Indians Battle Federal Troops at Wounded Knee

WOUNDED KNEE, S.D. - In 1890 this small hamlet was the site of a bloody battle where federal troops of more than three hundred Indians, mostly women and children. The battle, described in the recent bestseller, Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee, marked the end of the "Indian Wars" in the Dakota territories. Yet it was only a low point in the history of Native Americans who have suffered centuries of oppression and death at the hands of the white man.

Now, once again there is conflict between the red and the white at Wounded Knee. As part of the Indian movement against government neglect, race and job discrimination, poor living conditions and inferior education. Over 400 Indians recaptured this small hamlet with off federal marshals with high powered rifles. They were members of the militant American Indian Movement (AIM) and the Oglala Sioux Nation. Speakers from an AIM Monarch who said they would "keep the village "at all costs" until the government met their demands. The demands included an investigation of the dealings of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Department of the Interior in relation to the Oglala Sioux, and the ouster of the current leaders of the Oglala Sioux whose AIM membership they said was not sufficient to meet their needs. Another demand was that Senators Edward Kennedy and J.W. Fulbright go to the Pine Ridge Reservation where Wounded Knee is located, to discuss Indian grievances. Also demanded was a review of 371 treaties with the government that has failed to live up to. To this detail the AIM Monarch was declared in a statement by Carter Camp, an AIM spokesperson who said, "It is symbolic that we have to take the initiative to keep the red a definite threat that another massacre could occur here. We are not going to give in without a fight.

Three Underground Papers Live On

One recent February afternoon while in the midst of our monthly press run, things were quiet at the Gidra office. Most of the staffers were away at work, at school, or just on the streets and the few at the office were appraising the walls were closing in when the phone rang. It was a call from Chicago. Lois and beloved was the Chicago Seed calling to inform us that the Seed was "still around." Good news comes at unexpected times, for most of the Giders had thought that the Seed had ceased publication. It had been six months, at least, since we had received any sign of life from the Chicago periodical. Back in January, we had placed a call to the Seed office. Allas, the phone had been disconnected and thus, it was assumed that the Seed had joined a long line of other radical papers that have recently folded. Gone were the Berkeley Tribe, East Village Other, and the San Francisco Good Times, among others. But now, to our relief, the Chicago Seed lives on. Keep on keepin' on, Seed.

Also on the journalistic front, this time in the deep South, a publication known as the Great Speckled Bird in Atlanta, Georgia, had printed its "farewell issue" in the early days of this year. Being the only remaining radical publication in that section of the country, we at Gidra were sorry to see it go. Then, at the end of January we received another copy of the Bird. Apparently their staff has gotten it all together and ready for one more try and now the Bird is proudly flying once again. Good luck to the Great Speckled Bird.

On the East Coast, in the Big Apple, the Liberated Guardian finally published after an almost two month silence. Following much discussion and debate, the Giders prepared to move from being a national movement paper to a locally-based New York newspaper which they hope will reach a wider audience of number of people. They will also expand their staff, develop a sound financial base, and change their name. (Sounds familiar.) We're with you, LG!

LEFT: Gidra Staff, 1801-14, L to R: Howie Krieger, Rich Brown, Matt Mentzky, John Penrose, Steve Koons, Chip Brown, Ron Zeller, Tom Robinson, Mark Gidra, and Andrew Egan. Steve Koons is holding the book, which is the cover of this issue.


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Revenue Sharing

LOS ANGELES - Over seventy-five Asian community workers and social service professionals crowded into a meeting on February 20 at Resthaven Hospital. The meeting was held to discuss the impact of revenue sharing and the recent government cutbacks of community oriented social programs.

The much publicized revenue sharing, a program to "give back" $6 billion each year to state and local governments, was analyzed as nothing more than a smoke screen to cover up the dismantling of the Office of Economic Opportunities (OEO), the Model Cities program, and other anti-poverty programs.

It was noted that in the 1972 Revenue Sharing Act, "public safety" was listed as the number one domestic priority, while "social services for the poor and aged" was given a low, number seven position. In actual practice, the revenue sharing, which allocated a total of $122 million for the Los Angeles area, is already earmarked for capital construction, "existing deficits" and for "future tax savings."

Meanwhile, the nation's poor have been told to "rely on their own efforts" by Nixon's New Order in Washington.

Those present at the meeting were particularly concerned that the projected Senior Citizens Housing in Little Tokyo is being held up. All recently-funded Asian community service programs are in danger of being wiped out; and, worst of all, survival incomes of the aged and families with dependent children are in jeopardy, government cutbacks.

The Kennedy-Johnson era of reforms from above has come to a close. The Nixon administration is moving toward centralization of power while using the rhetoric of self-reliance. Thus, Asian social workers are calling upon all Asians to stand united in the face of the government cutbacks in our communities.

Humboldt State Seeks Asian Americans

HUMBOLDT, CA - It was recently announced by the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) at the California State University at Humboldt that twenty-five scholarships are available for Asian American students in the Fall quarter, 1973.

The EOP office at CSUH currently offers the student academic advising, personal counseling, tutorial services and courses designed to aid disciplines. Financial assistance is available also.

Applications and information about EOP and this small northern California campus can be obtained by writing to:

John S. Wong
1016 F Street, No. 3
Arcata, CA 95521

The deadline date for the submission of the applications is April 1, 1973.

Say "Hi" to Jeanne for us.

The Yellow Brotherhood - 1973

LOS ANGELES - Since its "official" closing in October 1971, the Yellow Brotherhood house has been very much alive and still functioning. Now, the YB is once again readying itself to serve the Los Angeles Asian community in seeking a solution to the ever growing drug problem.

Since 1971, many community organizations such as JACL, JACS, Asian Sisters plus Yellow Brotherhood members have been meeting and discussing ideas and methods to restructure the YB programs.

Presently, members of the Yellow Brotherhood house are combining their energies to re-pair and maintain the physical structure of the house. They are still meeting regularly, however they are also seeking additional support and input from concerned community members.

In order to reach out to the community even further and to share ideas, the Yellow Brotherhood is planning a fun-filled tie-dye day on March 10, 1973 from noon to 3 p.m. A workshop is also planned where people will have the opportunity to gain insight into the programs which the YB House is now developing. Their address is 1227 Crenshaw Blvd.; drop by if you have any questions, or call 938-4886 and just rap a while.

Jefferson Food Buyer's Club

With the cost of food on the rise, it is becoming increasingly difficult to get quality foods at reasonable prices. Discount stores such as Alpha Beta and Safeway offer no relief to the forlorn, hungry shoppers and their little kids. Especially in lower economic communities, rising prices leave the helpless consumer. It's often the case where a person living in Beverly Hills can buy groceries at a lower cost with better quality than their counterpart in the Crenshaw-Jefferson area.

In order to protect the consumer against rising food costs, concerned community members have organized a Food Buyer's Club. An initial investment of $3 per household for a lifetime membership offers the buyer the rare opportunity to obtain quality produce and eggs at wholesale cost. Members are able to obtain goods at lower costs because the middle-man is eliminated. The members themselves must take an active part in the operating of the Food Buyer's Club. On Saturdays the food is distributed to members at the Storefront between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. If you're interested in joining or want to learn more about it, the Food Buyer's Club meets on Wednesday evenings at 7:30 p.m. at the Storefront, 2828 W. Jefferson Blvd. or call 734-2666.

U.S. Economic Aid to Vietnam (in Counterfeit Bills)

HANOI - Counterfeit bank notes of the State Bank of Vietnam have recently been seized by air dropped over the Democratic Republic of Vietnam by the Nixon Administration.

The new tactic of Nixon's was denounced by the Vietnamese Bank in a statement last fall. According to a clumsy White House explanation, the fake bills dropped on DRVN territory were merely "leaflets" meant to urge North Vietnam not to "squander money on the war." In fact, the so-called leaflet is but a stub attached to the counterfeit note itself.

What the U.S. government has done here is nothing less than blatant counterfeiting of money and smuggling that money into a foreign state. This is a crime in any country and under international law.

This tactic was used in an effort to undermine the DRVN's economy and finances; something which millions of tons of bombs have failed to do. But all this was in vain, for the phony bank notes are being scorned by the Vietnamese people, who hand them over to the local authorities.

Farewell to Atomic Nancy

LOS ANGELES - On the night of February 14 many followers of the "Asian rock" band, Hiroshima, packed the Ash Grove for the two final performances of Atomic Nancy with the group.

Exceptionally well performed sets had the crowd in the renowned night club clapping, stamping and shouting for more.

Hiroshima has gained fame within the Asian American community not only for the great music they produce but also because of their willingness to perform benefits for community groups and their concern to reach people through their music.

As for their music, Hiroshima has developed a true style and sound of their own. As Dan Kuramoto, one of the band's leaders once said, "We're playing music that comes from our experiences as Asians in America, and it's the music out people want to hear." And on this night he could not have been more correct. It was a fantastic show.

With the departure of Atomic Nancy (who is about to be married) the band now consists of Dan Kuramoto on flute, sax and almost anything else he can get his hands on; Bennie "Oozie" Yee on keyboard and vocals; June Kuramoto, Koto, Randy Yoshimoto, drums and vocals and Chris Kawaoaka on a thundering bass. Together they provide some of the best sounds that ears can hear.

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Planning: New York Asian Coalition

The most impressive experience I had with the Anti-War movement was participating with the Asian Contingent in the Anti-War Demonstration in Washington D.C. on January 20, 1973. Planning began three weeks prior to that date. It was warm, cloudy, and the City of New York was alive with activity. As usual, much of the preparation was done by the local community groups and individuals. The event was a huge success, and it was clear that the Asian community had come together to make their voices heard.

Makibaka

Then, a sister from the Filipino group, who had just returned from the Philippines (she had been deported by the Marcos regime for being "subversive"), got up to talk about what was happening with the martial law in the Philippines. While she was talking she brought up the fact that her 'wife', Emedel, was one block away from the war zone, having just been on an inauguration Ball. A suggestion was made for the Asian Contingent to stage a small mass action (drip and chant) in front of the hotel where all this festivities was going on. We had forty-five minutes to make a decision (because our bus was leaving at a certain time). Scouting was sent out to the area and we reported back that there were two truckloads of National Guard nearby. A heated debate followed—several sides argued their points. It was finally let Marcos and his cohorts know that wherever they went in the world, there would be anti-imperialist forces opposed to his fascist dictatorship—and that this was an opportunity not to act. Others, although they were in full support of the Filipino struggle here and in the Philippines, felt that it was tactically unwise because it was Inauguration Night in Washington D.C.—there had been police sweeps in the past after large demonstrations. The other side pointed out that we would be completely peaceful and if asked to move on by the police, we would do so; that precisely because it was Inauguration Night the police would be available to the public.

January 20: On the bus to Washington D.C.

The next morning (5 a.m.) we were up and off to the United Asian Communities Center. A whole busload arrived from Chinatown and other boroughs and their students, Nisei Asian Americans. As we got on the bus, hot and cold tea and coffee are passed out. Two hours later we arrive to get to know people in our bus affinity group (4 people, one affinity group leader). The purpose of the affinity group was to break down barriers between people and facilitate communication between "movement people" and those who had come for the first time. We were handed a written packet containing information on the war; medical/legal/security information for combat and Asian events around the Virginia Medical Supply Drive; and evaluation sheet.

For the demonstration, we were to march in disciplined formation in rows of 8 across, each row made up of one marching affinity group. The purpose of the affinity group was to have smaller units of individuals who would be responsible for each other should the larger group have to split up (if we were subject to a police attack, for instance). There were 22 marshals (official persons responsible for overall leadership and security of the group; plenty of trained medics; and two scouts (people who moved ahead of the group to survey the area).

