area Pilipino Youth, Kasamahan ng mga Pilipinos sa UCLA, Filipino Community of L.A. Harbor Area, and Asian American Studies Center, ended by saying, "We can all help each other, people need people."

## FORMER DRUG ABUSERS TESTIFY

Los Angeles—Five young former drug users told a congressional committee here that youths probably would not respond to schools stepping up their inadequate drug education programs.

Among the five who appeared before the committee was Pam Eguchi, 18, a member of Asian Sisters, a self-help women's organization in the Asian American community. Pam said of the Asian Sisters program and other similar programs in the community that they are conducted by young people their own age who have been on drugs and kicked them.

All five of the youths, who attended a variety of junior high and high schools in Southern California, testified that 50 to 75% of the students were on reds, whites, grass and acid. Further, they spoke of the glorified role of the "dealer." "The dealer has lots of power—guns and things like that," one of them said. Another added, "They're like heroes—they have great images. The other kids look at them and say, 'Wow!' " This image is enhanced and perpetuated by movies like *Superfly* and *The French Connection*. (See page 15 for review of *Superfly*.)

The five young people emphasized the need to impress upon people that drug abusers are people, not very different from anyone else, and the need to restrict drug manufacturers on barbiturate distribution as it is currently done with amphetamines, rather than to emphasize the crack down of street peddlers and campus dealers.

## REAGAN FORGIVES HAYAKAWA FOR PEARL HARBOR (!?)

The following exchange between Gov. Ronald Reagan and Chancellor Glenn M. Dumke took place during discussions on the appointment of a new president for San Francisco State College, then undergoing student turmoil, and the ultimate naming of S. I. Hayakawa, according to the Los Angeles *Times* of Oct. 30:

"Dumke said, 'There is a man named Hayakawa on campus.'

"And Gov. Reagan said, 'Who the hell is Hayakawa?'

"Dumke told some of the things he knew about Hayakawa. And then the governor said, 'Tell him if he takes the job we'll forgive him for Pearl Harbor.' "





A CURIOUS THING occurred at a recent Los Angeles Human Relations conference. A group of sixty black youths were called on by the commission sponsoring the conference to "testify" on the situation created by youth gang activity on the southside of L.A., which included an alarming rise in violence in recent months. These sixty youths were considered experts on the situation because they were, in fact, the recognized leaders of black street gangs in the city. The Crips, the Brims, Blackstone, the Piru Street Gang, the Acey-Duecys, and so on; they were all there. Gathered under a temporary truce, proudly defiant, constantly suspicious, these very people who are said to be responsible for at least forty-two deaths this year alone, were asked to solve the problem which they were a part of.

The testimony lasted a mere twenty minutes and the commission was told, rather matter of factly, that the only way to cool down gang activity was to provide more jobs, better housing, better education and better government in the ghetto. Otherwise, said the young gang leaders,

all the police and all the social workers in the state could not clean the gangs out of the southside. Then the leaders left; walked out on the gray suited commissioners, perhaps knowing that the commission had heard what they had expected to hear and now, as usual, powerless to do anything.... So it was back to the streets again.

Within a few short weeks after the testimony, the Los Angeles Police Department "answered" the demands of the gang leaders by announcing the creation of a special 100 man task force which would "combat gang activity over and above normal police activities."

Thus we have reached the point where force will be used to fight force. The black community of South-Central Los Angeles is now an armed camp. Along with the "special police task force," armed guards patrol junior high schools, students pack guns, gang members stockpile arms in gym lockers, and the violence is yet to subside, perhaps yet to peak.

Although public alarm is manipulated by

the media, gangs are nothing new to Los Angeles. Social workers claim activity of gangs rise and fall every five years or so, but in various parts of the city gang life is a stage which many adolescents are expected to experience.

For example, in the immense East Los Angeles barrio, some gangs can be traced back more than thirty years. Territories are established around entire neighborhoods and whole lives may be encompassed by the association with a gang.

And even in the outwardly quiet Asian communities of L.A., ganglife is not an alien entity by any means. The names change and the faces surely do, but image of the street gang is a continuing thread.

Roy Nakano, a resident of Gardena, has spent a lengthy period of time retracing the history of Asian Street gangs in Los Angeles. Tracking down ex-members of the old gangs was painstaking, but not impossible. In the following article, three of these ex-gang members speak out on what gang life was like fifteen or twenty years ago. —Steve Tatsukawa

# THEM BAD CATS

## PAST IMAGES OF ASIAN AMERICAN STREET GANGS by roy nakano

GEORGE

"...we were rebellious. We were rebelling against society. Society had done certain things that we felt were not just." Today, George, once a member of the Constituents, still deeply believes in combating the injustices of our society. He is an instructor at a large Los Angeles high school and also an active participant in the Gardena Pioneer Project and the newly founded United Asian Families. And though his struggle today is on a different level, it is just as real for him as was his experiences back in the "old days."

*Do you see any relationship between past street gangs and the Movement?*

George. Yes, the relationship that I see is that the movement developed because of certain conditions in society. The gang itself was a result of that too.

In relation to the group I was in, (The Constituents, 1952-1955) I think we were more cognizant of the outside world than other groups that may have come about later on. We were of that age group that knew what the concentration camps were, but at the same time, we wouldn't buy this crap about being straight. We had our creative perspective of some of the problems that existed. At club meetings, a lot of the time we would discuss the political nature of the country.

We would talk about how Japanese are portrayed...how Asians are portrayed. Looking back, we tended to be kind of nationalistic. Given the nature of things at that time, it was the only thing that you could fall back on in order to maintain your self-dignity and pride.

And it was the same for the Chinese. We would talk about things like Camp, job opportunity, economic and educational opportunity. We'd also talk about the black and white conflict, and that we were very much in it too. We would identify ourselves with the blacks. In fact, one interesting point is that, of the Asians in our group, when we talked about manhood, we didn't identify ourselves as being a white man. We identified ourselves as being a black man. Not talking like a white man, but

expressing ourselves the way a black would.

When I first read Eldridge Cleaver's *Soul on Ice*, I could really relate to it. He's about our same age, and talks about different areas in L.A.—the areas we were familiar with. The dialect, the language he used, the black jive talk—that was something that was used in our time.

*The gang wasn't restricted to one ethnic group?*

No. We had Chinese, Pilipinos, and blacks, as well as Japanese in our group. There were incidents when we'd go to Beverly Hills to clean out some whites. That was a reaction. You have that when you react to racism itself, but we weren't the type of group that would sit idly by and take all that.

*What are your feelings about how street gangs were portrayed by the media?*

One problem with the media is their analysis. When they talk about street gangs, their perspective is juvenile delinquency. It begins with that and ends with that. They really don't understand the nature of street gangs, and why they develop. There is a political relationship to street gangs. It is a reaction to the conditions of society.

*When did you first get involved in the street gang? For what reasons did you get involved?*

The funny thing is that I really didn't see that group as a gang. I think our activities gave us a reputation of being a gang.

There was something about the so-called "straight" people that I couldn't trust. It was an intuitive thing. They seemed to be more concerned with petty things. On a person-to-person relationship, I didn't feel I could trust them. The people in the so-called "street gang" I could trust. If you're in trouble, they're there to help you. It was this sense of brotherhood that was non-existent among the so-called "straight people," that seemed to be more on an individual trip. I found the people in the "street gangs" to be much more sincere and much warmer.

During that time, when I was going to high school, in the early Fifties, to be in a club was a big thing. Everybody belonged to a club. The difference was that ours would be willing to have physical confrontations with any group

that crossed our path.

But street fighting was just a by-product of our group. I think most of this fighting took place at dances. It's just a matter of serving yourself. Other groups knew that we were willing to get into a physical confrontation, given the circumstances needed to create one.

*For what reasons were the Constituents formed?*

Primarily, we found ourselves trusting each other. The kind of things we did, what we talked about. These were the bonds that held that group together. If we had a purpose like strictly to get into fights, our group wouldn't have existed any longer than two or three months. That wasn't the purpose. As a group we did things like go fishing... Primarily it was because we found ourselves to have some common things that we enjoyed and talked about.

*Was anyone within or outside of your gang seriously injured from a confrontation?*

I remember when a "paddy" pulled a gun on us at a dance in the Eastside. When we saw him at a party in the Westside a few weeks later, his ass was had. They called an ambulance, and he was laid up in the hospital.

There was another time when the "First Street Gang" had it out with us. One guy ended up being hospitalized. It was because of what they thought was broken glass. But, at that time, nobody in our group had a weapon. Some people said a member from their own side had accidentally slashed at his own group. That may be true, because one guy had something in his hand. During the whole fracas, he probably didn't know who he was attacking.

We had a large number of people—if one person got involved, everybody got involved—there was no worry. If you never lost in any of these confrontations, you're going to do whatever you have been doing. You just don't think of any strategy, because you've always been successful. The only strategy was that we made sure there was going to be a certain number of people down there.... The other side didn't really know how many people were on our side. They may have known different people in the Constituents. What they didn't know was that there was T.W. Seinan, the Tarpins, and other



people who were not in any group but were our friends—friends enough so that they'll jump in too. With all this, you really didn't have to rely on a strategy.

*Were the Constituents a regional gang?*

Yes, I think most gangs were regional. They were from an "area" in L.A. The Constituents were primarily Westside. When we were going to high school, we had extended ourselves all the way to Eastside, Gardena, Long Beach, West L.A., and then L.A. in general. So, it was more or less territorial, with L.A. being our "territory."

*What were the girls doing at that time?*

The girls didn't have what you call gangs, in those days. They were pretty much straight you might say. The difference may have been that the ones we related to were those that knew how to do the Bop and the Texas Hop—the dances that the blacks did. The square girls didn't know how to do any of those fast dances.

*Did the Constituents have any confrontations with ethnic groups other than Asian?*

As a group, I don't remember having any. I do remember some members of our group being confronted with members of another ethnic group. Two Asians and two blacks in our group had a fight with four Chicanos—so it was a one-to-one fight. But, it was more restricted to our particular ethnic group.

Our group wasn't just a Japanese thing. A majority of the members were Japanese, but that was just incidental.

*Why do you think that ethnic gangs fight primarily against gangs of their own ethnic background?*

I think it stems from group identity. As a person, you're more concerned about how you are among your own ethnic group—not so much among other ethnic groups.

*Was there any connection between the Constituents and the Japanese community?*

The only thing I could remember is when we had a dance at Normandie playground. There was a big fund raising drive conducted by the Shonien, which was a Japanese orphanage. So, we decided to throw a dance and give all the proceeds to them. Shonien was very much a part of the Japanese community. In fact, those who made up the Shonien organization are the very same members that organized and became JACS. In that respect, we were somewhat remotely associated with the Japanese community.

*Do you remember anything about Asian gang involvement prior to the Constituents?*

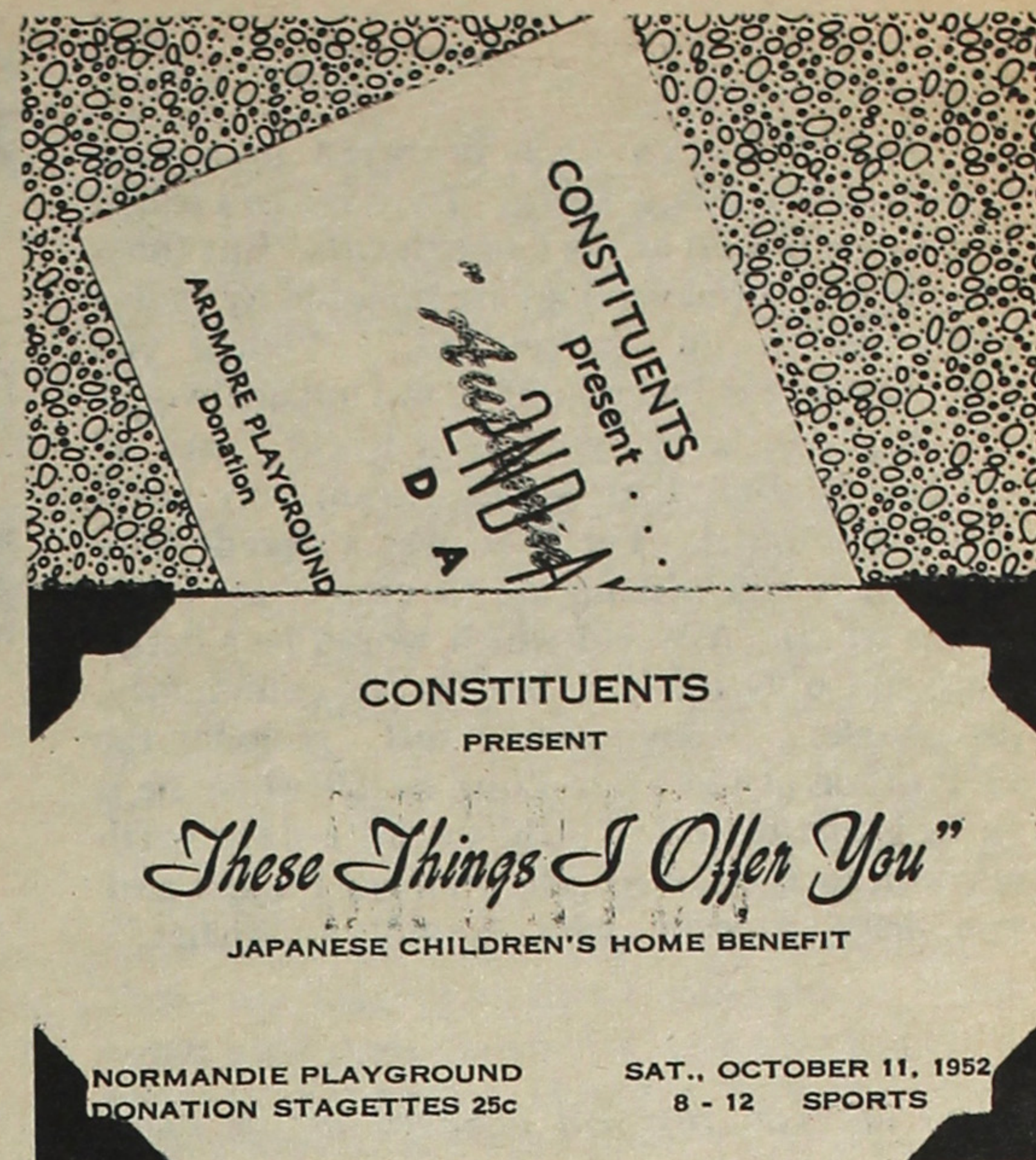
Yes, I think these kind of gangs existed even before World War Two. You know about these things because you had members in your group with older brothers. The older brothers would tell them some of the things that he went through before the war. You had groups like that at Terminal Island, Westside, Eastside, and near Little Tokyo. As far as names I could remember, there were groups right after World War Two. On the Westside, you had the Seinans, ...after them were the Baby Seinan. Seinan, you might say, dominated Westside since WWII up until around 1950. The Baby Seinan from 1950 to 1952...and, our group from 1952 to about '55.

*How much do you feel you've gotten out of your relationship with the Constituents in terms of education, outlook on society, people, authority, such as the police, or just developing your own personality?*

Initially, by being in that group, there was already something there where each of the members would not behave in the way the society at large would have liked them to behave. Because we were rebellious. We were rebelling against society. Society had done certain things that we felt were not just. We reacted in the only way we knew how. As a group we were very politically aware about a lot of things.

There was more personal warmth and trust among each member in the sense of brotherhood. I find that even among the people in the movement, those who were members of a street gang or got into problems with the law...for some reason or another...there is more sincerity than people in the movement with a white middle class background. I could recognize them right away. Some of them have beautiful rhetoric, but on a personal level, they are hard to relate to sometimes.

The other thing you mentioned, the police. We had a strong distrust for the police. We knew what the police did, and what some of their tactics were. Knowing these things, we did as much as possible to avoid them. When Jim was giving a talk at Japanese Community Week, he mentioned about a lot of these so-called radicals who have a white middle-class background. Never having any kind of confrontation with the police, they just stupidly, almost willingly, got beaten by them. They don't realize that they are very emotional, brutal, and de-humanized. They react violently towards those who have different political philosophies than that of the police department. A lot of these white middle class students who get involved in demonstrations and start protesting about certain issues don't realize this. Not just this, but how the police plan certain things. For example, police instigators who get involved in these demon-



strations. They'll throw rocks and other things at the police so the demonstrating group will lose credibility. It turns out later that the people who started throwing rocks were police themselves, who made themselves look like students. A lot of street people know these tactics that the police use.

*Do you know anything about how the Japanese-American newspapers viewed Asian street gangs at that time?*

The only time I remember was when the person from the First Street Gang got cut up around his stomach and ended up in the hospital. Even today, the only time you'll find any articles about street gangs is when somebody gets killed.

If a newspaper is going to talk about gangs—Chicano, black, Asian or white—those that are going to make news are the ones where killings occur. That kind of sensationalism is what they rely on for these newspapers to exist.

*Why did you call yourselves the Constituents?*

The way the name "Constituents" came about was that one of the blacks in our group was taking history, and had come across the word. Even the word "constituent" would not have come about unless you're somewhat astute about the political conditions of the country.

In our group, there were two that went to UCLA straight from high school. Academically they were doing quite well, but at the same time, we had people that got kicked out of high school for being caught smoking. Smoking "grass" was not uncommon, but nobody in our group got involved with any hard drugs.

*Do you see "street gangs" as a problem—at that time, and even now? How do you think the situation should be dealt with?*

First of all, we're going to have these groups as long as you have racism and the economic class structure of this society. We are not going to eliminate gangs until you eliminate those problems. The whole system has to be changed. The only thing that we could do as Asians is, rather than getting strung up on fighting each other or getting hung up on drugs, we have to make them realize what causes these things. Have them direct their energy towards changing society and getting involved in the movement. They could exercise the same kind of brotherhood that existed in these gangs. A lot of the gang members have a lot of imagination and are very creative. And that's what the movement needs.

*You had a lot of confrontations with the Black Juans?*

I think we did. But, with that group, we never really had a full force versus full force. Anytime there was an incident it was an isolated thing. It was a few of them and a few of us that got involved. When we went to a dance, the Black Juans would be at one end of the dance hall and we would be at another end. We knew we didn't like each other. Any little thing could have set it off. But, I think we always outnumbered them.



The Constituents, circa 1955



JIM

Jim Matsuoka once belonged in a gang known as the Black Juans. They weren't exactly the sweethearts of the Constituents. But times change and bitter feelings are replaced by fading memories of the "street life." "When you feel completely locked out of the outside world, you begin to create your own world," and according to Jim, that is one reason why gangs were established. Yet it is over a decade later and Jim is still attempting to create an alternative world. A world which would be a better place not only for him, but for his community, his people. Today, Jim's "turf" includes the EOP office at Cal State Long Beach where he is an assistant director. Add to this a deep participation in the Los Angeles Pioneer Project and you have a man who is still a "figher."

*When did you first get involved in the Black Juans?*

Jim. I think that was in 1953. I was just about ready to graduate from Belmont. Most of the people in the Black Juans were from my neighborhood. My cousin was one of the leaders of the group. He invited me to attend a party or dance. Not knowing anything about the group, I thought it was just his friends. It turned out that someone came up to me and said, "I hear you're going to be fighting someone tonight." I was really surprised. Being 18 years old at the time and not too social, I figured it was a good way for me to get into the social center. Before I knew it I was supposed to be in a fight. Nothing happened that night. I had a pretty good time at the dance so I figured, "this isn't too bad, maybe I should kind of string along and see what else is cooking." Up to that time I was a pretty clean cut kid.

