



ASIANS FOR ACTION

the voice of
ASIAN COALITION for EQUALITY

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APRIL 1970

ACE SPONSORS COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

"The Asian's Role in America" will be the topic of a 2-day workshop sponsored by the Asian Coalition for Equality, April 4 and 11, at the St. Peter's Episcopal Church, 1610 South King Street. Registration will begin at 8:30 a.m. The workshop will extend from 9:00 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. The keynote address will be delivered by Mr. Fred Cordova, Director of Public Relation, Seattle University.

The purpose of the workshop is to develop awareness within the Asian-American communities of the inequities of institutionalized racism and how it affects them. It is hoped that awareness will develop into concern and commitment to the struggle for human rights.

All members of the Asian-American communities are welcomed to participate and contribute to the group sessions.

ON THE PICKET LINE

The Asian Coalition for Equality picketed both the Nisei Vets and the Elks' Club on Saturday, March 14.

The Vets were notified during their February meeting that some Asians objected to their installation ceremony at the racist Elks'. However, the Vets refused to change the location because they felt that it was too late.

The pickets carried signs saying, "I wouldn't let my kid marry an Elk," "Elk-k-k," "racism is animalistic," "Elks, moose, and skunks."

A few Elks at the club called the pickets "monkeys," an old World War II anti-Japanese term. Ironically to a white observer, the "monkey" pickets could not be physically distinguished from the Nisei American Veterans.

Mr. Hoshide, the Vets' photographer, sat outside the Elks' Club, heckling the pickets. At one point, he stated that he was an Elk member and that he was taking pictures for the Elks' newspaper.

"WHITES ONLY"

Many social clubs, including the Elks have a restrictive membership clause which effectively excludes non-whites, very similar to the restrictive or "protective" clauses not long ago attached to housing as well as sorority and fraternity houses.

Such a policy is obviously racially discriminatory. The Asian Coalition for Equality objected to Asians patronizing clubs that exclude them strictly because of race. The Elks' constitution states that they will only accept "white males," 21 years old, who believe in God.

The Vets' patronage seemed to condone the Elks' racist policies. These are the same policies that hamper Asian Americans. It is in the social club that important business contacts are made. By being excluded from these clubs, Asians are losing out. The whites who are not permitted to join Asian groups, on the other hand, do not suffer because Asian organizations have little influence in the white society.
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Yet many Vets say, "So what if the Elks discriminate; so do Asian organizations." Such an argument justifies nothing. Never have two wrongs made a right.

Therefore, the Coalition picketed the Elks Club the evening of the Vets' dinner to demonstrate its objection to their action, but more specifically to the restrictive membership policy of the club.

As long as Asians continue to cooperate with racist institutions, they can never expect a change in policy. Again, we have an example of tokenism extended by whites. We are good enough to use their facilities, but they tell us our color and physical characteristics render us undesirable to be considered for membership.

Many expressions of support were heard from a number of Asians who were not ACE members, and had never participated in ACE activities. A few of them even joined in the picket.

Of course, many differing comments were expressed as well, such as, "The use of the Elks' facilities was a good way to create mutual understanding, build friendly relations and break down restrictive clauses."

The only understanding that can be achieved from this is that Asians recognize white superiority and know their place.

We have also heard some who agreed with our objections to patronizing the Elks' Club, but who told us, "Though I support your concept, personally, demonstrating is not my bag."

DEFENSE FACILITIES AND INDUSTRIAL SECURITY ACT OF 1970

After vigorous campaigning by the Asian Coalition for Equality and other concerned groups for the repeal of Title II of the 1950 Security Act, another bill, similar in nature, now appears to be headed for passage. Entitled the "Defense Facilities and Industrial Security Act of 1970," the bill purports to protect key defense facilities from disruption. However, close examination of the bill reveals certain tendencies within it which make the bill certainly in violation of our constitutional guarantees. Among the several stipulations available to either the President of the United States or Defense Department officials are clauses reminiscent of Title II.

Firstly, the Executive has the right to make certain industries off limits for employment by those considered to be "dangerous" to these industries. Who is "dangerous" is not clearly specified, leaving interpretation to the whims of officials. Peculiarity of speech, skin color, other physical characteristics, and place of origin, might serve as sufficient grounds for prevention of employment just as easily as membership in groups considered "un-American."

Secondly, this bill gives officials the right of detention, without due process of law, of those who are suspected of questionable activities or membership in organizations and associations. Once under investigation the suspect is denied the use of the 5th Amendment and is denied access to courts while his appeal is in process.

This 1970 Security Act contains several other restrictions which are both in violation of the American constitution and certainly repugnant to those concerned with the concept of judicial equality. The 1970 Security Act is a dangerous bill, and, if passed, will serve to intimidate those voices which would be raised in legitimate dissent. The bill has not yet passed the Senate, so there is still time for stoppage. Write to your Congressional Senator and ask him to vote down the Defense Facilities and Industrial Security Act of 1970 or HR14864.

