Rising tide of anti-Japanese prejudice in U.S. due to America's economic conflict assailed

Special to the Pacific Citizen

CHICAGO—The rising trend in Asian American racism was pointed out by public officials and Asian community leaders in an effort to counteract more and more economic and political pressures on Asian Americans, who are increasingly being labeled as a "prostitute race" by American press. Public officials and community leaders have been increasingly pointing out that Asian Americans are not "enterprising" and "innovative" as they are portrayed by the media.

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MINETA

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and unjustified and caused by "racial prejudice," war hysteria and a failure of political leadership." He added that the Japanese American "do not feel that we have been taken away from home and are getting ready to be returned under machine guns... I know the terror and despair of being taken away from home and being guarded for years under machine guns... How many people would have been bread winners at the age of 45 or 50 in the prospect of losing one, two or three years of their lives in a prison camp?"

After having people consider these points, Mineta said, then one must first ask whether the CWRIC did not include any attempt to estimate the immeasurable losses such as freedom and honor. After that point, one can measure the billions forfeited in lost property.

CWRIC's hastily called press conference scrubbed program
WASHINGTON—While insiders here were preparing for a June 22 press conference to announce the long-awaited recommendations of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, the unexpected release of details by the Sacramento Bee a week ahead of time, June 16, made the CWRIC Commission Chair Joan Bernstein to hastily call a press conference that day to make it official.

The Washington JACL Office was well aware in May that the CWRIC would be released June 22. The New York Times on May 23 (see June 3 PCC) passed on information to expect recommendations to be made June 22.

As it turned out, June 22 gave Sen. Alan Cranston and Rep. Mike Lowry an open field to announce their respective redress bills in Congress. They had intended to announce on the day when the CWRIC recommendations were to be made.

JACL to Meet
The $1.5 billion package with $20,000 per survivor plus a foundation for "humanitarian and educational purposes" being recommended will be discussed July 8-10 during the National JACL board meeting. The JACL National Redress Committee is scheduled to make its recommendations in time for the board that meeting.

The Media traffic was extensive June 16-17 at both National Headquarters, San Francisco, and the Washington JACL office here. The story appeared on network news as well as in the metropolitan print media. But what the CWIRC public relations firm had lined up for June 22 was severely affected—half of the network cancelled the spots. Even right shows and Sunday programs were affected, the JACL office here learned. The well-respected MacNeil-Lehrer report (PBC), however, devoted its full 30-minute show to the recommendations that night with Commission Chair Bernstein, vice-chair Dan Lungren, John J. McCloy and Tom Kometani (N.Y. JACL president) on the show.

CWRIC's hastily called press conference scrubbed program

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Yori Wada to chair UC board of regents

LOS ANGELES—First minority ethnic chair of the Univ. of California board of regents, Yori Wada, was elected 16-1 at the regents' meeting at UCLA June 17. He assumes the one-year term of office July 1 and will preside over a 12-member policy-making body of the nine-campus system.

The election of Wada was more controversial than the vote cast seemed to appear as a chairman historically serves two consecutive one-year terms.

Decision not to re-elect current chair Glenn Campbell, a director at the Hoover Institution at Stanford and an appointee of Gov. Reagan, came when the nominating committee had recommended the 69-year-old Nisei retired YMCA executive.

However, Wada's candidacy was challenged because, as one felt, he lacked experience in fund-raising and business. But outgoing UC president David Saxon held that notion of a chairmanship was not true. "What the president of the university needs is the support of a united board, not regents," he said.

Wada's outspoken stand against the university's nuclear weapons labs and his call last autumn for the university to endorse a nuclear freeze was also part of the heated argument when regent Yvonne Sakai of Los Angeles noted Wada was "a solution everyone can live with."

There were two other regents who wanted the chair position.

PROTEST

Continued from Page 1

big story about how wonderful the Los Angeles area is, how well immigrants are received and so forth.

"Then at the end of the hour the interviewer said, 'I suppose there are also a lot of negative charges,' and sentiments against new immigrants also," he said. "I say there are always negative responses to minorities, and we joked for a moment. But I never said what they quoted me as saying."

"I talked to the interviewer a few days later," Kiitano continued. "He told me that all the material had turned over to the next school at Time. Apparently, somebody further up the ladder decided to turn the story around to sound negative."

