

twenty-five cents

OCTOBER, 1971



MONTHLY OF THE ASIAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY

Permit No. 29127
Los Angeles, Calif.
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GIDRA
P.O. Box 18046
Los Angeles, Calif. 90018

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MONTHLY OF THE ASIAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY



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Gidra Staff: Doug Aihara, Linda Fujikawa, Jeff Furumura, Carrie Furuya, Tomo Hisamoto, Clyde Higa, Ken Hamada, Adrienne Hokoda, Kenny Hoshide, Bruce Iwasaki, Patti Iwataki, Minako Kawahira, Duane Kubo, Vivian Matsushige, Bob Miyamoto, Jane Morimoto, Any Murakami, Chris Murakami, Candace Murata, Scott Nagatani, Jeanne Nishimura, Tom Okabe, Tracy Okida, Glenn Oshima, Alan Ota, Candice Ota, Kyoko Shibasaki, Lloyd Tanaka, Steve Tatsukawa, Evelyn Yoshimura and others like, Mike Murase.

Gidra is published monthly by *Gidra, Inc.*, a registered, non-profit organization. P.O. Box 18046, Los Angeles, Calif. 90018, (213) 734-7838. All labor is donated. Subscriptions: \$2.50 a year; institutions: \$5.00; overseas: \$5.00; military and political prisoners: \$1.00. Current single issues: \$.25. Back issues (complete set of Volume I—April, 1969 to December, 1969): \$15.00; (complete set of Volume II, January, 1970 to December, 1970): \$10.00. Six weeks notice is needed to change a subscriber's address. Please include both old and new

addresses and zip code number. Address all subscription mail to *Gidra*, Subscription Department, P.O. Box 18046, Los Angeles, Calif. 90018. Contributions in the form of articles, essays, photographs, poems, sketches, letters and announcements are welcome. However, materials must be received prior to the third Tuesday of the previous month in order for them to be considered. Address all such material to *Gidra*, Editorial Department, P.O. Box 18046, Los Angeles, Calif. 90018. Printed in the U.S.A. Copyright © 1971 by *Gidra, Inc.* All rights reserved.

EDITORIAL

(Mind flashes in a nutshell.)

There is something happening in America today. (understatement)

What's all this talk of revolution ?

.....I don't know what you're talkin' about.

Remember the beatniks ?.....outasite !

Where have all the beatniks gone ?

(I've heard some have joined the Weathermen, the rest are living in Orange County.)

So what's happenin'.....?

(" What do you mean you don't like spinach ?")

Kids are saying, " Fuck it all !"

(" You're gonna sit there until you eat all your spinach.")

The age of sit-ins has come and gone.

Kids still say, " Fuck it all."

If you try to give them money, clothes, cars, etc. (Lord knows I've tried.)

they won't take 'em.....or..... they'll shove 'em back down your throat.

Parents (remember the PTA) are saying,

" What ever happened to good old American traditions ? "

" Apple pies, baseball cards, strip-tease, conventional editorials. "

" What ever happened to 'em ? Huh ? "

and the cosmic kiddies keep rockin' & rollin'.

The oldies call them, "Ya dirty bunch of commie freaks !!"

The children nod their heads and raise clenched fists.

(Martha, I thought all the communists were in China.)

Quote: " The only way to get rid of hippies is to draft them all. ".....your old man.

So the US declared war on the land of OZ.

but us kids were hip to what was coming down in the land of OZ,

and we wouldn't fight THEIR war.

" OZZIE never called me a nigger ! "

Instead, we went to woodstock, to telegraph ave., to new mexico (while never leaving home.)

We grew our hair, burned our bras and threw away our neckties.

(I even know a cat who burned a bank in I.V.)

We yelled, " You drink your booze and let us have our grass !!!!!"

The oldies (good christians that they are) tried to turn the other cheek,

and spank us at the same time.

" Don't bug me, man ! "

So we started our own nation..... within a nation.

We created our own music and our own art and our own films and sports (frisbee, anyone?)

and even our own army. (all power to the people.)

Then WE wnet to war.

We marched.

We fought.

We died.

We cried.

and we kept moving,

developing.

We started building.

" Serve the People," we sang.

And we started a rainbow of PROGRAMS.

and.....even our own newspaper.