Washington D.C.: At the Washington Monument

We arrive in Washington D.C.—Nixon’s Inauguration speech is blasting from the tops of buildings. We move to the Lincoln Memorial where we meet up with Asians from Philadelphia, Boston, Washington D.C., Ohio, small colleges all over the East Coast and form the Asian Contingent (about 200 of us). We then join up with the November 4th Contingent and march to the Washington Monument. There are 100,000 people—(police estimates at the time, whitened down to 30,000 in the L.A. press). As far as you could see—people! There were more of us than at Nixon’s Inauguration. Thousands of Anti-Imperialist forces could be seen with little NLF flags waving in the wind.

One experience impressed me in terms of how the movement works. The group was organized and led was instructed when the question came up as to whether or not we, as an Asian Contingent wanted to stay in support of the other contingents or to join the smaller group or leave for a church in Washington D.C. where an Asian Contingent program was being planned— to share information and contacts among the Asians who were there from all over the East Coast. It was a question of time—we didn’t know if we’d have enough time for both because the speakers were there for a longer time. It was about 10 degrees (or below) weather and we had another two hour wait. There were political considerations, however, like supporting the November 4th Contingent when they were making an arbitrary decision—all of the Asians in the Asian Contingent broke up into their affinity groups, discussed the question, and then their members agreed to a collective decision. We decided to stay.

After an enthusiastic reception for and support of Juan Ferraoli, the leader of the 4th Contingent speaker—we all split for the church. When we got there, we got a chance to eat, thaw out, and get to know the different Asians from the East. This experience was both enlightening and educational, because our bus was leaving at a certain time. Scouting was sent out to the area, and we reported back that there were two truckloads of National Guard nearby. A heated debate followed—several sides argued their points. It was finally let Marcos and his cohorts know that wherever they went in the world, there would be anti-imperialist forces opposed to his fascist dictatorship—and that this was an opportunity not to act. Others, although they were in full support of the Filipino struggle here and in the Philippines, felt that it was tactically unwise because it was Inauguration Night in Washington D.C.—there had been police sweeps in the past after large demonstrations. The other side pointed out that we would be completely peaceful and if asked to move on by the police, we would do so; that precisely because it was Inauguration Night the police would be available to the public.

Anti-War/anti-Imperialist Protest in Washington D.C.

The Anti-War/anti-Imperialist demonstration was a huge success, and it was clear that the Asian community had come together to make their voices heard. As usual, much of the preparation was done by the local community groups and individuals. The event was a huge success, and it was clear that the Asian community had come together to make their voices heard.

Next, a speaker from El Comite, a commu-
Two hours south of Los Angeles lies the thriving community of San Diego. The sun shines with alarming regularity down here, which gives the populace the opportunity to wear cut-off levis and miniskirts in the middle of winter. San Diego is the pinnacle of Southern California culture. The surf, the sun, and the horseless, casual Californian generation all come together here. It is, at once, refreshing and depressing. It is fantasy land and purgatory. It is San Diego with its smart rows of wood frame houses, lime green lawns, and two rosy red cars in the garage. "Them colored folk" are people living on the other side of town (which one rarely feels the necessity to journey through). As for the rest of the world... well, there's always the six o'clock news. Pictures of large East Coast ghettos or even smog-laden L.A. seem like surreal nightmares—unbelievable and remote. Conditions in San Diego are too nice, too secure and it's too bad that all of this is only a facade hiding the real situations of day to day struggles which the alienated classes must experience. The minorities are often given only token recognition, if not totally overlooked. The working class is labeled "rednecks" by the counter-culture and in return the counter-culture is called "dirty hippies." It is alienation from the "good life" which leads to this type of polarization, but the total environment of this Southern California city makes it easy to leave the problem unresolved.

Perhaps the experience of San Diego is what the rest of the nation will someday suffer—that of a numbing oppression where the sun, the blue skies and warm ocean make the battle against racism, sexism, and all the other evil "isms" all the more difficult.

Historically, the Asian American community of San Diego reaches back to the late 1860's, when the first Chinese immigrants established themselves in the city. These Asian pioneers were the first to develop the now strong San Diego fishing industry which laid the economic foundation in the area.

By the turn of the century, a small but tightly-knit Chinatown had developed and the first waves of Japanese and Filipino immigrants were settling into well-defined neighborhoods. These Asian immigrants were instrumental in developing the local agri-business and the railroads, while also laying a strong community base.

However, today in San Diego one finds no Chinatown, no Little Tokyo; instead an Asian American population widely dispersed. "The only place Asians really come together is at school," says a solemn Forrest Hong, chairman of the Asian American Student Alliance at San Diego State. "That's why it's important for us (AASA) to reach as many Asians on campus as we can. This conference is just one means by which we can do this."

The rumors were spreading like some plague of the dark ages. "Hey man, the Filipinos are going to boycott the conference?" "Did you hear that all the brown Asians were going to picket the conference?" "Wow, I just heard that the people organizing the San Diego thing are going ahead with it no matter what!!!"

One month before it was to take place, the Los Angeles area started receiving information concerning the Amerasian Perspective Conference in San Diego. At the same time the rumors crept around. No one really bothered to verify the rumors; instead, many paused to reflect over the inter-ethnic relationships between so-called yellow Asians (Chinese, Japanese, Koreans) and brown Asians (Filipinos, Samoans, Malaysians).

"Isn't it a pity," was the prevailing attitude in the air, perhaps hiding feelings which were more difficult to express. And yet, many remembered conferences in the past and looked forward, in anticipation, to see how the movement was moving in San Diego. Intriguing promises of "major speakers, films, workshops, special entertainment, and a celebration dance," hired, at least momentarily, the imaginations of many for whom San Diego was nothing more than a huge Navy base.

"There never was any boycott planned... never!" emphasized Forrest Hong, "I don't know how that whole thing got started." So no boycott, no picket line, but as it turned out relations in San Diego between yellow and brown Asians hadn't exactly reached nirvana. "True, there are a lot of problems within the San Diego movement between us and the Filipinos," explained Hong. "But most of them are due to personality clashes between community leadership. A lot of behind the back stuff takes place, you know, abuse of power and things like that. We're starting to iron a lot of them out and hopefully it won't turn into a 'us' and 'them' situation, but I think some people already see it that way."

Author's comment: The following was extracted directly from notes and tape recordings made during the weekend of the Amerasian Perspective Conference, San Diego, February 16-17, 1973.

* According to Forrest Hong, the present "movement" activity at the San Diego State campus came about: "Because we wanted to get EOP for Asians going on campus. In order to do that we needed a sponsoring organization to do a lot of community relations type of work. So AASA
was formed. And in order to keep the program going, we need a continuing line of people becoming involved in the movement, at least here on campus.

* The chairman or moderator of the panel discussion, a respectable young man named Willie Wong, just said, "Let's talk a little about the media now." silence...silence...sound of chairs shuffling...more silence... "Has anyone seen that TV show, Kung Fu?" Actually, this topic is going nowhere. Strange, too, that these people who are obviously concerned and motivated by their growing Asian awareness cannot yet realize the power that the media has in shaping their lives. The guy sitting behind me just whispered to his friend, "I'm going to get something to eat."

* "Where you guys from?"
* "Humboldt."
* "What?"
* "Humboldt! We saw an announcement about this conference in a Gidra that we bought from some girl up there (Jeanne Nishimura, our Humboldt distributor)."
* "Wow!"
* "Yeah...so we decided to drive down the thousand miles to San Diego and check out the conference here 'cause we're just getting into developing Asian American Studies on the Humboldt State campus, too."
* "What?! You guys drove all the way from..." she says I'm crazy.
* "Yeah...we know."

* It has occurred to my rapidly decaying mind, that at conferences such as these, real learning and sharing experiences take place not only in the "official" workshops but also and perhaps primarily in the spontaneous gatherings which take place inevitably.

* "Actually, the movement in San Diego has had a history of coming together and falling apart over and over. These AASA people here at State are just another generation in that cycle." - Anonymous.

* There are about six or eight people who are the core members of the Alliance here at State. These were the people who also organized this conference. Basically, it is aimed at the level of understanding which is present here in San Diego." - Anonymous. (AASA member).

* "You know, up in L.A., there were all kinds of rumors going around about a boycott of the conference by brown Asians."

* "Brown Asians? Oh, you mean the Filipinos. Now, there never was any boycott. The thing was that we (AASA) were approached by Filipinos without having their input into it. We thought that was fair, but as it turned out we didn't plan any Filipino workshop or any Japanese or Chinese workshop. The thing about the workshops is that we wanted them to be of a general application to all Asian ethnic groups." - A conference workshop leader.

* "Hey, that band Hiroshima is really good!!!"
* "Yeah, they always are."
* "You people in L.A. are really lucky to have something like them up there with you."
* "Yeah, we appreciate 'em."
* "Shoot...you people got everything going up in L.A."
* "What do you mean?"
* "You know, like JAC's...and Gidra...and CYC, and, well...everything!"
* "Well, ...I'm sure San Diego will get things going soon."
* "Well, I don't know 'bout that."
* "Getting things started is rough-you need a lot of energy to struggle through on."
* "Yeah...I guess so."
* "Just wait and see, pretty soon you people down here will have all kinds of things happenin'."

* "Wow!"

* "What?"

* "That band Hiroshima is really good!!!"

* "I sat in the 'Men & Women' workshop for both sessions. The first one was kinda messed up. No one seemed like they knew what they wanted to get out of it. The second session was a little better 'cause people started speaking up, you know, coming out of their shells." - A conference attendee.

* "You know, for San Diego this conference was all right. I mean, nothing really important was produced, but I think for a lot of the local people just the fact that they were able to come and share and express their feelings was good for them and good for the movement down here." - An AASA member.

**********

Bumping along Mexican National Highway 1-D, hoping my wheels don't fall off and thinking back to the Amerasian Perspective Conference in San Diego. I remember in one of my last talks with Forrest Hong, how he mentioned that "the conference was a real ruck job." Admittedly, I was rather disappointed by the small turnout, which was never more than 150 people (except at the dance). The actual organizing and publicizing was begun only a month before the conference was to take place, which was too short a time to develop any real direction and input. Add to that the general attitude or signification that the conference was basically a "San Diego thing" and you have discussions and workshops with only a localized focus or personalized viewpoint. However there were exceptions to this, specifically the Visual Communication and the Community Organizing workshops were both handled with objectivity and purpose, as for most of the others—rambling, directionless raps left many confused and frustrated.

Some people attributed the faults of the conference to the inexperience of the organizers. Yet, the movement in San Diego, no matter how young or inexperienced is just as vital and carries just as much potential as any other aspect of the overall Asian American movement. And furthermore, despite all the criticism, obvious faults and oversights, I witnessed a true sense of comradeship developing... and that, above all else, fulfilled any gaps which the conference itself produced. I saw people coming together out of mutual concern with bright hopes for the future and trust in each other. And it is through these people that the old San Diego sun became a lot more warm and giving.

Yet, foreseeable problems are looming in the future, lack of people-power at the San Diego State campus makes the prospects of healthy program development next year very cloudy and in the community, the Asian movement is quietly smoldering because of petty personality problems. Patience is becoming a luxury which is ill-afforded. Perhaps the whole situation can be attributed to the lack of a common purpose or even a mutual understanding of objective conditions. As one person at the conference had told me, "It seemed as though everyone was talking about the problems, but no one knew what to do about them." Maybe the Asian American movement in San Diego is at that level which we can call "Phase II," that period in any socio-political movement where the problems of society are given that first careful looking over. Add to that the growing awareness of common histories, common oppressions and common motivations and we have planted the seeds of revolt...

I turn to my traveling companion and mention that we should be in Ensenada in about another twenty minutes. That's when I noticed the huge crevice in the road ahead, and the sign—"Deviacion: 100 m." Does that mean 'detour,' or 'devastation'? The Baja sun has apparently frizzled my powers of rationalization. The car crashed over the potholes and continues southward into the Mexican high desert. The journey is far from over...