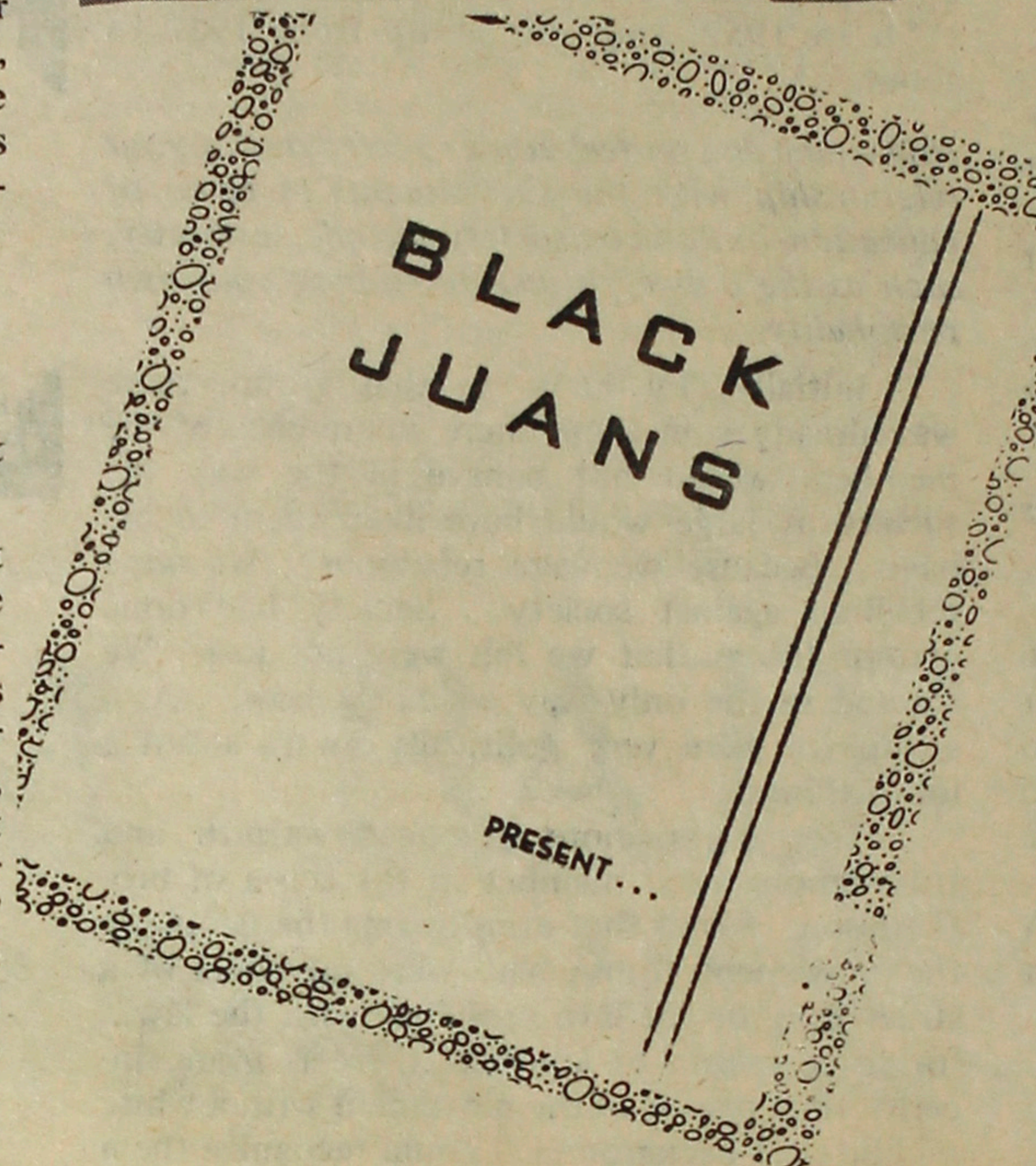
*Were the Black Juans restricted to one ethnic group?*

No it was never restricted, but our group was primarily Japanese American. We had a Chinatown group which was considered part of the Black Juans. Of perhaps 40 guys in our club, about four or five were Chicanos and five were blacks.

*Your confrontations with other gangs...were they mostly with other Japanese American groups? Did you ever have confrontations with other ethnic gangs besides Japanese Americans?*

Our basic thing were with Japanese gangs because we would fight over the women more than anything else. A Japanese girls club would throw a dance and the guys would start fighting when something would break out. There weren't too many black gangs to speak of, so we never did fight them too much. There were Chicano gangs, but we didn't know where they began and where they ended. They had alliances. You don't just fight one gang, if they want, they'll bring an army on you. Before you know it, they've got around five or six gig gangs teamed up against you. But, there was a time when we really controlled that Belmont area. Even with the Chicano's in it. I mean we could crash parties left and right. There was a time when we would hold our own against any group—black, white, or Chicano. As for the whites, they didn't have many gangs in L.A. You just practiced on them. They did have car clubs out in the Valley area, but they weren't considered serious opposition. There were groups way out in the hinterlands like the Hell's Angels and the Galloping Gooses, but they would never come into L.A. First of all, they didn't know how the minority groups would band together. There was one thing in common among the minority groups, it was kind of understood that they didn't care for the whites too much. They would go paddy hunting and jump the whites.

But I don't think too many gangs were organized just to fight. There's no sense to that. It was probably a search for some sort of status or prestige, and how others viewed you—especially the girls. When you feel completely locked out of the outside world, you begin to create your own world. Everything we know is competition. So the minute you group



into your own social clubs, there's no control over this competing—and it erupts into fighting. I think it reflects this society.

*How long were the Black Juans in existence?*

The group started sometime in 1953, and went on to the early '60s. The original Black Juans were a fusion of L.A. and Azusa guys. After that came the Baby Black Juans, who were from the L.A.-J-Flats area. Then came the Tiny Black Juans. They were from various parts of L.A. The Teensy Weansy's I believe they were called, came after that.

*Did your gang get into using weapons other than fists?*

When we first started, it was considered very manly to fight with your fists. We didn't go into weapons with the idea that it was more manly. It was basically a fear of what the other side had. We felt positively naked with the idea that, say, the Westside might show up one day with a pistol. Invariably, one of our guys would bring a pistol, just in case worst came to worst. You start off with little .22 hunting rifles. Then you go into regular hand guns, shotguns and what have you. We never could get a hold of any automatic weapons. There was a lot of tire irons and pipes. Still, we never did frown on fists. We thought that was the way to really settle something out. There was always the probability of patching things up after a fist fight. You'd realize that it was a minor misunderstanding and could get together and laugh about it. Half of our club, the Azusa guys, were initially supposed to fight us. Later on, we grew to like each other so much, we merged into one group. You can imagine what the outcome would have been if weapons were used. Later on though, we had quite an arsenal. I myself had something like six different guns, and would loan out a few.

*Was anyone ever seriously wounded either in your gang or another that you confronted?*

A friend of mine got hit on the head with a tire iron and we thought he was going to die. There were a few people that were probably hurt pretty bad, but we never stopped to find out. Some of the younger guys...Louie is still doing time for when he shot that kid. I heard one of our guys got killed up in San Francisco, though he wasn't in the club at the time. We

I say it was a social club is because we didn't necessarily try to recruit the toughest fighters. Too often, they turn out to be sort of like "dead heads." We basically looked for a lot of the things you would in any friend—a good guy, and loyal to you as a friend. We wanted people who wouldn't "stab" you, like messing around with your girlfriend or talking about you behind your back. You had to be someone that everybody could get along with. You didn't have to be tough, but you would never run from a fight. We had some really poor fighters, but they had the spirit. You'd probably have to had a rash of people knifed. This guy I know slashed somebody at Roosevelt High School during lunch period with an odd instrument. It was a hook-like thing tied on a metal piece.

*When you got into gang fights, was it spontaneous?*

We were always in conflict. After a while it became an everyday thing. We were constantly in a state of war. If not with one group, with another. In fact, later on among the younger groups, a party without violence was so boring, they would purposely start a fight. We really had nothing special, because we were always in that state. Anytime you went to dances, you were armed. You always made sure that the car was parked where you could pull out and split quickly if you had to.

*Would you say that a lot of Black Juans were politically aware of what's going on?*

They knew they were being bullshitted. They knew that somehow society was pulling shit on them. They felt no compunction at all about jumping white people—they had absolutely no mercy for them. But they didn't know how it was being done. Nobody really had the educational awareness. There was no Movement. There was no Malcolm X. There wasn't even a Martin Luther King at the time. Segregation, in 1953, was an accepted way of life. Yet, they knew that somebody was shafting them. And, they took their hatred out on people. A lot of it went into nationalism. On December 7th, we'd all wear hinomarus and deliberately see if any whites wanted to fight it out. In that sense, we were politically aware. We knew something was wrong in this society, but we didn't know how to articulate our positions. The Movement takes care of those frustrations.

*Why did you call yourselves the Black Juans?*

There used to be a much older group in our neighborhood called the Wombats. Our group had ties to San Fernando, and there was an old group up there called the Black Quins. So, we called ourselves the Black Juans. It was more from Wombats, but we spelled it J-U-A-N, because of our machismo character. We all thought we were great lovers and all that junk.

*Can you recall anything about other gangs?*

Our immediate rivals were the Constituents. A lot of other groups tended to align themselves with them or with the Black Juans. The Dekoyos were our allies. The San Fernando Valley area had the Freelancers, and we were good with them. The Eastside had a variety of smaller groups. They had one called the Koshakos—I still don't know where they got their name.

*For what did you drop out of the Black Juans, or were you just always in it?*

I was pretty much always into it. Fighting erupted among the younger people, and they were constantly calling on me to mediate or assist them. When that kid got killed...just that pressure was so intense, you couldn't enjoy yourself. My parents never knew what I was into. Then, it dawned on my mother just what I was into, even though it wasn't my fault directly. She knew I exerted a strong force around the neighborhood—the young people. I caught a lot of flack. Looking back, I always kept arms in the house—loaded—ready to fire. I never knew when



a doorbell would have a bunch a guys out there. You felt really trapped, with nowhere to turn. After all hell began to break out, I saw the Army as a good way out. Of course, I found that I jumped from the frying pan into the fire. When I came out, though, the gang thing had simmered down quite a bit. By that time, I had a strong appreciation for what was lacking in my life—education. I think I went to school for the next ten years, straight.

## RUSSELL

At one time considered among the "younger guys," Russell Valparaiso ran with the Tiny Black Juans in the late fifties through the early sixties. As not only a survivor of the street scene, but also the penal system, Russell has reached a level of deep commitment to the Asian community. Presently he is involved in the Storefront, the Asian American Drug Abuse Program, and also serves as a community worker in the Carson area.

*When did you first get involved with the Tiny Black Juans?*

**Russell.** My first involvement with the Black Juans was in 1956. At that time, everybody hung out at a drive-in. The Constituents hung out at Hody's, and the Black Juans hung out at "Chicken's" (Wilshire and Vermont). I came down from San Jose to Belmont High School. I never used to hang around with Asians too much. I thought they were very passive, book-worm types. Not knowing too many people, I used to run with Hawaiian dudes. At Chicken's, we had an encounter with the Black Juans. After a while they got to know me, and would hunt me down after school everyday.

Fighting was like I had to prove myself. My mother's side were fighters, and my dad was a street man—a hustler and a gambler. So, they would tease me in Pilipino, "Why, you're a sissy." I think that's why I got into these "had to fight" situations. I had to fight. It really wasn't in me that I wanted to. I had to prove that I wasn't a sissy.

With my first encounter with the Black Juans, I realized that these Asian Americans were "bad." They weren't afraid to fight either. It was a collective effort—if one person fought, everybody fought. So, it was like that "Three Musketeers" thing: "one for all, and all for one." This was really proven in practice, instead of being just words.

*When did you first meet Jim?*

I first met Jim at a Dayton Heights school ground on a Sunday. A lot of the senior Black Juans, Baby Black Juans, and Tiny Black Juans were going to riot. We got together with them. We were the young guys that wanted to fight, and learn how to drink beer and wine. The guys would buy us a beer and wine, and we'd stay there and sit along. It was locked up, but we climbed the fence. We'd have a big gathering, and talk about the population in South American—Japanese population. We thought we were the baddest of all Japanese communities. I used to hear Jim Matsuoka talk about how we were going to invade Latin America. He would talk about tactics and strategies—Jim was known as the "General." He lived on Middlebury at one end of the block, where people come into the Flats. Jim would be able to hold them with a shotgun, and be the blockade. But, I met Jim and the rest of the top senior Black Juans a long time ago. They used to teach us things like where to stash a knife or gun...not Jim particularly, but other senior Black Juans. The seniors were never really into knives and guns, but we were. There was a very heavy cohesion from the seniors all the way down to the Tinys. They knew we were the up and coming group, and we had to prove that we were the Tiny Black Juans. The name "Black Juan" was such a popularity meaning "bad."

*Can you think of anything you personally got out of being in the Tiny Black Juans that you couldn't get out of the media?*

You see, what media does is fantasize everything from what's really happening. They take

our minds away from the real conditions of society. We dreamed about being good gangsters. That perpetuated us to be "low riders"—to wear stingy-brimmed hats...to be good hustlers...to wear fifty dollar shoes...to be a good whore...to be a good pimp. But, what the gang did was develop a dignity that we needed. The Black Juans really gave me some identity—something strong and organized that I could relate to. It was a contradiction to the system of this society. In this society, you develop insecurity and a lack of confidence. You don't know if you'll get an "A" or a "B" on your grades...You don't know if your father or mother will have a job. We had to lower our Chevys or Fords to make believe we were in the world. It was a "Sir Guy" shirt instead of a hundred dollar suit. And it was cool and being slick...drinking scotch...and, listening to Miles Davis...and, if you don't listen to jazz, you ain't cool. You gotta have class. We were in the midst of the beatnik days. That was a long time ago. Going to coffee houses was the thing. Well, a lot of things happened at that time...there were a lot of stabbings.... There was a brother that got killed. A lot of us did time...a lot of us were put on probation. From that time on, people started opening their eyes.

*Did you learn anything out of your relationships with the police and authority? How did it affect you, up until right now, in terms of your personality?*

My personality is the same as when I was very small. I was a very outgoing, emotional, and sensitive person. I first got involved with the police when I was throwing rocks at a Naval patrol car in Hawaii. I was about ten years old. I never liked "haoles"—white people...because we lived in a soldier town. I always had a big mistrust for white people. When I came here, I was anti-police officer on every level. He wasn't on your side, and we understood that early.

*How did you lose your connection with the street scene, and how did you come about to your present position?*

It's hard to say that I lost any perspective from the street scene. I still dress the same way, and still relate to street people. The last time I got arrested was in 1966. I beat a police officer up, and did time for it. From then, I lost contact with a lot of the street people. I was strung out on heroin, and went to the penitentiary. My life-style in the penitentiary really reflected my life-style in the streets. I got mixed up in riots, burning of clothes, been in the hole for over thirty days, going from one penitentiary to another...When I came out, I couldn't deal with society. I couldn't get a job. People couldn't relate to me, because of my involvement in gangs. A lot of the things that make me what I am are because of prison...because of my awareness in the prison when the Chicanos and blacks were getting their thing together. They were talking about the Anglo society. They were talking about our true history as makers in America, which kind of opened my eyes. "Wow. Where does a Japanese-Pilipino guy fit into this society. What's happening. I want to know about me." What I did was learn about Chicano history. I learned about how the Anglos ripped-off the Southwest. That motivated me to learn more. I know I was oppressed, but I didn't know what to do when I got out in the street. But there were people like Mo Nishida—people from the Consti-



tients; people from the old gangs—from the Freelancers, like Ray Tasaki; old people in different gangs that I used to know—that I did time with, drank beer with, dropped pills with, shot dope with, were involved with—in the movement. The Asian Movement, at that time, was a Japanese Movement. That kind of opened a new life-style. I knew I needed a new life-style, because every time I would come out, I couldn't fit in. So, the only people that would talk to me were those I could drink beer with, shoot dope with, and cry on their shoulder. They understood me; they were under the same circumstances. Other people: college kids, people that owned private property, they don't understand where I'm coming from. There was no such thing as a helping hand. But, when I came out in 1970, there was a helping hand. There was something where somebody said, "Hey, you can help us out, man." There was something that I could share. "Talk about your gang experience; talk about your experience in prison..." Before, I never felt that I could contribute. I was Russell Valparaiso, street brother, dope fiend, very negative, nothing positive. But people were saying, "You got something to contribute. There's other people with problems like you—people have to get together." From there on, I progressed to other levels...and other levels. I went through a whole re-education process, which I could share with other people.

The school system is perpetuating the superstructure to defend the superstructure. The Armed Forces, law enforcement, all the institutions—we're surrounded by it. Every kid in every community goes through it. A lot of youths are dropping out because the school hasn't been responsive to their needs. The System hasn't been responsive to their needs. Kids get insecure. They start looking for something to grasp onto, to develop security. That's why there's gangs. That's why they're on drugs. That's why there's other kinds of social problems. Some people join the service to belong, even though it's a farce. It's not in the best interest of most people. It's in the interest of the people who have big corporate interests in Vietnam like Bank of America. People have to go through a whole re-education process to ask themselves questions, like why seventy cents out of every dollar of the tax money is going to the military and foreign "aid." Our needs—the people's needs—aren't being met. Funds are appropriated which don't benefit the people at all. Where does the Vietnam war get us? I don't think the people really understand who benefits on that war.

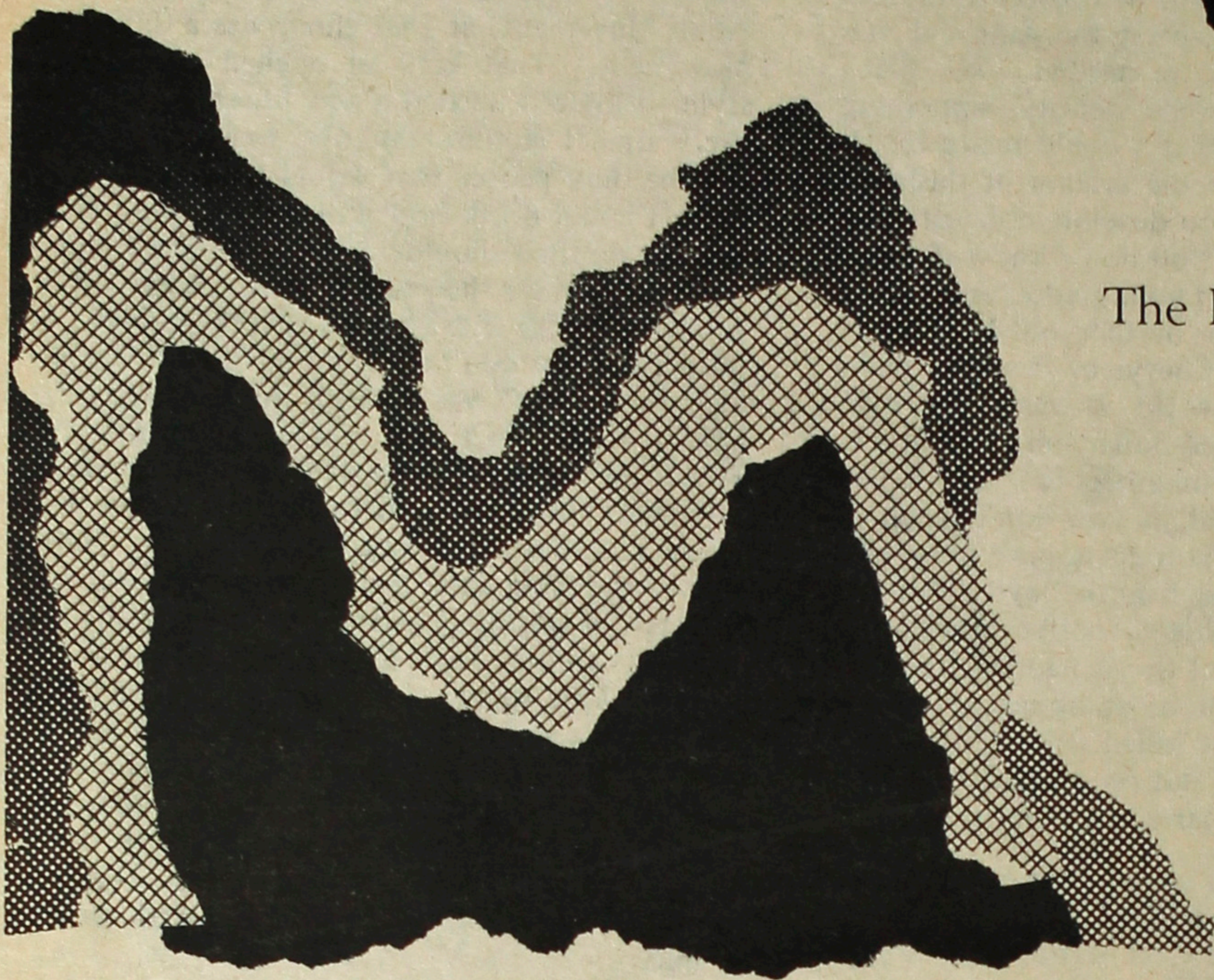
*What about the other gangs? Do you see it as a problem?*

It's energy that young people have. They want to identify. They want to belong. If it's the wrong kind of direction, it can be very self-defeating. What happened to our thing was that a lot of people got hurt. A lot of people took to drugs. A lot of people went to prison. If it can be motivated into something beneficial for them, the people, the community, their own mother and father, and their brothers and sisters. If gangs could go in that direction right now, it would be really cool.