Kiitano said he has received a large number of "hate calls" since the article was published, including several threats on his life.

Kiitano disagrees with the magazine's assertion that the different groups among the Asians look down on each other. "There is more of a pan-Asian feeling now in Los Angeles than there has ever been before," Kiitano said.

He added that he has met with a number of editors from Los Angeles-based Korean newspapers to explain the mix-up. "My strongest support has come from the Korean students association at UCLA, those who know me, have taken my classes. They know that what was said in the magazine is totally different from what I've been saying in class."

"It makes me wonder if Time had intended all along to turn the story against the immigrants and minorities." (It is likely that whatever letters reacting to this cover story would appear in the July 4 issue.)

Sociology Professor Eui-Yeong Young of Cal State L.A. also quoted in the story, said in a letter to Time's editor, "I do not agree with your contention that 'younger Koreans are more likely to commit crimes than any other Asian nationality. I have not seen any data or study supporting this contention. Such a derogatory remark only reinforces negative stereotyping of racial minorities.'"

Yu also disagreed with the Time article that Koreans in L.A. are concentrated mostly in the Koreatown area, "a two square mile swath along jumbled Olympic Boulevard."

"The area simply contains a large number of Korean shops," Yu said. "The area probably contains less than 5 percent of L.A. Koreans."

Dr. Youn-Cha Shin Choy, executive director of San Francisco's Multi-Services Center for Koreans, also objected to what she called the magazine's "slights of Koreans."

"Your writers seized upon an unrepresentative portrayal of Koreans and proceeded to lay waste to years of earnest efforts to present the Korean story to America," she wrote. "In one sentence you dismiss the efforts within the Korean community to reach out to the other ethnic minorities."

"It was difficult to introduce our community to America when people knew little of our burgeoning population. It will be increasingly difficult now that Time has given the American public this sad distortion," she continued.

"Dr. Allan Setian of Asian Pacific American Advocates of California said he was puzzled by Time's implication of con-

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Thoughts on Armament

Los Angeles

The League of Women Voters undertook to study national security despite criticism, bewildment and mysterious jargon. That in itself was rather phenomenal, given the atmosphere in which it found itself. It is not, however, given that the League of Women Voters has taken a firm stand in support of nuclear disarmament and has urged the United States to negotiate with the Soviet Union for the reduction of nuclear weapons. The League has also taken a strong stand on the issue of nuclear testing, opposing it as a threat to national security. The League is a non-partisan organization that works to promote political participation and to ensure that all voices are heard in the democratic process. Its work is based on the principles of equality, justice, and freedom for all people. The League of Women Voters was founded in 1920 and is one of the most influential organizations in the United States. It has a long history of fighting for women's rights and has been at the forefront of many of the most important social and political issues of our time. The League is a powerful force for change and is committed to ensuring that every woman has the opportunity to participate fully in our democracy.
FROM THE FRINGY PAN: by Bill Hosokawa

Asian American Journalists Assn.

Los Angeles

They demonstrated a great thing in the media business. Almost none of them were able to break into radio, and of course television was only a dream of the future at the time most Nisei were growing up.

TheSave have done much better in both the print and electronic media. The doors of opportunity were opened to them and their other Asian American colleagues, and they demonstrated a great deal of talent once they were given the chance to display it.

Several years ago, recognizing the desireability of encouraging other Asian American to enter journalism, a small group of professionals in Southern California founded what they called the Asian American Journalists Association.

Tritia Toyota, well-known throughout Southern California as anchorperson on KNBC-TV, was elected president. Bill Sing, a writer in the business news department of the Los Angeles Times, became chairman. Frank Kwan of KNBC-TV and Elaine Woo, a feature writer for the Los Angeles Herald Examiner, were named vice presidents. Linda Chang of KNBC-TV became secretary and Gloria Lee of the Los Angeles Times chief financial officer, treasurer.

One of the programs the AAJA was to provide scholarships for Asian Americans studying journalism. For that they needed money. Tritia Toyota asked her friend Tom Brokaw to speak at a fund-raising banquet. Brokaw flew out from New York just for expenses. The metropolitan newspapers and TV stations bought entire tables and the fund-raiser proved to be a rousing success.