—Steve Tatsukawa

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STYLIN':
An Asian American Fashion Show

in the movement's revolutionary fervor to forge a new life style free of materialistic hangups we often try very hard to discard any traces of our recent petty bourgeois existence. A good case in point is in the clothing we wear. In fact, we often find ourselves in contradiction when we buy jeans and work shirts rather than wear our now-dated but perfectly wearable pin-striped Ivy league shirt or that hot pink princess line dress. Nevertheless, the movement among Asian American people is relatively recent and for that reason, although realizing clothes are not and should not be important, they still often are. And let's face it. It's still kinda fun to see the latest styles. Even though as good revolutionaries we wouldn't be caught dead wearing them. At least, not anywhere we might be remotely recognized by any of our comrades. So when Alan showed me the headline in the Rafu Shimpo reading "James Shigeta Hosts All-Asian Fashion Show At Grove: A Salute to Hollywood The Asian Women?" it was with a great deal of ambivalent feelings that led me to volunteer, as well as being coercively persuaded, to cover the January 28th fashion show sponsored by the Parent's Auxiliary of the Los Angeles Chinese Drum and Bugle Corps as a fund raising event. I was skeptical: all that front: the women who come to see images of the way they should come and dress; the men who come to see the pretty young things strutting across the stage and the feeling that I would certainly feel out of place there. But I was also curious—not only of what it would be like and who would be there, but also a curiosity that was stirred up by remnants of my attraction to fads and fashion.

It was all arranged. Julian Falk, who along with Terence Tam Soon were fashion designers and co-producers of the show, was familiar with Gidra and knew some of the staff members. He was very open to having us cover the show.

Evelyn came to pick me up an hour early so we could decide what to wear. We had been talking about it for a week and now that the show was only two hours away, I still hadn't decided. We did agree, though, that blue jeans might make us look a little too conspicuous. I modeled my only two long dresses and after changing a couple of times, I decided to wear a cotton dress. We were on our way. Although it had been cold and rainy all week, today the sun was shining and despite a strong breeze it seemed like springtime. Parking was nil or expensive so we had to walk two blocks to the Ambassador Hotel from Evelyn's parked Datsun. As we neared the hotel entrance we could hear strains of the overture from "Ben Hur" played in booming style by the ninety horn-blowing, drum-beating, banner-carrying and rifle-shouldering young people of the Chinese Drum and Bugle Corps.

The imperial Dragons, as the corps is nicknamed, began in 1954 as the Chung Wah Chinese Drum and Bugle Corps with a few youngsters in the Chinatown area participating. Today it is the largest Asian American musical organization in the United States, with its participants coming from places as far as Orange County to practice two times a week which exclude any additional performance activities that come once weekly through May to September. The average age of a corps member is fourteen years old although the age spans from eleven to twenty-one. Most all of them begin through their parents' insistence and with no knowledge of how to play an instrument. After an intensive training period of two to three months where they are trained on an instrument by professional musicians and loyal alumni of the corps, they have competitive units to determine who will compose the performing segment of the corps. The corps encourages high scholastic and aptitude levels and have had as many as twenty straight "A" students at one time. But it's not all work and no play. The corps has social events such as beach parties, picnics and banquets. As the Imperial Dragons finished playing the last stanzas of "Happy Shades of Winter," which marked an end to their performance this morning, they began to joke with one another and enjoy each other's company. The conversation was average American teenager talk. No Chinese was spoken. Since it was windy, one of the boys had difficulty lifting his drum into their specially designed equipment truck. It takes money to maintain the Imperial Dragons and their instruments, track, uniforms, trips and staff—and lots of it. Hence the continuous fund raising activities—the raffles, carnivals, Moon Festival Balls and the fashion show.

Inside the hotel the Coconut Grove was packed with fashionably dressed and coiffured young matrons of the Asian American community. Jade and pearl rings adorned most of the women's hands as they valiantly tried to eat their roast chicken as politely as possible. And yet despite their polished appearance, a few of them handled their knives and forks awkwardly and exchanged their string beans for another's wild rice in a downtown style that reminded me that, thank god, we still hadn't become Asian Emily Posts. Midway through the ice cream mold cake, the preliminaries began with each table drawing tickets to see who got to take home the table center pieces of potted yellow chrysanthemums. Then the drawing for door prizes began with the Chinese New Year's baby king and baby queen picking the winning numbers. A polar bear rug to ticket number 472. A jade pendant to number 609. Screams of delight came from number 609's table. Shi-soldo cosmetics. A fifth of Galano. Hoorey. The Youth Dew Collection from Este Lauder. Three knit pants outfits. A photo album. A beaded handbag. A marble ashtray. That seemed to be the end of the prizes and the laughter and excitement seemed to die down when the mistress of ceremonies announced that another addition had been added to the door prizes—a trip to Hawaii for two to winner number 205. Shrieks of delight spread throughout the room and things once again went into a hubbub. The Parents' Auxiliary of the Imperial Dragons were pro at putting together social events and drawings and they knew what an audience likes and the audience likes being surprised by a sudden addition to the door prizes.

"Please return to your seats now, ladies and gentlemen, they tell me they are ready to start the show." Dan, Jane and Benny from Hiroshima began to tune up their instruments and started to improvise background music for the show. "We're very pleased to have with us today two very wonderful people that I'm sure many, many of you have seen both on stage and screen and at home on your little TV sets. We are pleased and honored to have today as our two moderators, Virginia Wing and Mr. James Shigeta. Would you give a big hand to them, please?"

There was a pause and as the house lights dimmed the stage and became the focal point of all eyes. James Shigeta looking harried and Virginia Wing smiling broadly and looking composed, appeared on stage amidst applause and a few whirls from the audience. Jimmie began.

"Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen,
They tell me that we'll have something the ladies will enjoy and some models that the gentlemen will enjoy looking at. Could we tone the music down just a wee bit please? Okay. And no loud belching in the audience, please."

"The Asian Women has long been the object of mystique and glamour to the Western world since the days of Marco Polo. The classical painters of Asia saw her as a demure, fragile flower blooming with innocence and gentle grace..." A slide show accompanied Shigeta's commentary on the Hollywood history of Asian Virginia retorted, "Chinese ladies don't belch," and the audience laughed as Ms. Wing's smile became even more broad. Outwitted, Shigeta began the show as women portrayed on the screen first by Anglo actresses, beginning with Lillian Gish in 1919 in "Broken Blossoms", all the way to the present with Asian actresses themselves. Jennifer Jones in "Love is a Many Splendored Thing" seemed to be the audience's favorite angle portraying an Asian woman as Shigeta announced, "The most sought-after Asian female role of the 50's went to a non-Asian, Jennifer Jones..." and applause came from the audience while Lisa Lu gained the most applause for an Asian actress. Ms. Wing moderated the fashion part of the program with over sixty outfits being shown by the Asian American Fashion Designers.

Designer Sue Wong favored the 40's and 50's look which involved costume-like outfits such as the Hollywood husky, a calypso outfit, the Kansas City Bomber bikini, a Ragamuffin clown pantsuit and a sequined tuxedo. Ms. Wong's model was Sandy Gaviola who is quite an actress. Some might say that she may have drawn more attention to herself than should be accorded to a fashion mannequin but Ms. Wong's designs spoke for themselves and Ms. Gaviola is more an actress than a model and so her periodic appearances on stage were fun and the audience seemed to enjoy her characterizations.

Alune Moy used quite a bit of suede and leather in her designs and more than once used her talents in leather to innovate rather than emulate as shown in her patch-work, natural chamois vest and skirt. Nevertheless when I saw her suede Chinese peasant shirts, I couldn't help but think that Chairman Mao probably would balk at the mere suggestion of something like that. Her primary model was Anita whose dancing movements made it evident that she was an old pro at this game.

It's difficult to pin point Julian Falk's designs although he did use quite a bit of hand embroidered silk and pastel colors for some designs and lounging pajamas. Especially imaginative were his white caftan with a Rorschach-like ink blot design and a simple white gown with a frontal design done in crayola. Julian was the only one who designed for brothers with the exception of a few designs by Alune Moy. The style was definitely flash with a heavy "Superfly" influence. His main female model was Ruby, whose style was demure even when she accidentally slipped out of her halter top, a trait that caught the eye of Universal Studios who later offered her a lead in an upcoming motion picture.

Carol Lee's tie dying ability gave her designs an added plus with her uses of colors of purple, greens and blues. Her designs in the show were representative of her original taste that can be seen in her shops on Sunset Blvd, called Miharabels. Her model was primarily Connie whose style was straight, poised and professional.

Teren Tsoo's fashions were marked by a flowing style with his use of yards of vibrating fabrics such as voile, chiffon and silk. Terence used all colors but seemed to like to use touches of gold whenever possible. Characterizing a Chinese influence on his designs was his frequent use of the mandarin collar. His model was the graceful Noriko who was also tested for a lead in a motion picture by Universal Studios after her appearance in the fashion show.

Perhaps the most marketable potential came from Loretta Leong Cymrot whose entire line of designs could be coordinated and interchanged with one another. She favored two piece sports outfits using a great deal of orange and green in her clothes. Kay was Ms. Cymrot's model and she too had the poise of a professional.

The last outfit of this segment of the program was a Sue Wong design, a silver pencil-cut, full-length skirt with layers of ruffles on the bottom and collar. As model Sandy dragged the matching jacket behind her and disappeared off stage, Virginia Wing announced that the show's awards would begin to be presented. ******

For this year's fashion show Asian American Fashion designers have established the Anna May Wong Awards to be presented to an Asian actress and an Asian woman who best represent the image, life-style and community concr of the modern Asian American woman. This year's winners were Ms. Tina Chen and Ms. Pat Li. James Wong Howe received the award for his contributions to the creative arts.

Anna May Wong was perhaps the only Asian American actress of her time, the 1920's-40's, to become a social personality on the Hollywood scene. She was born in Los Angeles in 1902, one of seven children of laundry-owning parents in the Hollywood area. She made her first film while still in her teens and got her "big-break" as a "slave girl" in "Thief of Bagdad" in 1924. Her popularity soared during the vogue for spectacular Oriental productions and she worked with people such as Douglas Fairbanks Sr., Sir Lawrence Olivier, Marlene Dietrich and Alfred Hitchcock. True she was stereotyped and played mainly oriental parts rather than acting roles but her parts were substantial and her taste and looks influenced the old Hollywood fashions. And so Hollywood was good to her and her career flourished, but during the 1920's her roles became scarcer and scarcer until she virtually disappeared from motion pictures in the late 40's but for a brief comeback in the 1949 "Impact." Ms. Wong was a Chinese American, born and raised in California, only visiting China once finally in 1936, but all her life she played the foreigner. She did not once have the opportunity to play an Asian American role. She made her final comeback in 1960 in "Portrait in Black," only to die of drug overdose the same year. The award is to her memory.

******

"Well, Julian, how did you feel after the show?" Evelyn asked.

"I was a mess," Julian responded.

A few weeks after the fashion show, Evelyn, Steve and I went to talk to Julian about the show. Julian had just arrived at his yet-to-be-opened Chinese restaurant China shop on La Cienega Blvd next-door to Tally's West. Julian's friends and workers, Bill and Lynn, were busy taping on silver velour backing to the display trays while Julian was standing at the counter quickly folding down some homemade potato salad. He offered us some. Julian explained how we had caught him at a hectic time but was nevertheless willing to have us come and ask what we needed to know. He explained how the Asian American Fashion Designers put together the show last minute.  