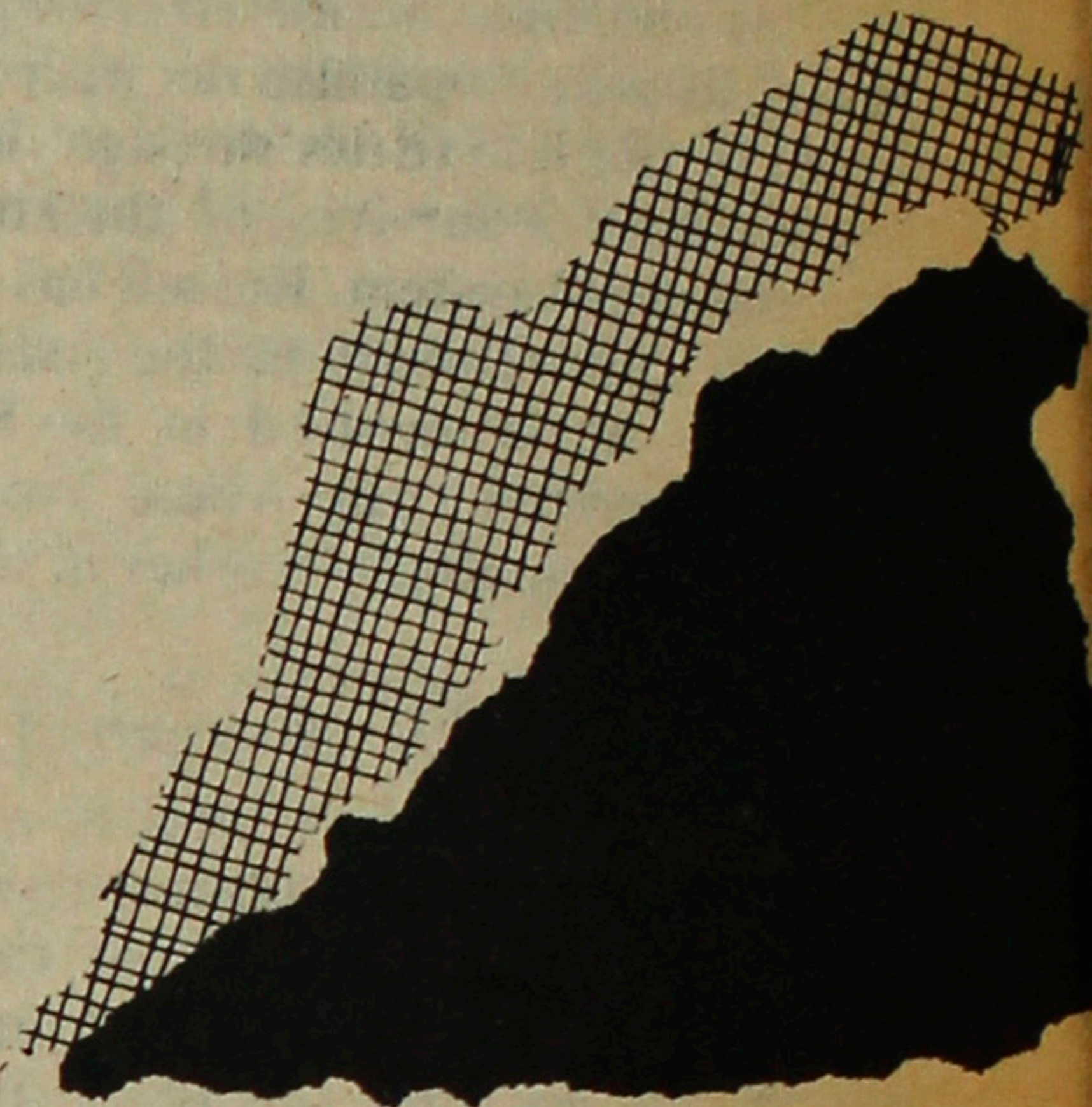
I just want to say something about one brother that I'd like you to remember. That is Louie Yamashiro. He used to fight so much, it was cool. He went to school in Beverly Hills. His father was a gardener, and they lived behind some houses—behind some rich people—and, all the racist elements that were surrounding him, affected him. He used to fight in school all the time. They wanted to send him to a mental hospital, because he wanted to fight so much. This brother, right now, is spending prison time, and like I could say, he was the "baddest" Buddhahead I knew. He could fight left hand, right hand, knock out six people in a row. I mean he was "bad." He was very humanistic. He didn't want "bullies" to pick on a weak person—didn't dig on any "bully" situation. This is the thing with street gang members. They're all humanistic—very humanistic brothers. Very much, they cared. They cared for the weakest. But, I've talked many times, that I want to throw a Black Juan party. I'd sure like to, man. All the people that were in gangs before—beautiful, man, beautiful people.

—Roy Nakano





## The Foolish Old Man Who Moved Mountains



Graphic by Teri Nitta

*Many years ago there was an old man who lived in Northern China. People called him the Foolish Old Man of North Mountain. His house faced south and beyond his doorway stood the two great peaks, Taihung and Wangwu, which blocked his view.*

*So one day he called his sons together and told them he wanted to get rid of the mountains. They each took a shovel and with great determination, they began to dig up the mountains.*

*A Wise Old Man saw them busily digging away and he laughed at them. "How silly of you to do this," he told them. "It's impossible for you few to dig up these two high mountains."*

*The Foolish Old Man replied, "When I die my sons will carry on; when they die, there will be my grandsons, and then their sons and grandsons, and so on until the job is done. High as they are, the mountains cannot grow any higher and with every bit we dig, they will be that much lower. You see, we will clear them away."*

*So, having answered the Wise Old Man, the Foolish Old Man and his sons went on digging.*

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Deep into the mountains of Tunhua county just east of Peking, there is a people's commune called Sa Shih Yu. The name means "sand and rock commune" because the only natural resources of the area are sandy soil and solid rock. The area has almost no natural access to water. The people who live there are peasants, many whose families have worked the land for generations past. The land was once owned by rich landlords who lived well off the misery of the people. In 1949 the masses of the people of China, under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party and Mao Tse-tung, took control of their country. For the people of Tunhua county, this meant that the land they had lived on and worked for so long was at last under their control, and that they could begin to reap the harvest they had sown for so long. In 1951 the Chairman issued a call for people to form Mutual Aid Teams within given areas so they could help each other to begin building a new China. The people of Tunhua county came together, and began to make their land cultivatable in an all-out effort to transform nature. The work was hard, and they had little technology, but gradually, they were able to begin terracing some of the land. The agricultural yield increased. By 1958 Sa Shih Yu People's Commune was formed. But in 1963-4 natural calamity wiped out most of the terraced land. They were back where they

had begun. They were offered aid and relief from the state, but everyone knew that China was still a poor country, and hadn't the Chairman come out with a call for everyone to practice "self-reliance"? Then, a great debate began among the people of Sa Shih Yu: One side felt that they had no choice but to accept the aid offered by the state. The other side, taking to heart the story of the Foolish Old Man Who Moved the Mountains, pushed for self-reliance. After much discussion and heated debate, a decision was made. Yep, you guessed it. The crazy people of Sa Shih Yu, with almost no technology but the strength of their backs, their hands, and their determination, began the task of transforming nature once again.

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The bus ride was unreal. The road through the mountains was so rough that I had to hold onto the seat in front of me so I wouldn't fly off my seat. I glanced over my shoulder towards the back of the bus and saw one of the comrades from Peking University who was traveling with us, bouncing up and down, holding desperately onto the seat in front of him. He must have been a foot off the seat at the highest point. It was really hot, and the terrain was really dry. The windows were opened, and dust would blow into the bus blinding us momentarily with each big dip. The soil outside was a reddish brown color, and the only green was thousands of newly planted young trees. As we went deeper into the mountains we began to see terraces of rice paddies all along the sides of even the steepest mountains. Terrace upon terrace, like wide, lush stairs. Women and men with wide straw hats, their baggy pants rolled up to the knee, harvesting the tall, green grass-like rice plants.

The night before, we had seen a full-color movie of the step-by-step transformation of nature at Sa Shih Yu: hundreds of people driving stakes into the rock by hand, first chipping, then finally breaking the surfaces down so that others with straw baskets at the end of bamboo poles could load the rocks in and carry them away—the poles bending from the weight of the load balanced on their backs. Then other people with baskets of fertile soil brought by foot from communes three miles away began to fill the newly-dug terraces. It took 2,000 baskets and ten days to fill one terrace. When we were there, the people of Sa Shih Yu had cultivated 200 acres of land in this way. That was during the day; by night they had constructed 400 new homes. Basket-by-basket in this way, with no gun-point threat of death, no external pressure or force. But rather, a deep determination from

within each person to make the land of their ancestors blossom and provide for each and every person.

When we arrived at Sa Shih Yu we were greeted by members of the revolutionary committee, youth brigade, and others with warm smiles and equally warm, calloused hands reaching out to us in welcome. After some brief introductions through our translators, and a confusing series of handshakes and cross-handshakes, we were taken into a large reception room. The floor was concrete, tables were of simple wood with benches to match. Instead of doors there were bamboo curtains in the doorway allowing a much needed breeze to flow through the room. The only decorations in the room were large, color portraits of Marx, Lenin, Engels, Stalin and Mao; and all along the walls on the floor were hundreds of large, flat-faced rocks with messages hand-painted in black from visitors from all over the world expressing warmth, friendship and respect to the Foolish Old Men, Women and Children of Sa Shih Yu.

We all sat down, and were given hot towels to wipe with, and tea (because of the shortage of potable water in general in China, even in the heat of summer people drink a lot of tea because they have to boil the water. It's really a trip, though, how refreshing tea can be in such hot weather). On the table in front of us were large platters of two kinds of peaches—reddish pink and white—both grown on the commune. As we settled down, biting into the peaches and sipping the tea, a responsible person of the commune began telling us about the Foolish Old Men and Women of Sa Shih Yu, and what a determined people can do. In 1964 the people decided to struggle with nature without aid from the state; by 1967 they were producing enough grain to feed themselves, and to sell some to the state.

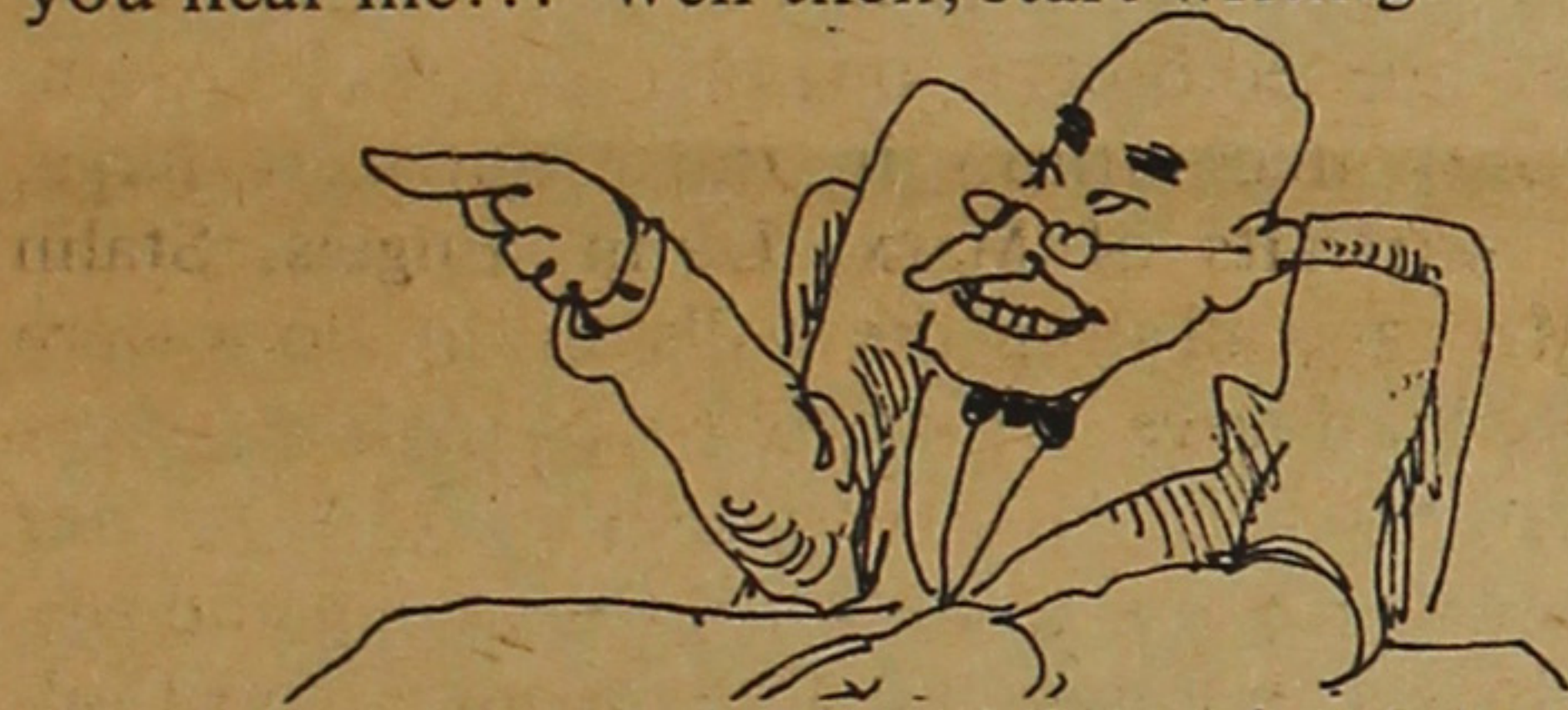
Then we got up to take a hike around the place. We walked outside, and down past many homes with large vegetable gardens, then the cleanest pig sties you can imagine, through small orchards of peach trees, and through plots of newly planted seedlings. We climbed up to the top of a hill that was mostly broken rock, and remembered what "Sa Shih Yu" meant. From the top of the hill we could see acres of green, terraced hills, orchards and fields that had been sculpted by human hands. I had to smile at the irony of the name "sand and rock commune," now. Some of us found large, flat rocks to sit down on, some just stood there taking in the scene. Throughout our journey through China, we would see or hear the words "self-reliance" and "hard work." Simple words. Yes, of course. But we never quite understood them like we did at that moment.

—Evelyn Yoshimura



PUBLIC SCHOOL: or how to ask for things  
they give you anyways.

Let's play a game, a guessing game. All set? Okay, here's the question: what experience has every single person living in the United States, between the ages of five and one-hundred-and-five, gone through, or, as the case might be, is going through right now? Come on, now, think hard... "...uh...gettin' drunk?" No, no—try again. "...er...I know! ...uh, remembering after it's already too late that you used the last pieces of toilet paper to blow your nose with!?!". Well, not to put you down or anything, after all that *could* be a right answer, but the experience I was thinking about, and hoping you'd guess, is *school*. "...oh...yeah, skool." Yes, my friend, "skool"—and since you guessed incorrectly, I want you to take out a pencil and some paper and write 500 times, "the answer was school." I will not allow you to read any more of this article until you do so. Don't you hear me!?! Well then, start writing!



Hey, what do you think you're doing reading this? ...Think you're pretty clever gettin' by without doing your assignment, don't you? Huh? ...HUH?! ANSWER ME!!! ("...J-...J-...Jesus this teach is koo-koo!") I HEARD THAT! Ho-ho, you're just asking for it aren't you?! Now, do you see that paper in front of you and the pencil you're holding? All right—I want you to write out, "This is no joking matter," 10,000 times, *in addition* to your previous assignment. You have your work cut-out for you, let's *get started!* I hope this teaches you a lesson.

This is no joking matter. This is no joking matter. This is no joking matter. This is no joking matter.

I wonder how many people, even as you're reading these words, are busily scribbling out "the assignment" as they were told? A little ridiculous, says you. Maybe, says I. To how many who are still reading this article did those words, that tone of voice, sound vaguely familiar? How many of us remember being subjected to a similar form of "punishment", or seeing one of our friends being reprimanded in a similar fashion—and at that time, years ago, sitting in Mr. Whytman's class in Room 13, remembering how it sure wasn't a "joking matter?"

And it isn't still, even now.

Just look at you. Let's say you're one of the "lucky" Asian Americans. Lucky enough to have found a rather soft, comfortable, economically secure position after spending a few years of your life in the public schools and state universities. You've got your own office, your own chair, your own desk for your own feet, your own house... Man, you've made it! In a reflective moment, you start thinking about how

all the shit you went through cramming for finals, writing fifty-page research papers on "the socialization of the eunich" was worth it—it paid off. Then, Mr. Bossman walks in and says, "JUMP!" and without a bit of hesitation, you answer, "How high?" Good, you did your homework.

It's true, we learn a whole lot more in school than we sometimes realize. And in the few minutes it will take for you to read this article, perhaps we can spend that time thinking about what school is all about.

I feel it's fairly safe to assume that many, if not most, Asian American families have come to view a "good education" as the key to the door of success. We equate "going to school" with "landing a good job." In many ways, this view is very similar to the unstated goal that educators in this country hold—that goal being "the maximization of every individual's potential" (Martin Carnoy, *Schooling in a Corporate Society*, McKay Pub.) Both of these related outlooks are based on the classical concept of education as a liberator of men's minds, and also the later idea that a modern, industrial state (such as the United States) requires a "socially mobile population." Stated simply, the public educational system in the United States is looked at by most people as a means of acquiring the necessary survival skills needed to "make it" in our society.

## Meritocratic Ideal

There is another notion which we have come to believe which goes hand in hand with this outlook on school: the meritocratic ideal. That notion assumes that each individual, on his own "free will," is able to go as high and as far as motivation, desire, and ability can take him. Thus, in a "meritocracy," only "the best" and "most intelligent" people rise to the top. We have come to believe that anyone with the desire to make it—will, and those who don't have only themselves to blame. They lost out in fair and square competition.

These beliefs are deeply ingrained within all of us. Our grandparents and parents have come to view education as an integral, inseparable part of "the American Dream." They are gardeners, cooks, laundry shop keepers, and waiters because, they feel, they did not have a good education. And because they love their children, and "don't want (us) to suffer as (they) had to," they make it a point to emphasize the importance and necessity of going to school. No wonder they blame their children, and even themselves sometimes, when Bobby or Janice come home with anything below C-level. They

shake their heads and cry, "What are we doing wrong?"; "What's the matter with those kids?!" Meanwhile, Bobby and Janice are out of the house passing the time with their friends, gettin' drunk, gettin' high, and if their thoughts ever do linger on their performance in school for any length of time, they think to themselves, "...I'm a big fuck-up, anyway...school ain't for me, it's for smart people...and I ain't smart." We have internalized the meritocratic ideal to such an extent that it never occurs to us that the real problem might be the school itself.

"Ah-ha! But what about all this new talk about 'open-structured education,' and 'child-directed studies?' Aren't there a lot of people trying to improve the classroom situation, who want to make going to school to learn more fun and enjoyable for kids?" Good question, I can tell you're thinking. Yes, there are. There are many educators, teachers and concerned parents who have realized that the old-style ways of teaching don't work well anymore. So, they're trying to improve things by experimenting with innovative methods of 'child-centered' and 'individualized' learning. But the deeply ingrained beliefs of these people are the same as ours, their idea of the goal of education remains *unchanged*. They develop methods to achieve, in different forms, the same American "ideals." They search for creative ways to reach the same *desirable* objectives of the present and (in their eyes) antiquated school system; to erase what impediments and obstacles stand *in the way of* that same goal. What we should do then is go one step back, to pause for a moment before we point our fingers at these "new approaches to learning" and shout, "See?! They are making changes!," and examine more closely the *goals* of the public school system.

## Society as a School

Earlier we talked about how many Asian families living in America truly believe that a good education means success. Let's use this maxim to begin our examination.

Now, those who believe this, as we noted earlier, do so not without reason. They most often times point to their own lives as examples of what happens when you don't get a good education. They make a connection between what happens in school and what happens when you finish school. Saying the same thing differently, school can be seen as a vehicle for transmitting the values, attitudes and beliefs, then, of the society at large. Okay? So, if we want to examine the goals of the schools, we have to understand how they fit in with the society at large. Or, looking at it from the other side of the mir-

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ror, if we can understand how our society works, then we can more clearly see the real goals of the schools.

So, off we go. Way back in Euro-American colonial times, in 17th century America, the basic productive unit was the family. For almost every single person, work was, for the most part, self-directed and done without any form of direct supervision. Despite natural calamities (like floods, fires, etc.), ill health (plague, disease, etc.), poverty, the low level of technological development, and occasional run-ins with the English political authorities, a person had considerable leeway in choosing his own working hours, what to produce, and how to go about producing.