" Someday GIDRA will be the standard by which all underground rags are judged." (overstatement)

And in Gardena, (of all places) the stoned-out Asian teenage cosmic rocker with hair down to "you-know-where,"

sez, " Shit, I can't relate to that."

and we know its what he ISN'T saying that really counts.

but that's the beautiful thing about it.

Its not what you say, but what you do that really counts.

Being you.

Apart of us.

and we are everywhere.

We're yellow, yellow, yellow, yellow, pink, green, blue.....

(Martha, clear up the TV set a little.)

WE'RE ASIAN

that makes us different. (right ?)

What the hell is a GIDRA ?????

" What did ya do all summer ? "

" went to Gidra. "

" wha ? "

" we rock & rolled. "

" Oh, you should have gone down to Gidra. "

" Why, what they do all summer ? "

" oh,party and bullshit....."

Live the Revolution !

and in the aftermath.....

Peace on Earth.

Hiroshima Speaks Out

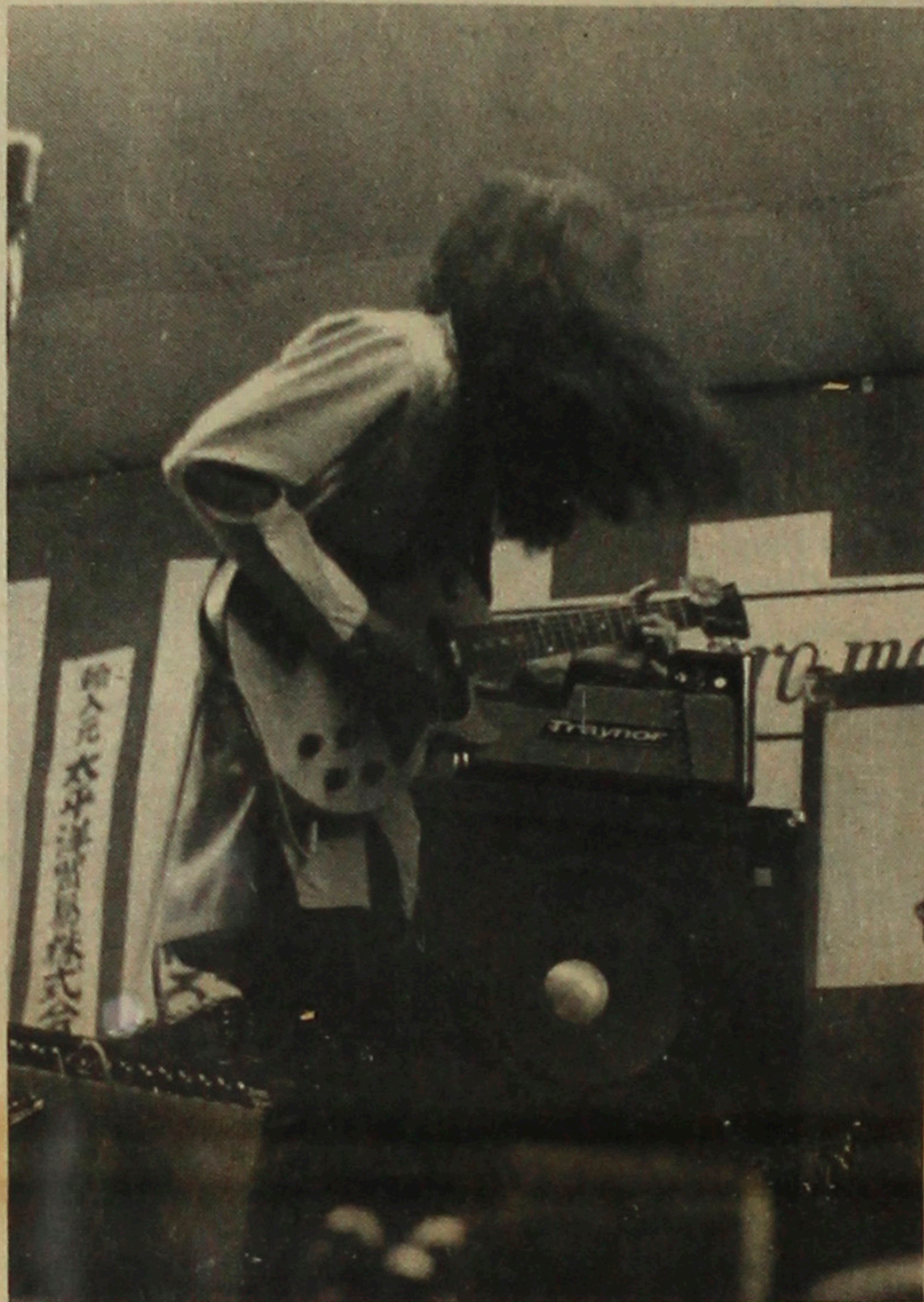
"Rock 'n Roll Forever," the banner flies higher and higher as time progresses to a four-four beat. Perhaps the mirror of our era, rock music is reflective of many conditions in this country and around the world. But Rock 'n Roll is much more than the music that bears that name.