March 1973  GIDRA 9
POETRY for the PEOPLE

Silent River
By the Silent River
the waters flow towards the sun
humble people, bent by its side
viewing the streams, the gleams
of the midnite sun
children playing, singing
along the banks
remembering so vaguely
the stories of old
of wars, of revolution
of the new future
Oh, Silent River
run towards other lands
bring the spirit of justice,
of love, to other homelands
not thwarted by walls
but strong to envelope all
in tunes of peace
of universal peace

poems by Zenta

Playgrounds
On concrete fields we sit
starting deeply to the sky
Clouds twist briskly
through winter breezes
A seagull lands between
the bungalows we face
at each other
Wondering who has more time
to make the first move
We continue our stares in
relaxing moods of nameless songs
Justifying our presence
our thoughts continue to swirl
Soon we would be near
so many hearts
There's much to be done
so much to learn and believe
When will there be time?

Destined Teacher
my beautiful sister
only numbers separate our years of struggle
yet you were strong willed
and self determined
and collided many a time
with the man
but be strong always
so that i may learn from your experiences
for you are a teacher
though you are not here
physically
a woman
bound to be sent to heaven
someone who paid the price of death
with the gift of life
who could be so unselfish
by giving your life
so others could learn
i call you teacher
i always will

Smokie

My mother saves the aluminum plates of
T.V. dinners. They're exotic, durable and shiny.
being portable my sister and I eat apart from
our parents. The social interaction of gossip
and haggling with the fish-mongers and otofu
man for supper daily is replaced by a refrig-
eration unit capable of keeping one inside for
a month. But I like cold cantaloupe.

1946-1948. My father is a pre-trial inter-
rogator at Judge Advocates Section, Yokohama.
He interviews NCO's and lower in rank. He was
inducted into the Army as a Hawaiian colonial.
Far East Intelligence knows that most mainland
Nisei went by "the book"--to prove their patrio-
tism and loyalty, and Hawaiian Nisei generally
were notorious gamblers with a don’t give a
damn attitude, and less adept at being bilingual.
The court interpreters are Mainland Niseis and
the pre-trial ones are Hawaiian. Thusly, the los-
ers get the maximum penalties. The Asian tells
the Asian, "You lose."

I'm nine and attend Virginia Road Element-
ary school in Southwest L.A. I'm gonna have a
fight after school with a blood who called me a
ching chong japs. (To this day, I've yet to know
what ching chong means.) The Asian hates his
middle name Kiyoshi, and wants to be black
like the rest of America. The Asian says, he
was born in Hawaii. After the fight, the Asian
tells the black, "You lose."

I'm fifteen and attend Dorsey High School.
For the past two Sundays, I've been teaching
a single grade Asians at Centenary Methodist
Church on Normandie and Jefferson. I've been
confronting the students with questions about
why we say the pledge of allegiance. What
does that ritual mean? I'm dismissed by estab-
lished community members. One person speak-
ing up for me was a certain Bruce Iwaski. Some
Asians tell some Asians, "You lose."

I'm talking to Shuya Abe. I'm 20. (Abe,
assisted by Nan June Paik, developed the video
synthesizer. He has been in America for (one
months.) He tells me of the enthusiastic ques-
tions and compliments he receives about Japa-
nese culture from the young people of America.
Although a brilliant man, Shuya does not see
America. Young Americans don't see Shuya.
And I don't see any compliments--except as
another.

The state would like nothing better than
upper class intellectuals, who speak "an easter-
ic language," understandable by those who can
afford good educations. Keep sensitive people
and artists contented, occupied with expensive
machinery or formal esthetic problems. Those
that see ought to be inactive. An ugly def-
ition of politics is desirable, something ugly
and scheming and associated with thirst for pow-
er which is to be "transcended" by more cosmic
concerns.

—David Kiyoshi Monkawa

Graphic by David Monkawa

I'm seven and crying my ass off. I'm lea-
ving Yokohama, おけえ and おっけえ. I
promise to come back though. Besides, I'm go-
ing to America, they have white wooden fences
and cocker spaniels and kittens that run and
jump, like the books at the American Army
school. Lots of hamburgers like at the P.X.

A powerful and sophisticated propaganda
machine never censors. It swallows up the truth
and vomits it back up neutralized in the form of,
"Here's one point of view?" or "One report-
er's opinion." The state knows that information
presented in this manner is stripped of whatever
spirit it once possessed that might lead people
to action. The audience confronted with ugly
information, which may or may not be truth,
has thoughts about it but remains immobilized.

Nixon sends Kissenger on some inconse-
quential trip—the White House press boys build
it up—on second page, third column is info
about stepped up military activity in Southeast
Asia. Fade out: now you see it, now you don't.
Four blacks are brawling over some card game
on Adams and Rimpau—five black and whites
respond—a few blocks down on Vineyard, a gas
station is being hit by two blacks. Fade out:
now you see it, now you don't.
"...Although primarily designed to serve the Japanese community of Southern California, Little Tokyo is destined to become one of the major tourist attractions for Los Angeles."

—Annual Report, Los Angeles Community Redevelopment Agency

Walking through the streets of Little Tokyo in L.A., many things crowd one’s vision: the busy traffic, the familiar shops and restaurants, the people walking by—old, young, in-between. But if you stop for a minute and really look around, one thing becomes very apparent: the buildings—many of which are over half a century old—are slowly, but surely deteriorating from age. It’s simple, then. A thorough process of redevelopment of the area must take place in order to keep Little Tokyo from being gobbled up by the rapidly-expanding Civic Center (did you know that at one time, Little Tokyo occupied an area that was bordered by 1st Street on the north, to Alameda on the east, to around 9th Street on the south, to Los Angeles Street on the west?). See the map below for details. The dotted area is Little Tokyo today.

Redevelopment and Little Tokyo

For example, in 1950, a block-long chunk of Little Tokyo was leveled, and an awesome new Police Administration building (the ‘Glass House’) rose up in its place. Currently, the City plans to level more of Little Tokyo within the next two years.

During the early part of the 60’s, a group of local nisei (second generation) businessmen and property owners formed the Little Tokyo Redevelopment Association (LTRA). Their intention was to maintain the community of Little Tokyo by and for its Japanese American inhabitants; this was to their own self-interest, both as members of the Japanese American community, and as businessmen and property owners. A thriving community would mean thriving business. So LTRA proceeded to gather finances to begin to redevelop the community. But money—the kind that it would take to rebuild even parts of Little Tokyo—was hard to come by. After all, the community there is made up of many small shops, restaurants and services; and the residents are elderly issei (first generation), or young workers from Japan, none of whom have the millions of dollars necessary to tear down, relocate, then rebuild the whole community.

The only kinds of private businesses that could afford to do this were a bank or savings and loan company, like Merit Savings; large corporations, like Kajima International; or exceptionally well-to-do individuals—like medical professionals—all combining resources, like the “321 Doctors.” So, the three main sites to begin redevelopment were Merit Savings, the Kajima Building (Sumitomo, Horikawa, etc.), and the 321 Building. Thus, the smaller businesses, many of whom have been there for twenty, thirty or more years, along with the local residents stayed in their old buildings watching and waiting.

By the mid-to-late 60’s, enthusiasm within LTRA seemed to go down; by 1968, they were no longer pushing the action needed for Little Tokyo’s redevelopment. The question of finance...
"Matsuoka. Redevelopment brings to mind the San Francisco experience with its Trade Center. A lot of criticism has been directed at it because there's been a sort of takeover of the Trade Center by Japanese business groups. I see this as a very interesting facet of what's going on in Little Tokyo in Los Angeles today...that they're developing almost a Little Tokyo of segments, where you have this group from Japan with—i won't say unlimited—but with huge expense accounts at their disposal. You can see it in the restaurants down there. You can tell, the "natives" eat on one side of the street and they eat on the other. There is no question of their influence in terms of money, in terms of confidence, in terms of their expertise in many areas. They're setting up a sort of social system where the Japanese Consul is becoming the social leader again, and he's reasserting his leadership. People are beginning to look toward him now.

Odo. This is like prewar days then.

Matsuoka. In a way, because all we're seeing now is a resurgence of Japan in general, and Japan had such an influence before. Of course, we're beginning to get a resurgence of this again.

Lin. Before it seemed that the interests of the Consulate and the interests of the people were the same, but if the San Francisco Tokyo and Little Tokyo experience is any indication, it seems that the foreign involvement in the U.S. is not so much concerned with people who live here. They're now concerned with their own business.

Matsuoka. You've hit the crucial difference right there. I think that's really a most crucial thing that we have to watch and look at. Just where are the interests of the Japanese "interests"? Are they with and for the people of the community or are they with and for whoever rules Japan...and that would be the business corporations. The biggest source of money around right now and that is available in vast amounts is probably from Japan.

One of the things in the Redevelopment Project that they've done is in order to retain local ownership as much as possible is to create local property-owner-local development corporations. Umezawa. This is where property owners whose property is acquired by the Agency are getting the first priority to form a corporation to build up whatever development is being planned for that area. They will be responsible for the financing of the project, for developing it and management once it's complete. In this way the same people that have control of that land now will also retain control of it in the future.

Odo. What about the residents themselves.

Umezawa. This is a weakness I see. Also the Redevelopment Project has what is called the Little Tokyo Community Advisory Committee, and supposedly, this is the advisory group to the Redevelopment Project. They're supposed to be in on all the planning and setting up of priorities for the project...I see a lot of businessmen in there, a lot of professional people, but few res-
idents. This is a problem that I see, and I don't know how it can be alleviated.

Matsuno. I think one of the problems with the residents is that a large number are transient. They're here one day and gone the next and you can't keep track of them. The remaining group are the elderly and their economic positions are very poor in many ways. It's difficult to get people like this to participate if you make strong efforts to get them. I doubt very much if anybody's made that kind of effort to get people like this.

One of the things we might want to talk about are some of the segments within the community today. The most significant one to watch, I believe, are the Japanese from Japan. How much power they'll eventually have and how much influence they'll exert. Another segment of course is the commercial element that have been here for years that is taking an integral part in the redevelopment of the community. Another, the third force that is making a lot of changes within the community is the young people.

As a way to watch too, as I think there might be a time of increasing conflict because the younger people are beginning to make significant inroads into the community. Before, the older people had a tendency to dismiss the young people as a hero today, gone tomorrow type of thing. But they're beginning to realize the seriousness of the threat and are sort of moving against it. I think Chinatown had a similar experience when the Six Companies really moved against any group that threatens to upset things.

The Little Tokyo community has taken a little longer to respond, but many of the people are beginning to realize the seriousness of the younger people's intentions of working within Little Tokyo as a means of recreating a community and moving towards some changes in this society. They definitely see it as a threat.

Umezawa. You notice that the most impressive structure is maybe the Kajima building.

Matsumoto. The money and power behind things like that is awesome. It's overwhelming.

Takita. Is there any merging between powerful Nisei business figures with some of the Japanese-based businesses. I'm talking about those Nisei businessmen who are developing profitable business relationships with Japanese firms.

Matsumoto. I don't know exactly how much influence is being moved around there, but I think it's beginning to grow. Did you ever see a list of Japanese corporation representatives in Southern California? It's fantastic.

Wong. It's like a cycle going back to the 30s and the prewar days again, where the Japanese community is conservative and imperialist because the very structure in the community such as banking and all the businesses are being run and controlled by the Japanese in Japan.

Matsumoto. Our control may well be gone. There will be faces down there (Little Tokyo) that look Oriental, but we'll be pushed out to the hinterlands of Crenshaw. We may be on the outsiding areas looking in, and we'll see a whole bunch of people and it won't be us, and when I say "us" I include businessmen. It won't even be us in that respect.

Odo. Is there any chance that Crenshaw might develop really divorced from the Little Tokyo area? To what extent will even Monterey Park develop as an autonomous Asian American, Japanese American entity.