Transmitting the necessary productive skills to the children was a simple task. If daddy was a cobblestone cutter, young Miles would learn how to carry on his father's work by doing it with him. Together they would go to the rock quarry, pick the stones, and the father would show Miles how to chip them to the desired shape, and then together they would deliver them to Mr. Johnson, who, with *his* son by his side, would place them into the road. Children learned not only the skills necessary for the job, but would also learn at an early age how to deal with relationships between adults other than their parents, and also with children other than their sisters or brothers. This is something that economists call "the social relations of production."

Children weren't required to learn a complex set of political principles or ideologies because participation in the political life of the country was limited and its authority went unchallenged, at least in normal times. The only socializing institution which existed was the church, which served to transmit the accepted spiritual values and attitudes of the time. In addition, children learned productive skills outside the family circle, serving as apprentices. The role of schools could best be described as vocational centers, usually restricted to preparing children for a career in the church. In 1647, for example, the state of Massachusetts provided for the establishment of reading schools because illiteracy was "one chief project of that old deluder, Satan, to keep men from knowledge of the Scriptures" (Edmund Morgan, *The Puritan Family*, Harper and Row, 1966).

Then came the Industrial Revolution, and with it, the undermining of the family as the major socializing and production unit. Cottage industry was destroyed completely; peasant farmers were driven off the land or were competed out of business; and ownership of the means of production became concentrated in the hands of landlords and capitalists. Being unable to compete against the large work houses, the workers surrendered their labor in return for wages and salaries. Work was done in large organizations where small management groups directed the activities of the entire work force. Slowly, as the authority structure/hierarchy (of owner, manager, foreman, worker, etc.) appeared, and desired/required types of behavior within the work place were developed and enforced, the social atmosphere in the work place became very different from that in the family production unit of earlier times. In economists' terms, the social relations of production slowly became completely separate from those within the family.

In addition, the rapid economic and technological changes which occurred made constant changes in the skills required to perform a job—any job. The productive skills that Miles now had would not be adequate to meet the needs that his son would need during his lifetime. The transmission of productive skills within the family slowly became useless.

#### Education and the Rise of Capitalism

As the traditional institutions of socialization were being undermined, the development of the capitalist system created an environment which would ultimately challenge its own existence. With more and more families uprooted from the land, peoples' search for a living re-

sulted in large-scale labor migrations. Workers were shoved into crowded, unsafe, and unhealthy factories. The influx of immigrants complicated the situation even more. The capitalist class (that is, those who owned the means of production, who hired workers to produce for them), held a disproportionate amount of wealth; a fact that could not be legitimized with the ideologies of the earlier period ("the divine right of Kings," or "the divine origin of royalty"). No sir, the mass of working people realized the gross inequalities—they *lived* those inequalities. And, ironically, the broadening of availability of political participation—a move originally made by the capitalist class to remove the entrenched interests of the previous period—became an instrument for the growing power of the mass of working people. With their positions of power threatened, the capitalists sought a mechanism to ensure social control and stability (*Studies in the History of Education, 1780-1870*, Vol. I, B. Simon, Lawrence, and Wischant).

Now, I bet you can't guess what they came up with? —Right, "skool." Ideally speaking, according to Adam Smith (*The Wealth of Nations*), a capitalist economy is one wherein progress is best promoted by entrepreneurs owning the means of production, whose activities, guided by the profit motive, reflect consumer's demands for goods and services. He adds, "economic progress is best accomplished within an environment of law and order, harmony of interests and stability." In 1841, a manufacturer from Lowell, Massachusetts, wrote the following words of advice to the State Board of Education:

I have never considered mere knowledge...as the only advantage derived from a good Common School education... (Workers with more education possess) a higher and better state of

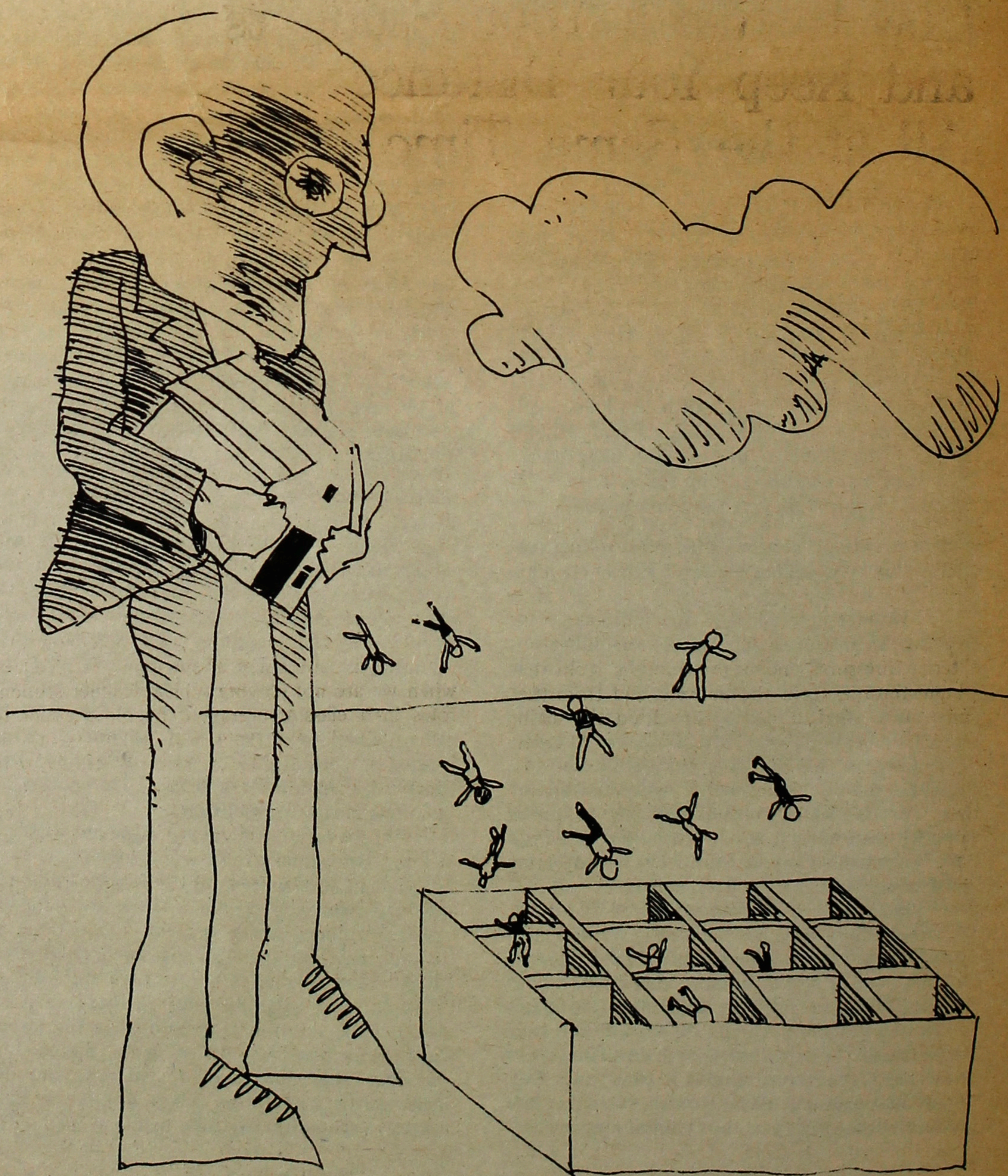
morals, are more orderly and respectful in their deportment, and more ready to comply with the wholesome and necessary regulations of an establishment... In times of agitation, on account of some change in regulations or wages, I have always looked to the most intelligent, best educated and the most moral for support. The ignorant and uneducated I have generally found the most turbulent and troublesome, acting under the impulse of excited passion and jealousy."

(Quoted in Michael B. Katz, *The Irony of Early School Reform*, Harvard University Press, 1968).

So, even as early as 1841, over one hundred-thirty years ago, the connection between school and the society at large was well perceived. In the early Common Schools the ideal preparation for factory work was found; specifically in its emphasis on discipline, punctuality, and acceptance of authority outside the family. By reproducing the social environment of the factory *within* the classroom—which included the acquisition of attitudes necessary to accept the oppressive working conditions within factories—the problem of "turbulent and troublesome" workers could be erased. The people who owned the factories could sit back down into their chairs, and wipe their brows. Saved by the bell, the school bell.

From its inception, from the get-go, public education on a mass scale in the United States was designed to benefit and preserve the privileges of one class of people (the capitalist class, those who own the means of production), while keeping another class of people oppressed (the working class, those who offer their labor in exchange for wages). Today, it is no different. The school still serves as a vehicle for maintaining the class system in our society. If you think

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Glen Iwasaki



about it, it would be only natural that rich, upper class parents would want to pass on their privileges to their children. Unlike in pre-capitalist days, it's impossible to inherit these privileges: how do you inherit skills necessary to operate a multi-industry, international corporation? You can't, not without the skills one receives in a university. Again, the public school system serves this purpose. Let's take a quick glance at some statistics:

#### COLLEGE ATTENDANCE IN 1967 AMONG HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES, BY FAMILY INCOME—

Family income/year	Percent who did not attend college.
less than \$3000	80.2
\$3000—\$3,999	67.7
\$4,000—5,999	63.7
\$6,000—7,499	58.9
\$7,500—9,999	49.0
\$10,000—14,999	38.7
\$15,000 and over	13.3

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Report*, series P-20 no. 185, July, 1969, p. 6. College attendance refers to both two- and four-year institutions.

It's obvious that the vast majority of the people who attend college come from families with high incomes, and those who do not go to college come from low income families. Now, if we compare the wide range of choice over curriculum, life style, and the allocation of time that a college student receives with the enforced obedience and respect for authority that students in working class high schools are taught—which do you think is channeled for factory work? Simple, no? We can go into any school in Los Angeles City and look at the differences in rules, expected modes of behavior, and the opportunities for choice available to the student and we

could probably guess correctly from what class of people the students come, and have a good idea of what the future holds in store for them. (See Mitchell Matsumura's article in this issue for specific examples of this.) It's a fact: "the social relations of the educational process ordinarily mirror the social relations of the work roles into which most students are likely to move." (Carnoy).

#### No Exit

In an article written by Amy Murakami, appearing in this issue also, she notes how her attempts to avoid authoritarian methods of discipline don't work, that it seems that her students only respond to the strict, authoritarian approach. No wonder—from what class of people do these students come from? Right, Gompers Junior High School is located in the Watts-Compton area—smack dab in the middle of working class blacks. The parents of Amy's students, working class people, have indirectly taught their children to respond to authority—a reflection of their own work experience which taught them that submission to authority is a necessary ingredient in getting and holding onto steady jobs.

But over in North Hollywood (or Sherman Oaks), for example, and in many other white, upper class schools, they have all of those new "open-structured educational methods" and "individualized, child-centered" techniques. And they're working, too—for the same reasons that Amy's students stand at attention when they're yelled at. Schools located within rich, upper class neighborhoods have the money to offer a much greater variety of opportunities for the child—usually they include all of those "play-oriented, child-centered pedagogy" of liberal educators, techniques which are designed to de-

velop the capacity for sustained independent work, and other characteristics required for good performance inside the high levels of the job-hierarchy (Edgar Friedenberg, *Coming of Age in America*, Vintage Publications).

Why does one school in a working class neighborhood remain under-financed, and without funds, while schools in rich neighborhoods remain well-financed? Easy. Presently, there are two main sources of income for all public schools in California: 1) the State funds, or ADA (Average Daily Attendance figure), and 2) local taxes. Percentage-wise, the ADA figure makes up about 25% of the schools' total income. The remaining 75% is collected through local county and city taxes, based on the assessed real estate value of property held by homeowners. Now, let's go back and look at the two neighborhoods we mentioned a while ago, Watts and North Hollywood. Imagine you live in a small 4 or 5 room house on 110th Street in Watts. The market value of your property is estimated to be \$10,000. You have to pay a total (of combined county and city taxes) of \$12.87 for every \$100 of assessed value (assessed value is one-fourth of the market value)—or, something close to \$322. You work as a maintenance man for the County Hospital. It becomes a real hardship for you to pay your amount of tax while desperately juggling your other expenses. You remain poor, your family exists at a mediocre level of subsistence. The schools have so little funds that they are forced to treat the children as raw materials, pieces on an assembly line, emphasizing obedience and punctuality. There is neither money nor time, nor the desire, to pay individual attention to the students. You, yourself, become so caught up with the struggle to make ends meet, that you care little that within the eyes of the child you call a "mistake," behind the face you slap every so often because

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## How to Reach Your Students and Keep Your Distance All at the Same Time

I can remember talking to my girlfriend when we were in college and telling her that I wanted to be a teacher. The reason most people go into education, I thought, was because of the short hours, good pay, all those holidays and vacations, plus the prestige attached to being a professional. Besides, with a physical education major, what else could I do? Knowing that I would eventually become a teacher, I began to question my motives and attitudes toward education. A teacher who feels a moral obligation to be a teacher—a sensitive human being—should attempt to understand the student's needs and problems. I came to the conclusion that the students are what teaching is all about and the relationship between the teacher and student is of primary importance.

It isn't easy for anyone to be a teacher in the existing school system. There are so many external pressures and responsibilities from the administration, from the parents, and from the community, that it can easily cloud the main responsibility, which is to the students. At best, it is an experience in a series of compromises. Bringing along with me a few major objectives that I wanted to transmit to my classes, I became frustrated because it wasn't easy to incorporate them into my lessons. I want my students to feel that they have a part in making decisions about the class organization and activity. Yet, my role as a teacher has been defined by the powers-that-be, and within existing rules and regulations, we don't have enough choices as to what we would like our class to be. As far as class activities go, they are predetermined at the beginning of the school year and each teacher is assigned to a specific number of weeks. Some of my classes did not want to play "touchdown" (a form of football played by girls) and voiced their opinion. I would have been happy to switch to another activity, however, according to departmental rules, we have to stay with each

assigned activity. I like students to freely express any criticism, good or bad, about the class, about the teacher, about the subject matter, and be able to suggest, discuss, and approach alternatives with open minds. Yet, inherent restrictions placed on the teacher and student, by traditional roles assigned to each, make it extremely difficult for the student to approach the teacher and also for the teacher to appear sincere about receiving this type of feedback from students. When I was in school, no one dared to criticize the teacher for fear of being reprimanded or of receiving a bad grade. I think students today still feel basically the same, and are not willing to jeopardize their grades. When I ask for criticisms concerning grades, how to handle discipline problems, or how to make the class more enjoyable, I get a room full of blank stares. Yet I know that I'm not doing everything right and that they're not crazy about gym. After class, when we are not playing typical teacher/student roles in a class structure, it becomes easier to open up and talk. However, when attempting to get feedback from students or when trying to find out what kinds of things interest them, I was accused by my colleagues of being too friendly with my students and was warned to "keep my distance."

I want my students to try to work together and help each other rather than to try to dominate one another. This is the kind of cooperative spirit I would like to see created with all students and teachers. Yet, the grading system, the standards regulated by the Board of Education, and traditional attitudes toward sports as being highly competitive, all help to hinder that process. The concept of competition is deeply rooted in the present educational system—not only through sports, but through the grading system. My students are very grade conscious. I found this out when I gave skills tests in tumbling. I used a numerical grading scale instead

of letter grades, hoping to place less emphasis on "grades." However, they were very concerned about their scores and quickly figured out my numerical system.

Besides wanting my class to express their feelings and to cooperate, I want them to have self-discipline. That is, to know what is important, what has to be done, and to do it. Especially in physical education classes, there is a heavy emphasis on an authoritarian structure where the discipline comes from the teacher. But in order to gain skills in any area, the discipline must come from within each individual to want to develop and improve. I believe that discipline is essential in order to reach any objective, but I do not believe in an authoritarian structure. Yet, I find myself having to resort to being authoritarian. The students, having been conditioned to an authoritarian structure inside and outside of school, oftentimes will respond only under this type of structure.

Students find their classrooms are prisons with curricula as relevant to their lives as so many moon rocks. Teachers are mainly concerned with controlling their classes. It is no wonder why our present educational system is in turmoil: full of bored students, dissatisfied parents, frustrated teachers, and reactionary administrators.

Still, with all its drawbacks and compromises, there are few other real alternatives than to work in this system. At this time, it is impossible for just a handful of teachers who are trying to revolutionize the educational system to realistically effect any major changes. The market for teachers is over abundant; any attempt to make changes in the schools radical enough to threaten the principal, administration, or school board, could result in dismissal and unemployment. As a result, some teachers and concerned individuals have set up alternative systems or free schools. However, those teachers working within the system who are conscious of the negative implications of the educational institution feel like their hands are tied. Where do we begin and how can we actively effect changes toward a more humanistic school within the existing system? I guess we begin together.

—Amy Murakami



"the kid don't know how to act," lies the image of the cycle of your own life-style. And each weekday from 9am to 3pm, you send your child to a place where they make that vague image, a concrete reality.

But a family living in North Hollywood, whose home is given an assessed value of \$40,000, who pay a tax of \$1287, whose children attend "innovative, individualized" schools, can rest assured that their children will find positions at the top of the social strata in society. The amount of property tax they pay on the assessed value of their property, is miniscule in comparison to the market value of their homes, and in comparison to their net incomes. These parents can afford to surround their child in an environment conducive to the learning of the productive and social skills needed to "succeed" in the professional world. Indeed, they are the privileged class.

#### A Classy Education

This brings out one other important observation that will help us see more clearly how schools operate to maintain the class system. Nearly all schools introduce common elements of expected behavior, regardless of the social class composition of their students. Discipline, respect for property, competition, and punctuality are integral parts of the curriculum of all

schools. But changing the child's personality, his set of values, and his personal expectations inside an institution in which he spends less than one-quarter of his waking hours each year, requires a different approach. Rather than oppose the socialization processes the child has learned from the family and the neighborhood (as Amy tried to do) the schools find it much more effective when they compliment and reinforce those already learned processes. This explains why the degree of social class differences in various forms of measurable school success (reading tests and the like) between say, a school in Watts and a school in North Hollywood, is so much greater than the differences between each school's budget could account for. Even though Title I, a proposed federal project which would supplement funds to urban schools, might raise the amount of money that Gompers Junior High usually gets to a figure much closer to, for example, a school in Beverly Hills, the difference in scholastic achievement would be much more than the difference in their budgets would indicate. More money is not the solution.

By now, you're probably asking yourself, "All right, already! Why?! Why are you telling me all this? How does it affect me?" After all, that's what it's all about, right? Okay.

When we started out on this odyssey, we wanted to find out more about the connection between school and society at large. Among other things, we found that:

—the public schools original intent was to en-

sure social control and stability, an environment necessary for the operation of a capitalist economic system;

—from the get-go, mass education served as a tool for the people who possess the wealth and power of the country;

—our society is made up of different social classes which the school system maintains, generation to generation;

—schools, by establishing class differences, produce people who are clearly "destined" to become either manual laborers, white-collar workers, secretaries etc.

Summed up in one sentence: public education in the United States functions to maintain the system. It is *not* a "liberator of men's minds"—it is an institution which cages the imagination, stifles the ambition, and suppresses the true liberating powers available within us. It does *not* create a "socially mobile population"—but is designed to produce workers out of the children of workers and to insure that those whose comfortable life is built upon the suffering of others, will remain that way. It is a mechanism that is far from being equal to everyone; moreover, it is a mechanism which creates and helps to maintain inequality between large segments of the population.

Knowing these basic realities about public school, let's go back and take a brief look at those "innovative, child-centered, liberal reforms of progressive educators." We noted be-

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## STUDENT RIGHTS: WE WANT WHAT WE DESERVE

#### Introduction

One of the most oppressive examples of insensitivity in our educational system are students' rights and limitations. A student's graduation depends on receiving acceptable grades, and maintaining obedient cooperation and disciplinary work habits. But in addition, the student has also been placed in a manipulative environment of controlled work with compulsory assignments. School is a structured "society" where political expression is suppressed, the press and communications media censored, where halls, bathrooms, and lockers are constantly searched by hired security guards, and where those who decide to leave school are tracked down, returned, and punished for trying to escape.