Rock and Roll is a rejoicing of an energy which has been realized. An energy within all of us, to want to be free to create that mysterious "something better." It is the language of youth, of exuberance, of revolution, of a new way of life. It is the promise of a future which is living on our hearts. It is a life-bearing force, a positive force, a force toward liberation of the body and mind.

Hiroshima can rock 'n roll; it is an Asian American Rock Band. From the Long Beach-Los Angeles area, Hiroshima is well known and respected among Asian youth. They are individuals performing in a collective spirit and producing hard-driving, dynamic music that is suggestive of what an "Asian American sound" could or should be.

In the following interview, Hiroshima has spoken out; about themselves, their music, and the environment and vibrations around them. The interview is between two collective spirits, GIDRA and HIROSHIMA and that is the format it has taken.

On with the interview: GIDRA vs. HIROSHIMA.



First of all, what is Hiroshima?

Say what?

Huh?

What?

Oh...what is Hiroshima?

Oh...well...Hiroshima is, like, uh, something that could have never happened but did anyway, you know what I mean?

Yeah, I think I...

It's kind of like a rose in a weed patch...or weed in a rose garden, you know? It's really cosmic.

How do you perceive yourselves?

Well, we're musicians...that's always on our minds but we're Asian too, so that makes our situation unique.

How's that?

Being Asian in America puts certain stereotypes on you...and being longhaired Asian musicians puts you in a very weird bag. Because you are Asian, people expect certain things from you. And because you're longhaired and freaky, people expect other things of you. It kind of puts a clamp on your artistic development. You know?

Yeah...keep going...

Well, like we feel that our music is for the people. We aren't together to just play for ourselves. Of course a lot of times that's the way it turns out cause we can't find jobs playing or even have the opportunity to play for an audience.

It that because of what you represent?

What?

Forget it.

I don't think what we represent is the main factor in our public image or anything like that. It's what people think we represent. You know, rock bands are all thought of as having basically the same type of people, you know "a musician is a musician," it's the same mentality that produced the saying, "the only good Jap is a dead Jap." People really don't hear what we have to offer that makes us different from other bands and a lot of rock bands suffer from the same thing.

Yet there are a lot of rock personalities that are looked up to as superstars by millions.

Yeah, how many? Six or seven out of thousands or millions of musicians in the world. Besides half a dozen supergroups, the rest are just a big puddle. No matter how good they are...

Shall we move on?

Alright...but all we're trying to say is that right now, in Watts, there's probably some kid who can play the guitar like Hendrix and sing like Otis Redding and no one is ever gonna know about him.

Does (sic) drugs play a big part in your music?

You know, the word 'drugs' is really weird cause...like grass and smack are both called drugs and they're completely different.

Alright then, how do you feel about grass?

We feel good about grass. Grass can do wonders for the head without damaging the body or other people.



What about smack?

We don't have nothing to do with smack. Smack can hook you, and when that happens all you live for is the fix, and we want to create music and not have to worry about sticking needles into our arms.

What drugs do you use when you play?

Are you an undercover pig or something?

Huh?

See, you seem to have the same hangups as most everyone does and that's thinking when musicians aren't performing, then they must be shooting up dope or balling some chick or something.

Alright, let's change the subject.

Alright.

Do you have groupies?

Let's change the subject.

Alright...uh, has the fact that Hiroshima is considered a Movement Band affected your music?

