



GARDENA

Part Two: "Everybody Needs A Helping Hand."

*It was about four months ago; sometime in May when this writer began compiling information for a prospective series of articles focused on the Asian American community in Gardena, California. In the July issue of *Gidra* "Gardena—Part One: A Saga of Youth, Drugs and Middle Class Misery" was published. It was with the cooperation of people involved in various community services that this initial segment was able to shed light upon a bit of the history, contemporary situations and community problems which are woven into that complex Los Angeles suburb.*

Since then, this writer has carried on more "interviews", further questioning, and various observations, often venturing recklessly into dark and musty corners of the Gardena area. And with additional and much appreciated cooperation of more people herein is presented the second... and final installment.

In addition, in this article several key personalities are referred to by their "street-names." This is due to the fact that under the

present legal system these particular individuals may not appear obviously innocent. No self-incrimination here; only true stories...

Things are changing rapidly. I must hurry and write. The universal scales of balance are once again being set into a gyroscopic movement. Everything is everything.

Thus with mellowing thoughts engaging throughout my mind I settle down deep into the *Gidra* office—to write. And before me amid the chaotic rubble which has become a *Gidra* landmark are the assorted memoirs of a movement for social change which stretch back to a now distant 1968.

Come Together: The Psychedelic Revolution.

"I can't really remember the exact year. . . lemme see it was about 1969, no make that 1968. . . Yeah '68, around. . . well, I can't remember the exact month but I went to the

second or maybe it was the first Come Together meeting." Mickey The Who rubs his beard in thoughtful reflection as he speaks. "The Who" received his nickname in some now-forgotten era of Gardena street life. It stuck and it's useful and, in some ways, meaningful—so for our purposes we will refer to this twenty-eight year old bearded, longhaired Sansei male as The Who.

The Who continues, "It musta been the second meeting, because some dudes that I knew over at Long Beach State were involved in initially organizing the group."

Before we venture any further we must backstep a wee bit. If there were such a thing as Asian American Chronologists they would probably say that what many have labeled "the movement" (or at least the Los Angeles portion thereof) actually got off the ground at some now vague "Oriental Concern Conference" in the San Bernardino Mountains of Southern California during the summer of 1968.

(continued on page five)

CONTENTS:

"Gardena—Part Two: Everybody Needs A Helping Hand." pp.1,5-8
by Steve Tatsukawa

"Gidra On The Scene." pp.2-3
Our monthly news-views.

"AADAP Declares War On Drugs." p.9
An introduction to the Asian American Drug Abuse Program.

"Nisei Week '73" pp.12-13
a photo essay
by Glen Kazahaya & Brad Fujikuni

"Watts Summer Festival" p.14
by Tomo Hisamoto

"Chanel's Are My Pals." pp.15-17
A look at an Asian American high school organization.
by Lisa Domoto

"Vietnamese Women And Culture." pp.18-21
by Liz Nakahara

Cartoon: "The Adventures of Steve Motomoto & his gal Shirley O." p.22
by "a very tired Alan Takemoto."

Calendar of Events p.23

...and life progresses at the *Gidra* office.

When wondering about things such as "the future," (which one often wonders about when things seem to be not-quite-right) one would (if one could) attempt a forecasting with guarded realism. Thus let us attempt.

Gidra has been publishing for well over four years now. We've made many friends plus a few enemies. All during our existence we were secure with the thought that somewhere people were looking forward to us each month.

So we've managed to survive and grow. Yet we have not escaped any internal turmoil. The toll has been remarkable. A smashed office wall here and there, hateful/comic graffiti in the bathroom, and well over two hundred people in then out of our "staff box." Add to this a peer group which must surely believe we are all crazy *Gidra* freaks.

Now we find a dozen (give or take five or so) *Gidra* staffers at the core of the organization. Talk in the air generally focuses on increasing audience outreach, equal distribution of work, and the constant improvement of content. Weird stuff. Yet necessary, for all these questions, and many others which must be confronted, will eventually shape the future of *Gidra*.

A loyal core of staff finds itself maturing, finishing school, finding straight gigs and waging survival struggle on a day-to-day basis. Time and energy is often drained from the publication as a result of now-shifting lifestyles. The student has become a worker; the hippie a square. Well, perhaps it's not that drastic...but changes are happening and life progresses at the *Gidra* office.

Gidra Staff: Doug Aihara, Lisa Domoto, Linda Fujikawa, Brad Fujikuni, Jeff Furumura, Tomo Hisamoto, Bruce Iwasaki, Lori Iwasaki, Glen Kazahaya, Mitchell Matsumura, David Monkawa, Karen Nishinaka, Alan Ota, Alan Takemoto, Steve Tatsukawa, Dean Toji, Laura Tokunaga, and Evelyn Yoshimura.

Contributors for this month: David Cho, Merilynne Hamano, Chris Murakami, Teri Nitta, Merle Oyadomari, among others. Welcome back Mike Murase!

Gidra is published monthly by *Gidra, Inc.*, a non-profit corporation. Our mailing address is P.O. Box 18649, Los Angeles, California 90018. Our phone is (213) 734-7838. Subscription for individuals are \$2.50 a year. Institutions, like libraries and schools, pay \$5.00 a year. Additional postage of \$2.00 for Canada and \$4.00 for all other foreign countries is required. (For individuals then, this amounts to \$4.50 and \$6.50 respectively). Printed in the U.S.A. Copyright © 1973 by *Gidra, Inc.* All rights reserved.

Cover by Alan "Batman" Takemoto



JAPAN, INC., CONTINUES TO PENETRATE U.S. ECONOMY; ASIAN MOVEMENT UNWITTINGLY SUFFERS CO-OPTATION

Los Angeles, August 17—A *Gidra* staff member and his companion trudged down 2nd Street in Little Tokyo, making their conscientious way from the JACS office to the Amerasia Bookstore. They spied three young Japanese businessmen hunkered on the sidewalk around a large paper sack. A quick lunch, innocent as in all appearances? Seemingly so, but the tale continues.

"As we passed them, they accosted us with offers of orange juice," said the staffer. "They reached into the bag and held out two more bottles, showing us what, in retrospect, was an arrogant display of economic might. 'We have extra...' they said." Hot in the noonday sun, the pair acquiesced to the point of accepting and splitting a single bottle between them.

"We asked them why they had so much extra orange juice. And the big one (if Japan had a Texas, this guy would've worn a ten-gallon hat, boomed out that they didn't need the orange juice, but that 'we brought in some chemicals

and we need the bottles to submit samples to the authorities!"

"My sense of duty as an investigative journalist made me press on and continue to drink the orange juice. I asked him, 'Oh, what company are you with?' His answer was:

" 'Mitsubishi International.' "

JAPAN, INC., OUTHUSTLES U.S.S.R. NABS SECOND SPOT TO U.S.

The prodigiously booming Japanese economy will overtake that of the Soviet Union sometime in 1974, to move into second place after the U.S., according to a forecast made in the July 28th issue of *Business Week*.

The prediction was made as a part of a survey of 24 key Gross National Products (GNP). (While the GNP is not an accurate indicator of a nation's economic activity in the full sense of how its citizens live, it does serve reasonably well as an index of commercial activity.) In 1973, Japan will lag behind the U.S.S.R., 437.8 to 465.4 billion dollars. But by the end of 1974, the standings will have been reversed, U.S.S.R.—493.3, Japan—508.3.

AMERICA, INC., SAME OLD TRICKS

The growth of Japan's economy may be stealing the limelight for the moment, but the gargantuan U.S. economy still easily sits in gross domination in the court of international commerce. A few comparisons will demonstrate just exactly how wide is the seat that burdens the throne.

Japan's Gross National Product (GNP), boom though it might for the projected years 1973-1974, will still equal only about 35% or so of America's. As a portion of the entire world's economy, even a modest estimate of the U.S. GNP amounts to a whopping one fourth of the total. Quite a spread, you might say.

How do those clever Americans do it?

TAXES.

Income taxes are a basic means by which the giant corporations controlling the American economy have managed to expand and maintain their domain. The governmental tax structures are increasingly utilized as a device for extracting money from wage earners and rechanneling it to corporate benefit. The share of taxes paid by corporations has dropped from what was already a miniscule 23% in 1960 to only 16% today. This, in a period when total federal income taxes have increased over 200%. Thus, an increasing share of an increasing whole has consistently been borne by taxpayers.

An average 8% of the income of a worker, with two children, and making \$10,000 a year, is paid out in taxes. In contrast, in 1971, major corporations such as ITT, Texaco, Gulf Oil, and Con Edison all paid less than 5%.

A study made by the staff of Rep. Charles Vanick (D-Ohio) indicates that at least 14 firms in the Fortune 500 list of largest corporations in the U.S. paid only 1% to 10% of their income in taxes. Most of the firms questioned refused to supply information pertinent to the study, and one can easily assume that this roster of shockingly low income tax rates would have been considerably longer, had the facts been available.

11 top U.S. corporations paid no taxes at

**"ZIEG" ZAGGED
U.S. PREXY FLIPS WIG
HEAVE-HO IN NEW ORLEANS**



all in 1972. "In the category of 'Evasion, taxes,' then, may we present to you this years winners and their respective profits:

McDonnell Douglas—\$111,675,000!
Republic Steel—\$43,061,000!
Occidental Petroleum—\$10,419,000!
Burlington Northern—\$48,711,000!
Eastern Air Lines—\$19,760,000!
TWA—\$43,078,000!
Northwest Airlines—\$17,682,000!
United Airlines—\$20,376,000!
Consolidated Edison—\$148,127,000!
American Electrical Power—\$156,157,000!
Pennzoil—\$58,655,000!

**JAPAN, INC., CONTINUES TO PENETRATE
JAPANESE-AMERICAN COMMUNITY;
ZAIBATSU ETHIC SUBLIMINALLY
INTRODUCED AT L.A. NISEI WEEK!**

Los Angeles, August 26—Gidra observers at this year's Nisei Week Parade were bemused to discern the words to a song being danced to by an *ondo* group. Whatever *should* have been expected, knowing the heavily commercialized nature of the annual event, our observers were surprised nonetheless when they discovered the affectionate look at striving up the corporate ladder that the song expressed. A rough translation of a stanza follows:

*The managing director is always busy with his
matchmaking schemes.
Hardly a day goes by without golf, in the life
of the department head.
Dreaming to have my own secretary....
Oh! I must reach at least the post of chief!*

THIRD WORLD COMMUNICATIONS

San Francisco—Third World Communications is now accepting essays, fiction, poems, photo-graphics, and art work for their upcoming publication. All those interested may submit material to: Third World Communications, 1242 45th Ave., San Francisco. Essays and fiction should be under 2500 words in length.

ASIAN PRIDE NEEDS YOU!

The Asian Pride Program at Cal-State L.A. is now accepting volunteers who are interested in participating in their program. If you are interested in teaching Third World people's history, that is, the history of Asian, Black, and Chicano people in America, inside the public school system—please contact Bogay Tong, or Steve Nagano, at 224-3171.

**"WHITE HAired GIRL" A MODERN
REVOLUTIONARY BALLET OPENS**

In preparing for the annual Chinese National Day Celebration, the Chinatown Community Assembly is presenting the film, *White Haired Girl*.

In order that more people in Southern California will have a chance to view this beautiful film, the C.C.A. will be showing it on six separate days, with a total of eight performances. Unlike other films C.C.A. has presented in the past, they are asking the viewer of this excellent film to obtain tickets for a donation of a dollar at either one of the following two places:

Xin Qiao Friendship Store
971 Chungking Road
New Chinatown, L.A.

China Native Products
Mandarin Plaza
New Chinatown, L.A.

The money will be used to defray the cost of keeping the Chinatown Community Assembly program in operation, and to help finance the upcoming October 1st Celebration. For a buck, how can you miss?



A Story of Class Struggle

The story takes place in a Northern Chinese village during the War of Resistance against Japan. It is New Year's time and the traitorous and greedy landlord, Huang Shih-jen, has come to demand payment of debts owed to him by Yang Pai-lao, a poor peasant. When poor Yang cannot meet the payment, his daughter Hsi-erh is seized by the landlord and poor Yang is beaten to death while attempting to prevent the rotten deed. Wang Ta-chun, a young peasant neighbor and sweetheart of Hsi-erh, becomes filled with class hatred and leaves the village to join the Eighth Route Army led by the Chinese Communist Party. After suffering misuse and abuse in the home of Huang, Hsi-erh flees into the mountains. Suffering from constant hunger and physical hardships, Hsi-erh's hair turns white. However, her passion for revenge and liberation of her village increases constantly. Later, the Eighth Route Army unit to which Wang Ta-chun belongs arrives at the village and begins arousing the masses to expose and punish traitors and local despots. Huang, the traitorous and rotten landlord, who has been guilty of enormous crimes is sentenced to death. Later, Ta-chun, together with other peasants find Hsi-erh in a cave and leads her into a new life with the Eighth Route Army. Hsi-erh takes up the gun and pledges to liberate other oppressed people and carry the revolution through to the end under the leadership of Chairman Mao and the Communist Party.

A 'Revolutionary' Ballet

This modern revolutionary ballet has enjoyed immense popularity in China because

this is a new type of ballet that can be understood and appreciated by all the people of China—not just a privileged group. The subject matter deals with the lives of the common people, rather than royalty.

Now the American people will have a chance to enjoy this beautiful ballet at one of the following eight performances at the Resthaven Auditorium located at 765 West College Street above Chinatown.

Tickets will be available at the auditorium door.

Performances:

Sunday, September 9th at 8 p.m.
Wednesday, September 12th at 8 p.m.
Friday, September 14th at 8 p.m.
Saturday, September 15th at 6 p.m. & 8 p.m.
Sunday, September 16th at 6 p.m. & 8 p.m.
Wednesday, September 19th at 8 p.m.

**KOREAN IMMIGRANTS IN L.A.
FACE MANY PROBLEMS**

The presence of Koreans in Los Angeles has recently become more obvious than ever before. Driving from Jefferson Blvd. down Western across Olympic and back down on Vermont, one is struck by the number of small businesses displaying signs in *hangul*, the distinctive Korean geometric script. Driving into a Westside gas station these days is as likely as not going to expose you to a Korean entrepreneur. There indeed is an apparent increase in the presence of Koreans in Los Angeles.

This impression is well buttressed by fact, although the documentation is at best tentative. Since the change in immigration law in 1965, there has been a 500% increase in the population of Koreans in the United States. Of this increase, the large majority have settled in Southern California. Every week plane loads of new immigrants arrive at L.A. International Airport aboard Korean Airlines jets. Currently an estimated 40,000 Koreans live in the Los Angeles area.

Unlike the earlier immigrants who were predominantly professionals or skilled workers, the majority of today's immigrants are relatives of the former group and as such, do not necessarily possess marketable skills. As the population of newcomers increases, the likelihood of the community being able to take care of its own social and economic problems diminishes. The lack of social services geared specifically towards the Korean community becomes a serious problem.

The inability of Koreans to utilize services available to them is symptomatic of their inability to participate fully in the political processes in their new country of residence.

Other recently arrived ethnic groups suffer similar problems, but the perception of the problems by each group is distinct. It is this difference that must be recognized if the cultural integrity of each group is to be protected.

Insight, a newsletter of Koreans living in the U.S. is a monthly publication in English which attempts to stand as a political forum of pertinent issues. Further information can be had by writing *Insight*, 7A Howard Drive, Bergenfield, N.J., 07621, or by contacting Cooke Sunoo, 620 S. Ardmore, Los Angeles, 90005.



HIROSHIMA BAND

Sumi & Co.
PRESENTS

HIROSHIMA

IN
Party
Dance
Concert

WITH SPECIAL GUEST

David's Eat'n Bread

AT THE INTERNATIONAL HOTEL

6225 W. CENTURY BLVD.

SEPTEMBER 28

9 PM - 1:30 AM

OPEN BAR

DONATION

TICKETS ARE AVAILABLE AT AMERASIA
BOOKSTORE 338 E. 2ND. STREET, LITTLE
TOKYO, L.A. OR PHONE 730-8449.

asian american
law students
assn. loyola univ.
presents

SIDE BY SIDE

featuring:

**FREE
FLIGHT**

and

**EASY
LIVING**

at

RODGER YOUNG BALLROOM
936 W. WASHINGTON BLVD.

on

sept. 29

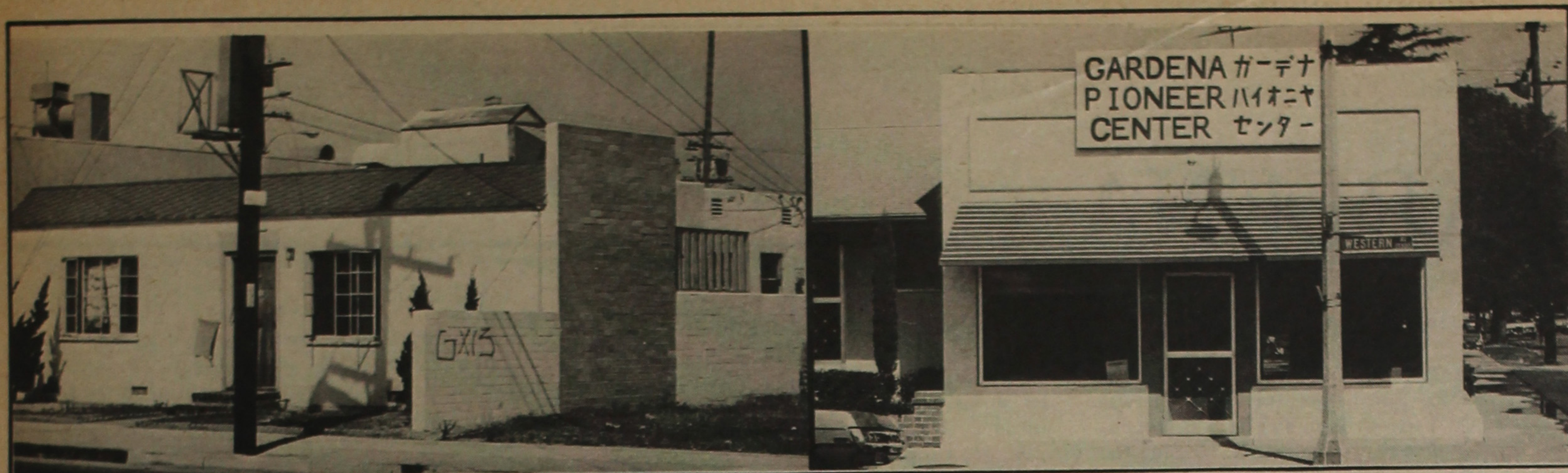
from

9 PM to 1:30 AM

proceeds go to Asian American Legal Services

Page 4 / September 1973 / GIDRA





Come Together Center (1968-70),
South Bay Asian Involvement Drop In Center (1970-73)

Gardena Pioneer Center (1970-?)

GARDENA

(Continued from first page.)

The following fall, many Asian American students rushed back to their campuses to organize. Oriental Concern chapters sprang up at UCLA, Cal State L.A., L.A. City College, Santa Monica CC and Long Beach State to name only a few. Proposals for Asian American studies programs were worked out and relevant (remember that word. . . and its counterpart "irrelevant," as in: "This is irrelevant") campus activities were activated.

At Long Beach State where many of the Asian American students come from Gardena, a rapidly broadening socio-political outlook described the need for "community involvement." The city of Gardena with its 10,000 Asian American citizens was seen as a natural action area. It was the homeland, so to speak, and thus, hardy pioneers of the movement plunged into getting Gardena "ta-gethur."

Come Together was born. And it was a highly experimental, prototypical community organization. From a historical perspective it can be described as a cultural phenomenon rather than an aggressive political move. The politics were there of course. Politics of the traditional radical left but with a new mixture of new left politics, Asian awareness, rock and roll, hippies, yuppies and crazies, LSD-25, and a "commune-nistic" soul.

"Come Together was a feeling thing," The Who continues, "a brotherhood and sisterhood, a unity of thought and action, you know—hanging together for a purpose. Strange things were happening in Gardena back then (1968). All kinds of O.D.s (overdoses) happening off of downers; people completely strung out all over the place."