The idea that students have rights is often ignored and disregarded by school administrators. Yet the Supreme Court in recent years has clearly stated that the rights of an American citizen are not restricted to adults, and students have all Constitutional rights. Students have the right of free speech, press, assembly, and due process under law. As far back as 1943, the Supreme Court made it clear that compulsory school attendance did not mean that students surrendered their rights at the school gates. The fourth amendment defends the "right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects." And the fourteenth amendment declares "the protection of the citizen against the state itself and all its creatures." Although these amendments are the most clearly stated laws in the books, school administrators, teachers, and counselors have either ignored or overriden them, to directly oppress students.

#### Political Activity and Free Speech

Infringement of rights in public high schools for example, is constant off and on campus. It is not an isolated practice of administrators to have students suspended or expelled because they participate in any sort of political activities. These include forming political and social organizations in the school, distributing leaflets, wearing political buttons, or simply not saluting the flag.

Harsh limitations have also been made on the freedoms of speech and press. Students have had leaflets and other materials confiscated from them and warned about further punishments if they continue. Student publications are censored by the administration and faculty; much reediting is often done to articles and editorials. Particular student organizations may not have access to the school newspaper. Finally, "unofficial" student publications do not enjoy equal rights and privileges.

#### Legal Entrapment

Most people are familiar with the arbitrary school dress codes and forms of corporal punishment inflicted on students. But sometimes the schools plan with the police to enforce their authority. In October 1971, "Operation Clean Sweep" came down on students of Dorsey high school as a massive and systematic operation with the Wilshire Division of the L.A. Police Department. The sweep was conducted both on and off campus. The on-campus sweep consisted of locking classroom doors at the tardy bell, posting assigned faculty throughout the entire school grounds, assigning additional security guards, and a screening process. Students late to class without a pass were apprehended and taken to a designated detention room. There they found that phone calls were being made to their homes to inform their parents about the action being taken against their son or daughter—usually a suspension. The off-campus sweep assignment was operated by a special police battalion. Squad cars and paddy wagons patrolled the immediate community around the school. All young people, not necessarily students, who were caught off school grounds were apprehended by the police. The victims were handcuffed or chained, searched and frisked for suspected drugs or weapons and then forcibly escorted to a nearby squad car or paddy wagon. Students were then taken to the on-campus detention room. If the victim was identified as a non-Dorsey student, he or she was sent directly to Wilshire Division for booking. These people were charged with loitering or other crimes. Victims identified as Dorsey students were screened

and in most cases suspended. A similar sweep was also conducted at Los Angeles high school the following week.

Attendance problems are evident in every school. Just because a student is sealed in a classroom does not mean that he or she is receiving a relevant education. Not after police raids, but only when our present curriculum and facilities begin to meet student needs, will students want to attend class. Progressive education and solutions to problems of our society will come not when fear and physical oppression is imposed to force students to attend and learn, but when the administration respects the students. Schools must serve students, not administrators.

#### Illegal Search and Seizure

At many high schools, personal lockers are regularly—and illegally—searched for cigarettes and drugs. Not only are suspected lockers seized but sometimes every locker on the campus is searched. On most campuses where such programs are instituted those who have cigarettes in their possession are suspended or warned. Those who have drugs in their possession are automatically arrested by the police department or suspended. In the case of drug abuse, which is a daily and common student experience, a student sees his fellow students taking and dealing drugs; sees his teachers pretend that nothing was wrong; sees policemen brought on the campus—not to stop the drug pushing or to deal constructively with the drug problem, but to force students to behave and drag away those students who are under the influence of drugs. Nobody seems to want to know why students take drugs. And nobody is telling the Board of Education to provide adequate space and facilities to improve the curriculum, to set performance standards for its staff, to deal with teacher discrimination and prejudice, to order unbiased books, or to provide decent lunches. The student must obey the law and be orderly, but the school officials are able to override the law and continue to collect their salaries.

Using Dorsey high school as an example again, we can recall that on March 26, 1971, thirty-eight youths were indiscriminantly arrested by a team of some fifteen officers of the L.A. Police Department. Of the 38 arrestees, four were arrested for alleged narcotics possession or use, two for loitering, one for having a concealed weapon, and the remaining thirty-one for being in the "presence or having knowledge of the use of narcotics." All 38 arrestees, including seven Asians, were searched and seized in front of Dorsey's auditorium steps. About ten minutes before the official school hours, the doors of the

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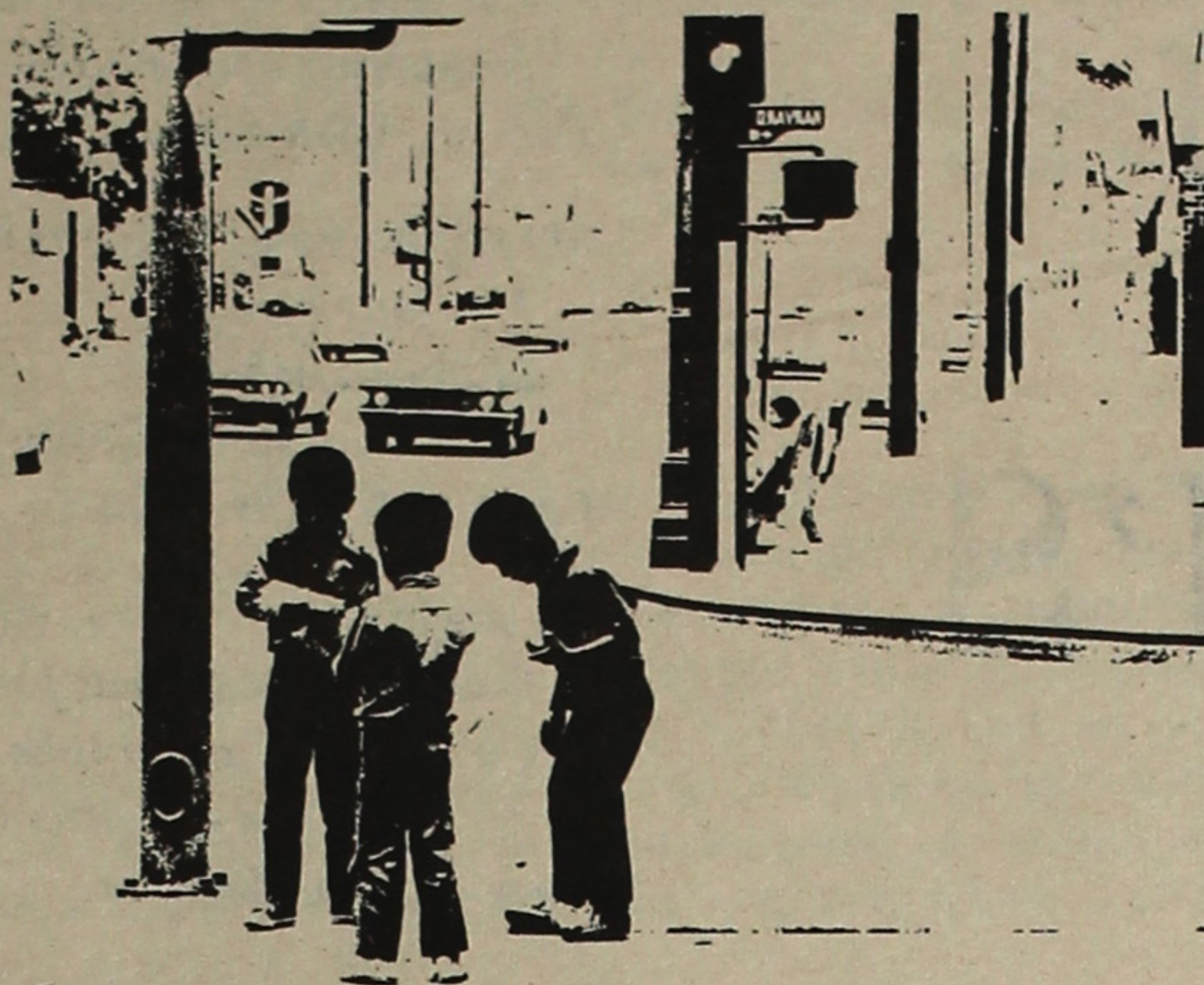


fore how these "new approaches to learning" do not alter the primary objectives of the school system (among those being the four points just listed) but at best make the classroom situation less painful, more 'enjoyable'—or rather, more *deceptive* and less overtly *manipulative*. In speaking about the characteristic of "spontaneity" and "autonomy" of the child's "non-directive" learning within the open classroom, Jonathon Kozol writes:

...Most of these teachers...understand and can predict extremely well the kinds of things their pupils will select when they are "freely choosing" areas of study. They know very well the kinds of things they will "conclude" when they are working on their "independent research." They write down in advance, on Sunday afternoon, in lesson-books, the things their children will "discover" Wednesday morning in "small group discussion." The open-structured classroom may be "child-centered," but it is also "teacher-written," "IBM-predicted," "School Board-overseen." Nobody ever really discovers anything within the confines of a well-run public school in the United States which someone somewhere does not give him license, sanction and permission to discover. It is just a better form of salesmanship than we have ever used before. In olden days, we had to *tell* the children

what to think, handing them, as it were, the bottle and the spoon. Today, we lead them, by a pretense of free inquiry, to ask for it themselves. It is the same old bottle.

Liberal reform, or alternatives within the system, is not the answer either.



What *do* we want schools to be like, then? What way, shape, and form will the schools we want to exist have? How do we begin to build "alternative schools" that truly deserve such an otherwise pretentious-sounding label? What constitutes an "alternative" to a school system that is bound so closely with the dynamics of our society? How can we, as one-time (or active) participants in the public school system, ever lose the "deeply ingrained" attitudes, beliefs,

and values that we have internalized? These are questions we should *always* be asking ourselves; questions we should *constantly* be striving to answer.

But the first step which must be taken before we can even begin to answer any of these (and related) questions is *to realize on a conscious level the realities of our own oppressed condition*—as Asian people in America, as products of the public schools, as members of the Third World, as real people living in a society that is, by nature, exploitative, by design, racist, a society that is inherently competitive and necessarily insensitive.

If we, as parent and child, worker and student, can realize the degree of actual human pain and anguish that our society, our lives and our livelihood are based upon—*then* we can start to find and build our own "alternatives."

The answers to these questions will come only after we have accomplished this first step—a step that constitutes a powerful act of true liberation. *It is not to our disadvantage that we are all products of "the system"—in fact, it is just the opposite. The reality of our condition, the experience of our daily lives, is not an obstacle, not a hinderance, but the inspirational knowledge and motivational ammunition that will guide us to our inevitable freedom—step by step.*

—Jeff Furumura

## STUDENT RIGHTS AND LIMITATIONS, cont'd.

auditorium were suddenly flung open and police officers rushed out onto the steps. A student standing just outside the door was hurtled down the steps by the force used in the surprise opening of the doors. An officer, who interpreted the movement of the student as one of escape, pursued him, and proceeded to choke him with his nightstick and physically subdued him. Other officers, with pistols drawn, stationed outside in the proximity of the steps shouted: "Freeze! ...or you're going to get it!" All arrestees, both male and female, were roughly searched by male police officers. All were then handcuffed, chained, and shoved into paddy wagons which had arrived moments after the raid. The arrestees were then taken to the Wilshire Division of the L.A.P.D. An Asian student was referred to as "slant eyes." Profanity was directed continuously against one of two arrestees. Tragically, of twenty-one arrestees who had their legal right of due process broken, 20 had no prior arrest records or juvenile courts involvements. Many were honor students and recipients of scholastic awards.

### Rigged Elections and Puppet Governments

In high schools, free elections and true student governments with real power and authority is nonexistent. To be a student candidate for office one must be screened and meet arbitrary administration requirements. These requirements are based on grade point averages and are carefully selected for citizenship standards. In many schools a certain number of students signatures on an official petition and/or a faculty sponsor is required before one can apply for candidacy. Student council is carefully supervised and watched by the faculty. Every student council

meeting must have a faculty member present, and in most schools there is a special student council teacher who is there for the sole purpose of supervising. In many schools, student council advisors must be present at council sessions in order for business at such meetings to be officially valid. There is often a lengthy process in voting much red tape which makes a student a valid voter in a student election. In most schools, a student first must register then remember to vote days later. Sometimes the scheduling of balloting occurs at a time when students are busy and must deal with the pressure of studies and other activities. Of course, student campaigns are ridiculous; students often win an election be-

cause of their popularity, good-looks, humor, and not by their stand on problems and issues of the school.

### War Machine on Campus

Since the Vietnam War, there has been an increase in the direct linkage and complicity between high schools and the war machine. Federal agents, draft boards, ROTC, and other related personnel have been established in every campus. There have been specific assemblies and classroom speaking engagements specifically aimed at influencing and recruiting students to join the armed forces. ROTC and other military programs have their offices on school grounds and have been established permanently on campus. Every year high school administrators collaborate with the draft board in programing students into the military. Records and quotas are kept of students who reach the age of 18 by draft boards, which are received from school administration files. Many times we hear about 10th and 11th graders signing themselves early into some military program, like ROTC, because they think it's "for the country," or "for democracy," or "they have been guaranteed officership when drafted." But these are all falsehoods and propaganda carefully structured to get students to join the armed forces. ROTC cannot guarantee officership, ROTC is only a stepping stone to the dehumanizing and manipulating realities of service life.

### Alternatives

One alternative to this non-education is the Storefront (Third World Community Center, located at 2828 W. Jefferson Blvd.) which has a youth workshop. The workshop defined the American educational system as one which is a "ineffective, harmful institution, for it has lost sight of its intended objective—to promote the total intellectual, physical, emotional, social, and creative development of the learner. American schools deny full educational opportunities to all people. They serve the interests of the ruling class in America by teaching those values, attitudes, and concepts which reinforce existing class, race, and sex divisions and inequalities in society. Students learn to be competitive rather than active producers; they strive for materialistic rather than humanistic goals." The Storefront's programs, of which the youth workshop is one, strive to put the future of our society and world over the priorities of war, hatred, and destruction. They value the lives of young people and view them as potential leaders of the future that will change the ill-conditions within our community. The Storefront youth workshop is

one means by which we can concretely demonstrate our beliefs through practical and educational projects. Although it is just beginning and far from a liberation school, I encourage you to go and check out the Storefront community center and see what progressive steps in creating alternatives can be made.

### Conclusion

Young people, especially those within America's educational institutions have and are finding that they have not learned to formularize their own ideas or opinions, but instead have been indoctrinated into accepting the opinions and ideas of an authoritarian administration. Students are not taught or educated in a positive environment that would encourage the seeking of alternatives or the implementing of new methods to base one's creativity, life, or self-determination. Students are not permitted to confront either their teachers or themselves. They are given little opportunity to develop ideas of their own about what they should learn, and they are actively discouraged to test their own opinions against those of their teachers. In essence, they are expected to learn what the administration wants them to learn in a method that the faculty wants them to learn it. There is virtually no freedom to explore, to test one's ideas as a means of finding out one's identity and one's beliefs. Presently, the schools function in a way which has no relation to students, no relevance for the kinds of lives they will lead, and it produces alienation, rejection, and insensitivity.

When young people actually begin to move against such repression which is counter to their just demands, they get punished. Police and security guards are stationed in the school. Students are forced to carry identification cards with them. Students are subject to suspension and arrest. Students are asking for more in life than just filling a seat, a numbered space, or a place on a construction line; they are tired of being manipulated, indoctrinated, and ignored. They want changes, they want to help out in the construction and structuring of their own educational system and process. They desire to begin defining the ground work for an alternative educational system. An alternative which would definitely secure the student rights that entitle them to the freedoms of political activity, speech and the press, due process, free elections, and no war machine.

—Mitchell Matsumura



# ASIAN WOMEN'S



# CENTER

At the beginning of this year Asian Sisters, a self-help group of young Japanese sisters from the Westside, submitted a proposal to the Department of Health, Education and Welfare for a sisters' drug abuse program. The proposal was accepted and funding began in July. At that time, a strategy committee was formed to reach out to women in different ethnic and geographical communities. Although the funding was designated for the Asian Sisters group, the sisters felt that the funding should be used to implement programs in other Asian communities, too.

An Advisory committee composed of a broad perspective of women working in community-based programs, and representatives of different age levels and ethnic groups in the Asian community was formed in August. The initial function of the Advisory Committee was to perform the necessary tasks in making the Asian Women's Center (AWC) operational (staff selection, providing broad direction and policy for the AWC, and giving input to program development).

The Advisory Committee presently consists of Yvonne Wong Nishio, Chairwoman; May Chen, Marie Chung, Karen Chomori, Carol Hatanaka, and Ester Soriano. Four additional members will be added to the committee in January.

Our primary concern at the AWC is to develop a viable alternative for Asian women through our program areas, and to provide women with the tools to organize for change. Because we represent a variety of backgrounds and ethnic groups we believe it important to establish common goals or principles that we unite upon and work to achieve. Also as a staff, we have recognized the limitations of federal funding and see the need for principles that would not be compromised even when faced with the withdrawal of funds. These are the principles that we have agreed to apply to our

program areas, and in our work with the Asian Women's Center.

## 1. We believe in the concept "Serve the People."

This means concern for the well-being of the people and doing what is necessary, not only to meet the basic survival needs of people (food, medical, clothing, shelter, education, employment); but also, basic human needs of self-determination, self-reliance and self-worth.

This means we value human worth over material gains.

## 2. We believe in the development of self-determination, self-reliance and self-defense in (Asian) women.

This means building the responsibility, commitment and leadership necessary to develop an alternative for women and all people.

We recognize that half of the community are women; that one of the determining factors in the struggle for a better society is the extent to which women can organize to be an active part in that process—not only for their own liberation, but for the liberation of all oppressed people.

## 3. We believe in solidarity with third world (minority) people in this country, and throughout the world—both in our outlook and activities.

Women of the third world communities in this country, and in Africa, Asia and Latin America experience racism and other forms of oppression similar to our own. These often stem from the same cause.

Our efforts as Asian American women have been inspired by their struggles; and our understanding of our own oppression and the possibility for social change have become clearer. In turn, our struggles as Asian American women will support their movement for self-determina-

*I am an Asian Woman*

*My oppression crosses all class and racial lines  
I've alienated myself from many of my sisters  
competing over anything to make myself feel whole  
I am an Asian Woman.*

*My stifling role stagnates in all cultures  
My body aches  
My heart aches  
from submissively serving my role of perpetual misery  
I am an Asian Woman.*

*My anger travels down religious roads  
I was told that I was formed from Adam's rib  
I was told I had to take more steps than a man  
to reach enlightenment (if it were possible for a woman).  
I am an Asian Woman.*

*Today a sister smiled at me  
Rapped with me  
Responded to me  
Radiated a sense of sisterhood.*

*Today a sister gave me her hand  
Gave me support  
Gave me the strength to analyze my past  
to understand the present  
Gave me reason to fight.*

*And I felt this sister's knowledge  
of what being a woman means*

*"I am an Asian woman,  
you are my sister."*

*I know now what it means to be an Asian Woman  
Proud, loving, strong  
And my strength will transcend all  
race, class, cultural and religious lines.*

*Remember, brother, my strength is your strength  
Together our strength is the people's strength.*

*I am an Asian Woman.*

tion, self-reliance and self-worth.

The AWC emphasizes and promotes the Unity of Asian Americans.

## 4. We believe in a democratic centralist organizational structure.

This means we recognize the need for a centralist structure (i.e., coordinators, central committee, steering committee) within a democratic setting (everyone has a voice). The centralist group would facilitate decision-making, clarify issues, provide leadership, and so forth.

In order to build a better understanding among women in the AWC, we just build a structure that is more effective in our means of communication and sensitivity towards each other.

We also recognize the need to work *collectively* in carrying out our work, keeping in mind the principles of unity.

With the Principles of Unity as our guidelines, the Asian Women's Center will be moving in the direction of four basic short-range objectives to be integrated into all of our programs. These objectives are:

1. To serve the immediate needs of Asian women in the Los Angeles area.
2. To develop the Asian Women's Center as a more viable alternative to meeting the needs of Asian women and providing the vehicle for the development of self-determination through these alternatives.
3. To develop community understanding, involvement and support for the problems of Asian women.
4. To develop the tools to analyze and deal with our problems.
5. Through practice, investigation and analysis, explore areas of need for future programs.



In the first year of development, the Asian Women's Center will be focusing on five program areas;

## EDUCATION PROGRAM

We at the Center feel the need to emphasize the importance of education—in each of the program areas, as well as overall. But by education we do not mean just gathering a bunch of facts and feeding them to people. Education must always be a two-way process—that of learning as well as teaching. We see the necessity of sharing what we learn about women with people in the community, but we must constantly educate and re-educate each other. By this, we mean it's not enough to provide services to women, but we must also understand and discuss the weaknesses of existing institutions that make these services necessary—it's not enough to have health examinations, without talking about why they cost so much, and who profits from them.