HELP RECRUIT MORE MEMBERS!

MEASURING THE COLOR LINE

In the last decade, the struggle for political, social, and economic equality among our minority populous has only created an awareness in white America and her racist institutions, and an effective means to combat racism has, as said, only created an awareness of our fight.

In 1960, the United States statistics of the white and nonwhite median family income by educational level provided facts of the imbalance and disproportionate distribution of employment in our society. For example, having from one to three years of a college education, the white man's median family income amounted to \$7,344.00. But at the same educational level as the white man, the nonwhite received only \$5,525.00. With

four years or more of a college background, the white man made \$9,315.00, whereas the nonwhite man made only \$7,876.00. Comparison of the earnings of whites vs. nonwhites shows a greater disparity in total income over ones lifetime.

With one to three years of college education, the white man earned, on an average, \$301,000. The nonwhite man made only \$162,000. And with four years of college work, the white man accumulates \$466,000., while the nonwhite man earns only \$246,000.

Education and Lifetime Earnings - White Men vs Nonwhite Men

	White	Nonwhite	Nonwhite as % of White
Elementary School			
less than 8 yrs.	\$157,000	95,000	61%
✓ 8 years	191,000	123,000	64%
High School			
1-3 years	221,000	132,000	60%
4 years	253,000	151,000	60%
College			
1-3 years	301,000	162,000	54%
✓ 4 years	395,000	185,000	47%
5 years or more	466,000	246,000	53%



John J. Reddin's **Faces of the City**

Among Our Finest Citizens

At the risk of being an exponent of the obvious, I feel that Seattle without its colorful ethnic groups would be a poor place, indeed.

And I think any interested or discerning observer of the Seattle scene will agree that our Japanese-Americans are among the city's finest citizens.

Industrious and polite, they have an inherent affection and respect for family and friends, an appreciation of beauty and love for flowers and well-ordered gardens, an old and graceful culture that has given us some of our best architecture and landscape design.

AND ALL OF US could take a lesson or two from them in good manners!

But it's their love of children and close family unit that impresses me most. Luckier than most, perhaps, I have many Japanese-American friends and have had an opportunity to observe first-hand their warm-hearted friendliness and hospitality.

It is little wonder that Japanese children are polite and well behaved. Like the Chinese, the Japanese have almost a fetish about education. Also, they know that children thrive as much on love and affection as they do on food or drink.

WHENEVER POSSIBLE, the father even comes home for lunch so that the family can eat its noon meal together.

It is this close family unit, I think, that makes the Orientals so adaptable. That, plus a keen desire for all the education possible.

In my own lifetime, I have seen Seattle's Chinese and Japanese communities raise themselves by their own efforts to first-class citizenship. Today, relatively few of them live in Chinatown or the Central Area. Instead, many of them have \$35,000 or \$40,000 homes on Beacon Hill or Mercer Island.

And it wasn't too many years ago that they were among the so-called persecuted minorities. There's probably a valuable lesson here, someplace.

I WAS REMINDED of this recently when the Seattle Chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League honored several of its long-time members at its annual installation and awards banquet.

Two of those honored were widows of old friends of mine — the late Jimmy Sakamoto and Clarence Arai. Tak Kubota, district governor of the League's Pacific Northwest District Council, presented certificates of merit, among others, Mrs. Misao Nishitani Sakamoto and Mrs. Yone Arai, whose husbands long were active in Seattle's Japanese community.

Reddin - "Among our finest" stereotypers

SAKAMOTO, blind Seattle newspaperman who died in 1955, was a familiar figure around the old Washington State Press Club. He was born here and was an outstanding athlete at Franklin High School where he was graduated in 1921.

Later, while supporting himself as a professional boxer while attending Princeton University, Sakamoto lost his eyesight from boxing injuries. He returned to Seattle and founded The Japanese-American Courier, an English-language newspaper for American-born Japanese that had a national circulation.

Friendly and outgoing, he refused to let his blindness be a handicap. Alas, however, his newspaper ceased publication when Jimmy and his family were evacuated in 1942 to an internment camp at Hunt, Idaho.

ARAI, ALSO Seattle-born, was an attorney and photographer. And, like Sakamoto, was one of the founders of the Japanese-American Citizens League which soon spread to 54 chapters and more than 15,000 members in the United States.

For many years, Clarence Arai was a familiar figure in Chinatown. He frequently served as my personal guide on nostalgic tours through Seattle's International Settlement. Despite the fact that he was a captain in the Army Reserve (the first American of Japanese ancestry to earn an Army commission), Arai was interned along with other Japanese at Camp Harmony, Puyallup, and then at the Minidoka Relocation Center in Idaho.