In recent years Gardena has never been free of a drug problem, but by the late 1960s it had mushroomed to the point where the main question to many youths wasn't if one used drugs or not. It was a question of what kind of drugs one used and how much.

"Big Bob" a good-natured, muscular Sansei was another Come Together member. He recalls, "A bunch of us thought we were pretty hip, you know, to drugs and shit like that. And we were. But when we saw all these O.D.s happening we felt that we had to do something. It was our brothers and sisters getting ripped off."

The initial point of unity was a developing Asian awareness. In Gardena, among most Asians, this awareness of being Asian and all that denotes is never overlooked. But until 1968 the idea of organizing on the grass roots level within the Asian community was unheard of. Radical politics and militant actions so prevalent in the headlines back then worried and even frightened many Gardena residents. And in Gardena, a city which often takes pride in calling itself a liberal town (meaning a majority of the voters are Democrats) the move by Come Together was seen as an effort to rock a boat which was sailing on calm waters. I realize that is a cliché but it was also a cliché image which many Gardena residents had of "community organizers." Come Together conjured up flashes of yellow panthers, wild-eyed hippies and drug crazed, sex-hungry anarchists.

With an absurdly incorrect image cast upon them almost from the beginning, Come Together

still managed to progress into the work which they had set out to accomplish.

An old abandoned dental building was secured from a group of local (and liberal) businessmen and it was converted into the Come Together Center. A drop-in center for the youth of Gardena to use as their own gathering place. Weekly meetings were held and topical rap sessions developed along with arts-and-crafts workshops and counseling sessions.

The Who recalls, "Back then as far as community organizing was concerned there wasn't any in the Asian Community except for us and the Yellow Brotherhood and Asian American Hardcore up in L.A. *Gidra* wasn't going yet and JACS was still in the formulating stage. In fact, some people from the Hardcore used to come down to our meetings because there wasn't anything else happening that they could relate to. The whole Asian American Movement was just getting itself together."

A robust, soft-spoken Sansei, Artie was another Come Together member. He recalls the old days, "I remember some meetings at the center would get pretty out of hand. People would be holding shit (drugs) on them even though we had a rule against that. But people would still be holding and just itching to get stoned. Pretty soon people started dealing in the center, you know, nothing big, but lids and tabs of acid, things like that. I think that's when things really began falling apart."

Brushing his hair away from his dark glasses The Who spoke on the same subject. "I remember Lil' Bobby used to say 'Hey, we can't be dealing in the center. We got business to take care of. Besides we can get busted!' The Gardena Police Station was right down the street from us and every time we would gather in the center it seemed as though there would be a lot of pig cars in the area. Anyway people would go outside to the parking lot and deal and get high and then come back into the meeting to take care of business."

Yet did any real business ever get taken care of amid all the "distractions"?

The Who smiles at the question then replies, "Oh yeah. . . we got to the point where we would attend city council meetings and even have conferences with individual councilmen and other city big wheels. We talked to them about the problems with barbs and drug O.D.s and other things like youth programs and city responsibilities to the people. And at the same time we were reaching out to the youth of Gardena trying to help them get their shit together while we were doing the same."

The Who takes a long, long gulp of beer and continues, "The thing about Come Together is that we never ever turned anyone away. People would stumble into the center strung out on reds and we would let them crash there. We figured it was better than letting them get into trouble on the streets or get thrown into jail. And we'd rap to them about the dangers of reds and how all kinds of brothers and sisters were screwing themselves up on "death drugs." We really tried to establish ourselves as a drug abuse group, but that's where the conflicts came in 'cause some people in the

group were getting loaded themselves and others weren't."

The political impact of Come Together has often been pushed into the background when talking about the group. However, during the years of operation, in the late sixties, Come Together constantly pushed out Asian awareness and attempted to organize around this factor. When considering the time and place of this action, the political meaning is tremendous. For here in Gardena, the largest body of Japanese Americans on the mainland of the United States resided. It is suburbia; the middle class; supposedly a working man's dream come true. And Come Together set out to shatter that dream, it forced the community to pay attention to the monolithic drug culture which had blossomed in the small South Bay city and also represented a voice for the large numbers of alienated youths for whom the middle class values and goals had lost all meaning. For the first time Sanseis were doing something; an attempt to point out what they thought was wrong with Gardena and the lifestyles which their parents had fallen into. This was youth rebellion in the heart of suburbia.

Perhaps the longest lasting attribute of Come Together was the sense of community which was established. The members became friends—close friends; then even a family in a communal sense of the word.

Artie explains this phenomenon, "We were a very close parallel to the Merry Pranksters of the mid-sixties (see description of Kesey's colleagues in Tom Wolfe's *Electric Kool Aid Acid Test*). It wasn't intentional. . . just happened that way. We were always doing crazy things. Freaking out people, freaking out ourselves. We had no use for the establishment; couldn't relate to that bullshit. We were into psychedelics, into rock music, into Asian unity, into a very cosmic trip."

Big Bob tells of one of the "cosmic trips": "We had a lot of crazy experiences. I remember one time after one of our little parties a bunch of dudes got in my van 'cause I said I was gonna drive up the coast to Ventura to see the sunrise." Big Bob rubs his eyes and beard as he continues, "I remember that I was pretty stoned at the time. I dropped some mescaline and was smoking [weed] and drinking, you know, getting kinda loose."

"Anyway...I got on the road and noticed those five or six dudes spacing out in the back of the van. I had about four-hundred hits of mescaline and pycylobin sitting on the front seat between me and Lil' Bobby. So I passed that shit around and everyone else was holding dope on them, smoking grass and hash, you know how it is. Everyone was getting really high. So I closed the curtain between me and the back of the van and then me and Lil' Bobby decided we would highjack these dudes up to the city—San Francisco, you know? Kinda as a joke 'cause these dudes sure didn't know what was going on."

"Anyhow..." Big Bob stretches his broad arms as he continues, "me and Lil' Bobby kept dropping small chips of the mescaline. And the people in the back were either so spaced out or just crashed they didn't notice that we were on the road seven or eight hours. In fact, me and

GARDENA

Lil' Bobby hardly noticed that and we were driving."

"I remember this dude we call 'Beaver' was the last one to realize where we were. He was only sixteen years old then and he was stoned. So as we were coming into 'Frisco, crossing the Oakland Bridge or something, Beav finally gets up and looks out of the window and says to me 'Is that Ventura?'"

"Crazy Times" such as these eventually became the principal motivating force behind Come Together. A suspicious City Hall refused to cooperate with the group on any constructive programs. The reputation of the group within more established circles of the city became marred. Rumors passed saying Come Together was nothing more than a group of drug-using hippie radicals. In the end, Come Together could no longer bear the weight of combating the abuse of death drugs and waging a youth revolt in which the use of drugs played a major role. By early 1970, Come Together was no more, the center was closed and the membership scattered. What Come Together did accomplish in its short existence was to expose problems in Gardena which many were unfamiliar with or were attempting to ignore. In the suburbs all was not well. Come Together pointed out that among many of the youth there was a disenchantment with the established structure of politics, economics, and middle class society in general. Young alienated Asian youths were destroying themselves with dangerous drugs. Come Together, many a time, had literally saved potent O.D. victims. The emergency ward of Gardena Memorial Hospital was familiar stomping grounds when someone "had to be pulled through." Yet, in the end it was drugs along with an uncompromising city government and an apathetic community which ended Come Together.

SBAI: Community Outreach/Outcast

The old dental building which Come Together used remained closed for a half year. The only activity was the pitter-patter of the mice and the falling of plaster. In other Asian communities of the Los Angeles area, a multiplicity of "movement" groups had established themselves since the paleolithic era of Come Together. In Gardena the youth of the city settled into what could be called an emotionally sympathetic state of detachment. Kent State killings had rocked the nation the preceeding spring and many Gardena youths had rallied support behind the arrest of two *Gidra* staffers at UCLA. In addition the drug problem on the streets was no longer a casual matter. In 1970, over two-hundred and fifty drug overdoses by Asians were reported by the Gardena Memorial Hospital. Eight suicide attempts were reported by the Gardena police department. How many hundreds went unreported is left to anyone's imagination, but it is safe to say that a vast majority of the O.D.s are never reported to anyone.

At the end of the summer of 1970, another community level group formed and directed its energies toward helping the youth of Gardena. Target areas included combating drug abuse initially, then general community service in the area of youth programs and political education.

Gary Uyekawa, a twenty-six year old sansei whose hair closely resembles a Brillo soap pad, was instrumental in the direction of the group. He recalls the "early days." "It was in September, 1970, we first met. The original group included students, ex-drug users, social workers, parents and various other interested community members. We were all disturbed about some of the conditions which exist in Gardena and the South Bay community of Los Angeles. Specifi-

cally we were disturbed about the drug situation, increasing numbers of high school drop outs, parent-child division, cultural alienation and similar problems which plague Asian Americans in the area. Because we are Asian American we can relate to people of our culture and therefore our name became South Bay Asian Involvement (SBAI)."

After a series of initial meetings in which the foundation of the organization was laid down, a search for a base of operations ended when someone suggested the old Come Together center. At first hesitation about using the center in which Come Together operated from arose because many in the new SBAI wanted to avoid being attached to any of the negative images which Come Together had developed. It was felt that the negative reputation of Come Together more than anything else had isolated it from constructive community service and credible communication. SBAI was to be a whole new group; a second attempt at reaching the youth of the huge Gardena netherworld.

Carefully planning for outreach work and renovating the old Come Together center consumed the remainder of the year and a good portion of the early part of 1971. By May 1971, the remodeled SBAI Drop-In Center was opened amid a series of local rock bands blasting away at a noontime crowd of several hundred curious on-lookers. Inside, the center looked as if some serious business was about to be finally taken care of. Gone were the "smoking den" and "Crash pad" of the old Come Together days and in its place was a business office, photo lab, and library.

It was a glorious beginning and during the summer of 1971, the weekly Tuesday night meetings would see fifty, sixty and more people crowded throughout the building, wanting to get involved, wanting to become aware and motivated by what the actual meaning of being Asian and living in Gardena was. Special activities and events were staged in order to strengthen the unity of the group. A series of car washes, dance/concerts and camping trips occurred and the group, or at least those at the core of the group developed very close personal ties.

Again, as happened with Come Together, those Gardena Sanseis who collectively were called SBAI developed in the same spirit as a family would. One could almost sense the beginning of what would be very long personal relationships.

In the later part of 1971, SBAI established a working relationship with a similar grass roots group operating in the Boyle Heights district of East Los Angeles. This was the now defunct Go For Broke. Together the two groups staged a series of "Satori" or sensitivity workshops to the various community groups and individuals around the LA area. It goes without saying that inter-sectional relationships such as this one between SBAI and Go For Broke have been far too rare within the movement in LA.

It also goes without saying that SBAI was not entirely a straight group. A portion of the "craziness" generated by Come Together and the contemporary atmosphere of Gardena which created a large body of Asian "freaks" had undoubtedly woven itself into the fiber of SBAI. First of all, SBAI looked like a bunch of hippies. This was one point at which there was no compromise. The Who, who by the way, reincarnated as an SBAI member, could be heard from time to time saying, "We all know it ain't how you look that matters; it's how you think and what you do that's important."

But by 1971, the city of Gardena had grown accustomed to longhaired community workers for there were a growing number of them who through hard work had proven their sincerity in carrying out responsible community services. Thus the "hippie" which had had a neg-

ative effect upon Come Together had almost no effect upon SBAI. It was up to the group to prove its capabilities to the youth and the whole community, hippies or not, actual work and service would be the final deciding point.

As more time passed, much of the initial enthusiasm began to fade. Slowly the number of members began to decline. What remained in the place of what was once a large body were a dozen or so committed SBAI members. What was bringing about this change, this gradual decline? First of all SBAI could not maintain any semblance of on-going, long-range programs or activities which would necessitate the employment of fifty to sixty people. Wild attempts to utilize these people had led to the creation of: a music workshop, a photo workshop, an automotive class, a silk-screening group, a political education study group, and a drug education workshop but all to little or no avail, SBAI's membership continued to shrink.

As a result of the downward trend in membership and activity a moratorium was called in early 1972. All organizational activity was halted in order to carry on internal development and a reaffirmation of directions and goals. Times were looking very glommy. As an outcome of the month-long moratorium more out-reach work was planned. Dances were held and they were wild affairs including top Asian American bands and a light show production which became known as the Space Brigade Light Show. Considerable amounts of support were shown. In addition to the dances a series of "community educationals" were organized. The first two centered upon drug abuse and a third was focused on Asian Americans and the Educational system. These were met with lukewarm response yet nothing attempted had produced any upward trend in the membership at SBAI. Frustration set in yet determination also remained. The core of the group shrank even further to eight or ten members. This had the side benefit of producing a very tight feeling of responsibility within the group to one another. Responsibilities and commitment were shared. If one person "screwed-up" in any way, it was the whole group which suffered. Good times, hard work, and bad times were shared by all.

In mid-1972, an ex-Come Together member who had managed to stay on with SBAI produced one of the tragic times. His nickname was "the Senator." He had gained this tag when he successfully ran for a student senate seat at Long Beach State. And he was "a Gardena boy" from way back. He had experienced many of the phases which Gardena sanseis had been exposed to. In high school he was into surfing, then cars and cycles. From this he became a part of Gardena's immense drug scene; he experimented heavily with psychedelic chemicals. Finally he underwent the Asian identity/awareness synthesis which many of us have experienced. He became involved in the Asian American Student Alliance at Long Beach State, he was one of the founders of Come Together and a member of SBAI. And perhaps more importantly or fundamentally, he had rejected the middle-class ghetto which is Gardena. The psychological entrapment which directs the Japanese Americans in Gardena into an endless cycle of middle-class strivings, goals and expectations. He was attempting to break free as so many of the alienated youth of the city were doing. He wanted to be free.

In the final analysis perhaps none of the alternatives which he tried provided any long-lasting solutions. Perhaps what he was trying to escape from was a meaningless reality.

Nevertheless one night as "the Senator" drove alone through the harbor area south of Gardena he accidentally lost control of his car and rammed into a parked car. A minor accident. But what was going on in the Senator's

mind was not minor by any means. After surveying the crash scene he suddenly began running wildly up a nearby hill. By now patrolling police happened to stop at the accident and saw the young Sansei running up the hill. The Senator had in his possession a small three inch pocket knife. Then it happened; as he was running, for some still unexplainable reason, the Senator pulled the knife out and began stabbing himself. Again and again, running and stabbing until he had reached the top of the hill. There he stopped and fell. By the time the police reached him, he was dead.

This was written off rather routinely by the police as just another suicide. The press played it up as a "samurai death by a Gardena youth." But for those who knew the Senator, and especially his friends in SBAI and the old Come Together, such aloofness could not be maintained.

Kazumi "Boom-Boom" Nakawatase, a round usually jovial twenty-year-old spoke out the night after the word of the Senator's strange death spread through Gardena, "All I know is that a brother is dead. And we're sitting here feeling bad and trying to rationalize what happened. The thing is, is that there's one brother dead and nobody here, even though we considered him our friend, nobody knew what was on his mind last night."

Perhaps at that point many in SBAI realized that either the bullshit would have to stop or SBAI would fail. Talk could become endless; it was actions, well-planned actions which would prevent any more "Senator suicides" from happening.

Yet as 1973 rolled around, the situation had deteriorated even further. New membership could not be developed and SBAI's financial situation became terminal. Last ditch efforts included hastily organized fund raising dances which were almost ignored by the youth of the community. One uninvolved teenaged Sansei told this writer recently, "The days of protesting and demonstrations are over. People ain't into that kind of thing anymore. It was good while it lasted, you know, it got us some changes and a lot of people got their heads together, which is cool, but now days all the people I know, all the young people, are back into school or at gigs and in their spare time they would rather relax at the beach or out in the country. I'm not saying the movement is bad, it's just that people have a hard time relating to it. Everybody just wants to get into other things."

A reactionary statement? Hardly, for talk such as this is very indicative of the general mood of many in the "Asian suburb" of Gardena. The long hair, casual life-style, and rock music is still there and drugs are definitely a part of the scene but there is very little political development outside of a small dedicated group which calls itself "the Gardena movement."

On August 7, 1973, South Bay Asian Involvement put itself into an indefinite period of moratorium. The center was closed down once again and left to the pitter-patter of the mice. Kerry Doi, one of the founders of the group, sadly stated at the last meeting, "After all the talk and action and everything else, it was apathy which killed SBAI."

During its three years existence, SBAI managed to go a few steps beyond Come Together as far as community services are concerned. First, SBAI was able to mobilize the youth of Gardena at crucial times; to pack City Council meetings in Gardena when decisions affecting the youth were up for debate. As a result of this, the City of Gardena's Youth and Community Services Office (YACSO) is now operating a unique Youth Center. It is the first municipally funded youth center in the nation and important community services have emanated from inside its

walls. YACSO is headed by Karl Nobuyuki and under him are several other Asians working in service areas of the Youth Center. An important note here is that all the Asians now employed by the city were also SBAI members. Thus, SBAI has been able to penetrate the surface of city government as the young Asians have entered into key areas within the Youth Center. Kerry Doi works as an employment counselor in the HRD outpost, Gary Morishita and Gary Uyekawa are staff "community workers" with the latter Gary being very instrumental in formulating the Asian American Drug Abuse Program (AADAP) which recently received funding from the National Institute on Mental Health for a half-million dollars. Sitting on a youth-to-city liaison group called the Gardena Youth Congress, we find Gary Oshiro another SBAI member in a very influential position.

As for the "sistuh" in the area there is a newly founded Gardena Women's Group. Started in December of 1972, perhaps the best definition of the group comes from a young lady, Marlene "Mars" Tarumoto, also an old SBAI member, "Basically, the reason we got together is to provide sisters in this area support. We discuss problems which only sisters could really understand." And what about the future? Mars continues, "Well, it's hard to say. We planned a birth control seminar and that fell through but our fund raising concert went off okay so now we can start building a resource library and hopefully recruit more members and get more activities going."

As a final word regarding South Bay Asian Involvement, I must admit it was not easy for this *Gidra* writer to express everything felt for SBAI. Much is intangible; the warmth, the strong friendship, the frustrations, the disappointments and the love generated by SBAI is perhaps its only legacy. Now it appears to be gone but it is not forgotten in my mind, for I too was a SBAI member.

The Almighty Gardena Pioneer Project.

There is absolutely no doubt in the mind of this writer that the most successful of the Asian American Community service projects in Gardena is the one and only Gardena Pioneer Project. Since its founding date in June of 1970, the "project" has established itself as a well-respected hard working organization fulfilling many of the needs of the Gardena area Issei.

An attractive young Sansei woman, Karen Chomori was very instrumental in organizing the group. She says, "At first, a lot of people questioned the validity of the project because it was believed that Gardena and especially Gardena Isseis didn't have any problems. People often reacted by saying we were rocking the boat and eventually it was up to us to prove that we were a viable community service."

Once again a fear of radical politics within the citizens of Gardena made initial progress rough. According to the Gardena Chamber of Commerce everything in Gardena was supposed to be in harmony. All races lived side by side, taxes were low, schools were good, and for recreation adults could have fun at any one of the numerous poker clubs in the city. But what about the youth and the elderly? The city PR men looked the other way.

By October, 1970, the initial social events included a screening of the "Seven Samurai" and a field trip to the L.A. County Arboretum. A significant number of Issei attended both events and this physically demonstrated a need and a desire for Pioneer Project functions by the very people it would be serving.

Karen continues, "I guess at first people around here were basically afraid of us. It was a new type of organization created during very turbulent times. People might have thought we were some type of left-wing radical militant

political group... which isn't exactly true."

It was decided to let the Issei themselves partake in the actual decision making at the very foundation of the group. Open meetings were held and all segments of the community were able to air opinions and viewpoints on the creation of such a group. Finally it was unanimously decided to formalize the organization and incorporate. Thus, began the Gardena Pioneer Project.