Matsumoto. Personally, I feel that Little Tokyo should always be a center of Japanese American activity if we aren't pushed out. I don't think outlying areas like Crenshaw and Monterey Park can offer the same sort of things that Little Tokyo can. They are more Americanized and they really are not the type of thing that Little Tokyo is...in strong association with the culture of Japan and its background of history of Japanese American. Those other places are sort of like a Japanese community. They've got beauty shops, etc., but these are just services that you can get anywhere else. It just happens to be that they're owned by Japanese Americans. The center for the cultural arts...the schools...most of them are located around the Little Tokyo area if not inside or somewhere close by. Your established social organizations will always be in Little Tokyo. Little Tokyo will stay important to the entire Japanese community.

For those people who don't live or work in Little Tokyo, the happenings there are still important. In Los Angeles County, just as in other cities in the U.S., urban renewal moves on the urban communities of Third World and white working people. There are various reasons for this, but the two main reasons are racism and economics. Racism forces Third World people into pockets, ghettos, barrios; the experience of the older Californians might be applied to the experience of other Third World people.

Because of the racist attitudes held by Californians, the Japanese found it necessary to bond together in their own ethnic communities. This was created. In these communities the Nisei found psychological and economic strength in unity and numbers. They were with people who spoke the same language, ate the same food, knew the same songs and stories, and celebrated the same holidays and festivals. They found security in being with people under the same outside pressures (or racial prejudice) and who came from the same background. In J-Town, isolated from the "outside" world, the Nisei could work with, rather than compete against, people on their own terms—where there was an equal chance of survival. 

The second reason for urban renewal is that the city is losing money on run-down neighborhoods. Most of the well-to-do people have spent years in the suburbs, so only Third World and white working people remain in the inner city. They don't bring in much tax money. So the city rebuilds deteriorated areas making them worth more, which means higher tax revenue. Along with that, redevelopment forces the local people out of these areas and attracts white, well-to-do people back into the inner cities (e.g. Banker Hill).

The history of Little Tokyo in L.A. dates back nearly a hundred years. Even today, it is the focus of Japanese Americans all over the L.A. area, whether it's for a cultural event, to do some shopping, or to go to the doctor dentist to visit community organizations like JACS-AL, the Pioneer Center, America Bookstore, or just to come back to walk around and eat. A survey taken by CRA in the late 1970s showed that more than 100,000 Japanese Americans in the L.A. area, 50,000 people make a trip to Little Tokyo at least twice a month from wherever they are—San Fernando, Long Beach, Orange County, etc. That's a lot of people coming into the area. Little Tokyo is, and should remain, a community, not a tourist attraction.

Little Tokyo represents a living link with the history of Japanese in America—a history that Japanese American young people are just beginning to realize and be proud of. This is very important to many Nisei (third generation) who grew up confused, even ashamed of being Japanese wanting, instead, to be white, or black, or Chicano. But that history is also important to our community as a whole, in order for us to begin understanding and dealing with problems we share, like drugs, generation gaps, etc. What we are today is a result of what happened to us, our people in the past. In order for us to find solutions to our problems, we must begin to come together—old, young, in-between—to share our life experiences, and together, begin work in and fighting for change.

—Evelyn Yoshimura
HIGH TIDES AND ROUGH WATERS

OR HOW TO FIX YOUR "JOHN"

"unLOADING ZONE—ALL DELIVERIES THROUGH REAR" sign on Tide's bathroom door.

It’s a fact. According to reliable sources, the average adult human being living in the United States deposits over 450 pounds of waste material each year. 450 pounds.

"Sheck it?" You said it. 450 pounds is quite an accomplishment—something like 1.2 pounds per day. Honest! This fact might lend some insight into the origins of that age-old Westside expression, "Man, I was shittin' bricks!" Yeah, man, you ain't be bullshittin' neither.

Now, where do all those 'bricks' go? I know. I know. ..."They go sloshing out on to the ocean somewhere, don't they?" Sure, I can dig it. But where does that long odyssey begin for our little friends? That’s right, in a toilet—probably similar to the one you’re sitting on right now. And what this article concerns itself with is how to give those little buggers a righteous 'send-off,' briskly wisking them off to new, more exciting adventures on the high seas.

But first, a short explanation, of sorts. If you'll recall, beginning over a year ago, and lasting through several months, Gliadu began including a number of articles dealing with things like: how to start a up a garden (December, 1971), tips on how to buy a guitar (November, December, 1971), and also a number of "how to" recipes. I even wrote once on how to buy a used car (December, 1971). If you noticed though, in each of those articles, we failed to explain why—wholly, we felt those topics important: we were advocating the values of a new life style without explaining the importance of that, the politics weight involved with, for example, how to fix toilets.

What am I talking about? Let's imagine you come down with the flu. Or, at least, that's what you thought you had. Alluvosudden, your temperature shoots up to 104 degrees, you can't climb out of bed, you begin babbling incoherent gibberish but between sentences, your mind flashes: "...better see a doctor..." So, there you are at the doctor's office, in the waiting room, seeing Dark Clouds... I. I've probably got a type of cerebral pneumonia, maybe with a rheumatic fever...my heart is going to fall out soon, then my legs will go away, and then I'll go deaf— if I'm lucky, they'll be able to save my eyesight... In a quick minute, the examination is over—you await the diagnosis ("...and then my nose will fall off.") "A cold's what you got—get plenty of liquids, some aspirin, stay in bed." "Oh." And before you're completely well, there's a $15.00 doctor bill sitting in your mailbox, for "services rendered."

This happens a lot: when our car "makes a funny noise," when the sink "doesn't work right," or even when we "don't feel good." We rely to a sometimes ridiculous extent on professionalism. As a result, we oftentimes pay for simple adjustments, remedies, and repairs that we ourselves could have been capable of performing—if only we had known how to do it.

It's all part of building self-reliance, and in the process, creating our own alternatives. By breaking down those mystic exaggerations concerning who is able to fix this, who is qualified to operate that, we can learn to do a lot of those things ourselves. So, let's start.

************

We'll need a little briefing on how a toilet works before we can get down to solving problems. A diagram will help us:

The arrows indicate the flow of water when you flush the toilet. Basically, what happens is that when the toilet is flushed, water comes down the sides of the bowl, pushing the shit down towards the bottom, where a strong current of water pushes the shit through an 'exhaust pipe' to the main sewer pipe. From there on, it's high tide and rough waters.

Now that we have a very basic understanding of how a toilet operates, we can get down to fixing one of the most common problems that occur: the leaking 'john.' If your toilet is leaking, you'll hear it making a high-pitched noise all the time. It sounds like it's leaking. There are many causes for this malady: it could be rust, mineral deposits, a faulty supply valve, even your ballcock (say wha?).

The first thing to do is to find out exactly what is causing the leak, is to lift the cover of the 'toilet tank' (that's the large box located behind the seat). Both the toilet tank and lid are usually made of porcelain, and should be handled very carefully. I was told that just a good push is all it takes to crack the sides of the tank, so watch out. Place the lid onto the floor, lying flat, somewhere where you or someone else won't go steppin' all over it. Take a look inside the tank, and see if you can find these various parts:

*the ball float: This should be easy. It's usually a sphere made of light-weight metal, with a metal rod sticking-out of it. The metal rod is called the ball float arm. The ball float arm is connected to an assembly called...

*the ball cock: at least, that's what the plumbers call it. The assembly controls the flow of water into the tank. More on this later.

*the tank ball: if you can see clearly to the bottom of the tank, you'll see a rubber plug with wires running from the top of it to the toilet handle—those wires are called lift-wires.

If you stare into the tank as you flush the toilet, you can learn how these parts operate together. As the toilet handle is pushed, the lift-wires lift the tank ball. When this happens, a hole in the bottom of the tank is uncovered, the water escapes, the flush is made.

Simultaneously, the float arm opens a valve in the ball-cock assembly, which channels a new supply of water into the tank. When the water level nears the bottom of the tank, the tank ball is drawn back down onto the hole by the suction power of the escaping water. Once the tank ball touches on top of the hole, the lift-wires will stop it from filling, and the float rises. When the float reaches a certain level, the float arm will shut off the valve in the ball cock assembly, and the thing will be empty to carry off another load. Simple.

A worn tank ball (the rubber plug that covers the hole in the bottom of the tank) is a common cause for leaking toilets. If the rubber is old, rotten, and cracking, the water in the tank will escape slowly and the level of water will never be able to rise to the level where the ball-cock can shut off. You can check the condition of the tank ball by rubbing your fingers across the rubber: if black stuff comes off onto your fingers you have a worn tank ball. But that might not be the only cause, so check out the rest of the possible causes before you try to replace it (the replacement procedure will be outlined below).

"If you shake it twice, you're playing with it." Let's assume your tank ball is in good condition, but the toilet is still leaking. If you have a toilet that stops leaking when you shake the handle, there's a couple of possible causes. The hole at the bottom of the tank, which is covered by the tank ball (remember?), sometimes acquires mineral deposits or rust, and makes it impossible for the tank ball to seat itself correctly. To correct this condition, we have to empty the tank of water. How? Look below the tank and find a handle that seems to be connected to the wall with a tube running up to the tank. See it? That's the 'tank ball.' If you turn the handle, clockwise, you'll shut off the supply of in-coming water. Once that's done, flush the toilet. Now, there should be only a few inches of water in the tank, which you can lower even further by lifting the tank ball and splashing the water that remains down the hole. We can get the tank ball out of the way (or replace it) unscarring the lift-wire coming out of the top of it and removing the tank ball and lift wire completely out of the tank. If you've done this, go and get a sheet of light sandpaper and, very carefully, sand completely around the top edge of the hole, where the tank ball sits. Plumbers have a special "honing" tool to do this, but we can use sandpaper (at least, we can try...)-if we're careful to...
sand the edge evenly. If we sand down only where we see a lump of mineral deposits or rust, we might create an uneven seat for the tank ball and have another larger leak on our hands. So, if this is your problem, and you’re attempting to do this with sandpaper, please be careful.

If the hole is in good shape, but you still have to shake the handle to stop the noise, the remedy could lie in a simple adjustment of the lift-wires. Sometimes the lift-wires are not aligned correctly, and cause the tank ball to fall off its mark, and sit incorrectly on top of the hole. There are two lift wires, one comes straight up from the tank ball and passes through the eye of the other lift-wire which is connected to an extension of the toilet handle. It looks like this:

![Diagram of toilet handle and lift-wires]

When you jiggle the handle of your toilet, what you’re doing is trying to seat the tank ball correctly on top of the hole. So, first check and see if the toilet handle extension and the lift-wires are aligned. When you flush the toilet, do the lift-wires come straight up? If not, bend the handle extension over until it lifts the wires up straight. Also, check to see if there is about a one inch space between the two ‘eyes’ of the lift-wires. This space makes sure that the tank ball can drop down all the way.

If you’ve checked those things out and you still got a leaking joint—don’t give up, there’s still a few more things to consider. Maybe your float has a hole in it. Sounds dumb, but it happens, and when it does, the float sinks, the float arm keeps the ball-cock valve open, and the tank fills with water. Toilets are equipped with overflow tubes for just such emergencies, so don’t worry about “What if this happens when I’m gone for the summer?” Your stash will still be dry, you’ll just have a $200 water bill. If you have to change the float, you have to shut off the water supply (the ‘angle stop’) first. You can figure out the rest.

A simple adjustment of the float arm can stop a leaking toilet... of course, only if that’s what the problem is. Occasionally, the float arm is bent in such a way that the water level can never raise the float (and the float arm) to the shut-off height. If this is the case, simply bend the float arm downward, pushing the float towards the bottom of the tank slightly. This will lower the height of the shut-off water level. In most tanks, there is a waterline indicated on the inner wall somewhere. See it? If you want to have a toilet with a good, forceful, efficient flush, bend the float arm until the water level is up to the indicated mark: bend up to raise the water level, bend down to lower it. Try not to get too carried away with this adjustment, though, or you’ll snap the thing in half.