An area of concentration for the Education Programs is the development of a resource center. The purposes of the resource center are: 1) to centralize information on various topics concerning all women, particularly Asian women, for the AWC and the entire community; 2) to centralize audio-visual materials around women's issues and in the future to develop new materials; 3) to initiate research projects in the area of Asian women.

This resource center will also be a study center for the staff and community. It will gather materials that not only deal with contemporary problems facing Asian and other Third World women, but will be integrated with materials from other countries. The problem of women's oppression is not solely a North American characteristic, it is international.

Only recently has the need for research in the area of Third World history and overall conditions of Third World people been recognized. The area of Asian working women is now emerging as an important area for research. This will be the main focus for the Education committee. Our first task will be to define the primary labor areas as well as to locate women who have participated in labor struggles throughout history. With this knowledge and resource, we can begin addressing ourselves to the labor problems and needs of Asian working women.

Staff includes Gail Saito and Sandy Mayeshiro.

## DRUG ABUSE

Growing up in a society whose only promise is destruction and alienation, drugs become an easy escape from problems that one person, alone, cannot confront and change. California schools lead in drug use (seventy-five percent of the students are into drugs), many of them young Asian brothers and sisters who continue to overdose on barbituates or "reds." The flow of drugs continues into our communities (forty percent into illegal market) due to the uncontrolled and unrestricted over-production by large companies, such as Lilly Company.

In a male-oriented society, it is even easier for a sister to feel weaker and dominated—a feeling reinforced by an Asian culture which places both men and women in strict and mutually oppressive roles or stereotypes. Overdoses by young women outnumber males by three to one.

We, as Asian women and sisters and as a part of the Asian community feel the need to organize and develop a positive self-image as women by studying our history collectively and sharing experiences in weekly rap/education sessions: to develop a sense of sisterhood by mutually supporting and working together cooperatively in creative youth activities in which we can learn skills of leadership and new ways of relating to each other which would be beneficial to ourselves and to our communities. In order to break down our own alienation, we must work towards serving the needs of the people and building a sense of a real community through coordination and participation with other groups involved in the area of drugs and youth, such as the Drug Offensive and Asian Sisters, etc. We feel the urgency for action and change in various institutions as schools for more participatory

and relevant education (Asian American studies, etc.); in families for more open and democratic relationships; and in our communities as a whole for more understanding of all problems, not only the drug problem; and unified response against the sources of these problems, such as Lilly Company, the Welfare Department and our own attitudes towards each other.

Staff: Kyoko Shibasaki, Chris Murakami, Marlene Weathers, Ivy Arashiro, Kathy Nishimoto Nishida.

## COUNSELING

As Asian women, we feel there is a problem of alienation from ourselves and others. Some of us must work in meaningless jobs to survive. Sisters are in schools where education is irrelevant. When we turn to health and service agencies for help, we are often faced with institutions that have no understanding, awareness, acceptance of who we are, and where we are coming from.

Within the Counseling program there are six target areas: Individual counseling, group work, volunteer program, outreach, training, and summarization.

Individual counseling will deal with crisis intervention trying to meet immediate needs, helping people discover their own strengths and resources. We hope to help organize groups around social activities, rap sessions on cultural and political awareness, and our identities as persons, women, and Asians in a larger community. An important part of the counseling program is an examination and evaluation of resources within our communities to meet immediate needs such as: food, legal services, transportation, housing, and even getting a refrigerator; and to meet such long-term needs as: training and employment. From the people we work with in the above areas we hope to involve some in a volunteer program. Counseling cannot exist without an understanding of the needs and strengths of community people. Built into the counseling program is an on-going in-service training program and evaluation of our work, so that the program is responding in meaningful ways to the problems of the communities and seeking alternatives to these problems.

Selected for staff are Judy Nishimoto, Pamela Joe, Lillian Tamoria, and Rev. Kogi Sayama.

## CHILD DEVELOPMENT

There is an immediate need to provide child care services for working mothers. An especially pressing need exists in L.A. Chinatown, where most of the women sew for a living. For these women with pre-school children, there are limited choices: 1. sew at home, 2. leave the children with friends or relatives, 3. take the children to the sewing factories, or 4. enroll their children in day care programs. The last alternative is the most favorable, but the now-existing facilities cannot accommodate the great numbers of pre-school children needing day care and demand high fees. The solution: a new kind of day care center.

The Asian Women's Center, together with people working in Chinatown, will try to set up a pilot program in Chinatown. We want community people to staff the proposed child care center. We hope to investigate training programs and to find stipends so that community women can participate in the training programs. At the same time we will be developing curriculum relevant to the Chinatown community, to be taught at the center in both Cantonese and English. Hopefully, by the end of this period of training and curriculum development, a day care center can be opened that is run by, and for the people in the community. Everything that is learned in Chinatown will, then, be shared with other communities.

In addition to the Chinatown pilot project, a child development program of the Asian Women's Center will conduct child development workshops for women with children. These workshops will involve methods, techniques, arts, and crafts that mothers can use with their own children. We will also coordinate a babysitting service for women while they use services at the

Asian Women's Center.

Staff includes Janet Lim.

## HEALTH

Most people today have very little understanding of the well-being of their own bodies. The mysterious and powerful wall that has been built around medicine by the health care system makes us almost completely dependent on doctors for information and solutions to our health problems. Medical care is expensive. We either get cheated, or we don't receive adequate care. Women are especially vulnerable because, in addition to basic health care, we need specialized services in relation to our reproductive systems.

We in the Women and Health program see medical care as a right and not a privilege. Through our program, we hope to educate ourselves, and in turn, other women about our health. The program will include counseling and referral for pregnancies, birth control, and abortions. Many of the already-existing agencies lack genuine concern and sensitivity, so we hope to evaluate them and direct other women to agencies that will be responsive to their needs.

In terms of education, we are working on workshops and other activities for the coming year. One of the workshops is on health education, and will be open to other interested women in the community. Included in it will be basic anatomy, birth control, abortion, pregnancy, venereal disease, infections, hygiene, and will take a critical look at the traditional health care system that exists in this country. We are enthusiastic about these workshops, but the success will depend on participation by other women in the community.

Staff includes Day Suehiro.

## COORDINATING COMMITTEE

We at the Center view the Coordinating Committee working collectively and not separated from the programs or the people. The Coordinators are not administrators in the traditional hierarchical sense—they are a coordinating body according to Democratic Centralist principles. The ability of the Coordinators to maintain a clear overview of the Center and the programs is dependent upon working collectively and closely with the people in the spirit of cooperation, sisterhood, and struggle—sharing and developing ideas and information.

The strength of the Center lies in the sisters representing varied ethnic communities, backgrounds, and work areas coming together in an effort to build an alternative which will address itself to Asian women, giving us more strength and commitment to work with our brothers—with and for the people.

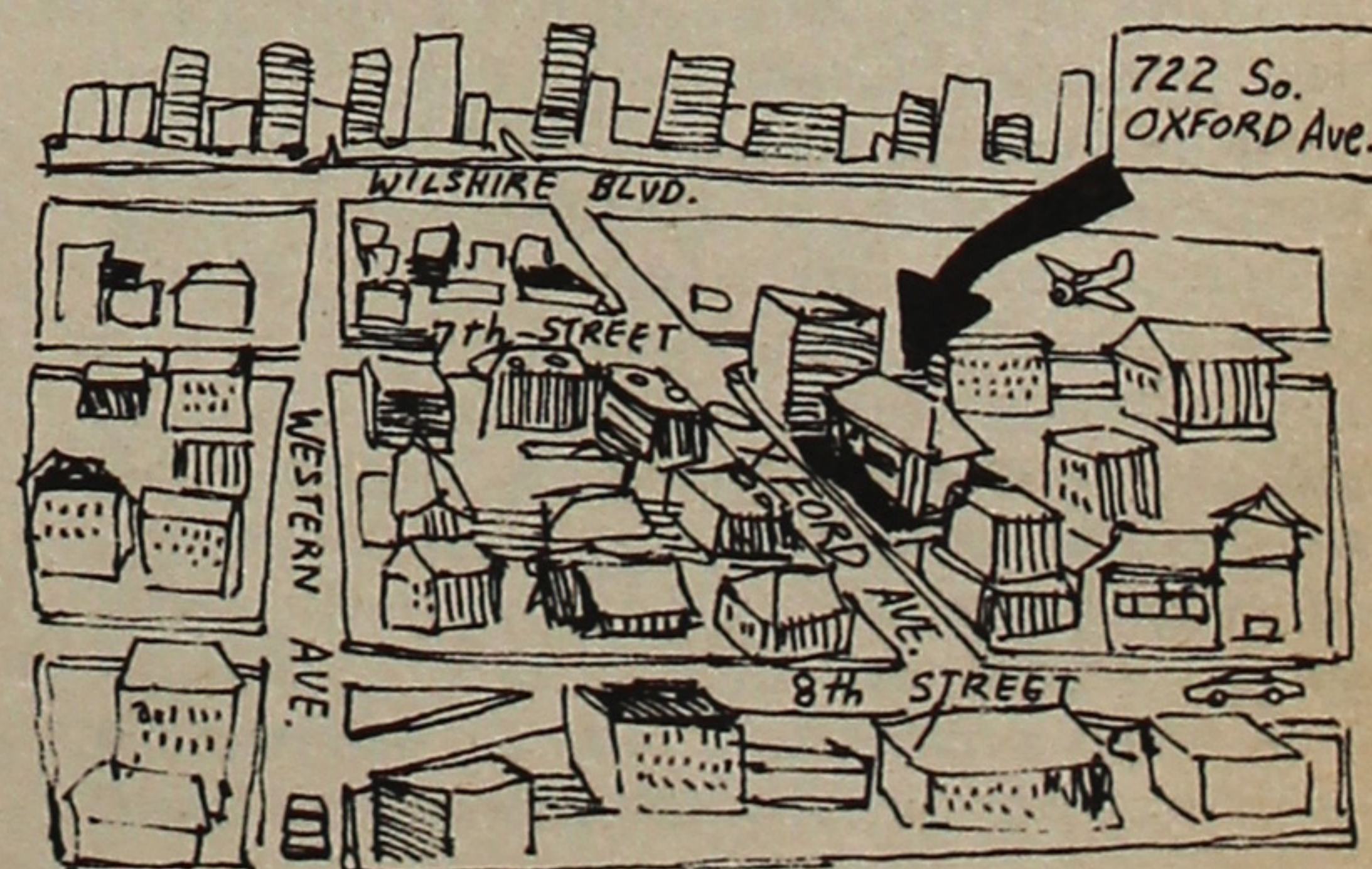
Some of the responsibilities of the Coordinators are: maintaining an overview of the AWC programs; coordinating political education; coordinating community open forums; public relations; finances; evaluation and analysis; internal and external communications; general volunteers, and so on.

Staff includes Linda Iwataki, Irene Hirano, Sandy Wong and Wendy Sakai.

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The Asian Women's Center is located at 722 South Oxford Ave., Los Angeles 90005. For further information, or just to rap, come on down (we open at 9:30 a.m.) or call us at 387-1347, 387-3141.

We will be having an Open House on Saturday, January 13, 1973 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Please join with us for presentations, rap groups, visual displays, refreshments, and sisterhood. The community is invited.





# You May be a Lover but You Ain't No Dancer

## helter skelter

I have trouble writing on the war. Finding and spreading facts is an important obligation, but when it has so little immediate effect, it seems very inadequate. However, right now our only power over policy is to doubt and denounce; if we want more people to do that, we've got to pass the word. Since I've lately done some articles and pamphlets on the war, I've been thinking about the significance of Vietnam for the Asian American movement.

From my limited, absent minded perspective, (L.A., Japanese American, male, "student") it's hard to say how the Asian movement has progressed except to be simply older, larger and different. It probably has less per capita macho trips than three or four years ago, less gut level chaos than two years ago, less tripping on and stumbling over new personal-political relationships than last year. Things seem to be condensing, settling (collectives, study groups) even as they are beginning (Women's Center) or restructuring (everybody). And though most individuals are less spread out—without, as one friend said, the urge to attend every movement meeting around—groups, projects and organizations sure get isolated. Even among friends, it's hard to keep abreast if you're in different work areas. (*Gidra* hasn't always been much help on this I'm afraid; we all share in that blame). With this happening it is no wonder that coalitions so far have been precarious structures: either dissolving as they spread, coalescing no new minds, or never seeing day.

Our hand-waving sort of communications is, I trust, temporary for now. Somehow I figure some structural networks will evolve to remedy that. What concerns me much more is the communication over time. I mean this: Many people who come into the movement now don't think of themselves as stepping into any historical train of events—any movement—at all. Programs, platforms and people are givens. Proof that this occurs is demonstrated by people still having to go through any one of a variety of movement syndromes (macho, over-extension, elitism, etc.). And on every hand there's still the rhetoric. Maybe all these rites of passage are necessary; I don't know. But with our expanding sense of numbers, consciousness, and possibilities, comes an enlarged responsibility too. That is, the responsibility for preserving the movement's past, its sequence of ideas, its different experiences, its changing spirit. Many of us know as little about where we've come from in five years as we do about the Nisei Progressives in the '40's or the Issei socialist labor organizers of the '30's. We don't need scrapbooks. But we somehow need to institutionalize the lessons we learn. Allow for an expanding of consciousness which comes every political generation every eight months or so. I don't know what the mechanisms will look like. I don't even know whether it's bound within our will or our karma. That such humble prerequisites seem like such lofty goals shows how far away is our political horizon. But without a sense of past how can we have a set of plans? And without plans how will we determine if that horizon heralds the New Day or more neon?

If I cannot offer solutions I should at least offer an observation. The very simple point I wish to make is that the way we view Vietnam and organize around it will determine the way we see and organize ourselves. And the critical aspect of this is the ability to realistically understand and communicate our historical situation.

The U.S. involvement in Vietnamese affairs began around the time we were born; stayed hidden from the national consciousness during our years of innocence; escalated as we matured; and has reached climactic proportions while our generation gains the will and seeks the means to end that involvement. Much as we forget, ignore, or grow numb to it, the war has been a constant shadow in our lives.

What have we Asian American lefties made of this fact? When we probed the roots of the war we discovered more than the Pentagon Papers sequence of governmental deceit. We also discovered the Empire, its rulers, their methods—all at once. This was new light on America: it explained why the liberal solutions to community problems couldn't expect to work any more than a bomb could rebuild a village. More important, it showed the immensity of what had to be done. As things grew clearer they became more complex.

This hard look at the U.S. no doubt developed our *national* consciousness of being Asians, Third World People, in America. An emergent Asian identity allowed several things: a fuller understanding of our people's history and needs; which began to explain the psychological effects of being a colony-community; which led to task organizations conscious of problem and cause and out to change them both. (All happening in various stages with far more uncertain trial and error than this glib schedule suggests). Till now: a movement spread out and spread thin.

These mass-line, "serve-the-people" programs have reached lots of people while legitimizing (at least) our sincerity. In L.A., the Storefront's programs, the Pioneer Projects, Chinatown community assemblies, Manzanar Pilgrimages, Amerasia Bookstore, community information days: all turn people's trust. JACS has simply out hustled the Japanese Chamber of Commerce with pure nerve. CYC is an organization with hard-earned respect, not a bunch of college kids loose in Chinatown. Which is all well—what the movement needs is a firm and swelling base, not a lean and hungry vanguard.

Most puzzling therefore is that when these same folks organize around the issue of imperialism and Vietnam, the people we reach are only these same folks. Demonstrations and marches serve exclusive clientele; teach-ins either encounter few ears or only ones which have heard the news before. Even the AMMO Vietnam medical supply drive, whose central strategic aim was mass involvement, has, up to now, fallen far short of tapping the substantial portion in our communities who could have supported the drive materially and been educated by it too.

Of course it's not only the Asian movement with problems on this. Mass media peace teasers have flickered at the tunnel's end for years to deceive the American public. But there is a re-

sponsibility we cannot evade; where is it focused? In faith I don't think it is a failure of will or nerve or skill. Instead, a matter of our sight, our perceptions.

Positive things first. The war heightened our national consciousness which in turn confirmed our intuitions that Vietnam was and is a racist war. The fusion of racism and imperialism was clear on every level: from the political economy of trade to the genocidal effects of the American exported Saigon culture. This perception of racism is still not prevalent enough among much of the white antiwar movement. We must push it.

Nationally, Asians in America are victims of racism. Internationally, Asians in Asia are victimized by U.S. imperialism. Communities of Third World people in America mirror the global picture. But *internationally*, objectively, what is the situation for Asians in America? Despite expressions of solidarity and friendship, despite knowledge that the U.S. government and people are different, despite our own earnest intentions and our agonized unwillingness to do so, we too share in shedding Vietnam's blood. Our hands are also stained. This is not something we can immediately transcend, and most importantly not something which should paralyze us with guilt. It is only (only!) something we should understand and change. The dynamics of our national condition as victim, and our international position as executioner.

After such abstractions, what suggestions? Of course I think we need a change of perceptions on Vietnam. This will subtly shift our attitudes—at least—in organizing, which (and this I cannot prove, only deeply feel) will strengthen our own movement against the diminution of historical consciousness I mentioned before.

First, we must end our romanticization of the Vietnamese people's struggle. It is not an easy thing to do: such multi-generational courage and dedication as theirs is beyond our Western grasp. The people in North Vietnam have come through one of their hardest periods stronger than ever, while the pending peace agreement has essentially crystalized along Hanoi-NLF lines. Even General Weyland admits that the Provisional Revolutionary Government controls half of South Vietnam. Food production, education and health care have progressed markedly in the liberated areas despite the constant bombing, an indication of the PRG's broad based support. Last year the PRG Ministry of Health, Social Affairs and War Wounded even held a scientific conference. Twenty-one papers were presented from different hospitals, pharmaceutical labs and medical schools in the-liberated zones.

Vietnam's victory should inspire us—but we shouldn't get a high off of it. Doing so really diminishes their achievement. Why? Because then we romantically project their military victory into a vanguard role in our American political revolution. Thus they become the agency, the *means* for change. No. Instead they embody the necessity, they are the *cause* for our need to make change. When we romanticize Vietnam we impose an unreality in order to bask in some



borrowed glory. This does not do the people of Vietnam justice. If there is anything we should learn from their self-reliant drive for self-determination is that our revolution must be fought and won, first, in our own behalf.

(An aside. It is truly positive for Asian Americans to feel the strength of Asian people defeating U.S. imperialism. Vietnam is important because we want to be like them. But again, though our adversaries are the same, the form of our struggles will be entirely different. As different as an advanced capitalist, post-industrial society is from a nation of compradors and peasants. The Asian American Left will have to help destroy the hegemony of the capitalist West, not just groove on the socialist East.)

At the same time we tend to over-romanticize the Vietnamese, we underestimate the importance of the war. There is a view which sees Vietnam as simply another symptom, another issue for radicals to organize their communities

around. True, the ultimate duel is with capitalism. What incinerates Vietnam also makes Asian brothers want 240Zs, Asian sisters scotch tape their eyes, make both take downers, and makes everyone choke on the smog. But Vietnam is not just some kind of organizing tool. We must not be so cynical as to think our people will be able to see Vietnam solely from a national outlook—as something that only drafts sons or raises taxes. It is cynical to think our people cannot face their roles, although passive ones, as executioners internationally in this war. And of course, we cannot think they want to be.

Vietnam has defeated the West's greatest imperial powers. They have inspired Third World people around the world and in the United States itself. They have destroyed the myths of yankee superiority and the generation of official lies meant to control our minds. This is important; it gets us back to that "communication over time" I mentioned before. In America,

which talks of so many civics book freedoms, the way they control minds is by controlling memory. They maintain rule not only by slaughter, but by erasing from human memory, from our historical consciousness, any image of resistance and struggle so as to make the people who are ruled feel free and satisfied. (Hayden, *Rolling Stone*). Among the countless other tasks of our movement is to keep alive this history of resistance to domination, to pass the word, to make known the true facts.

The significance of Vietnam to us is the new possibility of doing that. The Vietnamese have stripped the Emperor's clothes; we must spread the news. They have opened our eyes to our genocidal past, our bloody present, and the future potential of our own liberation. By forcing us to see what we really are, Vietnam's revolution lets us seize the possibility of our own.

—Bruce Iwasaki

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# Though You Dance like a Lover, That Ain't All the Answer

## revolutionary music

Most of you reading this probably grew up on the music you heard over KRLA, KHJ, or KGFI just as I did. And if you are as "old" as I am you will remember when "K-F-double U-Bee (pause) channel ninety-eight" was competing with those other stations. Also when you were in junior high school did you ever stand in amazement in the cafeteria as someone strolled by with an entire collection of hit singles in their hand, and wonder why? Well, those were the days.