Karen described some of the motivation behind the project, "Basically, the Issei in Gardena or other middle-class areas are often isolated. Their Nisei children are busy raising a family of their own and the Sansei are in school and have their own set of friends and responsibilities. Gardena isn't a compact community like Little Tokyo, so the Issei can't just go visit their friends because often several miles separate them and they are without transportation. The Gardena Pioneer Project offers the Issei something to belong to and a chance to get together."

Besides Issei, the "project" involves Nisei and Sansei. Abbroad cross-section of the community attends the weekly meeting; students, housewives and workers. Through working on the project, these people have developed a community awareness which wasn't there before. Problems and situations unknown to many are investigated and solutions are developed.

Tall and lanky, David Uyekawa, a project worker, described some of the problems which face the Issei in Gardena, "Well... uh, besides the isolation factor, there are language problems, health problems, and income problems, plus they (the Issei) all have a common history and a very common present living situation which makes the coming together of Issei an almost natural thing. Right now we have approximately three hundred Issei on our mailing list. These are the people who are participating in our functions."

Today the "project" operates out of a small office structure which is aptly named the Gardena Pioneer Center. This site has developed into a social center for workshops and classes, meetings and affords people the opportunity to socialize in a "living room" atmosphere.

In regards to other special activities, Karen says, "We average about one special activity per month throughout the year. Our big event of every year is the annual Hanami (Wildflower trip). This we coordinate with the other Pioneer Projects in Los Angeles, Long Beach, Pasadena, Orange County, and West Los Angeles. Besides that, we've had a couple of talent shows and a whole series of field trips: to the Queen Mary, the Descanso Gardens and cherry picking events. We've also staged pot-luck dinners and picnics and movie screenings. And we also have regular on-going workshops and classes in Japanese dance, language, handicrafts, and a goh club."

The apparent success of the Pioneer Project is mainly due to the fact that those who work on the project do so very unselfishly, all are volunteers, no one has ever been paid one cent for the hundreds of work-hours required throughout the year. Through working together over a period of time, a fringe benefit has been an increased communication between the three generations in the Japanese American Community of the Gardena area.

David interjects, "We... uh, we finally got to the point where the people who were questioning us at the time we started now realize that we are a positive thing, you know, a truly responsible community service group."

Karen adds, "Once in a while we get criticized by some people who consider themselves heavy radicals or something because they think our activities are bourgeois, you know, like taking middle-class Gardena Isseis to the country or any other field trip or movies or anywhere. But the time and the people involved and the ac-

GARDENA

tual work being carried out makes these services important and justified and definitely not bourgeois."

Since the inception of the project it has served as an introduction to other involvement. People have come to the project with a wide range of political beliefs and motivations. Those who have stayed on have gained valuable insight into the dynamics of community service and involvement. The insight has often been enough to motivate additional involvement in other community groups. As an example, a considerable portion of the membership of the project has also participated in the South Bay Asian Involvement group at one time or another and vice versa.

Also, because of the large cross-section of people who work on the project there is an accompanying array of skills and talent. Karen described how the people-power at the project is utilized, "The project is broken into various special tasks committees. A legal service offers counseling to the elderly and also training of paralegal technicians. A media group produces slide shows and other multi-media presentations as an educational arm of the Gardena Pioneer Project. The publicity committee handles all the public relations work of the project in promoting functions and communication with various individuals and institutions in Gardena, such as the city government, churches and so on. A health workshop offers educational information on nutritional diets and safeguarding of personal health. In the past many of the younger members have participated in educational study groups which touch upon a variety of topics including: Asian American history, martial arts, and U.S. involvement in Southeast Asia."

David jumps in, "Oh yeah... also... uh, within the Gardena Pioneer Center is an outpost for the L.A. County Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) which offers the senior citizens counseling in available social services and social security. Put that in your paper... And don't forget to mention the Issei Board."

The Issei are given a strong voice in all project policy decisions through a vehicle called the Issei Board. This was created almost at the outset of the project for the very reason of letting Isseis determine how the remainder of their lives would be directed.

As for the future, it looks good. New members including Issei, Nisei, and Sansei are constantly becoming involved. When asked, Karen stated a few future goals, "We would like to become self-sufficient, and involve the Issei Board and the Issei membership in general in more decision making on a day-to-day basis. Also, we would like to open up the center even more to the Issei. A lot of times they see some Niseis or Sanseis in here and they think we're having some kind of important meeting so they don't come in because they think they would be intruding. But after all, this is their center just as much as it is ours (Sanseis and Niseis) so we would like to see much more 'drop-in' activity generated."

A bushy-haired and bespectacled Gary Uye-

kawa offered a little insight on the Pioneer Project from a different angle. "It has grown in quantity, adding new members, new activities and such, but not much political growth has taken place and that should be dealt with in the center." In the eyes of this writer this comment seems to be true, however I must mention that on an individual level, many of the core people working in the project have developed a keen political insight into the problems of the society around them. The question remains: How does this personal insight transfer over to the group-at-large without again raising eyebrows in the community along with rumors of radical politics and activities emanating from the project's center. Gardena, sorry to say, is still a very traditionally oriented community. New ideas, radical or not, must be communicated very sensitively. The project has been very successful in the past, successful in terms of reaching a large number of people and establishing credibility in the community and presently it is pushing on into the future with only a few clouds to fret over.

Now it is mid-1973, and for a young Asian, Gardena is a very "hip" place to be. A whole youth lifestyle revolves around the Gardena scene. The hard work of Nisei parents and Issei grandparents has provided physical comfort. The family elders themselves look to upcoming Sanseis with bright hopes for the future. And people are doing what they feel they have to do. If nothing else, the Gardena movement has been successful at getting Asians to become aware of and understand their identity, heritage, and also get a feel for the way the rest of the country is structured. So at the moment, the Gardena Asian is in the social limelight. (They think) They make the scenes happen. They start all the trends. They're hip to the whole universe. . . and they're "out-to-lunch."

The True Story of "Out-to-Lunch"

The Allman Brothers Band is attempting to break out of a stereo in the background as "Gee-Gee," a twenty-two-year-old, longhair Asian male, settles back with a beer and a joint to begin his tale. "Uhhh... let's see... yeah, about a month ago me and my two partners, we dropped some of that red pyramid acid that's been going around. So we kinda cruised up the coast to above Santa Barbara. You know just bumping along over the highway watching the mountains cave in. Well, finally we saw this little dirt road off to the side of the highway. So we took it in for a little while and then we parked the van near somewhere; trees or fields or something. And we were sitting in the van with the breeze blowing across us through the door going 'ahhh, Aaahhh' and checking out the stars and shit like that. Then my partner here (pointing across the room to another young Asian male wearing a broad smile) he gets up and runs out into the open and he's laughing and jumping up and down and dancing around waving his arms and yelling, 'I'm out to lunch! I'm out-to-lunch!' (Heavy accent on the "lunch.")

"So anyhow me and the other dude in the

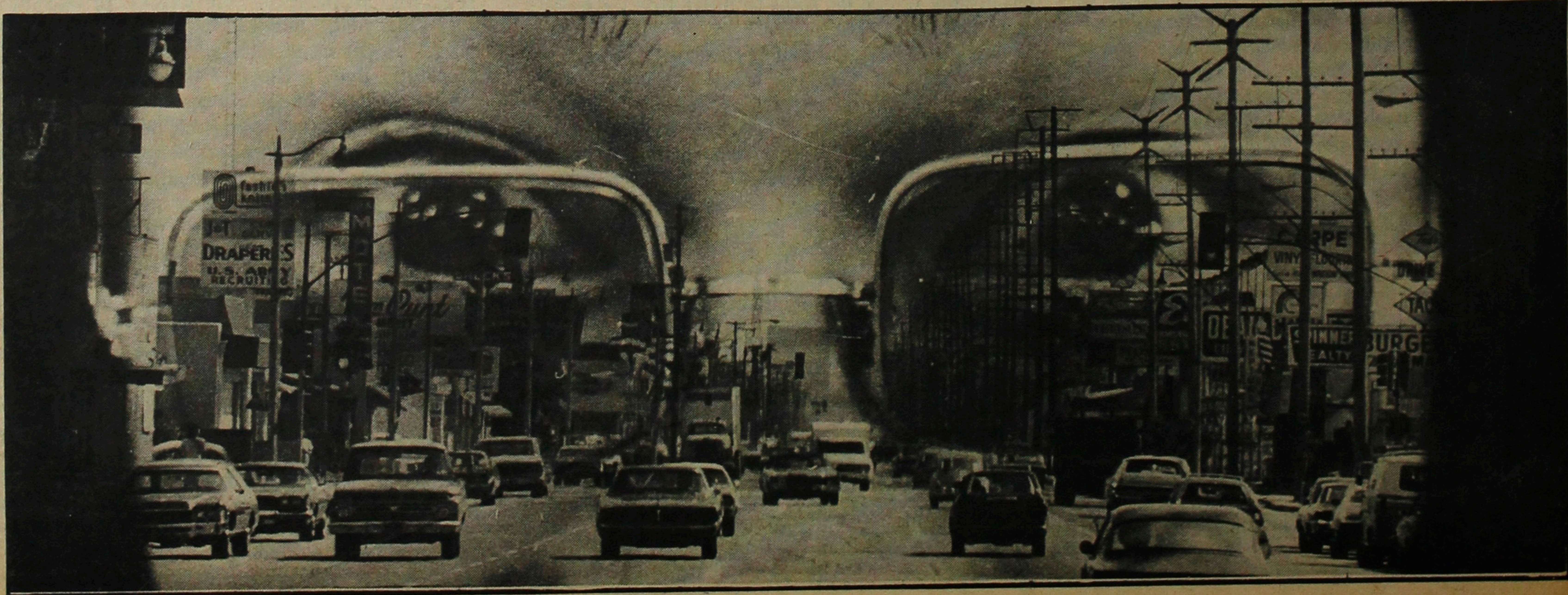
van, you know, we're thinking 'man, this cat has finally flipped.' But we kinda joined him 'cause it looked like he was having so much fun. And it really was. Man, I was laughing so hard I couldn't breathe and we was all dancin' and yellin' 'I'm out to lunch. I'm out to lunch.' Yeah... and anyhow after about three or four hours of this we see these headlights coming at us really fast from down the road. It was the pigs. And we go 'Whoa shit... we're out-to-lunch.' And we jam back into the van and closed the doors and this dude (again pointing at the smiling face across the room) man, he couldn't get the stupid curtains closed. He was still giggling and making weird noises and saying, 'man, I'm out to lunch.' Anyway finally we all decide just to lie down in the van and be real quiet. So here comes the pigs, you know, driving up, shining their spotlights all over the place. And they come right up next to the van and we're lying on the floor of the van going 'whoa shit' and then they shine their lights all over the inside of the van. You could see the light rays going zing zing all over. Man it was a badd lightshow. I was thinking 'Man this acid is all right.' But finally a pig comes walking up to the van and he's peeking around and shit, so I opened the window and he says 'What are you fellows doing out here?' Then this jerk (again fingered out across the room) he says, 'Ahh man, don't bother me I'm out to lunch.' Anyway, the pig was alright to us. He said if we wanted to sleep to drive about a mile up the highway and we could crash there at a reststop. So we all said 'Thank-you-office-fur-sir' and we blasted the van away from there.

"So anyway... the reststop he told us about had a couple of gas stations and a small restaurant and a huge parking lot. So we drove way out to the corner of one of the lots. We were still pretty spaced out... you know "out-to-lunch" so we were listening to the radio and then this fool's (across the room one more time) stomach starts going 'gaaorruu... grraaaooorruuu... beeoogggraaooorruueee' really loud. Man, we were busting up laughing and yelling 'Out to lunch' over and over. Then he says 'Man... I wanna get something to eat... I'm hungry.'

"So we decided to check out the restaurant and right before we walked into the place we get all paranoid and everything and were thinking 'Man... wonder if there's nothing but a bunch of redneck honkies in there and they stare at us and give us hard looks and shit.' But then he goes 'It's all right man, we just tell 'em we're out to lunch.'"

Thus ends a somewhat "adjusted" view of the City of Gardena. Hopefully all you faithful *Gidra* readers out there have gained some insight into its character, its people, its problems, its folklore and its legends. Gardena, after all, is a very human town, with real people dealing with very real day-to-day situations. And it's not perfect... but it's home. So if you'll excuse me, I'm going "out-to-lunch."

—Steve Tatsukawa





AADAP DECLARES WAR ON DRUGS

An Introduction to the Asian American Drug Abuse Program.

In an effort to effectively combat the incidence of drug abuse in the Asian American community in Los Angeles, the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) has awarded a \$320,000 grant to the Asian American Drug Abuse Program (AADAP, Inc.). The grant was awarded to be effective as of July 1, 1973 and projected over three years should total 1½ million dollars.

With rumored reports of five to ten million pills being hijacked in the Los Angeles area, the threat of an upswing of barbiturate addiction appears likely.

The AADAP is charged with the responsibility to initiate such a treatment facility. The AADAP holds two major unique factors:

1. Intrinsic to the design of the AADAP is that the program will focus primarily upon the problems and causes of barbiturate addiction. When established, AADAP will be the nation's only barbiturate treatment center. By comparison, other treatment programs focus primarily upon the problems of heroin and possibly methadone addiction. Services tend to emphasize reduction of, or elimination of drug dependency.

"...It is clear that the requirements for grant applications to NIMH are geared specifically for heroin and/or opiate addiction and clearly discriminate against comprehensive treatment of sedative-hypnotic drug misuse." (AADAP, Inc., December 14, 1972, p. 45).

2. AADAP will focus upon a high inclusion factor for Asian Americans. In the past, most treatment programs recorded very few, if any Asian Americans in case

records. Simultaneously and concurrently, the Asian community recorded a rate of thirty-one overdose deaths per year (Ibid, p. 39). The dilemma faced by the Asian community, then, suggested that the addiction and misuse of wrong drug and consistent inaccessibility to treatment services is a national priority issue (Paul Namkung, National Conference on Drug Abuse, December, 1972, Report to the Conference, *Asian American Drug Addiction—The Quiet Problem*, p.1).

The AADAP will consist of one 24-hour treatment stabilization unit that will serve as a live-in residency component. The unit will be drug free. The administering of medication and detoxification will be handled by two county hospitals—Rancho Los Amigos and Harbor General Hospital. In addition, one to two-day care units will be set up to service individuals that are not in need of intensive twenty-four hour care, but require daily activity in a structured environment. Also, an Outreach Team will be formed to provide crisis intervention services and maintain community contact. Administration will be handled by the Administrative component to be located in the Echo Park Area.