Any of the simple tasks outlined so far would cost you, in terms of dollars and cents, about $15 if you called a union plumber, and a minimum of $13 for a non-union plumber. "Course, this is little consolation if you’ve done all of these and the thing still leaks. Does it? Still? Well, then, the trouble lies in a faulty ball-cock assembly..."

Once in a while, some small bits of rust find their way into the ball-cock and mess up the smooth operation of the supply valve inside, preventing complete closure and allowing water to continue running. If you’re sure that none of the other problems are what’s causing the leaking, then this is the next place to check.

There are many different types of ball-cocks, but the most common-type is the Mansfield ball-cock. Look at your ball-cock—are there little screws on the top of it? Chances are two out of three here, and it’s a Mansfield ball-cock you’ve got. Good, now the first thing to do is close the angle stop and flush the toilet. All set? Now, unscrew the screws that are visible on the top of the ball-cock, and lift off the cover. If you heard some loose gizmo just drop to the bottom of the tank, that’s the supply valve. If you’re fortunate, it didn’t drop down the hole, and you won’t have to wind up buying a new one. Whatever the case, it should look like this:

![Diagram of ball-cock assembly]

The supply valve travels up and down inside the ball-cock and is controlled by the movement of the float arm. When the toilet is flushed, the float dips and the float arm rises from the pressure of the new-water supply, which flows around the valve and eventually into the tank.

If the leaking is caused by rust or mineral deposits in the ball-cock, you’ll see it on the section of the ball-cock you just uncovered. That’s why it’s usually suggested to wipe the area clear of any visible particles and then turn on the angle stop and let a stream of water clear anything else from the supply pipe. Then, rinse off the supply valve, and while it’s in your hands, rub the rubber part of the valve and see if it’s worn or rotting. If it is, finding a replacement valve for your particular ball-cock will be pretty difficult—most hardware stores sell the whole ball-cock assembly. So let’s keep our fingers crossed, and put the whole thing back together, and see if it’s fixed.

Still leak? Are you sure? I don’t mean to be skeptical, but are you perhaps imagining that leaking noise? Maybe there’s a jet passing over-head, or your hot-water kettle is whistling—go see. Either? Then you have to replace your ball-cock, and, as you can probably guess, replacing your ball-cock is a major operation.

The plumber that I gathered all this information from (who, for personal reasons wishes to remain anonymous), explained the lengthy procedure to me in great detail. If it is the case that your toilet still leaks, and you refuse to be ripped-off by the “pros,” walk on over to a nearby-by telephone and dial (213) 734-7138, and ask for Jeff. That’s me. I’ll be happy to explain this procedure to you personally. This is not a ‘cop’ by any means—’m serious! You can write me, if you prefer, at: P.O. Box 15901-C, Los Angeles 90018. This is for real, and I ain’t be bullshittin’ neither...

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“One of the great enjoyments in life,” as was once sighed by a relieved Gidia staffer, is made all the more so when the experience ends with the reassuring whoosh of a smooth-running toilet. “Know your enemies, know your friends,” a man once advised. Surely a device that performs the irreplaceable task of shuffling 450 pounds of human waste out of sight and smell each year, year after year, must be a friend of some sort. And hopefully, this brief introduction has only been the start of a lasting and intimate association. Get acquainted!

Jeff Furumura

Postscript. After some discussion, I was able to convince the plumber to allow me to reveal his identity. Mike Tanghe has served the community through a number of different projects ranging from AAMO (Asian Movement for Military Outreach) to The Creative Workshop (a group of people working with a group of people to create a group of projects). He is a hard worker, a friendly guy, and an all-around cool person. And thanks to him, this article was possible. Without Mike’s assistance, this article could not have been written. —fy
OPIUM TRAIL

"Ladies and Gentlemen," announced the genteel British diplomat, raising his glass to offer a toast, "I give you Prince Sopsaisana, the uplifter of Laoist youth."

The toast brought an appreciative smile from the guest of honor as well as cheers and applause from the luminaries of Viêtnâmese diplomatic corps, that were assembled at the farewell banquet for the Laoist ambassador-designate to France, Prince Sopsaisana. A member of the royal house of Xêng Khouang, the Plain of Jars region of Laos, the Prince was vice-president of the National Assembly, chairman of the Lao Bar Association, president of the Lao Press Association, president of the Alliance Française, and a member in good standing of the Asian People's Anti-Communist League. The Americans considered him an outstanding example of a new generation of honest, dynamic national leaders, and it was rumored in the Laoist capital that Sopsaisana was destined for high office some day.

The final send-off party at Viêtnam's Watay Airport on April 23, 1972 was one of the gayest affairs of the season. His arrival at Paris's Orly Airport on the morning of April 25 was the occasion for another gala reception. The French ambassador to Laos, and the entire staff of the Laoist Embassy had turned out to welcome the new ambassador. Curiously, the Prince insisted on waiting for his luggage like any ordinary tourist, and when his many suitcases finally appeared after an unexplained delay, he immediately noticed that a particular one was missing. Sopsaisana angrily insisted that his suitcase be delivered at once, and French authorities promised, most apologetically, that it would be sent to the Laoist Embassy as soon as it was found. Sopsaisana departed reluctantly for yet another reception at the Embassy, and while he drank the ceremonial champagne with his newfound retinue of admirers, French customs officials were examining one of the biggest heroin seizures in French history.

The Ambassador's suitcase contained sixty kilos of highgrade Laoist heroin—worth $13.5 million on the streets of New York, its probable destination. A week later, a smiling French official presented himself at the Embassy with the suitcase in hand. Although Sopsaisana had been bombarding the airport with outraged telephone calls for several days, he suddenly realized that accepting the suitcase was tantamount to an admission of guilt and so, contrary to his righteous indignation, he flatly denied that it was his. Ignoring his declaration of innocence, the French government refused to accept his diplomatic credentials, and Sopsaisana remained in Paris for no more than two months before he was recalled to Viêtnam.

This is only one rare glimpse (taken from Harper's Magazine, July 1972) of the workings of the Laoist drug trade. That trade is the principal business of Laos, and to a certain extent, it depends on the support (in money, guns, aircraft, etc.) of the United States' Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).

Prince Sopsaisana had allegedly received his sixty kilos of heroin through an aggressive Lao general named Vang Pao, who happens to be the commander of the CIA's secret army in northeastern Laos. He has commanded that army since 1961.

But the American embassy remains unaware of his involvement in the narcotics traffic. This benign attitude was expressed in a December, 1970 letter by Ambassador G. McCormick Godley to a journalist inquiring about the opium traffic. Godley wrote: "The purchase in Southeast Asia is certainly less difficult than in other parts of the world; but I believe the Royal Lao Government takes its responsibility seriously to prohibit international opium traffic... However, latest information available to me indicated that all of Southeast Asia produces only 5 percent of narcotics which are, unfortunately, illegally imported to Great Britain and the U.S. As you undoubtedly are already aware, our government is making every effort to contain this traffic and I believe the Narcotics Bureau in Washington D.C. can give you additional information if you have some other inquiries." (Harper's, July 1972).
Ambassador Godfrey neglected to mention in his letter the latest information available to him that the majority of American G.I.'s were using heroin coming from the Meo tribesmen of North Laos. A cholera epidemic in the Middle East has brought new attention to the heroin problem in the region.

The Meo, a group of tribesmen, have been involved in the production of opium in Laos for many years. They grow poppy plants and sell the opium to local traders who then export it to China and other countries. The Meo tribesmen have also been involved in the production of heroin, which is derived from opium.

A few years ago, the CIA began an active campaign to disrupt the opium smuggling network. They have been successful in reducing the flow of heroin into the United States, but the problem remains a significant one. The Meo tribesmen are still involved in the production of opium, and the CIA continues to work to disrupt their activities.

The CIA has also been involved in the opium trade in other parts of the world, including Myanmar and Afghanistan. However, the Meo tribesmen in Laos remain a significant source of heroin for the United States.

The Meo tribesmen are also involved in other activities, including smuggling drugs and weapons. They have been known to use their opium profits to finance these activities.

The Meo tribesmen are a complex group, and their activities are difficult to trace. However, the CIA continues to work to disrupt their activities and reduce the flow of heroin into the United States.
Fashion Show

year and how it marked the first opportunity for the Asian designers to prove themselves in the industry. It was a success, not only in financial terms of exposure and positive reaction for the designers themselves. It had been done in only two weeks and so budget whatever to work with. And so this year the Drum and Bugle Corps approached them again and asked them to match or top the success of the previous show. This time a small budget was allocated for the production of the show but the substantial part of this year's costs was again absorbed by Julian and Terence Tam Soon, who co-produced the show. But Julian rationalized their financial involvement saying that the show was for the community and would provide needed exposure for all the participants in the show. And he seemed quite pleased by the responses noting that the show got write-ups in several large newspapers and magazines such as Variety and After Dark, and that two of the models in the show got calls from Universal Studios. What Julian and Terence are working on for is to establish a strong on Asian American production company so that any type of production needed could be met utilizing Asian American talent in the field of art, media, or entertainment. Presently there are no showcases or opportunities for such people without the touch of tokenism or yellow exploitation. Hopefully their producers will speak for themselves and that they will get opportunities because people recognize it and they deserve it. And turn this will make a difference to get involved in the arts. As Julian put it, "The days of Charlie Chan are gone." Julian has now rented a huge building (5000 sq. ft) in Silverlake which will serve as his home, studio, and initial headquarters for the company. It is a fact of life in our contemporary society that anyone involved in the drug business has no choice but to follow the road to commercial success if he is to survive. He must strive for excellence and professionalism in a field so competitive that the clitch of the starting artist is, in fact, the brutal truth.

The fashion show has kept Julian and Terence busy for the last four months planning, making contacts, researching, designing and making the garments. All this in the midst of finalizing plans and opening his Captain China on La Cienega and planning for an additional shop in Century City to be opened late spring/early summer. Captain China is to be opened in a week and so as we talked, Bill and Lynn continued to work. Julian lit up as he mentioned the videotape of the fashion show which has come out very well but added disappointingly that the cameras were reeled incorrectly and consequently the show's end is missing. Evelyn tells Julian that he asked Mary Ueyama had she seen the videotape and she heard that her film, too, came out very well. She suggested he call Mary at the Gidra office as she might be there developing a film. As Julian phoned the office, Steve strode over and looked at a pile of genuine snake skin walking cane. Julian put his hand over the mouthpiece as he waited for someone to call Mary to the phone, and told us that he has tons of various items stock still in the back yet to be unpacked but he's too busy to look.

"Hello, Mary. This is Julian..."

-Linda Fujikawa

Smack: A Personal Account

I was fourteen when I started getting into reds. My friends were using heroin so I was around it a lot but I wasn’t into shooting until later. As my tolerance for reds grew, I got up to using thirty reds a day. Then I started shooting reds and dug it because of the instant rush. I was shooting for about three months.

When I started shooting heroin it wasn’t a big step because I had already been shooting reds. Heroin was a more sophisticated kind of high, you don’t get sloppy, don’t stumble and you don’t get belligerent...it’s more a peaceful kind of high. The main difference between heroin and reds is that the cost of heroin is higher and getting high is not such a lightweight thing anymore.

I was eighteen when I just got into heroin. To support my $14 a day habit, I worked and pushed reds. For a while it was pretty easy. After a while I began to follow the path of my friends which was committing burglaries, thieving and even ripping off my parents. I didn’t give a shit about anyone except myself and getting high. My main concern was staying high. I really thought that drugs were more important than love.

When I was shooting stuff I felt that the whole world was fucked up and heroin just made the world seem nicer. In school I reacted to the stereotypes that were out on me cause I was Asian. I thought that getting high was like getting back at everyone, plus it was a lot more fun than getting high. My family and other people’s parents were constantly gossiping about me. Even the kids at school treated me like a social outcast. There were some other people who were getting high so we all hung around and supported each other in fights and shit like that. We understood where each other were coming from because we were out of control. Everyone knew someone who was in need of help.