Arai's health broke during the war years and, after returning to Seattle in 1946, he semiretired from the practice of law and devoted much of his time to photography, winning many prestigious photographic awards. He died in 1963.

Both Jimmy Sakamoto and Clarence Arai were delightful personalities — dedicated and sincere, yet as friendly and ebullient as small boys. And both of them, I am proud to say, were treasured friends of mine. They were first-class citizens — and real men!

*A "Quiet American"
speaks out again.....
see next page*

**Reprinted
From
Seattle Times
Feb. 12, 1970**

(Dr. Joseph T. Okimoto of Seattle is a member of the Asian Coalition for Equality's executive committee.)

By DR. JOSEPH T. OKIMOTO

In a recent column John J. Reddin, in his usual colorful manner, describes the Japanese - American community ("Among Our Finest Citizens," The Times, February 12). On the surface the column appears benign. In fact it might appear to be flattering to the "colorful" ethnic community. But beneath the surface, and not too deep at that, lie certain social attitudes which betrays a long history of discrimination against Orientals.

This commentary on Reddin's col-

umn is not intended as a personal attack; rather it is an attempt to point out a few objectionable implications of the article and to raise the question of the newsman's responsibility in influencing social attitudes.

THE FIRST objectionable point is the manner in which Reddin deals with the Japanese - American community in such gross, inaccurate stereotypes. While it might have been fashionable among patronizing whites to heap praise upon a "colorful" ethnic group a decade ago, the present-day usage of such praise is entirely inappropriate and insulting to those who feel the stereotypes are no longer true.

Characteristics such as industrious, polite, well-behaved, friendly, docile, etc., are traits which evolved out of a century of racism against the yellow man in a society which regarded him as inferior. These stereotypes, therefore, are associated with a position of inferiority imposed upon the Oriental by a racist society and are continually used by the society to keep the Oriental in his inferior place.

Whether the stereotypes are positive or negative, as long as they are associated with a less than equal status, they are a great disservice to the ethnic community.

THIS GETS US to the second objectionable point of the column, the interpretation of the position of the Oriental in America. Reddin states: "... I have seen Seattle's Chinese and Japanese communities raise themselves by their own efforts to first-class citizenship."

There are several reasons why I do not agree that the Asian-American is a first-class citizen today:

1. There are areas in Seattle

Reddin Displayed Insensitivity to Racial Problems, Says Doctor

where an Asian-American can not buy a home.

2. There are private clubs which do not admit nonwhites to their membership.

3. Although our median educational level is higher than the white population in this state, our median income is lower. If the Asian-American were first-class citizens they would have the opportunity to capitalize on their education. The evidence is to the contrary.

4. There is a noticeable lack of Asian-Americans in the economic mainstream as evidenced in the ethnic makeup of the executive positions of large corporations such as Boeing, the banks, the department stores and other commercial interests.

The above phenomena represent a racially based exclusionary policy which deprives the Asian-American (and other nonwhites) of true first-class citizenship.

The third and most objectionable point is the manner in which Reddin deals with minority groups. His attitude displays an insensitivity to racial problems which is so prevalent today. This is illustrated in the following sentences:

"And it wasn't too many years ago that they were among the so-called persecuted minorities. There's probably a valuable lesson here, someplace."

The use of the word "so-called" implies a doubt in the writer's mind that persecution of minority groups actually exists. It seems apparent that many white people who do not know the ethnic communities share this doubt that Asian-Americans are really discriminated against.

What must a minority group be subjected to before he is considered persecuted?

The implication of the sentence, "There's probably a valuable lesson here, someplace," is quite clear. It is an attempt to suggest that other minority groups should somehow follow the Asian-American example.

It is my belief that our racist society has managed to keep minority groups in socially inferior positions, in part, by playing one group against another.

A Southern white once said to me: "Why can't the Negro be like you people?" The message was clearly a put down of the black man by a racist who used my ethnic group to dis-

credit the blacks, a manipulative maneuver which any decent man would resent with vehemence!

WHAT THIS ATTITUDE ignores is the great sociological difference between minority groups as well as the severity of racism directed against them. Rather than call attention to the qualities of the minority group, it would do well for our society to examine its continuing racist practices against all nonwhite groups.

Assuming that Reddin was not consciously aware of the implications of his column, this raises an important question regarding the ethical responsibility of the press in perpetuating social attitudes.

Many white people do not know the minority communities because of "de facto segregation." Therefore, their knowledge of ethnic groups is based upon information provided by news media.

What minority groups see in our society are white institutions, such as the press, which abound with racist policies and attitudes. Changes within these institutions are necessary before meaningful resolution of the racial crisis can occur.