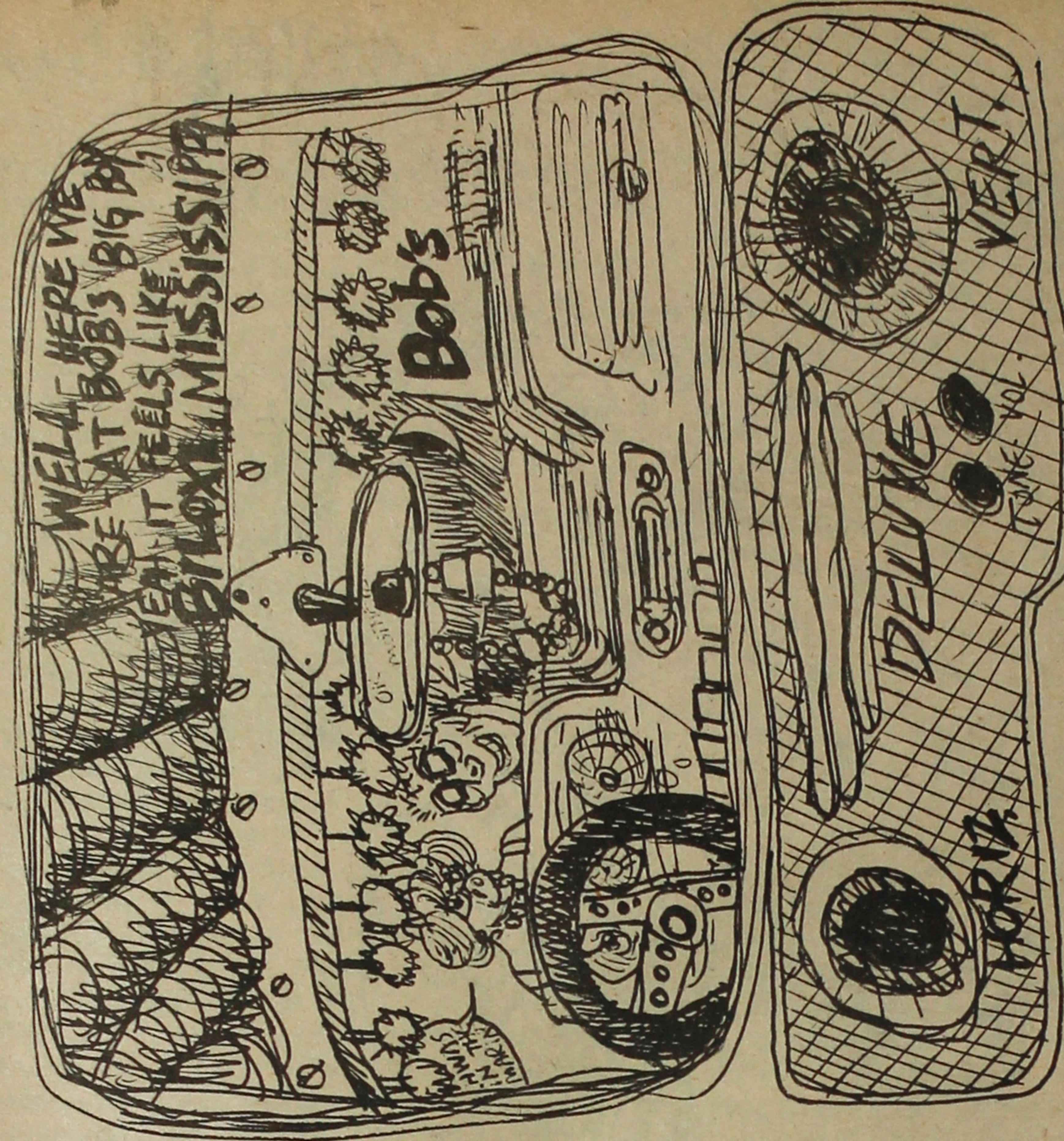
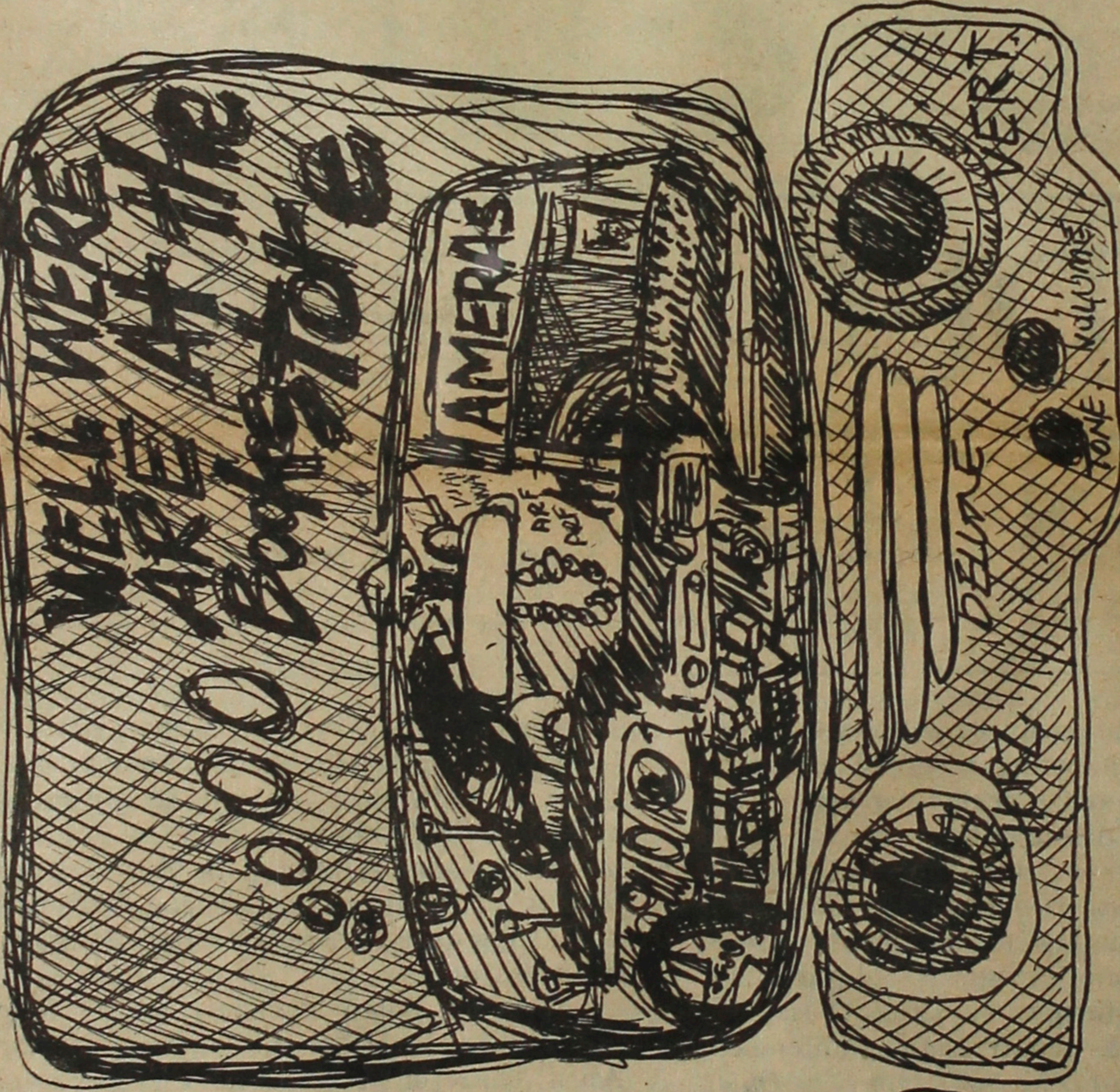
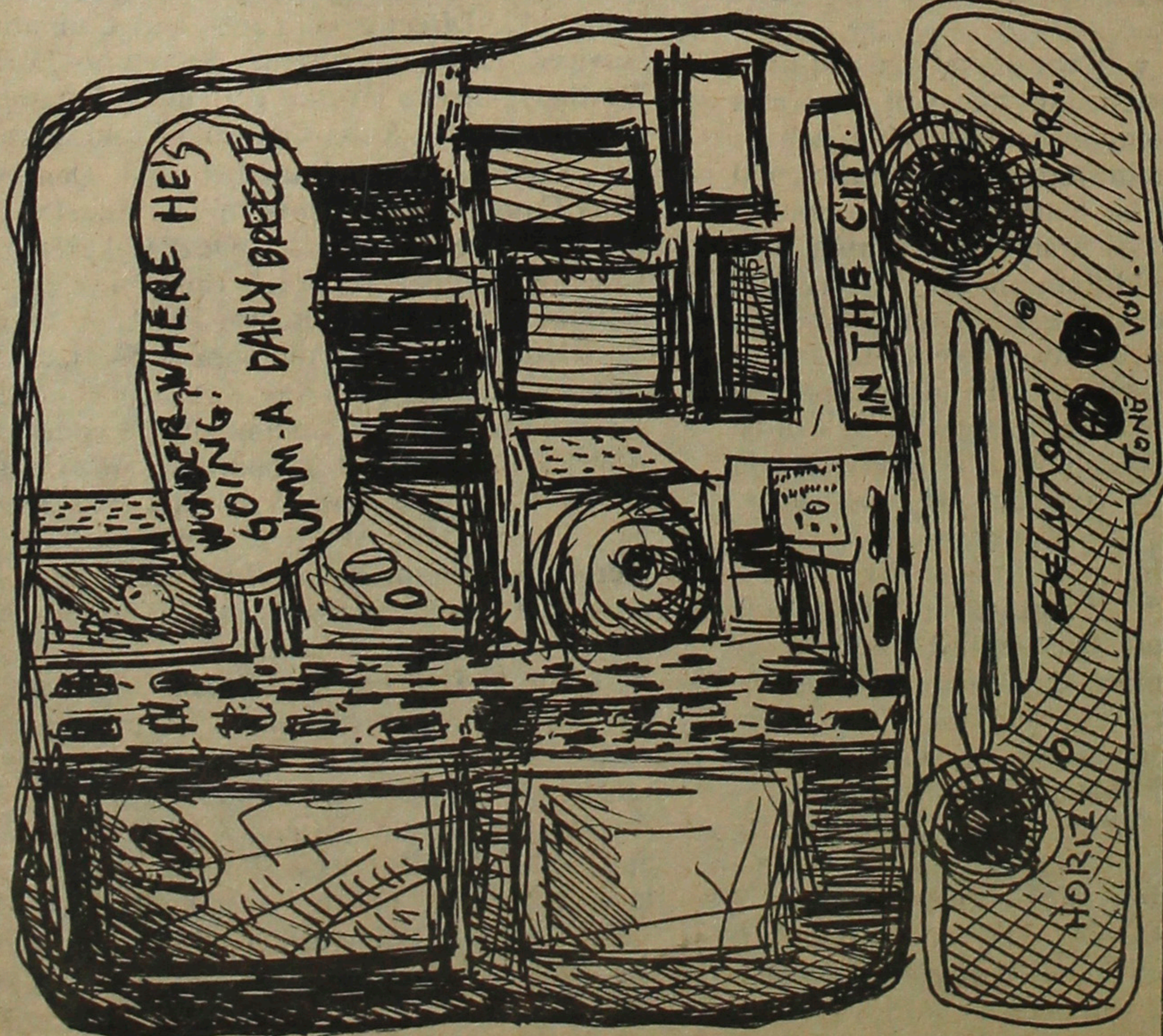
While the AADAP venture is a county-wide program, federal guidelines require that primary service areas be indicated in the grant application. The latter are the South Bay and Crenshaw-West Adams areas of Los Angeles County.

Since AADAP has pledged to respond to community needs, three modes of community input have been built into the operational design of the program. First, there is a general membership to AADAP. The general membership consists of individuals that pledge support of the AADAP and will actively work in formulation of AADAP. Second, a community advisory

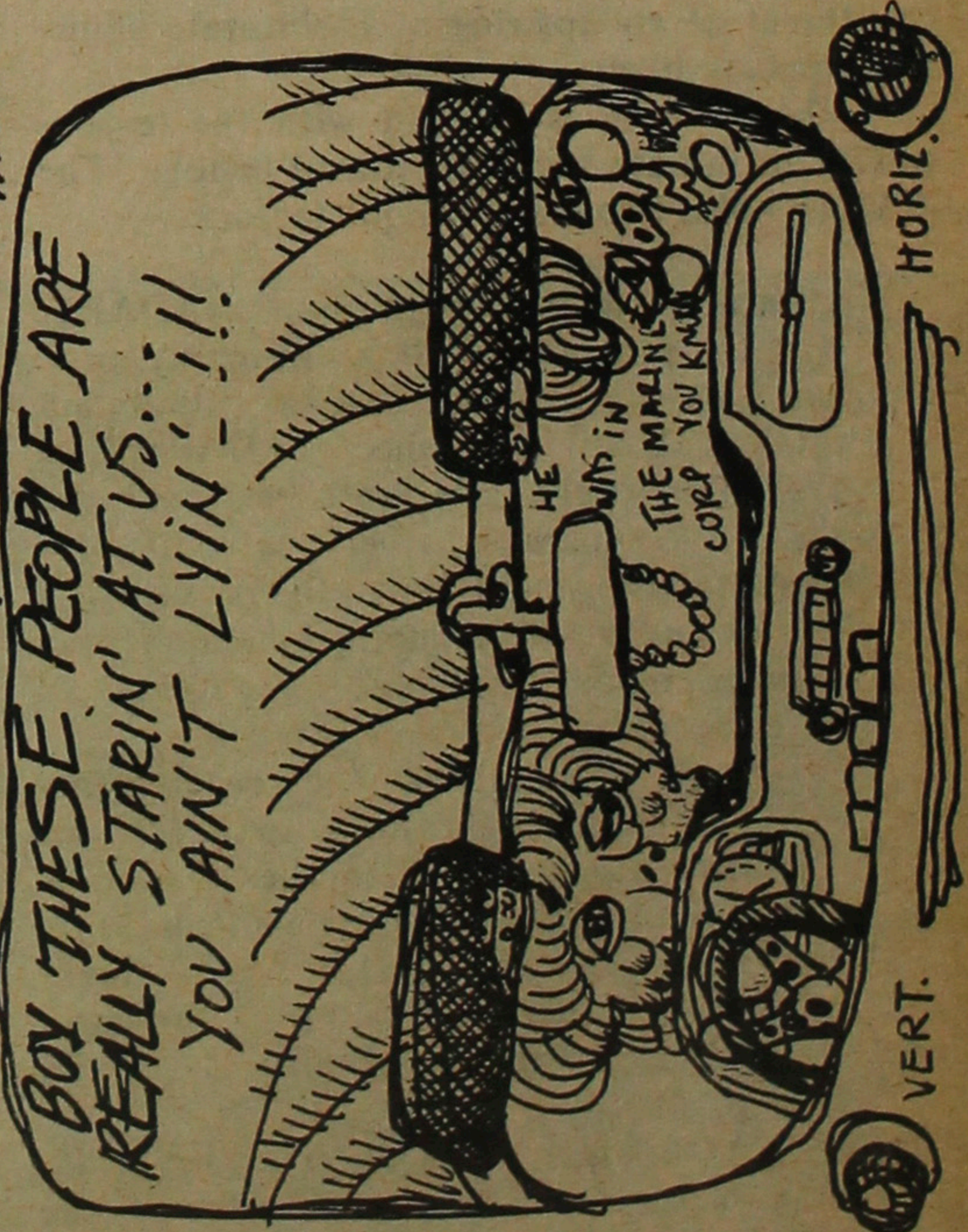
board will be selected from the general membership to assist in the decision-making process. Currently individuals are being sought for membership on the Community Advisory Board. Finally, the Corporate Board or Board of Directors (selected from the General Membership) will assume corporate responsibility of the AADAP endeavor.

Current board members are as follows: Chairperson—Ester Soriano, community worker, Asian Outreach Team; Vice-Chairperson—Karl Nobuyuki, Director of Youth and Community Services, City of Gardena; Secretary—Marlene Weathers, Asian Women's Center; Treasurer—Gary Uyekawa, Asian Outreach Team; Mas Fukai, Commissioner, Narcotics and Dangerous Drug Commission, County of Los Angeles; Simi Potasi, O Mai Fataasi; Sue Obayashi, Personnel Director Gardena Memorial Hospital; Craig Shimabukuro, Regional Director JACL; Al Mendoza, Department of Community Services, Los Angeles County; Rev. Kay Kokubun, Coordinator, Department of Community Services, Los Angeles County; and Tamiko Hirono, Community Workers' Collective. Vacancies have recently been open and AADAP is seeking people for membership on the Board. Individuals interested are asked to submit resumes to the addresses below.

The AADAP has hired a team of consultants to assist in the development of projects and, in the very near future, will be seeking applicants for the twenty-six positions available. For further information, write to AADAP, c/o Youth and Community Services, 1730 W. Gardena Boulevard, Gardena, California 90249, or AADAP 1320 Glendale Boulevard, Los Angeles, California 90026. Persons seeking information concerning staff applications are requested to submit a resume with their requests.



While Driving to the Printers...



"You're Never Too Old"

a benefit dance

sponsored by:

P.O.T.*



at the Elks Building

607 S. Park View

Sat., Oct. 13

9pm - 2am

open bar

CONTINUOUS ENTERTAINMENT BY:

FOR BID INFORMATION CALL 660-1865

Hiroshima

Windfield Summit

Stash

*PEOPLE OF TODAY -- a newly formed organization with plans to establish a centralized social center for Asians from all over.

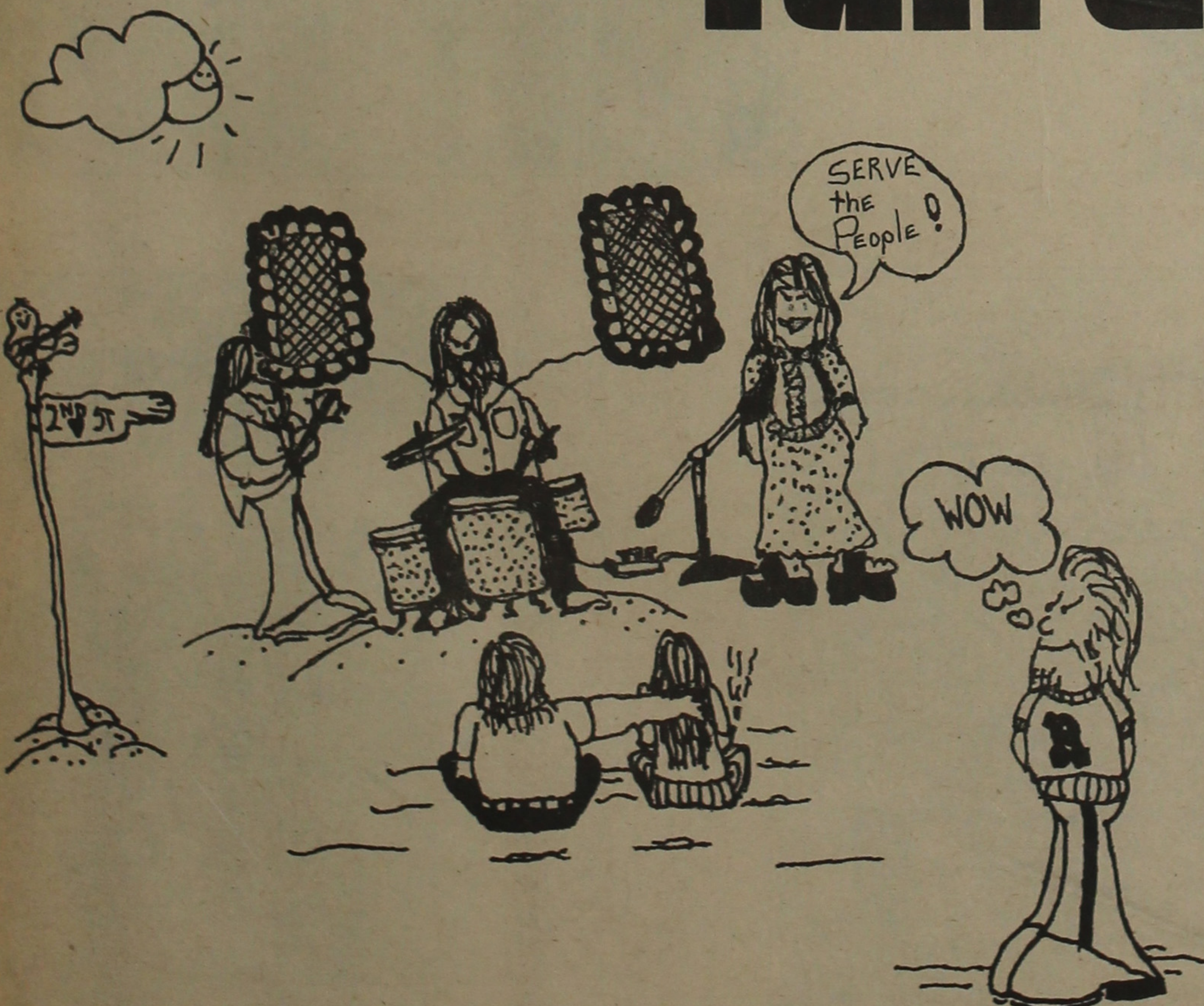
2nd annual street faire

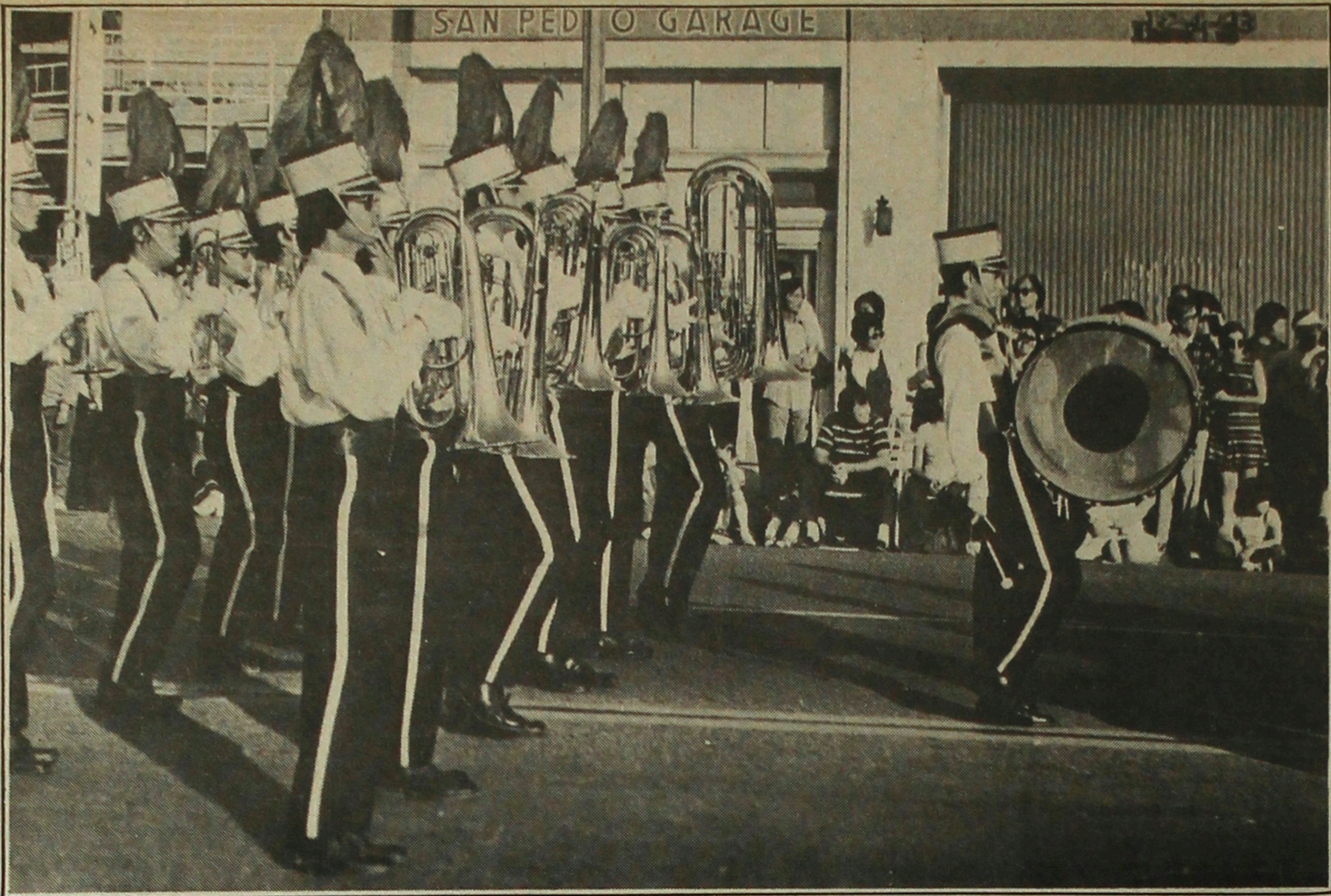
What is a STREET FAIRE? It's a people's event. An alternative to carnivals and bazaars, whose main purpose is to make money. It's displays, workshops, presentations, and entertainment by the people from our own communities.

What is it for? It's a chance for people to get together, young and old. To share information with other groups and to have a good time. It's to demonstrate the involvement and organizations that are dealing with the real problems that not only affect them directly (i.e., drugs, identity, alienation, and redevelopment), but also plague the overall community.