I started buying heroin and reds from friends but they were taking cuts of heroin and making money off of me. Then I started making my own connections. Most of the street dealers were dealing to support their own habits but the bigger dealers were in it purely for money.

Seeing that heroin was a one way trip, I felt I had to get away from my friends and get away from heroin. A lot of my friends were busted and I didn’t want to get busted so I split to Fresno. I was planning to quit dope and start my life all over again, but I brought seven jars of reds with me.

I was still using heroin, but I was really heavy into reds. In 1969, I overdosed on 47 reds. The hospital sent me to a Chicanos' psychiatrist. He told me that the blacks, Chicanos, and myself were giving our money to the white man to poison us. Then I got really angry and went home and threw my stash away. I even tried to tell some of my friends this, but they couldn’t dig it. I wanted to quit, but then I started to go through withdrawals, so I went out and copped.

I met some people from Asian American Hardcore and I really dug them ’cause they were warm and down to earth. They were talking about revolution and I could relate to where they were coming from, cause some had been strung out and had real problems that push people away. I heard about getting angry and fighting to pay the man for what he has done to our people...then, something clicked in my head.

I was living in Long Beach then and I didn’t have any money and was about to get kicked out of the pad so I knew I had to make a decision right away. I read (1) Keep clean, make money, you know the “American dream” shit. (2) Stay strung out and keep the same lifestyle - it’s how you live your life. And (3) start changing things and start helping each other. I chose the last one. I didn’t want my life to be controlled anymore.

Hope friends need motivation to struggle (not only physical fighting) or else they’ll never quit. Generally, most dopes need to see something concrete and encouraging. I guess it was that feeling of love for my brothers and sisters, and motivation to change society, not only for myself, but for all oppressed people, that made me quit.

—a former smack head.
Abnormal state enclosed within these cement walls imprisoned from the sun artificial snakes of light refusing to acknowledge the changes of day or night.

Help... embittered by this meaningless vacuum... a cycle that cannot be broken... 
abnormal after all.

It seems to breed callousness as I grow thick-skinned and insensitive to all this shit around me... time... that clock that no longer measures what I have gained, but rather what I have lost.

Now I long to seize the time and regain what little meaning I had in life.

An Asian Brother working at Sanyo

Monday through Friday: 7:30 am; the routine begins. Turn off the alarm, drag myself out of bed, dress in a hurry, then split from the crib. The start of another day at work.

Working is fucked up. I know it's necessary to get a job to survive, because in this society, we need money to live. So most of us have to work. And it's a drag because someone tells us when to come in, when to leave, what to do, and how to work the way someone wants us. We don't have any say in how things should be. Often we're in a situation where we want to speak up about our work. But because we're tied to our jobs for survival, we can't risk any trouble. Then when we get in a position where we feel more secure, we realize that we have to keep quiet even more. If we dare to criticize, we get fired or laid off.

For example, I was an assembler at a small company where there were only three brothers working in the shop, and the rest of the people upstairs in offices. One of the brothers quit, feeling he couldn't relate to the work or the conditions. I felt fairly secure in my position (with only two of us left) so I started to complain to the president about the fucked up physical conditions there. At first there were token changes, and then three weeks later I got laid off. Even though this was a small company, I began to feel really helpless, a pawn in the man's game to keep himself on top, ripping people off. Then I began my frantic search for another gig.

Looking for another job, I began to think about what it means to come from a working family. By working family I'm talking about parents who are blue collar workers, people who do physical labor, and their kids who have to work to help support themselves. If you come from a working family, chances are that you end up working right out of high school. It's hard to relate to studying when you have to think about your own survival. No desire for college; work is the only alternative.

Work in itself isn't all bad. Work is physical exercise which everyone needs. Also people are needed to produce goods or services so that we can all survive. But the way things are organized in this country, under capitalism, a whole lot of unnecessary luxury items (like electric can openers, remote control TVs, fur coats), which most people can't afford or use, are produced for corporate profit. So a lot of meaningless jobs with boring work are created. And which jobs are available to us? "You got any skills?" No. "You have a college degree?" Nope. "Well, we have openings for gas station attendants at $1.65 an hour, or delivery and stock boy at a liquor store for $1.65 plus tips; or salesgirl at $1.50, or seamstress at $1.65... Or we can get pigs as warehousemen, cashier, maintenance, secretary, and almost any job that means taking orders, any job being a flunky. Ever think about that? If you come from a poor or working family, you'll probably end up with a poor paying slave job and remain poor, while the rich people go to the best schools, go to college because they can afford it, and end up with high salary jobs and a whole lot of money. It's a vicious cycle.

We learn to accept our positions in this cycle because of the man's system add our own need to survive. We dream of better jobs and getting rich because they tell us that's going to make us happy. We feel helpless fighting back even though we know we should change things. Having no security except in our jobs dulls our fighting spirit. That's strange because when we were younger we had to fight for everything we wanted, "go for what you know"; now the man's got us chained up in his system and we have to accept what he dishes out. No power to bust those chains. Yet.

And how about the actual conditions at work? There's this cat who gives orders, scares us with his power to fire us, makes us kiss his ass. You go against him, you get fired. This is the same dude who pays low wages for the hard labor that we do. We get slave wages for physical labor while these punks sit on their asses in air-conditioned offices and make three times as much. (I was making $2.75 an hour making drapes—a drape that would take me an hour to make would cost $200.) That's the way this system operates. Workers slave and get paid barely enough to buy what we produce, while the rich corporate owners buy whatever they want. And they get richer by ripping us off in wages and high prices for goods. Things have gone to change.

We face this frustrating contradiction every day. We know we have to work and yet we know we're being fucked over at the same time. So we try to slide as much as possible at work. "Work only as hard as you have to," because the harder you work, the more money the man makes. At least we can get back at him some way.

The best thing about working is the people, our fellow workers. They are usually down home, enjoy the same things we do, come from the same background. A natural comradeship evolves as we work together, helping each other. We learn how to handle tools and machines from each other, jobs from the bosses. And we become tight, standing up for one another because we understand that it's the external force of this society that is keeping us down. Change is real to our lives, something that must happen, so that our work can become meaningful. We have to prepare ourselves to act together to change things.

But we must realize that the boss is just a small part in the way things are. Free enterprise—the capitalistic system and the big corporations—is what is really keeping us down. That's the way capitalism works. So we must look beyond the boss of a small company and recognize this system as the enemy which must be destroyed.

We have to find ways to change our jobs, our lives, our society. Think about how things would be if we controlled the means of production. Goods could be sold cheaper because there wouldn't be any rich pigs getting huge profits. Work would be more meaningful because we would be producing things that people need to survive. Everyone would benefit. We have to create alternatives for ourselves, like learning skills. We need a security base, something we can fall back on for survival, while we move to change things. We need unity to feel the power so we can fight back. We have to become united with our fellow workers so we can make changes on the job. We are and have been stepped on, so it's up to us to unite, rise up and make those changes we all want. —Tom Okabe

March 1973 GIDRA 19
ASIAN COALITION:
on white anti war movement

The L.A. Asian Coalition was formed in November, 1972 in response to the medical supply shortage which was carried out by AMMO. They have continued to gather funds for the supplies and have made contact with Asian groups in New York and San Francisco, setting up a nationwide medical supply drive. Last month, they organized the January 20th rally in L'il Tokyo (see Gidra, February 1973).

In the Inauguration Day Rally, the Asian Coalition participants were active and walked out as a coalition to make a statement to the white anti-war movement on the racism and patriarchy that exists within the white anti-war movement. In making this statement we do this with the understanding that a great number of different groups were involved in the planning of the activities. Some we have respect for as progressive people (anti-imperialist), some we consider left opportunists (NPAC), and a great many, we don't know where they stand... (most of the groups in Anti-imperialist Coalition).

First, we will explain our position on the war. We see the war not as an isolated issue, but as an issue that is directly related to our day to day reality. Within our communities, whether we work, go to school, worry about being caught in the draft and so forth, we are subject to the same conditions that affect us from across the sea, but it also a war within our communities. The connection we see around all of these issues is "Corporate profits held above human lives." In Vietnam, corporations are financing a war to create new markets and develop a cheap labor force, at the expense of democratic rights of Vietnamese people. The war is a racist, genocidal war that reflects U.S. foreign policy towards Asian countries. Twenty-five years ago the experimental bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were executed, then Korea, and recently the indiscriminate bombings of Vietnam.

In our communities redevelopment is taking place within Little Tokyo. Our grandparents and small business people are being forced out of L'il Tokyo and replaced by Japanese corporate business from Japan which have no stake in the community. Like the American occupation, L'il Tokyo will no longer be a place for our community to come back to, but will be turned into a more tourist trap. Already we see it taking place within the construction of the Kajima Building Complex. We see redevelopment taking place all over the city—Normandic 5, Pac-Union, Bunker Hill and now L'il Tokyo. A market place to move all the people of color out so white people can move in.

Barbed wires (commonly known as "rods") have been in our communities for over ten years...the government controls have been put on production of amphetamines, the main killer of white youth. But the overproduction of ghetto drugs still take place while corporations make money off the people who must deal with this capitalist society.

In terms of style of work, we see ourselves joining forces with people working in areas of stopping redevelopment and overproduction of drugs, and keeping day to day contact with people of our communities.

In looking at the history of our involvement with NPAC on previous demonstrations, we have come to the decision that we will not participate in any activities sponsored by NPAC.

NPAC's racist line of "Bringing our boys home" only shows concern for American lives and not the lives of the Vietnamese people in terms of education of the American public as to the true nature of imperialism internationally, and here at home. It does not portray the justness of the Vietnamese people's struggle against U.S. imperialism.

In our past dealings with NPAC, the racism that exists within them as white people is very evident in terms of their work style and relationships with Third World groups. White anti-war people are going to have to realize that for any unity to develop, white skin privilege and racism will have to be dealt with. The tokenism that is felt at demonstrations will have to cease and to say that they aren't racist because they have a few Third World people in their organization is bullshit. They gear their lines and their positions towards the vast majority of white liberals, yet they make no attempt to educate themselves to the true nature of racism in this country. Instead they reinforce it. They have the organizational and monetary resources and funding themselves in a leadership position within the white anti-war movement. But, during the past years they have done nothing to further raise the consciousness of the people who are anti-war but who cannot understand the true nature of this country and its effects on people overseas and here in America. But, they don't try to stick to their opportunist line to try to bring people in to support their organization monetarily. As a result, we see progressive and founding democrats in an after demonstration with no qualitative change in the content of the mass activities. Overall, we see stagnation and regression taking place within the white anti-war movement in terms of the number of people who attend these rallies and in terms of the loss of enthusiasm for change taking place in the community. People change their ideas change with changes taking place in their objective conditions. They must grow from these ideas in order to lead the people, to fight for the liberation struggles abroad and for continuing the liberation struggle in America.

The Asian Coalition does not participate as a part of Anti-imperialist Coalition. It wasn't because we disagree with the fundamental basis of the Anti-imperialist Coalition—being against U.S. imperialist aggression in Vietnam and the support of struggles of the Vietnamese people against U.S. aggression. We agree with these two principles, we also feel imperialism is a very broad issue, not only does it affect the people of Vietnam, but it also affects the oppressed Third World people of this country and in particular people within our community.

We felt that in joining the Anti-imperialist Coalition, we would have to follow the line of the Anti-imperialist Coalition and the issues that reflect the interest of our people would be neglected. (redevelopment and drugs)

Movement to fight against U.S. imperialism abroad must also confront white racism in all its aspects at home and especially within the movement.

In terms of the January 20th rally at City Hall, there were positive and negative aspects involved. The major positive aspect is that the Anti-imperialist Coalition was able to prevent NPAC from launching attacks against the Vietnamese Peace Proposal.