Last year the AAJA received more than 60 entries in response to its scholarship announcement, and awarded new to professionals in both the print and electronic media.

This year’s judging was held a few weeks ago at KNXT-TV in Los Angeles and I happened to be one of the judges. Elaine Woo had assembled the entries, which included the usual letters of recommendation, a 500-word essay and published samples of writing.

Elaine and Bill Sing felt that some of this year’s entries did not measure up to those they had seen last year. But I was more impressed. Having been a part-time journalism instructor in a couple of Colorado universities in the not distant past, it was a pleasure to read material that demonstrated a working knowledge of spelling and grammar, and expressed original thought.

But I was even more impressed by the dedicated efforts of the AAJA. Like most volunteer organizations it has a small nucleus that does the work because it believes in its program. Nobody, so far as I could tell, told them they must get money for the scholarships. But obviously they believe journalism is an important profession and that Asian Americans ought to be encouraged to enter it.

So people like Elaine Woo and Bill Sing and Victor Merina and some others have put in a great deal of time and effort to publicize the competition, gather and coordinate the entries, arrange for the judges, assemble the finalists for personal or telephone interviews, determine which ones they can afford to give out, and finally write and mail the checks.

It is, of course, a labor of love that deserves the support of Asian Americans in the media throughout the country, because even if it is difficult for all of them to get together, I offered to start a one-member chapter in Denver. If you’re a journalist interested in joining, you can write to Elaine Woo, Asian American Journalists Assn., Room 411, Japanese American Cultural and Community Center, 244 So. San Pedro St., Los Angeles, CA 90012.

PPepperpot:

Two Sides of the Nikkei

Pepperpot is PUD’s corner column, turned over two decades ago for contributors who are 35 years and under, to discern a forum of their own. We are grateful this JACLer (and next time, include the age or check off the age bracket on the membership form) reviewed this title.-H.B.

By RANDOLPH T. SHIBATA

Two Vice-President-Membership, New Mexico JACL

Elaine Taniguchi, N.M.

At a JACL District function in the Rockies, I saw a good side of Nisei. I experienced the warmth and hospitality shown by many members of the host chapter. It was most impressive to see how generous each member was toward another. This function was successful.

The sessions and redress workshop were interesting. At one point, I pointed out a position that was somewhat unpopular. Unfortunately, some disagreement developed as a result of the vantage point, they encouraged me to speak out. Obviously, most of my colleagues at this convention felt that we are to have a wide range of viewpoints expressed. The lack of fear of what people is something that I will always remember and try to emulate.

Unfortunately, I also saw a bad side of some Nisei. This is a side that I would rather forget, but cannot. One member of my party was a Caucasian, herself a JACLer. A few of the Nisei present at the function behaved in ways that are inconsistent with the goals of a civil rights association.

One person called my friend a “whitey” to her face. A few others feel that Nisei can only be the victims of bigotry. Somehow, some people feel that because we are members of a civil and human rights group, we cannot have racist attitudes. But we can.

Is the person who called my friend a “whitey” any different from the Klansmen and Bentetskens of the past? If you look at their mental attitudes toward other ethnic groups, I must say that I doubt it.

While some Nisei demand to be accepted, some of those who demand this refusal to accept others. I remember the outcry when Nisei Week Queen candidates in California were not 100% Japanese. Somehow, things like this remind me of a racial purity pose advocated by a name by the name of Hitler. If we are a civil rights group, we must accept all people whatever their names are Stabila or Johnson, whether they are 100% Nisei, 50% Nisei, 25% Nisei, or 2% Nisei.

Our chapter sponsors a Japanese Festival called Omatsuri. I see things happening in it that I feel some Nisei might never accept. About 30% of the entertainment feature Nekkei participants. The other acts feature Caucasians demonstrating anti-Japanese, anti-Hispanic and demonstrating sexual and racial acts. Some Nisei will probably find this distasteful in what is billed as a Japanese Festival. But if we wish to please to be “Better Americans in a Greater America”, we must get rid of the attitude that other ethnic groups cannot do things Japanese.