Who is doing it? The people putting on the Street Faire are people working through the Neighborhood Youth Corp (NYC) and those working at the Japanese American Community Services-Asian Involvement (JACS-AI) offices.

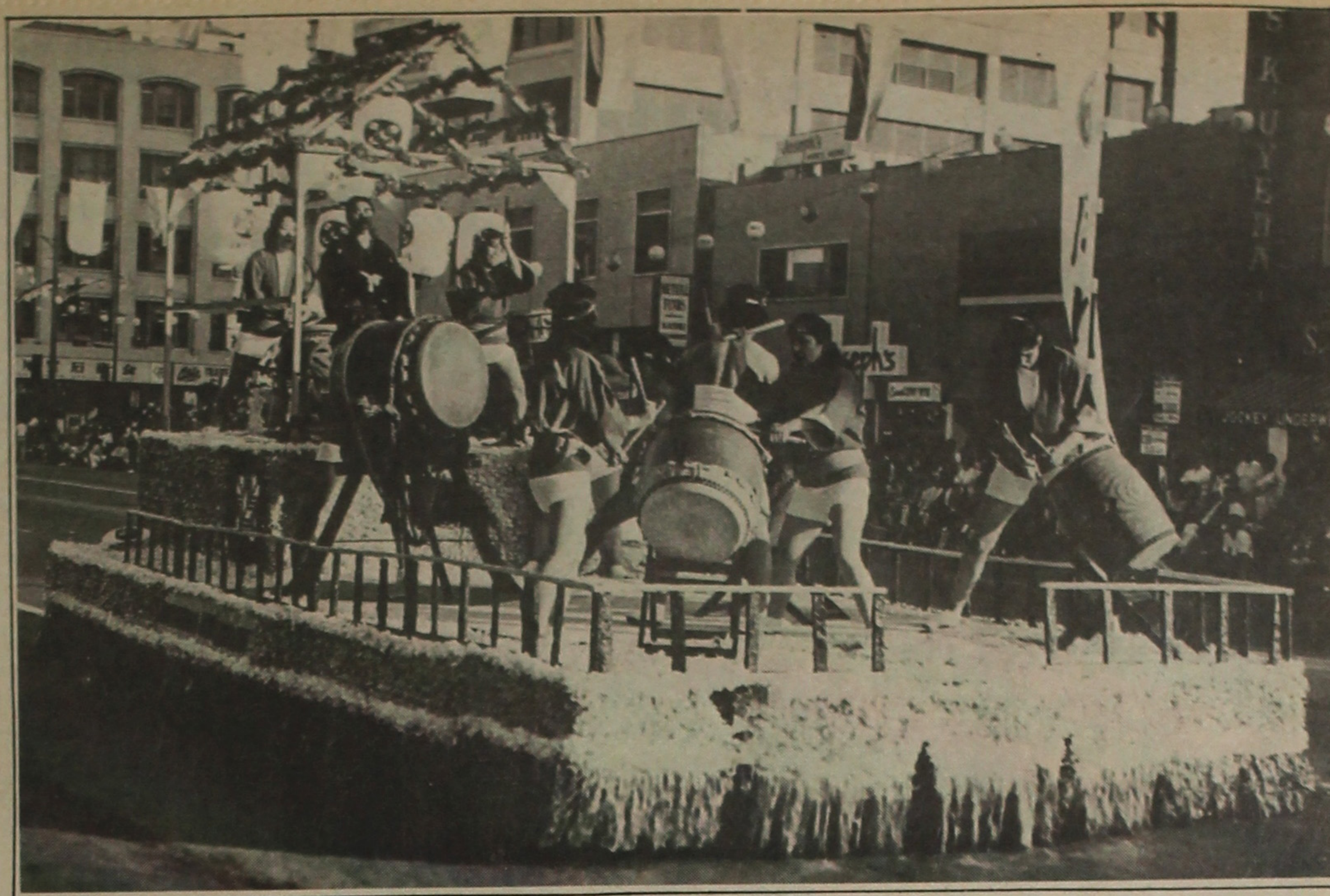
Who will be there? Hopefully you, your friends and family and the people of the different communities.





NISEI W





WEEK '73



Watts

Summer Festival: '73

I remember watching the fires from the roof-top of my house in Gardena back in 1965 when I was nine, and listening to the radio and television about the people struggling in that community. It was the Watts revolt.

And after the revolt, I heard that self-help groups were formed and government agencies started to come into the community. And at the same time the community was getting together, the people were developing a Black pride and awareness.

Now: it was the first day of the Annual Watts Summer Festival which takes place in the heart of Watts at Will Roger's Park. Steve, Candy and myself went to take a few pictures and to check it out.

As we entered from 103rd Street, we could see a lot of booths on the south side of the park. On the north side of the park there were rides and a few displays. Just like in 1965, the police and armed forces were there, only this time, eight years later, they were there to demonstrate and display their ways.

All these things may sound nice, but this is only part of the things that happen in that community. Things haven't changed that much since the summer of '65. There are still problems with drugs, unemployment, education, housing, gangs and welfare.

The Watts Summer Festival is just one way which shows how the Black community is working to defeat these problems and to build a unified community.

I can't wait to see what's in store for next year.

—Tomo Hisamoto





Hell Night, 1973: Three young sansei lads hangin' out in Westwood.

Chanéls

Are My Pals

A Look At An Asian-American
High School Social Club

Part One

— Lisa Domoto

First of all, Chanels is pronounced with a French accent (*sha nels*), and not with an Americanized Asian accent like *channel (chan el)*, which is the way most people say Chanels.

The Chanels, a high school social organization, is basically the last of that type of organization here in Los Angeles. There were others, which failed and there are some now who have formed only recently.

Within the various parts of this article, you will eventually learn what it is that "separates" this particular club from the rest. The future parts of the article will also explain the history of the club and how time has definitely changed the status of the Chanels along with an analysis or evaluation of the Chanels.

The Chanels consists of Asian-American youths (most Japanese) ranging from the ages 14-18. The majority of the members are centered around the Crenshaw area and attend Dorsey High School and Los Angeles High School. There are also a few people from Gardena in the Chanels. These members have joined the Chanels only recently. It is hard for them to adjust to being in a club in L.A. because they feel that they are not really an important part of the club since distance and transportation hinder them from attending all functions.

The Chanels is an inactive member of the Pacific Southwest (PSW) Chapter of the Junior JACL. Inactive meaning that the club only acts indirectly by selling raffle tickets and such for the JACL rather than participating in activities and attending meetings and conferences. The reason for this is that the club would rather concentrate their efforts to their needs and simply that they do not seem to care much or just are not interested enough about the PSW Chapter to participate in the activities.

Since the Chanels do not participate in activities of the PSW Chapter, the club releases its energies on functions within the club. Most of these activities fall into the category of fund-raising. The Chanels had a dance last year which brought in a lot of money and the club had another dance this year in July which was not as successful as the other. Another fund-raiser occurs when the Chanels participate annually in the Crenshaw Square Carnival with a sno-cone booth. This is usually when the club makes the most money even though this year there were many problems. The booth could not start business as early as other booths because the generator was not on, so there was no electricity to start the sno-cone machine. Then the motor on the machine blew out late Saturday afternoon and the club had to close the booth until someone could get hold of another sno-cone machine. Finally the club got another machine a few hours after the first one broke and business got rolling. By Sunday afternoon supplies were running low and there were people from the Chanels booth running in and out of stores buying more cups, straws, spoons, and syrup. Then around 9:00 p.m. Sunday, when the most money is usually made, the second sno-cone machine literally "wore out." Things looked pretty bad and the booth just closed

up. People kept coming to the booth, wanting a sno-cone or kintoki, and had to be turned down. Overlooking all of the problems, the booth still did better than the dance as far as fund-raising is concerned.

Besides those two large fund-raisers, the club has little money-making efforts like cookie sales, sembei sales, and car washes. For the cookie sale, all of the members bake a couple dozen cookies and each member gets around 20 bags to sell. Most of the members end up eating the cookies themselves and paying for it.

Of all the fund-raising activities, the car wash involves the most work. On the day of the car wash you will find Chanels members running around in old torn jeans or cut-off levis with holey T-shirts or tank tops, scrubbing cars and splashing water. There are some members on the side trying to sell the cookies that they did not sell before. At the end of the day everyone is soaking wet and beat.

Besides fund-raisers, the Chanels have activities which are just for fun. These activities are usually beach parties, basketball and volleyball games against other clubs and organizations.

The beach parties are not really parties. They are just retreats to get away from the fund-raisers and to go down to the beach to relax. Everyone brings something to eat, like hot dog buns, soda, potato chips, or marshmallows and just get together and have a good time.

Last year the Chanels had a basketball game against the Duprees. The Duprees are also a Junior JACL organization in the PSW Chapter. Both clubs met at the Audubon Jr. High School gym and had a friendly game of basketball. The guys from the Chanels could not keep up with the Duprees and the final result was the Duprees winning the game. There were no hard feelings and most people went home happy.

It's too bad that the same can not be said for the volleyball games which took place two years ago. The Chanels were in sort of like a league with other clubs like the Les Esprits and teams that people just put together. The volleyball games took place every week at the Audubon Jr. High School gym during the summer. The Chanels had a pretty small team and hardly ever won a game. Even though the Chanels were not No. 1, everyone on the team was having fun and enjoying themselves while some of the other teams were out to kill with their perfect set-ups and fantastic spikes. There were frequent arguments between teams and players about cheating or scores, and someone spiking the ball wrong. The Chanels were just happy to get the ball over the net.

Although it may seem that the Chanels only think of themselves, the club does one service project during the year. This service project is a complete Thanksgiving dinner pre-



Hell Night, 1973: Four young sansei lasses checkin' out the St. Mary's Carnival.

pared by the club and served to the Issei pioneers at the Japanese Pioneer Center on Thanksgiving Day. Complete, meaning the works. Not only a turkey, but yams, biscuits, mashed potatoes, rice, stuffing, vegetables, cranberries, and even gravy. Everyone meets at a kitchen in a church half asleep, at around 5:00 or 6:00 a.m. An hour later, after everyone, over the shock of waking up at 5:00 a.m., is busy running all around the kitchen trying to get the dinner prepared. Some people are washing the turkey, some preparing the stuffing, and others waiting to cook the vegetables, mashed potatoes, and rice.

As always, some people are doing more work than others. At one of these Thanksgiving functions, one guy who was just standing around was watching another guy busily chopping onions and celery for the stuffing. The guy who was standing around told the other guy, "What the hell is the matter with you? How come your eyes are so damn watery?" So then the guy who was busy chopping up the onions and celery stopped chopping those onions and celery and turned his knife toward the other guy and told him, "What the hell do you think I'm doing. . . Just because you don't do a goddamn thing around here. So why don't you just shut up." Good thing they were only kidding or else the guy that was just standing around would not be around at all.

Once all of the food was ready and the biscuits were fresh out of the oven, everyone jumped into a car with all of the food and went down to the Japanese Pioneer Center. Then the club members served the dinner to all of the people and to themselves. Smiling faces of the young and old eating together gave the Chanels a feeling of satisfaction that a good deed had been done.

The one activity which stretches into many small activities is the procedure for admitting new members into the club. There are four major steps which must be taken when dealing with new entering members. First, there is a meeting of all the members to nominate anyone they want to put up. Nomination of new members is usually an easy procedure. Then activities with those prospective members and Chanels members must be planned in order to give everyone an opportunity to meet each other and get to know one another before the Chanels members actually vote for which prospectives will be admitted into the club. After everyone has nominated whomever they want, and planned the activities, letters are to be sent out to each of the prospective members telling them that they have been nominated into the Chanels and when the certain activities are going to take place. The activities are things like scavenger hunts, picnics, horseback riding, bowling, car rallies, and "progressive dinners."

The picnic is the best way to get to know the prospective members. All of the Chanels members bring certain things to eat and everyone goes to Griffith Park or Cheviot Hills to eat. There are little games planned like kite flying teams and other teams with mixed Chanels members and prospective members getting to know

each other. At the end of the day everyone has an idea who everyone else is and most people have already developed opinions about each other.

At the scavenger hunts, everyone is assigned a certain car, handed a list of what to find, and told the time to come back and the prospective member only meets those who are in the car. Every car gets a list of things to find and at the end of the scavenger hunt everyone returns to a meeting point and sees which car brought back the most things on the list. The list usually includes some weird or hard to find things like a Mickey Mouse hat or an old California licence plate.

At the car rallies, everyone again gets assigned to a car and are handed clues. The clues are things like "Who was the third president of the United States?" and the answer to this question would refer to the street Jefferson Boulevard. The first couple of clues are really easy while the clues later on become difficult and some cars even get lost.

The "progressive dinner" is a fairly good way for members to get to know each other. First, four Chanel members homes are used as 1) a starting point, 2) a place to eat the salad, 3) a place to eat the main dish, and 4) a place to eat dessert. The salad, main dish, and dessert are prepared by the Chanel members and taken to the homes before the progressive dinner begins. First, everyone meets at the first house and is assigned to cars. All of the cars go to the house where the salad is served and everyone eats together. Before leaving to go to the house where the main dish is to be served, people are re-assigned to different cars. Then everyone goes to eat the main dish together and again everyone is reassigned to different cars and heads for the house where the dessert is going to be served. By the time everyone has finished their dessert, everyone has all had a chance to meet each other.

After all of the activities are completed there is a special meeting where the club members vote in whomever they want. This is usually when all of the conflicts between Chanel members occur. The conflict which arises in this situation is when some of the Chanel members feel that because the people that they nominated were not voted in, that everything is unfair.

Not all of the people who are nominated get into the club so therefore the Chanel members have a limited number of people that they may vote for. Before everyone is given a ballot, there is a discussion on each prospective member. During the discussion, people are free to express their true feelings about the prospective members. Most people will not say anything bad about any of the prospective members, but once in a while some people will say what they feel whether it be bad or good, true or untrue. Whenever the people, who say what they feel, start talking, they say things like, "I didn't like the way he was acting" or "Oh, that dude is a punk," or even, "Oh I know that if he or she got into the club, they won't do a damn thing." Most likely though, the room will be very quiet and then

everyone votes. Once the ballots are tallied, the club immediately notifies those people who have been voted in. Those who did not get into the club receive letters in the mail explaining to them that "due to the small quota of new members that the Chaneles are accepting, you did not get into the club."

After all of the new members have been notified, an initiation must be planned for the new members. The initiation is the best advantage there is in being a member. Even though you can not take revenge on the people who initiated you, you can take it out on the new people coming into the club. A person who has been voted in is not a full member until he or she has completed the entire Chanel initiation up to the satisfaction of the club.

The Chanel initiation is called "Hell Night." It's one night where the new members "go through hell." There is a hell night committee of Chanel members who decide what type of things and places to do and go to. Once all of the planning has finished, a list of things to wear and bring, instructions, and the date of the

8. A change of clothes
9. Towels
10. Heavy jacket

On each list it will say something like, "be in front of your house dressed like this at 5:30." Then there will be some threatening statements on the bottom of the list like, "If any of these items are not carried out, be prepared to face the consequences. Also, if you are not planning to attend "Hell Night," notify us one week in advance—if you are not coming this time, a *very special one* will be held just for you." Usually, those statements serve their purpose and most people do exactly as the list tells them to do.

When "Hell Night" arrives, the Chanel members pick up the new members. After the new members are picked up, the Chanel members drive them around for an hour and take them by their friends house or to the store and anything else that will make the new members embarrassed, but most of all "scared." When the cruising time is all over, everyone meets at one of the Chanel members house where the new members are checked to see whether or not they have carried out all of the instructions. If someone does not carry out all of the instructions, they must face the consequences sometime later in the night. Also at this time, the girls of the Chaneles are fixing up the new guys by putting on the false eyelashes, eye-shadow, lipstick, fingernail polish, perfume, eyebrow pencil, and teasing their hair and spraying it with hair spray. They try to make them look like girls as much as possible. Once everything is all finished, it's time to officially start "Hell Night."

First, everyone is assigned to a car and at Crenshaw area since most of the new members live in the area and hopefully one of their friends will see them. They are taken to places like Holiday Bowl and on the way going there, the Chanel members tell the new members to do things like "sing as loud as you can" or "go to the liquor store and buy me something to eat." Once everyone arrives at Holiday Bowl, the new members are immediately embarrassed when they find out that they are at *Holiday Bowl* where all of their friends hang out at. Then the new members are told to do things like, "leapfrog across the bowling alley." The "Hell Night" stays there for around a half hour and then heads for either Westwood or Hollywood.

At Westwood, the new members get dropped off at corners all alone and are left to stand there for around 15 minutes. 15 minutes is not that long, but when you're dressed the way they are, then 15 minutes is 15,000 hours. While the girls are standing at the corners, people just walk by laughing or giving funny looks. While the guys are standing on the corners in dresses other guys come up to them and actually try to pick up on them. Then everyone meets at the Bruin Theater or somewhere and makes the new members skip up and down the street together and sing as loud as they can. Some people tell them to do different things like making two guys hold hands and go buy them an ice cream cone,

Chaneles Jr. JACL

This Is To Certify That

IS A MEMBER IN GOOD STANDING

ADVISOR

President

MEMBER'S Signature

"Hell Night" are given to each of the new members.

Not every "Hell Night" is the same, but here is an example of what it might say on a list given to a girl:

What to Wear:

1. 25 articles of clothing
2. A bathing suit underneath all other clothes.
3. A pillow case over all other clothes with the name of each Chanel member.
4. Combat boots
5. 20 braided pig-tails (at the end of each braid attach a balloon with ribbon and Chaneles written on it).
6. Bright red lipstick (no other make-up)
7. A diaper on the outside (over clothes)

What to Bring:

1. Lipstick
2. Roll of toilet paper (on each sheet write your name, address, phone number, and measurements).
3. One page from the classified ads with all the a's and e's circled.
4. Two squirt guns filled with vinegar
5. A "Chanel" candy box.
6. Ten live worms
7. One dozen eggs
8. A change of clothes
9. Towels
10. Heavy jacket

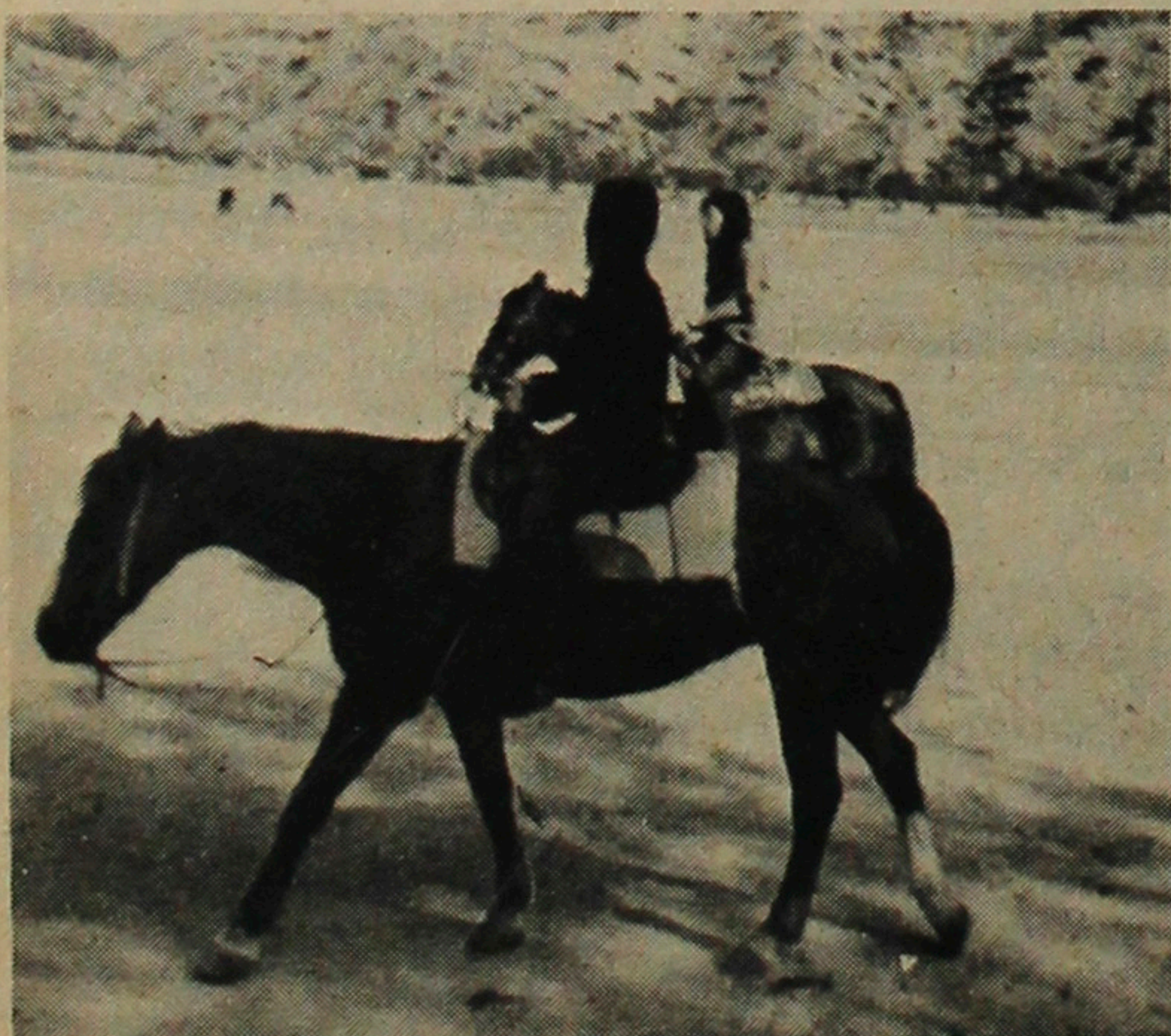
Here is an example of what it might say on a guy's list:

What to Wear:

1. Size 40-D bra
2. See-through blouse
3. Skirt, 8 inches above knees
4. Nylons (no panty hose)
5. No shorts under skirt
6. Garters
7. High heels
8. Swimming trunks under all other clothes
9. Earrings, necklace, bracelet

What To Bring:

1. Lipstick
2. False eyelashes
3. Fingernail polish
4. One dozen eggs
5. A "Chanel" candy box
6. Roll of toilet paper (on each sheet write your name, address, phone number).
7. Two squirt guns filled with vinegar



A get-together with prospectives—horseback riding at Pickwick Stables.