Or were they? To a certain extent they still are, but because there exists a real alternative—a growing body of revolutionary music and musicians—which more people are becoming aware of, it will eventually cease being considered just an "alternative." That change has already occurred for people who can relate to it. Moreover, this new music encompasses a great variety of styles. It is rock, folk, jazz, soul and also that which is too new to have been labeled. Perhaps it may even come from another continent. But yet, differing as it may in its mode of expression, there exists a common theme: the urgent need for a humane world.

Even so, all of us who today are struggling to create a new, revolutionary culture, can still remember "those days" when culture meant little more than that latest hit heard every five minutes on the radio. That was our musical culture because we knew nothing better to replace it with. Today however, we can see the gradual emergence of groups like Hiroshima, Chris, Jo and Charlie and others which, all together, are creating a revolutionary political music *for* and *from* our common struggle. These brothers and sisters who have dedicated their music to the people (to you) deserve and need your support. A cultural revolution cannot happen without it.

Meanwhile you might be interested in check-

ing out some other revolutionary music you may never have heard before. There is for instance, some really incredible black music around on records. The entire first side of Pharoah Sanders' latest album, called *Live at the East*, is an improvised jam session entitled "Healing Song." There is such communication between the audience and the group (who in turn communicate with each other) that one may be tempted to believe this song to be the definition of joy. It is not hard to open yourself up to this music because there is nothing the least bit abstract or intellectual about it—if Pharoah can communicate with you, you may find such joy in sharing his vision of a liberated world that you may laugh out loud, cry, or do both at the same time. This is the music of Pharoah Sanders' people, but it presents a vision we can all rejoice in—peace, love, beauty and freedom. It is precisely because this music can enrich your humanity (in spite of a lack of lyrics) that it is revolutionary.

Archie Shepp, like Pharoah, is a black revolutionary artist. He makes it very clear that he is in tune to the consciousness of his people. He gets this message across, however, in a manner that is slightly different. Pharoah's music requires a greater imaginative effort to understand because it is somewhat less structured and without lyrics. On the other hand, Archie does incorporate lyrics in his tunes (though they are not always political). His tunes have more of a formal structure to them (they are compositions), whereas Pharoah's tunes are improvised, "written" on the spot. Needless to say, the two musics overlap in conception and so, perhaps it is sufficient to regard one as more explicit than the other. They are both equally imaginative.

Archie's latest album is called *Attica Blues*. Its title tune is a jazz/soul/gospel indictment of

America and succeeds in communicating the joy involved in struggling to bring it down. A different feeling, however, is conveyed by "Blues for Brother George Jackson," a striking mixture of deeply serious reflection and funk. We as Asians can understand the profound sense of loss that this song expresses because, despite our varied tastes, we too are a Third World people. And for those of you that want to feel happy, there is a song that is sung by the pre-teenage daughter of one of the session's musicians and is vaguely reminiscent of the feeling Claudine Longet always seemed to have in her songs—kind of French sounding. Perhaps because she is so young, however, she makes it sound like a lot of fun. We can all relate to that.

Of course there is other music that will require more of a conscious effort to appreciate, but it is necessary for us to make the attempt, not only because the struggle that the music is about is a common one, but also because of the prospect of finding some truly fine music, a small fraction of which I have tried to introduce. The two albums I have discussed demonstrates I think, the great potential of this music to enrich our humanity and bring beauty into our lives as well. I hope you will discover for yourself some of the beautiful revolutionary music that is around—both live and on records as well. And when you find some, be sure to tell your friends about it.

Clearly then, today it is no longer necessary to judge music only on the basis of how danceable it is, how loud it is, how technically brilliant it is, or how popular it is. While these criteria may or may not be important, isn't it also important to ask the question, "What has the artist said to us?"

—Peter Hata



The exposed rafters hold an assortment of powerful quartz spotlights as Beulah Quo, stepping into the brightness, introduces herself and says, "The East-West Players would like to welcome you to our new home."

Located on Santa Monica Boulevard in Los Angeles, the structure of which she speaks is a converted theater that was formerly an architectural studio; and the East-West Players, the group welcoming everyone filling the ninety-two seats, is the nation's only Asian American performing theater group, and has been together seven years.

Beulah Quo, mother of two college students, is the president of the East-West Players and an actress who has appeared in a number of films including *Sand Pebbles* and *Flower Drum Song*. She briefly explains that this is the first public opening of their new theater, having to move from their original location, a church basement, due to problems with city permit regulations and building codes. The East-West Players, she says, is a labor of love since no one is paid; and they feel that they can provide input, not only into the Asian American community, but into the entire American Theater.

Those listening to her speak had sufficient reasons to be there on this Saturday evening in December. They had come to this, the second in a three night benefit, to help supply proceeds for more facilities and to sustain operating expenses for the new theater. They had heard that the East-West Players was finally making headway to that point where talent matched visible accomplishment. They had heard that the East-West Players were learning to work with each other and learning to work as a group. They had heard that this would be a night of pleasant entertainment, and they knew that they would be seeing the work of polished professionals—many having seen experience on national television, the legitimate stage and feature length motion pictures. Those that came tonight had heard and read much of the East-West Players.

The publicity had been thorough. Two newsletters had been published, thirty radio and television stations had been contacted, over 150 newspapers and community organizations had been notified, and over 3,500 announcements had been mailed. Irvin Paik, the man in charge of publicity, understood that even with such a widespread promotion campaign, the sale of tickets had always depended upon the personal initiative of all people involved with the East-West Players. Each member was urged to call a friend or two. Even if a person was contacted who didn't purchase a ticket, Paik reasoned, at least that would be one more person who had heard about the East-West Players.

And now the people who did purchase tickets applaud politely as Beulah Quo extends her hand to the side and says, "Now for your entertainment, we present the East-West Players and our presentation of *SPOOS*."

*SPOOS* is a one act play written by thirty-six year old Bill Shinkai and directed by Mako, the Academy Award nominated actor. The brief satirical comedy, which is Shinkai's first produced effort, takes place in the home of an upwardly mobile Japanese American couple. The home is replete with plastic plants, a plastic jade Buddha, and a door bell simulating wind chimes reminiscent of a night out of a romantic Japanese movie. The home is visited by Dr. S.I. Kayahawa and Tak Yamashiro, Asian stereotype extraordinaire. The play describes people running from and eventually getting caught by an organization known as the Society for the Pres-

## East-West Players:

## Cleaning Up And Myth-ing Down

ervation of Oriental Stereotypes. Those performing include Clyde Kusatsu, Shizuko Hoshi, Penny Lee, Don Sato, Beverly Kushida, Mako, Alberto Issac, Pat Morita, Jesse Dizon, and Sherie Emond.

The East-West Players have gained enough attention in recent years to have been awarded sizeable and prestigious grants from both the Ford Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts. And they have learned well how to read an audience.

It is apparent to those people—the actors, technicians, and other members of the East-West Players—who have been to the previous showings of *SPOOS*, that the audience tonight is different. It is unlike the Thursday performance, on December 7, which was a free engagement staged for students, senior citizens, and members of Asian service organizations. That audience far more openly showed appreciation and enthusiasm. They laughed and they laughed hard. They reacted honestly without the encumbrances that come with a financial investment and it was apparent.

Tonight the laughter is more subdued. When a comical line from an actor is rushed and there is little opportunity in the timing for an adequate reaction, the response given is one of silence. Still, tonight, when the laughter comes it arrives in torrents. As does the applause at the end of the play.

With the performance over, everyone who has come tonight is encouraged to enjoy the buffet dinner and to become acquainted with the East-West Players. The house lights are on. Long folding tables are assembled which are quickly covered with plates and serving trays filled with sushi, egg rolls, fish sticks, egg foo young, wonton, and chicken teriyaki. Many of those who have been in the wooden theater seats for the past sixty minutes slowly, but unobtrusively, get up, and make their way to the rest rooms. The actors and actresses in the backstage dressing rooms change from stage costumes into their civilian clothes—plaid flannel shirts, scarves by Vera, blue jeans, Gucci loafers, safari hats, Peck & Peck dresses, construction worker boots—and quietly begin to mingle.

While people continue to talk, eat and drink, music by Frank Sinatra softly comes through an elaborate speaker system that seems to subtly envelop the large building. Several people are finished with their plates of food and are begin-

ning to leave the theater and are making their way to the exit leading to the lobby. At the exit Robert Ito is thanking people for coming tonight and encouraging them to come again. Although Ito was active with the East-West Players in their embryonic stage, he has been away working in various productions and acting companies throughout the country. But he has always been an enthusiastic supporter and tonight he has come to assist the group by mingling with the crowd and volunteering to help clean up.

A young woman wearing high rise baggy jeans and a blue sweater walks through the entrance back into the theater precariously carrying a cup of hot tea. She smiles at Ito. He smiles back and says, "Hi."

The young woman takes the initiative, "You know, you look *really* familiar to me. Are you part of the East-West Players?"

The ensuing conversation reveals that Ito is a native of Canada and has been acting, singing, and dancing since the age of three. The past three years have been spent with a repertory company in an experimental project performing before high school students throughout Los Angeles, and he has previously appeared in motion pictures, television and in stage plays such as *Candide* and the Las Vegas production of *Flower Drum Song*.

"That's where I've seen you," says the girl as she jerks her head back and widens her eyes. Ito laughs in learning that the girl had seen him dancing in that show at the Thunderbird hotel when she was nine years old.

Most recently, Ito goes on to explain, he has been given short roles in television and as he's talking he laughs again, "I've been playing coroners a lot lately."

A few rows across from them a red-haired middle-aged woman starts to put on her fur-trimmed wool coat and knocks over a plastic cup which had been almost full with ice and Seven-Up. The woman gets up and adjusts her coat without saying a word. She smiles towards those watching her, acts as if nothing has happened, and starts to leave.

Strain appears on Ito's face, but immediately, in a firm but polite voice, he tells the woman that it's all right and for her not to worry about it. The woman still smiling broadly walks out through the doorway. Ito looks at the spilled drink a few moments, then excuses himself, walks backstage, and soon reappears with a white cloth. He retrieves the melting ice cubes from under the theater seats, drops them into the empty plastic cup, and wipes the area dry.

Most of the people have left now. The long folding table is being taken down and carried away. Large push brooms are swept along the carpet used for the set design. Beulah Quo says good-bye to friends as she walks to the door.

Bill Shinkai is being congratulated for writing an excellent play. He mentions that *SPOOS* was originally written for television and had to be altered for live stage action. Presently employed as a sign painter for Hughes Market, the large supermarket chain, this is his fourth year of writing. He plans to specialize in comedy and was pleased tonight with the reaction to his work.

Shinkai is one of the last to leave the East-West Players' Theater. This is the third of a four day engagement of his play. And as he helps others to clean up before the building closes for this Saturday night, he thinks about the different audience reactions that have been apparent each night and how it will be different, again, on Sunday.

—Alan Ota & Linda Fujikawa



Berkeley — mid-September, 1972

While cruising up the West Coast on a "vacation" away from the ozone of Los Angeles I found myself deeply embedded in this one-time haven of the American counter-culture. Conditions and situations are more evolved along the same direction which was set in the mid-sixties. Hair length fluctuates, Cold Blood and Tower of Power keep a firm grip on the air waves, people say "out there" instead of "far out," and dope as usual, is around in amazing abundance.

Yet, it is 1972 and on the Bay, once the epicenter of the acid movement, another drug has taken over as the number one mind bender. Cocaine (also: coke, snow, girl) is "in" for the moment.

"It's a clean thing, man," says one determined advocate of cocaine, "I mean, like, it's expensive, you know. But there ain't nothing like it. And anyway the people behind coke got bread usually...or they find ways to get it."

So, according to those who should know, people are supposed to have bread these days; maybe they just like to believe they do. Madison Avenue calls this phenomenon "Flash"; a lifestyle centered upon fancy cars, styling clothes and expensive drugs plus the basic belief that the coins in your pocket are meant to be spent. And even if you don't have money you try to make others believe that you do. Material possessions are what counts, and today there seems to be plenty of scorekeepers.

Cocaine plays only a small part of this lifestyle, but along with the cars and the clothes and everything else it adds up to—"flash."

It is with weary tolerance that I witness this latest and perhaps most dangerous of trends work its way into what was once the hang loose ethic of the nineteen-sixties.

Seattle — late October, 1972

At one time the entire Northwest portion of the U. S. looked toward Seattle as its cultural and even ideological base and at one time this was the case. Seattle represented a lifestyle removed from the inhumanity of New York and the plastic of Los Angeles. It held the promise of a bright future.

Autumn, 1972 finds Seattle in the throes of a serious depression. Aerospace engineers and business executives are stranded on street corners along with winos and other segments of the lumpen. Thus, amid the natural beauty which is created at this time of the year in the Pacific Northwest, a dismal economic situation pervades all.

Yet again the phenomenon of "flash" is present. Maxi-length suede coats and high-heeled alligator-skin boots are the uniform of the day. "The girl" is around for those who wish to indulge; if they can afford to. Here in Seattle, there is superflash amid superdepression.

On the evening the new Santana album was debuted various friends gathered to chat and to listen. The conversation, decidedly drug-influenced, somehow managed to work its way around to Los Angeles and more specifically, "Tinsletown."

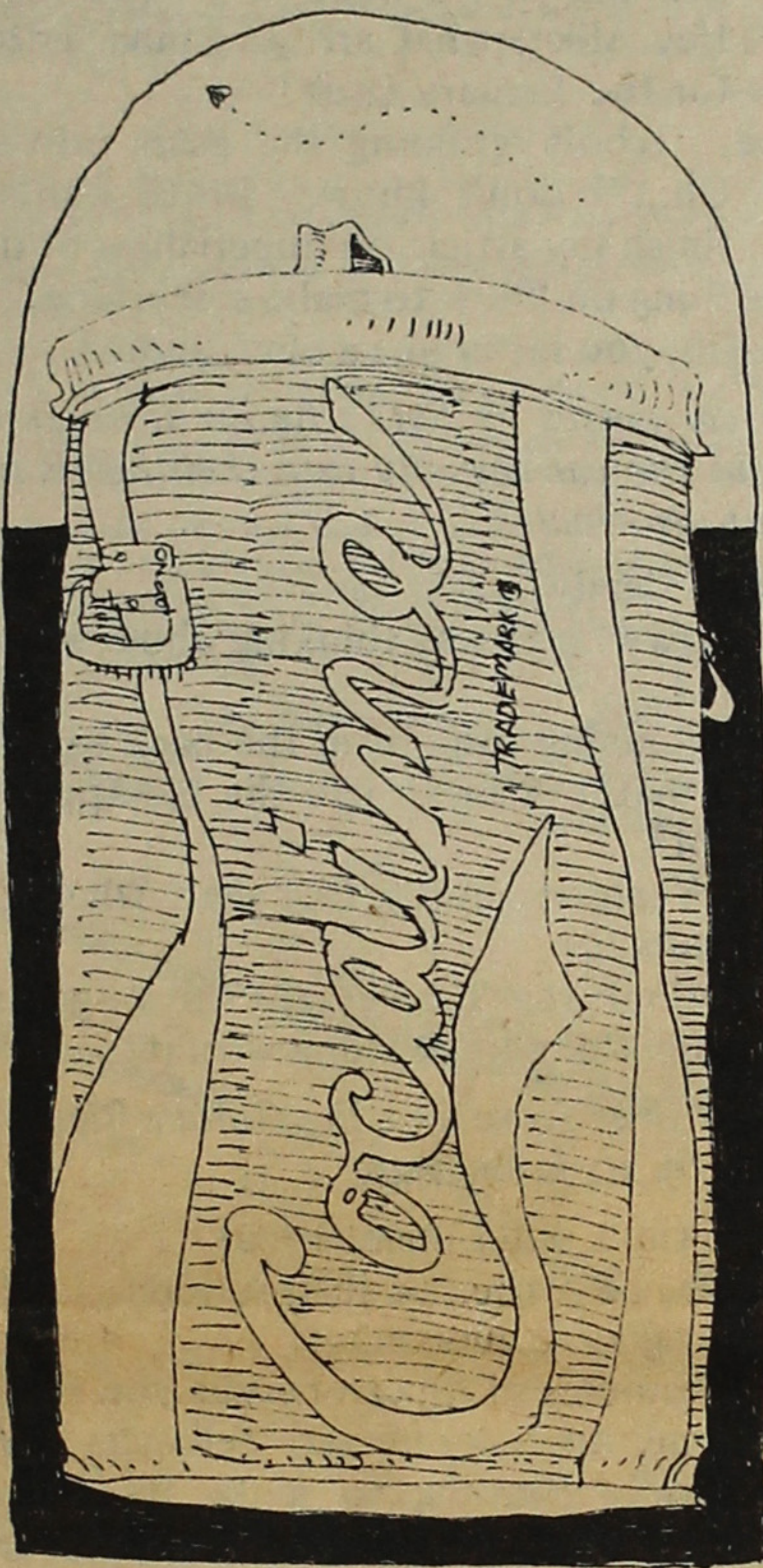
"Hey, do you make it up to Hollywood very often?" I was asked.

"Yeah, once in a while, to catch a flick or something like that."

"Yeah...I wish I could go to Hollywood. Man, I hear people down there are stylin' to the maximum."

"Yeah, it's pretty outrageous some-

## On Film: Superfly



## Fly's Lies: Cries and Sighs

times," I admit.

"Hey, did you see that flick, "Superfly" yet?"

"No, I haven't," I answer then asked, "Is it pretty good?"

"Oh man, you gotta see that flick. I mean, it's about cocaine dealing, you know. And the cats in the flick do some heavyweight stylin'."

"Where does it take place?" I ask being always interested in locations.

"Oh...uh...in New York City. But, man, its a badd (meaning good) flick. Really into what's happening, you know."

I didn't know, but what could I say?

Los Angeles — early December, 1972

Back in old, spaced out L.A. Things are basically the same and it's good to socialize with old friends again. As the whirlwind effect of my "vacation" finally settled, I found myself in front of a movie theater in downtown L.A. late one evening. "Superfly" the marquee shouts. Movie-goers stroll into the theater wearing leathers and furs, platform shoes and tailored

pant suits. Supercool. The male movie goers seem to anticipate the mood of the film as they peel off their dollars at the box office and escort their dates through the entrance with a certain hip, cool style to their movements. Superflash, superstyle.

I walk in.

The film, "Superfly," directed by Gordon Parks, Jr. and written by Philip Fenty has emanated from, capitalized upon, and further prolonged the "flash" phenomenon. As friends have said, "The cats in the flick do some heavyweight stylin'," and it is a motion picture about cocaine dealing in New York City. But aside from drooling over the maxi-coats and Cadillacs the film deserves a deeper investigation.

First, from a cinematic standpoint, "Superfly," is a flop. If I were told that some UCLA film students put it together, I would call that a noble effort. That is not the case though. "Superfly" is the product of professional "Hollywood" film makers (who, by the way, had over \$400,000 at their disposal,) and that fact must be taken into primary consideration when judging this film. My list of gripes is as long as the film itself. But briefly — the camera work was sloppy, lacking in imagination and a steady hand. Much of the interior lighting techniques were flat and definitely artificial. The acting was of pure amateur status with movements being awkward and lines put forth as "lines." The dialogue was so contrived at times it seemed as though some assistant's assistant was holding up idiot cards...upside down. "You have to sell me...some cocaine, man, because...I want to make one last big deal...before I get out of the...business," says "the Priest," a small, big-time dealer in the film. The editing was of average quality and that's all that needs to be said about that. The only redeeming facet of the movie was the soundtrack. An original musical score was produced by Curtis Mayfield and it was very good. Mayfield's music helped the film more than anything else. It fit the flow of action on the screen and added to the complete mood of the film. Look for an Academy Award nomination here.

With the cinematic air thusly cleared (or fouled) we can now investigate why such a poor creation should enjoy such widespread popularity.

First of all, Hollywood has all these "formulas" locked up somewhere (in the Pentagon, no doubt) which they have calculated will produce a successful money-making film. Profit is Hollywood's only motivation in filmmaking. Make a film about a black drug dealer, and the black and the drug-oriented movie viewing public will jump for joy if it contains all those things which in reality they are unable to obtain but deeply desire.