The unity between the Anti-imperialist Coalition and NPAC was an unprincipled compromise. In looking at strength of the Anti-imperialist Coalition the reality of people who are bilized, the Anti-imperialist Coalition should not have settled for compromise of the fundamental principles.

It was obvious that leadership of the rally came from NPAC with its carnival like atmosphere and no effort was made to reach people. But only in terms of monetary contribution. We feel very little effort was made by the speakers representing Anti-imperialist Coalition to push the Vietnamese Peace Proposal. We felt very little support by the Anti-imperialist Coalition in our dealing with NPAC leadership to get speakers from the Asian Coalition to be heard at the time requested by our contingent.

There were reasons why we felt it was necessary to leave the rally and to make this statement. We make these criticisms of the Anti-imperialist Coalition in the interest of bettering further work relationship between Anti-imperialist Coalition and the Asian Coalition. We feel this is the first in a series of principled discussions. There are many basic questions that must have understandings if not agreements. At the same time for our movement within our community and these discussions will further our understanding about the nature of U.S. imperialism here and abroad.

Asian Coalition

UNION OF VIETNAMESE

The Union of Vietnamese is an organization of Vietnamese in the United States who are from the southern part of Vietnam. They have been instrumental in creating a favorable atmosphere about U.S. intervention in Indochina.

Confronted with the absolute determination of the Vietnamese people to defeat any foreign aggressor, and condemned by world public opinion, the United States government was forced to sign the Agreement on Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Vietnam. The last continuation and intensification of extermination bombings in the two zones of Vietnam proved itself a disastrous failure of the United States in attempting desperately to win any concessions at the negotiating table in Paris.

The signing of the Agreement on Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Vietnam on January 27, 1973 momentarily marks a great victory not only for the liberation movement and all the peace and justice-loving peoples throughout the world, including the American people who have demonstrated their solidarity and given assistance to the just struggle of the Vietnamese people.

The Union of Vietnamese in the United States would like to express at this historical moment our affection and gratitude towards the liberation fighters of the South Vietnamese Provisional Revolutionary Government with the full backing of the Vietnamese people. We salute all patriots who have staunchly smashed all U.S. massive attacks to defend the Northern part of Vietnam. The Union of Vietnamese in the United States venerates countless sacrifices of all Vietnamese who lost their lives for freedom, independence and reunification of Vietnam.

The signing of the Agreement on Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Vietnam marks a great victory, however it also turns the struggle in Vietnam from an anti-imperialist war to sharpen our vigilance to expose the U.S. intention in maintaining a reactionary puppet regime in Saigon.

On this occasion, this body knows that the United States government has already sent into the bloody hands of the traitor Nguyen van Thieu thousands of tons of ammunition including more than one thousand aircraft and two hundred
CAL STATE L.A.
SINKING FAST!

The Asian American Studies Program at Cal State LA was initiated in 1969 through the combined efforts of the Asian American Studies Group (a student organization) and concerned community members. The Asian American Studies Group was funded in 1970 by the Associated Students with the sole purpose of developing a program in Asian American Studies. The Program began with the hiring of a coordinator and an assistant coordinator. However, abuse of the program by the coordinators and a negative attitude toward the American Studies by the administration gave rise to conflicts and disputes which seriously impeded the successful development of the Program. As a result, an ad hoc faculty committee was created in 1971 to examine the Program. The coordinators resigned and the budget was frozen by the Associated Students Board.

The present Asian American Studies Group organized in an attempt to carry out the original goal of the Program. All the original effort was to develop a comprehensive program in Asian American Studies. Monies were reallocated to the group with stipulations laid down by the President of the University.

Since there were no instructors on the campus qualified to teach Asian American Studies, it was the Group's decision to hire a faculty member experienced in Asian American Studies who would act both as the Asian American Studies Group coordinator and as an instructor. However, one of the student's stipulations made it clear that the new coordinator would have to be a currently enrolled student. This now hindered the Program, placing the Asian American Studies Group "outside" the academic circle. A student could not possess the credentials and the accompanying credibility necessary in the University's bureaucratic environment.

Another stipulation was the creation of a "5 Student/Faculty Committee," which was empowered to oversee the Program and decide on all "formal matters" concerning Asian American Studies.

Although the Asian American Studies Group's plan was to establish a Department of Asian American Studies, the direction of the Program had already been decided by the administration. This direction was justified with what they said was a supposed 'lack of funds', as well as an added sentiment that "Asians have no problems!" An early meeting with the Dean of the School of Letters and Science made it clear that a department would not be possible and the only direction available was an interdepartmental one.

What this meant was that depending on the subject area, the course would have to be submitted to the appropriate department for approval. Given the alternative of either going interdepartmental or not offering Asian American Studies at all, the Studies Group was forced to go along with the administration's "recommendation."

A proposal for an introductory course on Asian American History was submitted to the History Department. Due to the unavailability of units, it was suggested that we offer the same class as "Special Registration which could only be offered one quarter. A list of five candidates was submitted from which one was selected by the History Department to teach the class. The class was restricted to upper division students on a limited enrollment, and was scheduled for late evenings. The following quarter, an upper division course on Asian American History was offered as a lower division course.

Two more proposals were submitted: Chinese American History and Arab-American History. These courses were approved but not scheduled due to shortage of funds.

Finally, the introductory course on Asian American History was approved for General Education credit, making it part of the university curriculum. The decision was made without the knowledge of the Studies Group. The History Department then proceeded without the Group's approval to replace the recommended instructor with one of their own. The instructor is less than desirable because his specialty is in the field of American Studies and lacks sufficient knowledge and background in Asian American Studies.

At the same time, the Studies Group submitted course proposals to the Sociology Department and requested the names of the people who were to review them. Strangely, the Asian American Studies Group received a letter from the Sociology Department saying that they had already approved their proposals, and the Sociology Department would develop a course of their own, entitled "Sociology Seminar on the Sociology of Asian Americans." The content of this proposal bears a striking resemblance to the Studies Group's proposal.

In all, this experience showed us that through our efforts to submit and promote our courses under these various departments, we had been "cutting our own throats."

The Asics were more dedicated to ensuring that Asian American Studies courses and programs were developed on campus.

The Asian American Studies Group did not have classes stolen and co-opted, but we will not tolerate a co-optation of the entire program. Therefore, we are soliciting your support in our efforts to establish an Asian American Studies Program on this campus.

"We, the Asian American Studies Group, have had classes stolen and co-opted, but we will not tolerate a co-optation of the entire program. Therefore, we are soliciting your support in our efforts to establish an Asian American Studies Program on this campus."
Ethnic Understanding Series

EUS-0001 Asian American People and Places
Nine Stories for Grades 3-6 $5.00 each

This series of nine human interest stories on personalities, events and places in Asian American communities portrays Asian Americans in a multi-dimensional, human perspective. Each story comes in a seven panel folding screen design used as a small book or unfolded and displayed as a single, long panel.

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12 Activities for Grades 3-6 $3.00 each

The kit consists of four sheets of art/crafts games and lessons. Each sheet may be displayed as a visual aid or cut up into separate activities. The language lessons, origami designs and East/West Mix Match emphasize the universality of certain human needs and their expression in Asian cultures. A thirty page resource guide provides each activity with background information, construction hints and follow-up activities.

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New Renew

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### March!

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<tr>
<td>Wash. D.C.-10,000 women march to demand the right to vote</td>
<td>advance sale of tickets to dance Let's Boogie April 21</td>
<td>UCLA Asian American Student Ctr workshop on IFA noon at 7240 Campbell Hall</td>
<td>Asian Women's Ctr Workshop 7:30 &quot;Pregnancy&quot;</td>
<td>International Women's Day</td>
<td>Asian Sisters' msg every Friday 8-9pm</td>
<td>He day at YB hours 12:27 Cremona 12-5pm</td>
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<td>Filipino Tagalog 7pm Pilipino Youth Center 323 N. Merced</td>
<td>Nat Day to file for research aid at UCLA Asian Studies Ctr</td>
<td>Drug Education Workshop for High Sch sisters AWC 8:30-8:30pm</td>
<td>Soc Welfare seminar on Asian American 12 noon Sch of Soc Wolf-UCLA</td>
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<td>“America” concert at Music Center Pavilion</td>
<td>Drug Education Workshop for High Sch sisters AWC 6:30-8:30pm</td>
<td>Asian Women's Ctr Workshop &quot;Abortion&quot; 7:30pm</td>
<td>Filipino Community &amp; Social workers msg 2pm LA Filipino Cultural Ctr 1740 W. Temple St.</td>
<td>Not Young at Long Beach</td>
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<td>Feb 26-March 23 A.S.I.A.N.S. present &quot;InterAction&quot; visual display of Asian American community organizations</td>
<td>Drug Education Workshop for High Sch sisters AWC 6:30-8:30pm</td>
<td>Drug Education Workshop for High Sch sisters AWC 6:30-8:30pm</td>
<td>Every Wednesday, 7-30 pm msg. for the Mandaue Community at the FACL office, 113 Hollywood Bldg, L.A. is Little Tokyo.</td>
<td>AWC workshop &quot;Womenize&quot; 7:30pm</td>
<td>Jot1 Solidarity Day for African Prisoners of War</td>
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A lotta things happen to kids when they’re in school. We all remember, right? Sure, we learned a lot in school: how to cheat without getting caught; how to look invisible when you don’t want to get called on to answer something; how hard you have to work to get better grades than “that smart person who wears glasses and sits up front.” It’s no joke—the competitive atmosphere inside the classroom is real. If you “successfully” acquired all the basic survival characteristics to get by in our society: greed, selfishness, shrewdness, and the alienation necessary to sit through eight hours of work as meaningless as the algebra homework you were forced to do in junior high school.

Things change—but not by themselves.

There’s a group of people working with children in the Japanese community here in Los Angeles. They call their program, the Creative Workshop. Kids learn a lot in Creative Workshop, too: how to build things together; how important it is to be aware and sensitive of others around you; how well an activity goes when everyone helps each other along. Cooperation and sharing are the two basic ingredients in the Creative Workshop curriculum. They’re trying to change things—

—But they can’t do it by themselves. They are in sore need of new supplies and facilities—and that takes money. So, to help raise those necessary funds, the Creative Workshop is sponsoring a brunch, rumored to be titled, “the morning-after brunch.” It’s on a Sunday, March 18th. For $1.00 you are entitled to your choice of French toast or pancakes, sausage or bacon, eggs, and coffee, and you even have a chance to win something in a raffle. There’ll be entertainment provided by the Creative Workshop children, and a band making their L.A. debut, Streetflower.

So, that’s where we come in. If you want to help Creative Workshop continue its operations and the work it’s doing, drop on by to the brunch, on ‘the morning after.” It’s at:

Semshin Church
1336 W. 36th pl. (near Normandie)
From 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Sunday, March 18th

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**Creative Workshop’s Brunch**

March 1973. GIDRA.
THIS IS A POEM.

WE MUTTERED THEN SHUDDERED
AT GIDRA SANS READERS
AND CHOSE TO AVOID SUCH A FATE.

BUT TOM, DICK & HARRY
WERE ALL VERY WARY
TO BITE ON A LINE WITH SUCH BAIT...

...A GIDRA FOR FREE
TO YOU WHO WILL PLEASE,
PLEASE SEND US THE INFO BELOW.

AN ADDRESS AND NAME
OF YOURSELF AND A FLAME
AND A CRIT OF THIS POETIC FLOW.*

* In other words, what this "poet" is trying to say is Gidra will send sample copies out to people you know. No cost to you, no obligation to your friend.
1 "Flame"—term meaning "lover" in a bygone era.

GIDRA
Department A & P
P.O. Box 18649
Los Angeles, CA 90018

☐ I like the above poem.
☐ I dislike the above poem.