Chanel meeting.

or making some girls race to a trash can and dig out a Baskin-Robbins ice cream cup. There are many different things which the new members have to do like pass out those toilet papers that they wrote their name, address, and phone numbers on. One year, while the "Hell Night" was in Westwood, the Chanel members made a few of the guys stand on the edge of the sidewalk and hitchhike. One of the guys that was trying to hitchhike really looked like a girl and a car pulled up beside him and opened up the door. Once he saw that door fly open, he didn't know what to do. He must of said something to the man who stopped to pick him up or otherwise the man would not have slammed his door for nothing and just sped off. About an hour is spent in Westwood, then everyone goes to places like St. Mary's Carnival or the Gardena Carnival. The main point of "Hell Night" is to let the new members make fools of themselves and once everyone gets to the carnivals, the new members are told to do things like, "You two guys slow dance." and "Why don't you go up to that lady and ask her if you could have a bite of her teriyaki." At the Gardena Carnival, the people from Gardena who are going through "Hell Night" see all of their friends and they are immediately told that they can not talk to any of their friends because "this is no time to socialize." At that carnival, the new members are told to do things like, "Lie on the ground and do 30 sit-ups," and "Do 50 jumping jacks."

After the carnivals, the "Hell Night" goes to the Santa Monica beach where the new members are either blindfolded and seated in a row or are told to crawl through huge boxes with the tops open. Then the Chanel members gather around all of the new members and throw things like eggs, flour, sugar, Bosco, oil, limburger cheese, vinegar, tomatoes, molasses, honey, oatmeal, peanut butter, and other icky and smelly stuff all over the new members. Then when everyone is through throwing everything there is to throw, the new members all run to the water and wash off in the ocean. Usually the Chanel members end up just as stinky and dirty as the new members because when everyone is throwing things, many of the throws are wild and it flies all over everyone else.

After the excitement at the beach, the highlight of "Hell Night" is yet to come. This event is called the "Hot Seat." The Hot Seat takes place in a garage, patio, or a large room where the new members are called in one by one. Once the new member walks into the room, he or she is blinded by a bright light and is told to sit down. The new member cannot see a thing and the Chanels are free to ask all kinds of questions and tell them to do whatever they want them to do. Many times the people already know about the new members before "Hell Night." That way, if they ask a question, they will know whether or not the new member is lying or not. If a new member lies, and the club knows it, then they are threatened or punished by the club. That punishment is usually called the "Good Food." The "Good Food" is a preparation of tabasco sauce, French snails, hot mustard, fish, peppers, and anything else that the "Good Food" committee thinks of. I'd hate to give all the details to "Hell Night" and especially the "Hot Seat" because some future prospective member might become doubtful after reading this part on Hell Night and actually it's "not that bad."

Sometimes there is not only a Hell Night—there may even be a "Hell Week" before Hell Night. Hell Week occurs on Monday through Friday at school, ending with "Hell Night" on the last day of "Hell Week." For Hell Week, the new members must dress a certain way to school for a whole week. People in the Chanels already come and check up on the new members to see if they are doing everything that they are supposed to do. If not, the club makes a special effort on "Hell Night" to be extra mean.

Once "Hell Night" and "Hell Week" have been completed to the satisfaction of the club, the new members are officially in the Chanels. They are welcomed into the club by a "snatch breakfast." The "snatch breakfast" is when all of the regular members "snatch" the new members out of bed at 5:00 a.m. The parents of the new members are notified beforehand and are told

to either leave the backdoor open or leave the key for them so that they may "snatch" the new members without disturbing the rest of the household. After everyone has been "snatched" out of bed, the club will treat them to breakfast and then put them through sort of like a second "Hell Night." The club will usually take all of the new members, still in their pajamas or whatever they wear to sleep, to the Los Angeles International Airport and make them do such things as jumping jacks in the middle of the United Airlines hallway.

When I was "snatched" out of bed, it was no surprise to me. The mother of one of my friends told her that we were all going to be snatched and my friend also told me. So I said to myself, "I'm not going to act like a fool and walk around in my pajamas, so I'm going to be dressed." So, the night before the snatch, I went to sleep with a T-shirt and shorts on. When the people in the club came to snatch me in the morning, the first thing they said when they saw me dressed was, "Oh you knew about it." Well, I didn't know what I was in for, but as soon as we got to the airport, they made me do extra dumb stuff like run around the airport ten times. Why I did it I don't know. I think that it was the smooth talking lecture of one of the members who talked to me about the "unfairness" towards the other people walking around in their pajamas and "what if everyone was all dressed like you, then it would be no fun to do any of this." I guess they had a point in saying that because when we snatch people now and they're dressed, I feel that it is no longer any fun and it seems like a waste of time.

Over the past three years, the Chanels have had two members of the club become Miss Teen



Chanel Hell Night, 1964: read about it in Part II.

of Crenshaw Square. In 1970, Ginny Kokubun won the Miss Teen title and this year, 1973, Jean Horimoto won the crown. Virginia "Ginny" Kokubun was a student at Los Angeles High School and the Vice-President of the Chanels while Jean Horimoto attends Dorsey High School and is the current secretary of the Chanels.

The only Chanel function which is different from the other activities is the installation dinner for the in-coming and out-going officers. This is the only time when Chanel members see the girls in dresses and the guys in shirts and ties. This also is the only time when the parents of the members are invited to attend a function. The installation usually takes place at a restaurant like the Lobster House or the Continental Hyatt House. At the Installation Dinners, the newest members of the club put on little skits or supply any other type of entertainment.

The governing body of the Chanels consists of eight people in the cabinet. There is a President, Vice President, two Secretaries, a Treasurer, two Historians, and a District Youth Council (DYC) Representative.

That's all there is to know about the Chanels of today. Everything the club does seems to be a routine or a set schedule of activities. Right now, the club is doing okay, but the future of the club seems to be rather shaky. With people leaving the club and new ones being brought in, hopefully the Chanels will be around when Part II and Part III are written.

A Reflection in the Puddle

1.
a taut skin of oil
holds the surface of
the puddle in a quiver
hard to notice the
crumpled gum wrappers
that float in orbit
and tumble, end over
end like dead goldfish.
swirls bleed into
different tints from
different angles
I leave myself
in the puddle
on the driveway
tucked-in snug
under blankets
of wet silence.
2.
a heavy flapping rotation
of metal blades spanking the air
kicks me back to the clenched
concrete under my feet,
there, on the puddle. . .
the reflection of an enemy copter is
passing onto the slick-curdling surface of oil.
its black and white belly swaggers
like the coin pouch of businessmen.
3.
I aim,
my cuss through a skin
of paranoia
that clings,
to my shoulders
like dry-cleaners
plastic.
when henchmen are polishing
up their badges overhead
you leave,
puddles to evaporate.

David Monkawa '73

Clouds

At late dusk when the streetlamps
are fixing to illuminate
a dense puff-ball was suspended
above layers of veteran ozone.
an acrobatic cloud-sphere
that swirled and cascaded down
a dozen or so
bustle-like
vapor arms
that pierced its neighbor clouds
as if bewitched by some Imperial sky god
to do so all along.
Then the cloud seemed to
instinctively turn
the color of spoiling meat
when the star-spangled jet
made a second trial run.

David Monkawa '73



VIETNAMESE WOMEN AND CULTURE

The bombing of Cambodia has ended, but the big guns are still in Thailand and on the Seventh Fleet. The Vietnamese Peace Agreement has ratified diplomatically the United States' military and political defeat; but Thieu is still being propped up and there are thousands of American civilians in Saigon. The current phase in Southeast Asia holds intense ambiguity.

One of the less ambiguous events however is the attempt by the Administration to whitewash the history of America's involvement in Southeast Asia. Just as with Watergate, Nixon is trying to force feed us with the milk of amnesia. Recent examples are his chest thumps over those POWs, and the handwaving rationales for the Cambodia bombings years ago. Any options for a change in all this presupposes introducing a high profile consciousness of America's genocidal history, Indochina chapter. That is, we must counter the government's lie that it ever could, did, or wished to achieve "peace with honor." Then, explain how America's counterrevolution was defeated by Vietnam's revolution.

Liz Nakahara's article looks at the lessons of the past. Though we don't agree with all of its conclusions and it rambles a lot, we thought that the mass of information presented here would be useful to Gidra readers. Potential raw material in our effort to intend and create (not just to wish for) our future.

—B.I.

There is a small square in the city of Hue, Vietnam, and during the summer of 1965, a revealing incident innocently took place there. Two American M.P.s, watching several children play in the square, cheerfully threw candy up in the air. Naturally, the children scrambled for the candy, and soon other children swarmed like locusts around the laughing M.P.s. Witnessing this incident, a young Vietnamese school teacher reprimanded the children and firmly suggested that they return the candy. The children sheepishly complied, and as they walked away from the city square, the young teacher scolded the M.P.s with these words: "You Americans just don't understand. You are making beggars of our children, prostitutes of our women, and corpses of our men!"

"Americans don't understand" is both a blunt truth and a pallid understatement. After the incalculable—and continuing—death and destruction in Southeast Asia, Americans must begin to understand the Vietnamese people, whose determination and courage they so poorly underestimated. They must understand the history and culture that their B-52s have tried to erase from human memory. And important in all of this has been the history of struggle of Vietnam's women.

According to an ancient legend, the union of a dragon and goddess gave birth to the first one-hundred ancestors of all Vietnamese. The original inhabitants grew in numbers and expanded southward. This new kingdom became known as Nam Viet—"Nam" meaning south.

In 111 B.C. Chinese intruders conquered this kingdom and renamed it An Nam—"the pacified south." The Chinese governor assuming power in Vietnam briefly maintained a loose association with the local aristocracy. Then, he shifted his policy—he began imposing the Chinese political and social traditions upon the Vietnamese village people.

At this time the Chinese invaders were opposed by two women. Following the political execution of her husband, Trung Trac and her sister Trung Nhi mounted elephants and led 80,000 compatriots against the Chinese governor to restore local aristocratic privilege. The two Trung sisters subsequently liberated 65 villages, leaving the ruthless governor barely enough time to flee with his life.

After the expulsion of the dictatorial intruders, the Vietnamese people declared Trung Trac their sovereign—her title was Trung Vuong, Vietnam's first investiture of a royal title had the added significance of honoring a woman.

Unfortunately, the Chinese Court indignantly rejected Vietnamese independence, especially since that independence naturally involved a blunt affront to Chinese authority. After extensive preparation, the court engaged a reputed strategist to reconquer Vietnam. With the best lieutenants and a massive army, he drove Trung Vuong's army far into the countryside. Faced with humiliated defeat, the two Trung sisters drowned themselves in the Day River.

The brave sisters remain a symbol of the Vietnamese people's indomitable spirit. Saluting Vietnam's rich history, Ho Chi Minh once said: "The French had Joan of Arc in the 15th Century, but we had the Trung sisters in the year 40 A.D."

Centuries of Chinese domination followed the Trung sister's defeat, irrevocably altering Vietnamese culture. Authorities forced traditional Chinese fashions and customs upon Vietnamese villagers, and strictly supervised the educational training for the mandarin. Accordingly, the local mandarins became collaborators to maintain foreign presence—instruments of Chinese oppression.

During the 18th Century, social awareness and political nationalism massively invigorated the population. The peasant oriented Tay Son Movement effectively overturned the Le Dynasty and permanently removed Chinese domination. Following this, the Vietnamese social structure became remarkably sophisticated. The Vietnamese population drafted an elaborate legal code, practiced a complex religion, and designed a hierarchal civil service system.

Unfortunately, this social renaissance did not reinforce political unity. During the 17th Century, vehement feuding between north and south effectively divided the country between two ruling families, the Trinh family and the Nguyen family. The subsequent two centuries practically institutionalized discord and disunity. Finally, Gai Long, emperor of the Nguyen Dynasty, spiritually united the Vietnamese people, and established the imperial throne in Hue at the turn of the 19th Century.

Chinese efforts to acculturate and assimilate the Vietnamese people were initially and ultimately doomed. The Vietnamese people historically define themselves in relation to their neighbors. They perceive differences between themselves and surrounding groups, and accordingly, strengthen group cohesiveness by making differentiations—by distinguishing themselves from others.

Although influenced by Chinese culture, the Vietnamese distinguish themselves by comprehending basic differences. For instance, Vietnamese women enjoy considerably more authority than Chinese women. Due to ancient contact with a matriarchal tribe, the Chams, feminine authority permanently entered Vietnamese culture. Vietnamese women were not confined to the more delicate labors of the household—they worked in the fields alongside

their men.

The entire village community collectively contributed to the state tax. This tax was not paid in money, but instead, in commodities such as rice. Government policy emphasized social aid, and government assistance often saved smaller communities from enduring unnecessary hardship. Mandarins of individual villages maintained rice granaries for insurance in case of floods, typhoons or fires. This tradition of cooperation also instituted cultivation of communal lands to supplement the earnings of the old and poor.

During these feudal times excessive ownership of land by individuals rarely occurred; land ownership was dispersed and limited to necessity. A lifetime of work sufficed only to accumulate a modest estate. Accordingly, the prominence of a single family rarely lasted more than two generations. An often-repeated proverb states: "Nobody stays rich for three generations; nobody stays poor for three generations."

In Vietnamese villages, as in all communities, a social hierarchy existed. Those enjoying the most prominence possessed age, wealth or literary accomplishments. The kind of competition present under capitalism did not exist. There was virtually no dominating, elite class, secure in its position and permanently alienated from the lower class. A person could well enjoy prosperity and prominence one year, but he faced the considerable probability of hardship and poverty the next year. This insecurity explains the strong empathy individuals felt for the masses.

Imbued with Confucian doctrine, traditional daily life had a religious aura. A child's sentiment towards his father approached reverence. Vietnamese children frequently referred to their father as "hardworking" or "worthy."

In general, Vietnamese children felt strongly compelled to fulfill family expectations—they were inclined to regard themselves within the context of family needs. Sharing family responsibilities at an early age, children understood their parents' hardships and felt committed or compelled to alleviate parental suffering. Accordingly, couples favored large families, despite poverty. Children tended to be assets and not liabilities since they assured parents comfort and security during old age. Seeking to enhance the family name and reputation, couples desired sons who traditionally continued the ancestral cult and maintained the family tombs.

This attachment to family extends into the culture—it includes attachment to ancestral lands. Vietnamese people pay frequent tribute to their ancestors and devotedly maintain ancestral altars and tombs. Believing they are the embodiment of ancestral spirits, they respectfully adhere to ancient ethics—they must live according to ancestral precedents. Many village people never wander from their homelands, preferring to remain near ancestral lands and fearing unbearable alienation in unfamiliar territory.

Although Vietnamese women of feudal times experienced greater freedom than their Chinese contemporaries, subjugation of women nevertheless existed. In fact, this Chinese-import-

ed proverb persisted into the 20th Century: "Ten women are not worth one man."

In traditional Vietnamese literature, the "ideal wife" is commonly presented as a prim and proper daughter of the noble class or a wealthy family. She has had a good upbringing and therefore possesses flawless morals. Often she is the daughter of a minister, landlord or mandarin. During young adulthood, she falls in love with a poor but promising boy, the son of a farmer or once-prominent family. Due to insight and exceptional perception, she discerns that her prospective husband is hard-working, well-bred, and with a promising future. Indeed, she detects these traits or virtues even though the boy is penniless and forlorn when she meets him. Throughout the relationship, she withstands the most difficult hardships and proves herself to be sincere, enduring and unselfish. A statement which she could easily make which summarizes her role: "I'll stand through thick and thin with my husband and endure the coldness by myself."

Western infiltration into Vietnam, which steadily eroded the secure foundation of an ancient culture, can be traced back to the 16th century.

The Christian missionaries in effect prepared the way for economic and military penetration. During the 17th century French father Alexandre De Rhodes developed "Quoc-Ngu," a Romanized alphabet ultimately replacing Chinese characters in Vietnamese writing. Evidently, he felt the Vietnamese manner of written expression wasn't quite good enough.

Hostility towards self-righteous foreigners grew steadily. In the 19th century, Vietnamese patriots, fearing the erosion of national traditions, killed 100,000 fellow countrymen who had converted to Catholicism.

Actions such as these outraged the French court and provided an excuse to conquer Indochina. Of course, more significant reasons for invasion were economic profit and aggressive competition with other colonial powers.

The strategy for takeover emphasized "divide and conquer." Vietnam has over sixty-five minorities comprising 15 percent of the population. They are culturally different from the majority of the Vietnamese population, and live mostly in isolated mountainous regions. French colonialists divided the Vietnamese by telling the majority population that the minorities were ghosts, vampires and evil-doers.

In their conquests the French colonialists confiscated Vietnamese territory, and disregarded the traditions and psychology of Vietnamese people. They arbitrarily terminated traditional collective tax payments in the form of commodities, and instituted monetary tax payments. Oftentimes these payments were extremely exorbitant to village people.

Furthermore, the French failed to comprehend and respect the Vietnamese social concept idealizing the harmonious whole. Obsessed with profit and oblivious to ancient traditions, they abused and offended sacred social ethics which

ordained that an individual's loyalty belongs to his family, village and local community; and accordingly, the universe is an agreement between heaven, land and the ancestors whose spirits are embodied in the living generation. The individual exists to function within the system, for he has no function outside it. Contributing to an overall result of social integration, he or she has no individual rights and no property rights.