When I think of the attitudes shown by those bigoted Nisei and of our quest for redress, I am appalled. The kind of bigotry that such Nikkei show is the same kind of thinking that created the Minuteman, the Minutokos, the Granity and the Heart of the Mountains. If Nisei show a narrow bigoted attitude toward other groups on this issue and in other issues, our quest will fail.

I was told that redress must be a human rights issue. I agree. Unfortunately, some people think that we are only people to have faced discrimination. Too many Nisei forget about the long walk of the Navajo Indians, of American Hispanics being confused for illegal aliens, of Iranians being discriminated during the hostage crisis, of Nikkei calling people “whitey” and “nigger.” What is worse, some Nisei do not even care! If we cannot see redress as a cause for all peoples, and if we are not sincere in our beliefs that our experience should not happen to any person again, and if we show a narrow bigoted attitude, redress deserves to fail.

JACL is and must be a human rights advocacy organization. We must let ourselves become an Asian version of the Klu Klux Klan. No.

Ah, you say that I am not talking about you! Well, for most of me I am not talking about you. But then again...
June 18, 1983

Los Angeles

It was supposed to be a typical June day. The weather forecast was for morning low clouds with clearing midday, turning to high in the 80's in the P.M. I was going to dress comfortably that day. Therefore I put on a pair of jeans (not designer), a polo shirt, and walking shoes. I picked up Ken Hayashi, who had on a gray suit, without tie, and we drove to city hall. We met George Kodama

College president at Trade Tech, after a series of meetings with APLDEF board members, assured he would personally investigate the problems and work for a resolution. Several problem areas have been successfully negotiated. Torii's supervisor also has elected to take an early retirement.

(4) Felix Bahauta, a Guamanian employed at the U.S. naval shipyard in Wilmington, has charged racial discrimination at the yard for several years. The case is under review by APLDEF.

To support APLDEF through personal contributions, membership, or participation, call John Saito (213) 980-4617.

at the footsteps of city hall. He was supposed to give me instructions on my role as a rally monitor. We were the earlier arrivals to the Vincent Chinn rally. As we stood in the shade of the numerous trees that front the elevated entrance to the city hall, we observed elected officials and organizational heads climb the many steps that lead up to the platform level where the podium and microphones were set up.

As we waited we could hear voices from a distance and then there soon appeared the first face of the group that had walked from Chinatown to the city hall. Young and old were carrying banners and placards in English and other Asian languages and began to converge on the footsteps of city hall. After the crowd had settled, speaker after speaker spoke about the injustices done to Vincent Chin, the scapegoating of the Asian American community, the folly of the justice system, the unification of the Asian Pacific American communities, and etc.

The list of speakers included: Secretary of the State March Fong Eu, Mayor Tom Bradley, State Senator Art Torres, Assemblyman Robert Calderon, Mayor pro-temp Lily Chen (Monterey Park) and many others. They all spoke and left the scorching sun rays to a shaded or covered area, but our district governor Cary Nishimoto was one of the last speakers. When I saw him two days earlier he was about six shades darker. The wrap-up speaker was Fred Fujisaki, a Santaertey and member of Marina chapter, JACL, JABA, APA, etc. and he received a standing ovation that day.

The wraps warme white folks to arm themselves against an Asian takeover. Fred said the message is a two edged sword and cuts both ways.

Acknowledgments and words of appreciation were made near the end of the rally. One man was thanked for his donation of 500 cans of soda. The media estimated the crowd to be about 300 and since I did not get a can of pop I concluded that there were more than 500 people in the crowd or I didn't catch those persons who drank more than one can.
McClory "is an insult to those of use who were interned and to all Americans who believe in equal justice," Norm said. McClory's continued defense of the internment "brings dishonor to himself and to those who honor him." A tireless advocate of civil liberties, Norm has also been very active in the Vincent Chin case, which involves the murder of a young American of Chinese ancestry in Detroit and subsequent sentencing of his killers to nothing more than a $5,000 fine and probation. In this instance, Norm organized a letter from several Congressmen to Attorney General William French Smith, asking for his direct, personal involvement in the federal investigation and review of the entire incident.

Earlier this year, Norm took the lead in calling a special meeting to discuss formation of an Asian American caucus within the Democratic National Committee. That first meeting in Washington was followed by a seven-week national tour and a second one last month at Palo Alto. The caucus is well on its way to formalization.