Any downtrodden class in America: Blacks, Asians, workers, *freaks*, etc. just love to see people, like themselves on the screen with fancy clothes and cars, beautiful women and handsome dudes, good dope, lotsa money and an exciting lifestyle. People like to see this because for a few dollars they can forget their own day-to-day reality and drift into a world of "flash." Hollywood understands and exploits this point to the hilt. So it is understandable that the plot of "Superfly" was constructed to contain an exact balance of sex, violence, suspense and "flash" to make it a strong box office attraction. It hits the viewers hard as pure entertainment and the vast majority are willing to accept it on that level.

Yet, in the case of "Superfly," the after-effects have been considerable. Brothers and sisters come gliding out of the theater actually

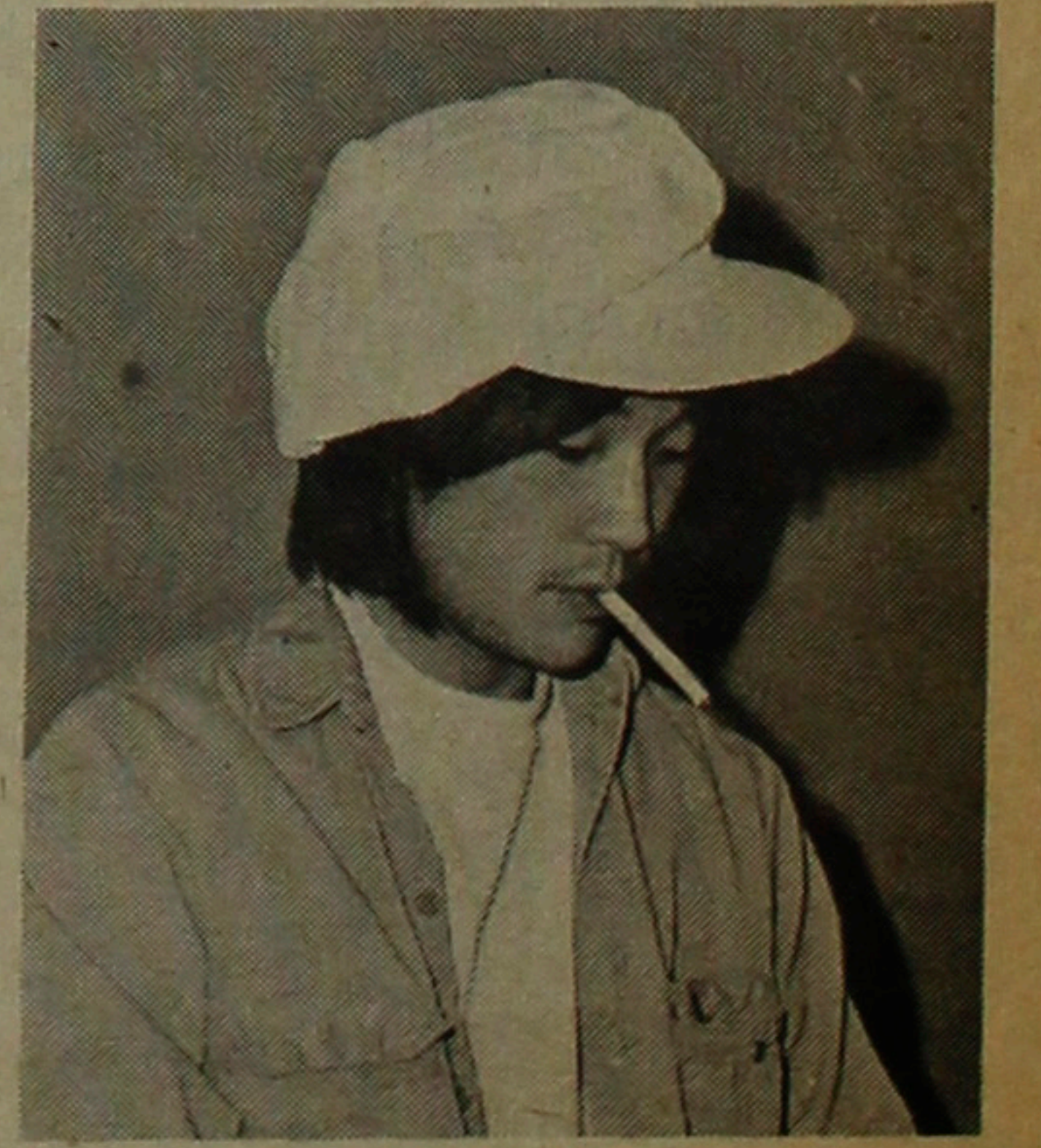


(Continued from preceding page.)

Hopefully somewhere, someday there will emerge film makers who are truly sensitive to the conditional needs of the people and also "on top" of situations in their communities. And hopefully these film makers will blow away the demi-gods and myths created by films such as "Superfly." 'nough said. —Steve Tatsukawa

**Mike:** Oh, maybe I could talk about sexism too. How sewing is traditionally a task assigned to women, and it's labeled a "feminine"

**Mike:** Why doncha make yourself one?





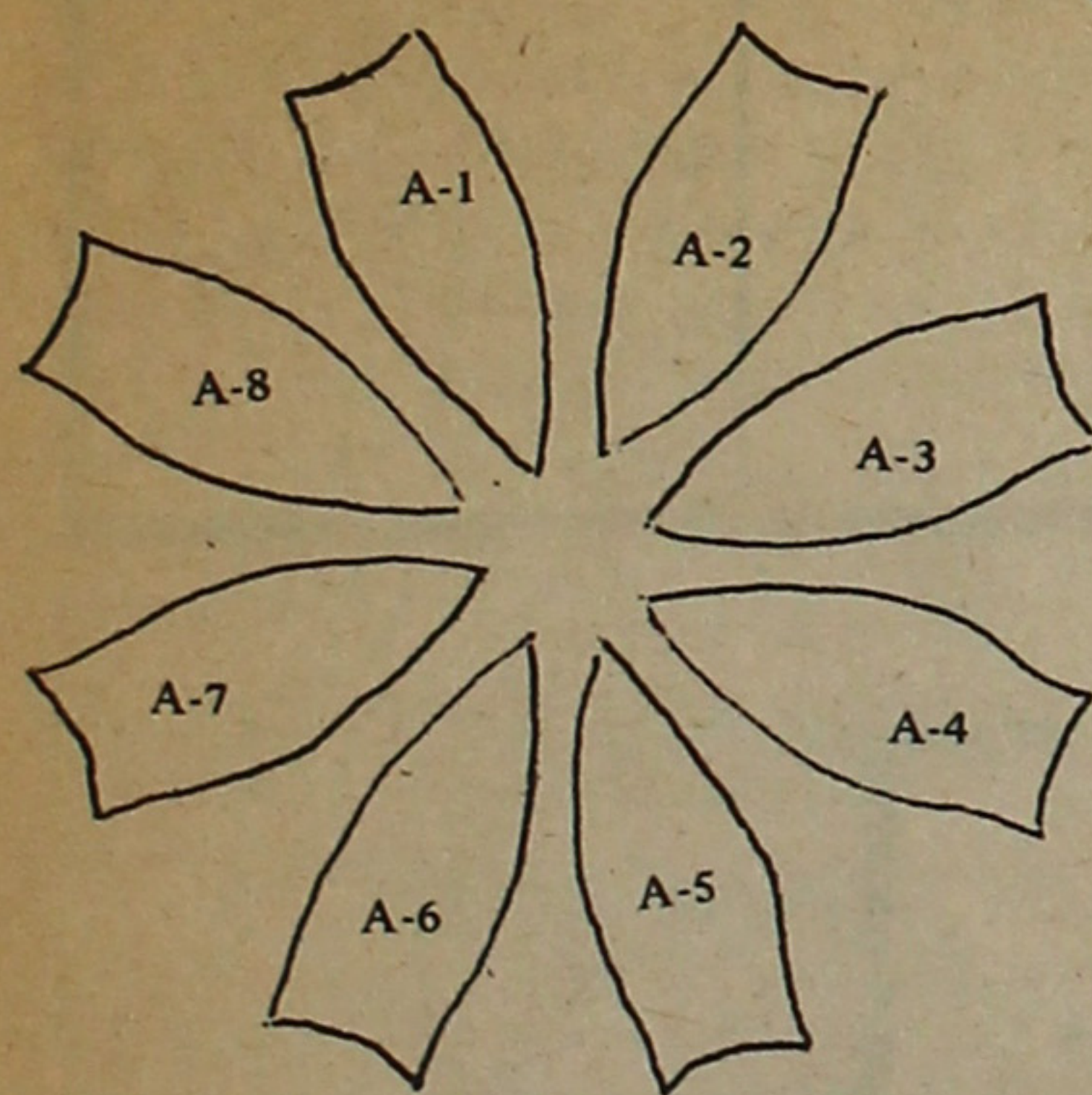
# The Big Apple

A

INSTRUCTIONS: (approximate time = half an hour)

1. Cut out the patterns along the heavy solid lines.... or better yet, if you wanna keep your *Gidra* in one piece, trace the patterns onto another piece of paper and cut that out.
2. Cut out eight pieces of pattern A, two pieces of pattern B and two pieces of pattern C. (Make sure that the grain of the material is lined up as shown by the arrows on the patterns. For pattern C, fold the material in half and cut it so it's actually twice the size shown; you need two of those.)
3. Now, let's start from the top. Take two pieces of A (which will be called A-1 and A-2) and put them together *back to back*. Sew along ----- line on one side of it from X to Y. Take A-3 and A-4, put them *back to back* and sew along ----- line on one side again. Repeat with A-5 and A-6, then again with A-7 and A-8. You should have four pairs of two triangular things stuck together.
4. Take the A-1/A-2 piece and the A-3/A-4 piece and line them up *back to back*; sew one side of it so that the four little pieces now become one. Do the same with A-5/A-6 and A-7/A-8. You now have two large pieces with four leaves on each, right?
5. Guess what the next step is? Right... put A-1/A-2/A-3/A-4 and A-5/A-6/A-7/A-8 *back to back* and sew up both sides. Now you should have something that resembles a miniature teepee.
6. Turn the hat inside out and sew along ---- line from M to N. Repeat with all the seams. Turn it right side out now; hem the bottom by folding it in twice and sewing it. Is it looking like a hat yet?
7. Now put the teepee away for awhile and get the two pieces (B) for the visor and line them up facing each other. Sew along the front edge along --- line. Then turn it right side out.
8. Now, hold everything. Go get that box top you use to sift your grass. Cut it into the shape of the shaded area shown in pattern D. Now stick that cardboard into the visor you just sewed.
9. Hold the cardboard in there tight against the front edge and sew the back edge so it can't come out. Hope you haven't put those slits in along the back yet because you're suppose to do that now.
10. This part is the trickiest to explain... and to do. Take the visor and pin the tongue (slitted parts) to the inside of the hat. Sew the visor onto the hat. Now, it should really look like a big apple.
11. Take the two strips that you cut out for the band and sew them together, end to end. (Remember, they should be facing each other and sew about a half inch from the edge on one end.)
12. Just hem up one long side, and on the other side, just fold it over once and sew it into the inside bottom of the hat to make the interior band. The pattern is purposely made a little large for most people to account for swelling of the head that may be caused by your pride in making the first apple all by yourself. For minor adjustments, you can sew in (on the inside) a piece of elastic in the back.
13. Now to top it off, just hand sew a big button in the middle. (Buttons which you can cover with matching material can be obtained from any local notions department of most stores.)
14. Put that lid on, tilt it to the side a little and check yourself out.

Cut 8



B

D

Cut 2

C

Cut 2

FOLD



# DECEMBER — JANUARY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
24  Yutaka Fukuhara will show his photos at the L.B. Museum of Art, 2300 E. Ocean Blvd. until Jan. 7th.	25  The Long March presents anti-war flick 'FTA' with Sutherland & Fonda—an X-mas benefit.	26  Chairman Mao's birthday.	27  Cheech & Chong are at the Troubadour 'till New Year's eve; 276-6168. Fanny is at the Whiskey 'till the 30th.	28	29 12th Anniversary of National Liberation Front.  Chinatown Community Assembly presents a Chinese art film about shadow play at the Alpine Playground, Alpine & Yale St. For more info. call 625-5004.  4th Annual Mochitsuki at Senshin Buddhist Church. For details call 689-4413.	30
31  The Long March presents a fund-raising party at 474 manis Dr., Highland Park. Mini-teach-in at Sage Methodist Church in El Monte 10:00. For info., call 689-4413.	1  Happy New Years, everybody!—love, <i>Gidra People</i> . Come to Union Church for Ozoni sponsored by the Pioneer Center at 10.	2  The Golden Age of Japanese Screen Painting is on display at the Ahmanson Gallery. For details call 937-2590.	3  Gidra staff meeting, if you're interested in working on the Monthly of the Asian American Experience. For info, call 734-7838.	4  Free teach-in training workshop at Senshin Buddhist Church 1339 W. 36th Pl. 7:30 p.m. For more info. call 689-4413.	5	6  Creative Workshop re-opens at 10 a.m. at Maryknoll Church.
7  The Community Drug Offensive presents a teach-in and pot-luck lunch at L.A. Free Methodist, 200 N. St Louis from 12:30 to 1:30;	8	9  L.A. Ski Club general meeting at the Oriental in Chiantown, 436 Gintling Way at 7:30 p.m.	10  SBAI's music workshop still getting it on every Wednesday from 7:30.	11	12	13  Asian Women's Center will have an Open House at 722 So. Oxford from 10-4.  Hot Meals Program sponsored by the Pioneer Center at Union Church from 12 to 3.
14	15	16  Deadline for articles for February issue of <i>Gidra</i> .	17  A multi-media presentation on concentration camps by students of the University of Delaware 2:00. For details call 879-3576.	18  JACS-AI Medical Committee will have their first training session for physical therapy training at the Asian Women's Center at 7:30 p.m.	19	20  Gardena Youth Center will open at 2 p.m. For more info., call 327-0220, ext. 269.  Deadline for submitting photos to the First Annual Chinatown Photo Exhibit & Contest. Themes: faces, workers & children of Chinatown; life as a Chinese. Judging will be based on realism expressed. Submit entries to Chinatown Youth Council 971 Chungking Rd. 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily.
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

3830 Crenshaw Blvd. Crenshaw Square  <b>NARI'S COSMETICS</b>  299-2118	3882 Crenshaw Blvd. L.A. 90008  <b>SHIG'S HABERDASHERY</b>  292-1211 Crenshaw Square	313½ E. First St. 680-2888  <b>AMERASIA BOOKSTORE</b> Books, periodicals, hand made crafts Tues-Fri. 10-10 Sat.-Sun. 10-6
318 E. Second St. 626-4528  <b>MODERN FOODS</b>  in Little Tokyo	3218 W. Jefferson Blvd. Los Angeles, Calif. 90018  <b>JAPAN PRINTING CO.</b>  RE 4-3758 WE 5-2892	3101 W. Jefferson Blvd. 732-2920  <b>CHIN'S CHINESE FOOD</b>  TAKE OUT ONLY FOR QUICK SERVICE!
348 E. First St. 624-6601  <b>NISEI TRADING CO.</b>  FURNITURE & APPLIANCES	3318 W. Jefferson Blvd. 732-5025  <b>KAY'S HARDWARE</b>  Open 7 Days	4000 W. Santa Barbara Ave. 294-8565  <b>DONNA MICHELE'S</b>  Avoid everyone else, come here!
3860 Crenshaw Blvd. Crenshaw Square  <b>PENTHOUSE CLOTHES</b>  292-2511	3412 Crenshaw Blvd. Jefferson & Crenshaw  <b>WESTSIDE ARCO</b> Al Morita Gas—Tires—Oil 732-2128	3730 Crenshaw Blvd. 295-4325 Open 24 Hours  <b>HOLIDAY BOWL</b> billiards-bowling-coffee shop-sushi,tempura bar



# KUOMINGTANG CONTROL IN U.S. CHINATOWNS DECLINING

In the final paralysis of his gunslinging senility, J. Edgar Hoover warned that a Communist fifth column of agents is infiltrating the Chinatowns of America. Foreign agents in America's Chinatowns? He was right, but these agents are not communists and they have been here for many years. They are representatives of Chiang Kai-shek's faltering, anti-communist regime on Taiwan. They belong to his Kuomintang Party and their activities in San Francisco have intensified in the wake of Nixon's trip to China.

"The Kuomintang has 300 members in all the important organizations in the community," boasted Mr. Lee, prominent Chinatown leader and active San Francisco Kuomintang party member. "You know, if Chiang Kai-shek were to invade the mainland tomorrow, the Kuomintang could collect a million dollars from this community in a month. No other group could do that."

San Francisco's Chinatown has long been the headquarters of the "American" Kuomintang (KMT) Party which is registered with the Department of Justice as a foreign agent whose purpose is "to secure and maintain interest of Chinese residents of the United States to aid and further the aims of the Central Executive Committee of the Kuomintang."

Here, as well, resides Wong Yen Doon, National Policy Advisor to Chiang Kai-shek and the highest ranking officer on the West Coast of the United States. He controls the powerful Wong Family Association, the Ning Yeung District Association, and the Bing Kung Tong. He is known not just as a high KMT official, but as "the most powerful man in Chinatown."

There is hardly an organization here in which the KMT does not have a hand. It controls and subsidizes the influential *Truth Semi-Weekly* and at least two other of Chinatown's major newspapers. Its members sit on the Board of Directors of Chinatown's most powerful political organization, the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association, popularly known as the Six Companies. It controls the wealthy and influential Family Associations. It runs and staffs Chinese language schools (such as the

Chinese Central High School) which have become even more important since the recent boycott of the public school system began.

## Consulate Control

Just four blocks down from the Kuomintang National Headquarters on Stockton Street is the Nationalist Government's largest consulate in the United States. The Consulate, on Montgomery Street, is only minutes away from the center of Chinatown. It is a very short walk for the Chinese Consul who meets regularly with Chinatown's KMT officers, and with prominent merchants who toe the KMT line in order to maintain good ties with Taiwan.

Traditionally, the Consulate has avoided betraying to the American press its extensive involvement in Chinatown affairs. Chinatown newspapers, however, are liberally sprinkled with photographs of the Consul General at various social functions.

More important, he keeps in close touch with the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association (CBA). "Whatever the CBA does, we have to have a meeting. Sometimes he is busy, but he's always invited," said one CBA member. And sometimes he is not so busy: "Sure," says Mr. Lee, "we met him just last night. The CBA is planning a nationwide protest movement against Red China."

The Consul's interest is hardly ceremonial. He knows that support from America's Chinese communities is especially important—for the position of Nationalist China would deteriorate badly without the military, economic, and political protection of the United States. KMT strategists know the significance of showing Washington that 300,000 Chinese Americans appear to back Nationalist China.

As Wu Yueh-ching, the editor of the pro-KMT *Young China Daily* explained: "The concern of the Republic of China for overseas Chinese is greater than you can imagine. You know that the first (1911) revolution in China was mainly achieved through the efforts of overseas Chinese." With one eye to past history and the other to American public opinion, Chiang's government puts great significance on American

Chinese. And San Francisco's Chinatown, as the largest in North America, is one of the last bastions of support for Chiang's fading regime.

## Last Gasp

But even here, in traditionally conservative San Francisco Chinatown, opposition is springing up, and the KMT is worried. Recently, Consul Chou Tung-hua, who was not considered "active" enough was replaced by C. C. Tuan. However, Mr. Shiang, a staff member at the consulate stated, "I believe the Chinese Americans are loyal. I can say that definitely." When asked what precisely was the relationship between the Republic of China and San Francisco's Chinese population, he replied: "We support them. We support them as long as they are loyal."

In San Francisco, the KMT-controlled Double Ten celebrations (1971) of the founding of Republic of China were far bigger than normal. One of the two major floats in the parade contained a four foot tall painting of Chiang Kai-shek and a huge birthday cake saying "Free China Forever." It was drawn by a white convertible with the John Birch Society's name on it. As *East-West*, a moderate Chinatown paper put it, last year's Double Ten celebration showed that "the Republic of China is making a strong effort (possibly a last ditch one) to gain additional sympathy from Free China supporters in what may very well be the most loyal Nationalist Chinese stronghold in the U.S."

The upset that Nixon's visit to the People's Republic caused among Chinatown's political establishment is evident here today. Despite a placid public face, KMT leaders know that their existence is tied to Chiang's regime on Taiwan. And they know as well that, short of Chiang's inconceivable return to the mainland, things will only get worse for them.

—Mary B. DeBary  
Pacific News Service

*The community's attitudes toward China are changing rapidly. For the viewpoint of a Chinese American pioneer, see Victor Nee's interview with Lew Wah Get in last month's issue.*

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