To "civilize" Vietnamese society, French colonialists granted village people civil status and individual rights. Intending to "advance" Vietnamese culture, the French actually disrupted qualitative harmony among the peasantry. They callously and arbitrarily dispensed with village ways of bartering through exchanges and compensations. To facilitate their industrial aspirations, they imposed their own personal alternatives. In the process of destroying qualitative harmony, they quantified the individual. They assigned him personal capital and issued him property rights to protect him. Many times rights conflicted with traditional loyalty to family and village welfare.

Familiar only with spiritual traditions, Vietnamese people regarded individual rights as empty rights. They were permitted the unprecedented practice of receiving salaries for labor. However, this practice violated collectivism and harmonious survival. Individual labor seemed unjustified because it was not functional to collective society. Such labor benefitted only a few people and was not praised by the heavenly mandate. In the village people's eyes, the riches were in banks, the wealthy were in cities, and the circulation of assets was imbalanced.

During confiscation and construction of the Mekong Delta, Western industrialists imported capital and machines which the Vietnamese people didn't have. Village people saw themselves dispossessed in their own homeland. They saw rapid accumulation of fortunes at their expense and beyond their reach. And, they grew hostile towards the French due to apprehension that the vengeance of heaven was imminent.

During the French occupation, the standard of living fell considerably. To capitalize on Vietnam's rice and rubber, the French imported the large plantation system. This economic procedure exploited the peasant's full working capacity, and left him too depleted for personal enjoyment and development. Consequently, the illiteracy rate increased remarkably, and higher education became a very privileged commodity. The most blatant indictment against the French colonialists is dryly and factually recorded in the budget for the 1930's. During this time, 15 million piasters were paid to 15,000 Vietnamese employees and government functionaries, while 40 million piasters were paid to 5,000 French functionaries.

The Vietnamese people did not wholly submit to French authority. In the Mekong Delta, many villagers ambushed rivercraft thereby reducing food supplies to French bases. Villagers systematically assassinated mandarin collaborators. And angry villagers continually sent messages to court representatives, beseeching the impotent officials to take to the field against the enemy.

From 1862-1863, French troops in outlying



posts contended with persistent rebellions. At this time Napoleon III considered granting concessions to the rebellious city of Hue. However, the growing colonial party in Paris disputed the effectiveness of Hue's commanding authority. On-the-spot observers related tales of "vanishing" mandarins and crime epidemics—adding combustible fuel to the colonialists' argument that Vietnam "needed" French supervision. Thus, outgrowths of the resistance ironically contributed to the French will to domination.

French abusiveness eventually ired the elite class. The unfortunate plight of women was simultaneously incorporated into the nationalist movement. As early as 1913, the literary figure Phan Boi Chau perceived a relationship between the nationalist movement and the emancipation of women. He wrote and staged a play presenting the Trung sisters primarily as national patriots and secondarily as servants to filial piety.

Two very prominent authors of the 18th century depicted Vietnamese women in starkly contrasting ways. Doan Thi Diem wrote *Laments of a Soldier's Wife*, which vividly expresses the anguish and delicate romantic feelings of a lonely woman whose soldier-husband dutifully goes to war to defend the King.

Ho Xuan Huong, in contrast, avoided subtlety in her approach and style. She wrote in a racy vernacular and denounced polygamy, and unfair male privilege, and criticized hypocritical social conventions.

Ho Xuan Huong lived in a rigorous, rigid society, but nevertheless ventured boldly into social criticism, especially in matters pertaining to female oppression. She actually dared to extol unwed mothers, who were social outcasts in traditional Vietnamese society. She borrowed the theme of a famous saying: "To marry and have a child, how banal! But to be pregnant without the help of a husband, what merit!"

Other early rumblings include Hoang Ngo Phach's novel, *To Tam*, published in 1925. The story's central figure is a young woman who dies of despair when she realizes the full extent of her social entrapment. By 1930, writers like Khai Hung, Nguyen Cong Hoan, and Nhat Linh—who were influenced more than Phachs by European literary fashions—denounced restrictions on free choice of marriage partners and remarriage for widows.

Nhat Linh was the most daring writer of his time. His controversial novel, *Doan Tuyet*, is now regarded as a modern classic. Linh's heroine laboriously wins social acceptance after rebelling against a forced marriage and refuting allegations that she indirectly engineered her husband's death. The heroine's true love, meanwhile, seeks redress in nationalist politics.

Throughout the story, the traditional authority of the father, husband, and eldest son is outrightly challenged. The implication is that a woman's allegiance should belong to a larger community—the Vietnamese nation.

Echoing the themes of literary figures, Vietnamese women made many sacrifices in the early non-communist nationalist movement. Most commonly, they served as agitators and organizers for the Vietnam Nationalist Party.

Nguyen Thi Hoc, wife of the party leader, emerged as the most prominent feminine figure. Undoubtedly, she attracted popularity and prominence merely as the wife of the party leader. After her husband's execution, she shot herself. However, she left two suicide notes attesting to the authenticity and seriousness of her nationalism.

By 1930, women's rights were a serious issue in the political arena. This scenario contributed to growing acceptance of the Indochinese Communist Party (ICP). Although an elitist intellectual circle first introduced the subject of women's rights, the ICP professed to be the first organization to seriously promote the cause of women.

The ICP mocked the intellectuals' early protests and inferred that the bourgeois elitists borrowed Western ethics for personal benefits. The party insinuated that the intellectuals were engineering the adoption of degenerate capitalist



lifestyles—so they could indulge in vices like adultery and quick divorce.

The party benefitted immensely from the early participation of women. In 1930, Nguyen Thi Nghia directed communications between the party central committee and the Soviets. Nguyen Thi Minh Khai emerged as one of the most popular and celebrated women of the party's hagiography.

In 1927 she joined Tan Viet, the revolutionary party of North Vietnam, and in 1930 she became a member of the Indochinese Communist Party. During the early 1930's, she worked in the Hong Kong Bureau of the comintern. In 1936 she attended the Seventh Congress of the Comintern which convened in Mexico. After returning to Vietnam, she married Le Hong Phong the ICP's secretary-general. Minh Khai's career bears striking resemblance to that of Nguyen Thi Hoc, a previously mentioned feminine activist. However, Minh Khai was executed in 1941, more than a year before her husband died of torture in prison.

The party made early statements committing its labors to the cause of women. However, the party often appeared uneager to fully incorporate women into a revolutionary struggle. In February, 1931, the Women's Union for Emancipation was founded. In March, 1931, the party identified women as "the most persecuted element in society." However, in October, 1931, the party central committee published a list of "essential tasks of the revolution," and rated the women's cause as ninth in importance.

Although party leaders subordinated women's rights to other issues, the leaders nevertheless recognized the pragmatic value of the women's cause. For instance, feminine emancipation cut through class distinctions and appealed to the political energy of both upper and lower class women.

In Vietnam, upper class women felt greater oppression as women, since the elite class felt stronger devotion to Confucian doctrine. Lower class women, on the other hand, felt a stronger association between colonialism and their own oppression, since they, along with their husbands, suffered the inequities of unfair land distribution.

In 1946, the party initiated the "New Life Movement" to extend revolution into the daily aspects of Vietnamese culture. The movement recommended simpler dress, unextravagant wedding ceremonies, improved feminine hygiene, and abandonment of outmoded customs.

The basic concept of feminine liberation was inseparable from socio-political revolution. Women participating in any activity considered undomestic marked a drastic departure from the past. During the resistance against the French intrusion, women mobilized to effectively contribute themselves as nurses, couriers, guides, porters and propagandists.

Women also experienced combat in the home militia and in territorial guerrilla units. Women, however, were excluded from the regular army since they were expected to replace men in agricultural production. A resistance slogan, adopted from an old proverb, stated: "Let women replace men in all tasks in the rear."

The party itself retained remnants of traditional ethics. For instance, in 1946, the Na-

tional Assembly delegated only 10 seats to women—a gross imbalance considering the representative body's membership of 403 people. This ratio remained unchanged until 1960.

Retrospectively examining the situation, most people believe that the exclusion occurred due to male hypocrisy—it was not due to the timidity and idleness of Vietnamese women. Despite its shortcomings, the party nevertheless exposed village people to revolutionary ideology and introduced opportunities for initial progress.

In many ways, World War II marks a turning point in Vietnamese social history. It is one of the first big obstacles in the path of Vietnamese women—detouring South Vietnamese women into the depths of despair and degradation, and North Vietnamese women into the heights of fulfillment and accomplishment.

Throughout World War II, Japan sought to exploit Vietnam. In 1940, the Vichy government of occupied France collaborated with the Nazis to share Japan's power in Indochina. A nationalist movement called Viet Minh emerged, and guerrilla patriots, led by Ho Chi Minh, fought the French and Japanese invaders. When the war ended, Japanese power in Indochina collapsed; and the Viet Minh took over Saigon and Hanoi. The popular victors issued an eloquent Declaration of Independence, quoting from the American Declaration of Independence and the Declaration of the Rights of Man, promulgated during the French Revolution.

After speaking eloquently of self-determination, the allied powers—England, the United States, and Russia—sent troops to Saigon and restored French power. In January, 1946, a national election took place—held openly in the countryside and secretly in the French-dominated sections. Ho Chi Minh was elected the first President of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam (DRV).

Nationalists upheld a loosely-drawn truce with France. However, the truce fell apart when French troops shelled Haiphong, killing thousands of civilians. Consequently, in December, 1946, France began the long, costly war to maintain her colony.

In 1949, French colonialists set up the Bao Dai government. Bao Dai had been France's puppet emperor before World War II. This mercenary and tool of foreign domination abdicated to Ho Chi Minh in 1955. Today in 1973, Bao Dai is alive and well—on the French Riviera.

The United States immediately recognized the Bao Dai government and on June 27, 1950, President Harry Truman announced intentions to provide military assistance to France, thereby assuming tremendous responsibility in the war against the Viet Minh. From 1950 to 1954, the United States provided 80 percent of the war cost, sending France 2.5 billion dollars. All this, however, could not save France.

The smallest territory confiscated by French troops was never securely held by French commanding authority. French troops constantly fought to maintain every inch of land captured.

Depleted in strength, humiliated by unprofessional guerrillas, and sick of war, France finally lost Diembienphu on May 7, 1954. The



Viet Minh overran Dienbienphu, the last French stronghold, killing 2,000 French soldiers and capturing 10,000 Frenchmen.

After the Viet Minh's decisive victory in 1954, the Geneva Accords were drafted. Characteristically, however, the United States began undermining the Geneva Accords before the ink on the document could dry.

During the Geneva Discussions, Bao Dai selected his new premier—Ngo Dinh Diem. The United States immediately recognized and supported Diem.

According to the Pentagon Papers, the United States "adhered to a policy of looking to the French rather than to the Vietnamese Nationalists for constructive steps toward Vietnamese independence." By making this decision, the United States thereby insured its own defeat and narrow-mindedly overlooked the Vietnamese perspective.

The Vietnamese perspective happens to be quite different from the American outlook. The United States sees Vietnam as a helpless country threatened by ruthless Communist takeover. The Vietnamese, on the other hand, see themselves caught up in a social revolution, empowered by Ho Chi Minh to overcome poverty, disease and injustice.

Ho is the George Washington of Vietnam—the national hero who fought the Japanese occupation in 1945 and the French intrusion in 1954. He is bitterly hated by the small, oppressive minority resenting his uncompromising, unpatriotizing land reforms.

The Vietnamese perspective also involves an unforgotten, unburied hatred for Diem and the self-promoting outsiders who installed him. The United States apparently does not understand the full impact of this unwise maneuver.

The Diem regime was so oppressive that extensive rural areas were driven to open rebellion. Diem callously violated much-respected traditions. Village affairs had always been handled by respected officials familiar to the people. Diem, however, assigned outsiders to manage village affairs. Diem's servants were insensitive and abusive, primarily occupied with controlling the village people instead of serving them.

Writer Bernard Fall published records pertaining to construction projects undertaken from 1957-60. According to these reports, the Diem regime built 6,500 square meters of hospitals, 86,000 square meters of school, and 425,000 square meters of *high-rent villas* and *apartment buildings*. Fall adds: "this sort of thing—far more than weapons and infiltrators from across the 17th parallel—makes communists out of peaceable peasants."

In 1960, Vietnam was a primarily rural country with an ancient social pattern. Only 15 percent of the people lived in cities. Thirteen million people were affected by the civil war between South Vietnam and the Communist Republic of North Vietnam. Today 60 percent of the people are urbanized, the ancient social patterns are disintegrating, and all 30 million people are affected by the war.

These people plant rice under air fire, huddle in refugee camps, and cram into cities seeking refuge from the devastation of their villages.

The United States army has a policy of thorough destruction. Troops laid waste to many fertile valleys, and rationalized that this excessive destruction further cripples Viet Cong strength. After peasants evacuated their villages, artillery fire continued unnecessarily, insuring that all remnant of life remained useless to everyone.

Destruction in itself is a disruptive tactic. However, the U.S. Army's actions—whether combative, precautionary, or routine—invariably instigated a chain reaction of traumas and devastation.

To prevent villagers from defecting to the NLF military authorities instituted resettlement camps. The forced evacuation of homelands traumatically demoralized peasant people. Marine Lieutenant Colonel William Corson witnessed the forced relocation of 13,000 civilians who were uprooted from an area near the DMZ and transferred to a resettlement area just 20 miles away. He tells this story: "The truth of the matter from the Vietnamese peasant's point of view was that the trip of 20 miles was more fearful than the trek of Steinbeck's 'okies' to California during the 1930's. Over 90 percent of the residents of Trung Luong had never travelled further than 10 kilometers (about six miles) from their homes. They feared that Cam Lo would be a point of no return. Furthermore, the natives of Cam Lo were Buddhists who, because of their religious beliefs, were greatly concerned about dying in a strange place. They believed quite strongly in the necessity of being buried in their own family plots in order to achieve the Buddhist version of heaven. This fear, added to the loss of their fields and the length of their trip, was sufficient to demolish the people. Without a shot being fired, we had conspired with the GVN (government of South Vietnam) to literally destroy the hopes, aspirations and emotional stability of 13,000 human beings. This was not and is not war—it is genocide."

In 1967, at least 2 million people were surviving in government resettlement camps (approximately one person in seven). Roughly half the camp population is comprised of women and old men.

Shelters in resettlement camps are very basic if not downright inadequate—they are parallel rows of poles, unwallled and floorless, supporting a thatched roof. Camps are invariably situated in barren areas of little desirability. Unenhanced by accessories to block the sun and rain, the shelters are stifling hot in the dry season and covered with mud in the rainy season.

Since the land is unsuitable for farming, peasants are undignifyingly dependent upon the government for food. The official relief payment is 10 piasters (about 8 cents) a day per person—barely enough for subsistence. Due to widespread corruption, most refugees receive far less. Barely half the supplies intended for resettlement camps are finally distributed to refugees. To describe the resettlement camps as a haven for refugees would be tantamount to libel. In January, 1967, there were 68 refugee camps for 122,680 people. Fifty of these camps had no schools, 42 had no medical dispensaries, and 48 had no latrines.

The Vietnamese people have no choice,

just dilemmas. An alternative to camp life is the cities, notorious for street crime, chaos, inadequate housing, pollution and inflation. Often-times, an army troop encounters a village suspected of harboring Viet Cong fighters. After searching thoroughly, however, the troop discovers that it has chanced upon an abandoned "ghost town" whose inhabitants migrated to the cities en masse.

In the past three years, approximately 3 million farmers have been forced from their land into the cities. Probably half these people are escaping devastation in rural areas and the other half are lured by economic opportunities of U.S. bases. In the cities people can often earn 5 times what they can earn in the fields.

But life in the city is as problematic as life in the midst of artillery fire. The quality of medical care ranges from poor to non-existent. Sanitation conditions are disgusting since both sexes must resort to using the streets as toilets. Only 10 percent of urban dwellings have the luxurious convenience of toilets. The city of My Tho has a population of 109,000—and there are only 2 public toilets in the entire city.

Collapse of public facilities are every day occurrences. In December, 1968, Premier Tran Van Huong reluctantly shut down the public transportation system because the overdue gas bill remained unpaid. Crudely accommodating the steady influx of people, plywood shanty-towns recycle every potentially useable scrap of material—artillery shells serve as stoves and napalm canisters serve as pots and pans.

No fewer than 1/3 of Saigon's 3 million inhabitants live on government paychecks, which are backed by United States investment. In other words, approximately one million long-shoremen, laborers, bartenders, and bar girls receive wages paid directly by American tax dollars.

Only 3 percent of the Vietnamese work force labors in local industry; the cities depend on war for survival. The most lucrative industries in Vietnamese cities are catering for U.S. mess halls and laundering U.S. army fatigues. The few men trained in civil services were promptly confiscated by the war effort.

Even minute details of daily life reflect cultural dilution. For instance, daily dress "fashionably" underwent modification, and traditional costumes no longer dominate the scene. For centuries Vietnamese women wore traditional attire—the *ao dai*. This costume has a close-fitting bodice and free-flowing front and back panels which hang over long black or white pants.

This outfit is uniquely suited to small-boned Asian women and usually appears inappropriate and uncomplimentary on large Caucasian women. Foreigners always praise the elegance and stylishness of the *ao dai*. Their high regard for it, however, has not kept them from changing it.

During the French occupation, foreign designers eliminated the scarf that went around the neck and the bodice. The designers felt this new simplicity added "charm" to the basic design. Attempting to fuse Oriental and western fashion, they cleverly designed Chinese collars into the costumes.

Reveling in their reputation as fashion leaders, the French also introduced *ao dais* with padded shoulders. Still another fad emphasized high collars and eventually the height of collars rose from two centimeters to eight centimeters. Logically, women encountered difficulty eating and even talking, so this bothersome inconvenience caused the fad to disappear.

Nowadays, women wear both Oriental and western attire, attributing their daily choices to whatever is most convenient and most appropriate. Vietnamese dress usually suits cool weather and formal occasions.

Oftentimes young men dislike the *ao dai*, considering it representative of the rigid past when boys and girls were forbidden to intermingle. Although formalities have been relaxed, women nowadays experience equal difficulty meeting young men.

Unfortunately, Vietnam has acquired a drastic shortage of eligible bachelors; many youths have been drafted by the army, remain missing in action, have been killed or incarcerated, or are political prisoners.

—Liz Nakahara

for jeffrey n.

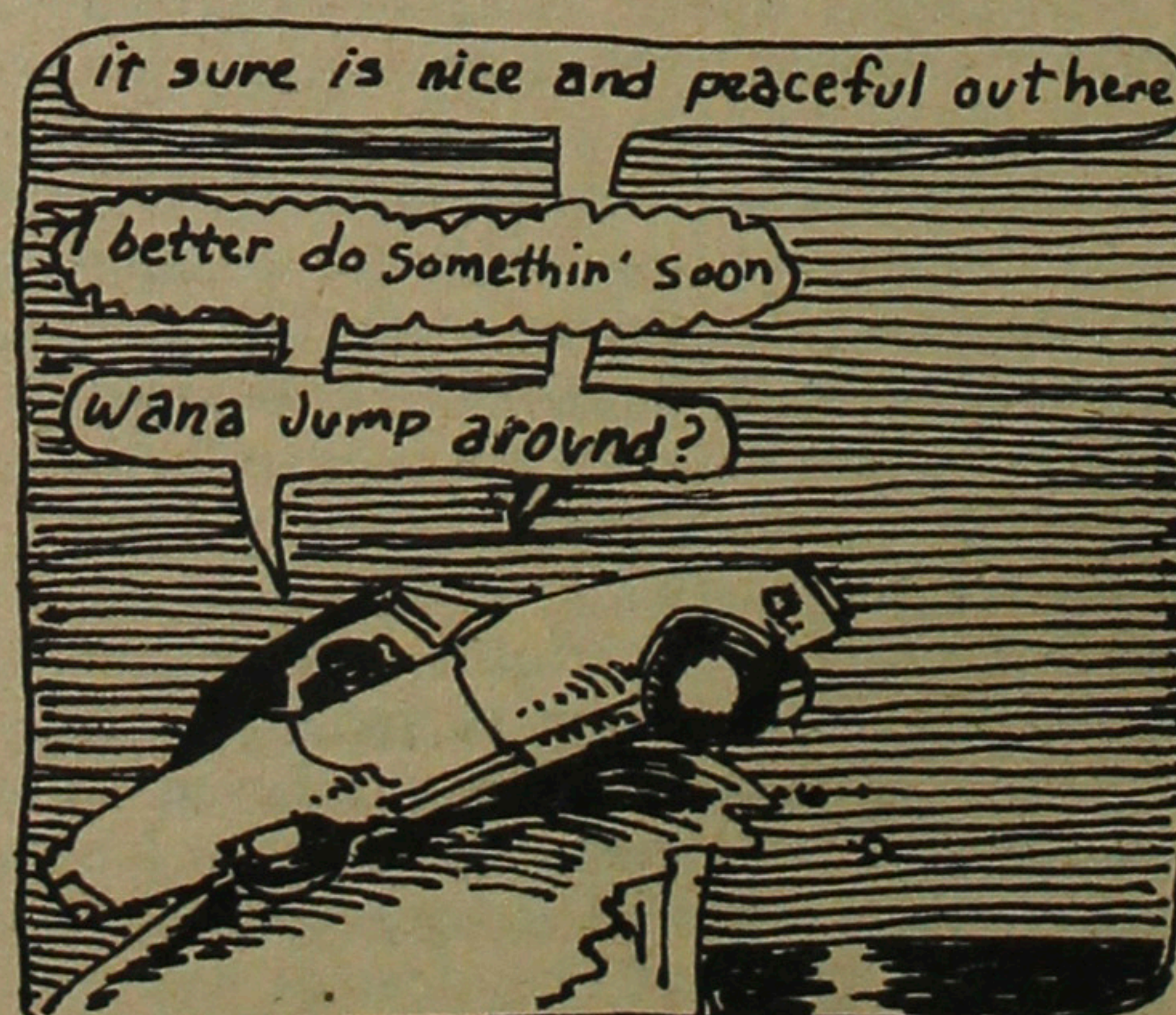
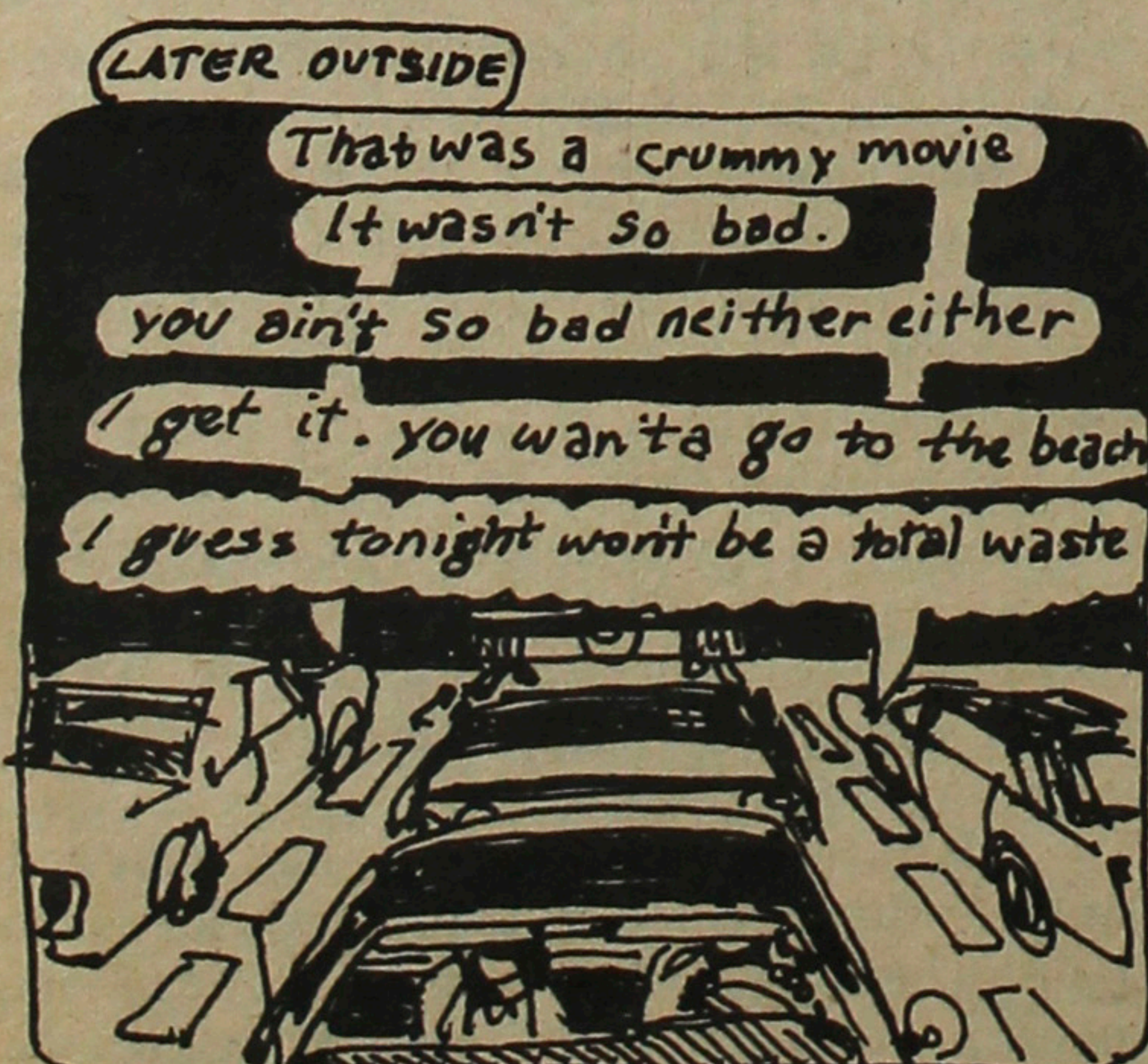
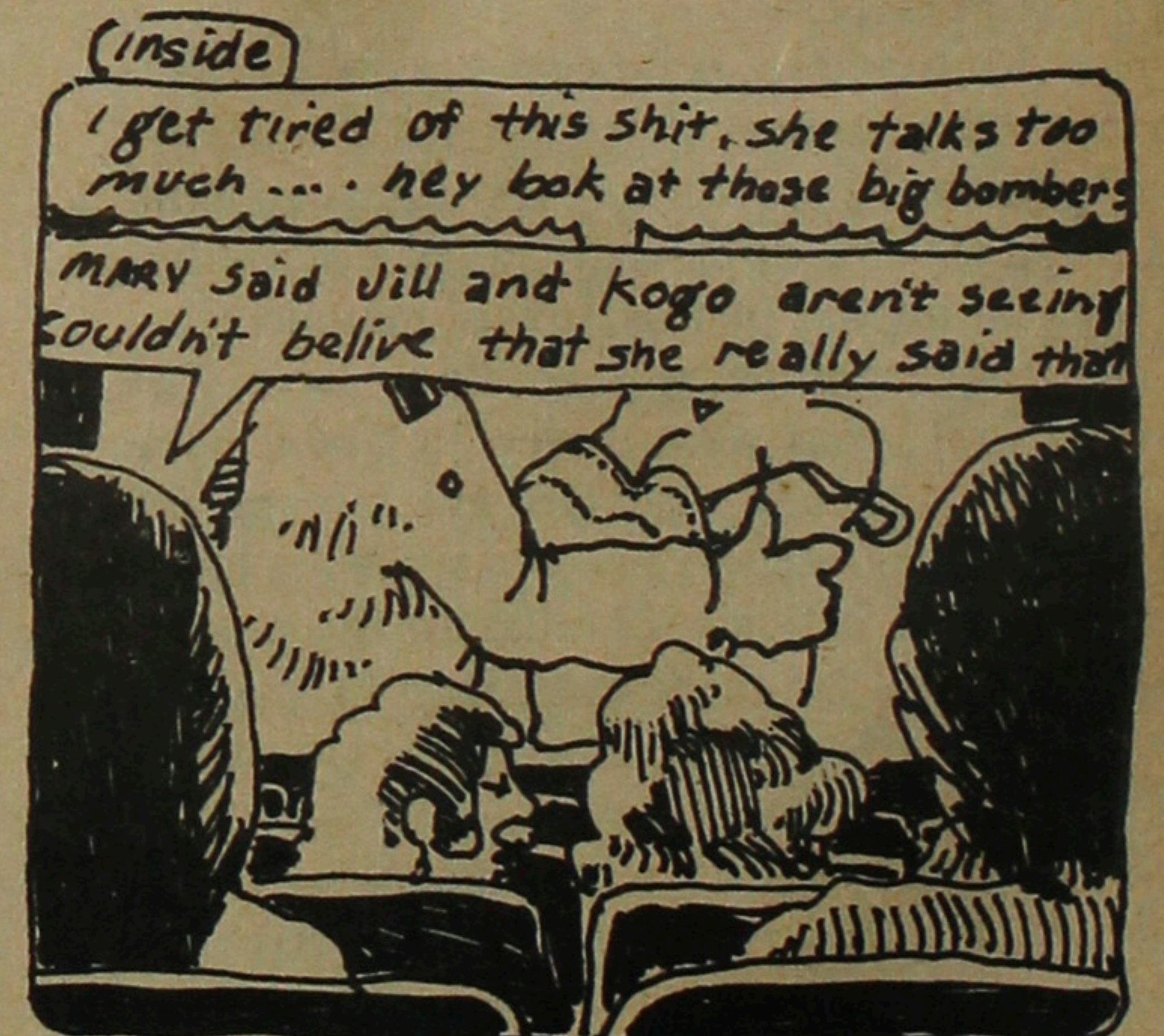
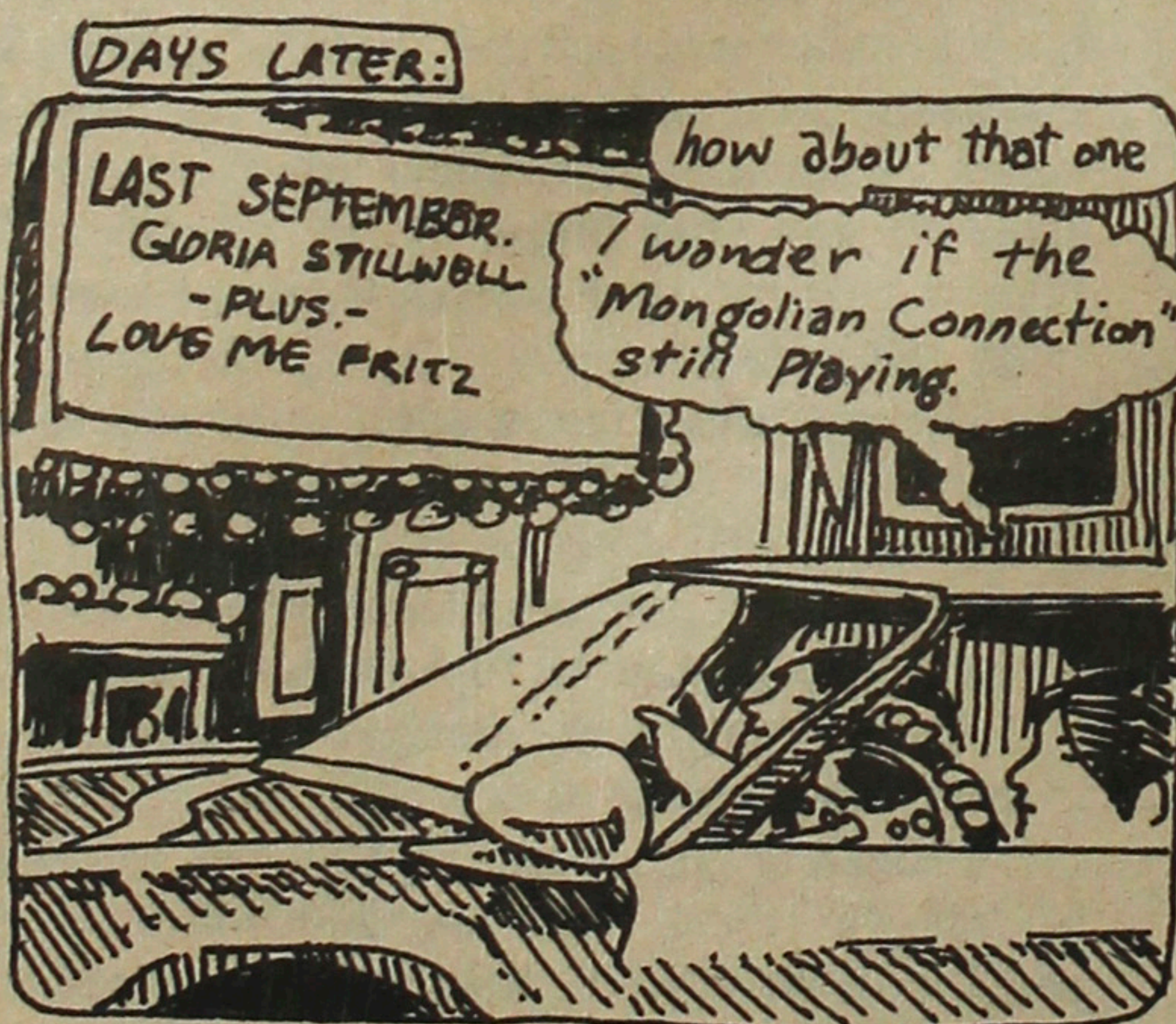
you are more violent than i am,
and that borders on cold murder.
i hope they never challenge you
jeffrey; the molten jewel will
freeze the human tissue, send
you charging through white smoke.
but for now the air is still.
we sit discussing fanon to
scatology between sips of cheap
burgundy. your words come like
constellate flashes, vivid in
the black sky—
the mountain boy struggling
through bureaucratic impasse.

Philip Gotanda

(you can)
pull it in
a little
here
and tuck it
under
(if you like);
remove this
track of hair
and chip
that
bone,
draw a line
with a very sharp knife:
chop through a layer
of accumulated tissue,
take it out
and put it in a jar;
narrow these heartbeats
employing lunar grins,
there's a door in my ear
marked exit
please
(we can leave when you're done).

Laura Tokunaga

THE ADVENTURES OF STEVE MOTOMOTO & HIS GAL SHIRLEY O.



BY A VERY TIRED ALAN TAKEKOTO

September 3: 1969, Death of Ho Chi Minh.

September 4: Carlos Santana and John McLaughlin at the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium, shows at 7 and 10 p.m.

September 6: Asian Joint Communications Field Trip to Chino Prison.

September 8: Community Street Faire, from 11 a.m.-12 p.m. at 2nd Street and Moline Alley (see ad on facing page!).

Also: Thru September 9—A benefit festival at, and for, the Long Beach Community Center, 1766 Seabright; featuring food, ride, and game booths, and ondo dancing from 7:30 p.m.-Saturday, and 7 p.m.-Sunday.

September 9: Health Day in Gardena at the Gardena Youth Center, 1730 Gardena Boulevard, from 9 in the morning until 4 p.m. Everyone—but especially senior citizens—is encouraged to come. Medical and dental check-ups will be administered free of charge.

Also: Initial screening of *White Haired Girl*, revolutionary ballet from the People's Republic of China, at Resthaven Auditorium, 765 West College Street, at 8 p.m. Tickets available at Xin Qiao Friendship Store, 971 Chungking Road, and at China Native Products, Mandarin Plaza. Total of seven more screenings on September 12, 14, 15, 16, and 19, all at Resthaven Auditorium. See calendar for times.

Plus: A beach party at Huntington Beach, sponsored by the Chinatown Teen Post. For more information, call 680-0876.

September 12: Screening of *White Haired Girl*, at Resthaven Auditorium, 765 W. College Street, at 8 p.m.

September 14: Screening of revolutionary ballet from China, *White Haired Girl*, at Resthaven Auditorium—8 p.m.

September 15: 1965, Nguyen Van Troi—who attempted to assassinate then Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara—was executed in Vietnam.

Also: This is it! Creative Workshop's Bicycle Rally from Crenshaw and Jefferson Boulevard to Hermosa Beach—a mere 25 miles—featuring a pot-luck lunch for those who finish, plus free transportation back to the starting point. Starting time and place: 10 a.m.

September Calendar



Ho Chi Minh May 19, 1890 — September 3, 1969.

at the Bank of Tokyo parking lot at the previously mentioned location. If you're interested in riding to earn money for the Creative Workshop, or finding out more info, call Jeff or Ernie at 224-3171, or 731-1636/734-7838.

Plus: A Moon Festival, sponsored by the Chinatown Youth Council, at Alpine Playground—from 6 p.m. With stage shows, art exhibits, and a lantern making contest and parade.

And: A benefit dance with Carry On and Savanna Sunrise at Alpine Playground, 10 p.m. to 1:30 a.m. Bids: \$2. Door: \$2.50. Sponsored by Chinatown Youth Council.

In Addition To: The fourth and fifth screenings of *White Haired Girl*, at Resthaven Auditorium—6 p.m. and again at 8 p.m.

September 16: Flu Vaccination Day in Little Tokyo. Medical professionals, bi-lingual personnel, volunteers, and contributors needed. For more info, call George Umezawa at 224-1594, or Carol Hatanaka at 626-2249.

Also: The sixth and seventh screening of *White Haired Girl*, at Resthaven—6 p.m. and 8 p.m.

September 18: Public school begins.

September 19: Final screening of *White Haired Girl*, at 8 p.m. in the Resthaven Auditorium.

Also: The Allman Brothers Band in a benefit concert for the North American Indian Foundation at the Forum—7:30 p.m.

September 28: Sumi and Co., presents *Hiroshima* in an extra special party/dance/concert at the International Hotel on Century Blvd., from

9 p.m. to 1:30 a.m. Guest band—David's Eat'n Bread. Open bar, donation. Be there or else... Tickets at Amerasia, or call 730-8949.

September 30: Teach-in on "Women and Cancer"—at Asian Women's center (see short somewhere on pages 2 and 3 for info).

Also: In celebration of National Liberation Day of the People's Republic of China, U.S.-China Friendship Association sponsors a gala extravaganza at Exposition Park today from 1 p.m. until 8:30 p.m. featuring (you'll never guess) a screening of *White Haired Girl* at 6:30 p.m. in the Museum of Science and Industry.

October 1: National Liberation Day of the People's Republic of China.

3830 Crenshaw Blvd. Los Angeles 90008 299-2118

"Naris is the difference" It's something you'll quickly find out after using it and talking to the people who really care about your skin. You'll also be helping the underdog.



Naris COSMETICS

3858 CRENSHAW BLVD.

299-1999

AA-1 instant printing
& office supplies

JAY K. KIM

while-u-wait

MUSIC IS LOVE.....

HIROSHIMA
IS MUSIC

370-8949



THERE'S NO DOUBT ABOUT IT...
FOR GOOD FOOD IT'S

Chin's Chinese Food

3101 W. JEFFERSON BLVD.

SPECIALIZING IN FOOD TO GO

732-2920

Everyone is goin' to the NEW

Amerasia
Bookstore

338 E. 2nd. St. Little Tokyo
680-2888

For: Books, Arts & Crafts, Threads, Gidras, etc. etc.

GIDRA Inc.
P.O. Box 18649
Los Angeles, CA. 90018

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

For Those Without a Full Deck



Well, deal me in for:

- ☐ A one year subscription at \$2.50. *
- ☐ One of the following back volumes.
- ☐ Volume IV. (All issues for 1972.) \$3.50.
 - ☐ Volume III. (All issues for 1971.) \$3.50.
 - ☐ Volume II. (All issues for 1970.) \$10.00.
- Enclosed is a check or money order.

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____
STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____
Mail to: Gidra
P.O. Box 18649, Los Angeles, Ca. 90018

Gidra: Twelve of a Kind, Twelve Times a Year.

(Additional postage \$2.00 for Canada and \$4.00 for all other foreign countries. Institutional and library rate is \$5.00.)

25 cents

THE MONTHLY FOR ASIANS IN AMERICA

September 1973

GIDRA®

Volume V, Number 9