Well, it all goes back to being put in a bag, you know. I guess it's better to be bagged as a "movement band" rather than a blues band or folk-rock shit or something because the term "Movement Band" doesn't mean a thing to those outside of the movement, and to people in the movement I guess it means we're just really together. As for our music, we would be playing the same thing if we were considered an establishment band or a fascist band cause it's the music we feel most comfortable with.

How do you feel your music actually ties into the movement?

Well, actually we have to look at the whole thing from a much broader perspective, like, 'how rock music ties into the revolution.'

Go head on.....!

See, in America today, it's just a fact of life that more people relate to rock 'n roll rather than to the Weatherman or the Panthers...

How's that?

Well, for example, if the Rolling Stones gave a free concert somewhere, anywhere, 500,000 people would show up. Now, if Jerry Rubin or even Huey P. Newton gave a free rally talk somewhere, a hell of a lot of people would show up, but it wouldn't be anywhere near a half a million, no matter what.

So how does rock music tie into the revolution?

Because the revolution in America today is not of solely political or economic intent. It is also a cultural revolution. Our culture is changing in a revolutionary manner. And since culture encompasses so much more than either politics or economics, our revolution will be one of the most totally drastic the world has ever seen. And rock music is part of the cultural revolution because it is at the revolutionary end of the music our culture has produced. Marx once said, "Men are products of circumstances and conditions produced by other men." So, if we can produce conditions and circumstances of revolutionary quality, be it in music, art, film, literature or politics or whatever, the revolution will come. It will come because of the fact that we will all be practicing revolutionary cultural development.

Do you mean that, in a sense, we will be living the revolution?

Exactly.

Do you consider yourselves a "political rock band," if there is such a thing?

We don't like to label ourselves anything, especially something like a "political rock band" cause that brings to mind connotations like us giving political raps set to music. But it has to be remembered that in America today, every action or inaction has political connotations. It's unavoidable. Like, uh, we do not have to give political raps with our music cause rock music is inherently political especially in a society like ours, you know, which is governed by a bunch of squares or anti-rock 'n roll freaks. Like, you know, whenever people gather to hear rock music, whether its for spiritual, political or social reasons, it doesn't really matter because actually all those reasons are the same in a country whose government has a policy of separating people. Just the fact that people are coming together in a common cause is making a revolutionary statement. We hope that rock music helps to generate certain revolutionary vibrations.

Say what?

Let me clarify that. You see, there is no such thing as revolutionary music—there's revolutionary people who produce music which is reflective of their own experience. And if that experience is revolutionary, what they produce will be inherently revolutionary also. But it all goes back to the personal experience—the human element.

If music is based or developed from human experience why isn't there a true Asian American sound?

In a sense, there is an Asian American sound but if you mean on a level equal to the balck sound of, uh, Motown or something similar there ain't cause what Asians are relating to is the Top 40 simply because there is no true Asian music reflecting the Asian experience in America except for what Chris and Joanne are putting out. We're trying though. But for now, the Top 40 is the Asian sound—Carole King, Neil Young, James Taylor, the Rolling Stones, and all that kind of shit.

Why is that?

Let me give you an example. Santana. See, Santana was jiving and playing around the Mission District in Frisco way before anyone big would have anything to do with them. But the Chicano community was behind them. They made them through their support. 'Cause what they were supporting was their own sound. Now they're sharing their sound with all of America and America—rock and roll America, that is, is really digging it. Now it's possible for the Asian community to do the same thing, you know, to rally behind our sound, whether it's our band or whatever it don't really matter. It's just the initial breakthrough that counts. And it's not just for personal advancement but for the advancement of the whole Asian American culture.

Where is the Asian youth culture heading?

Well, there's a hell of a lot of young people just freaking out, you know, not even relating to the movement but just getting into their own trip which, in a lot of cases is just as revolutionary as what the movement people are doing cause what they're struggling for is a new way of life too, but in their own way, based on their own experiences. And then, there's just as many people, probably more who are still into the thing of going to dances and parties and just bullshitting around like most of us were doing five years ago. Then, there's the movement, but we know where that's at don't we?

Do we?

Well, don't we?

Yeah, I guess we do.

Or else we wouldn't be doing what we're doing.

Right on...so, where are we heading?

Into the cosmos—the realm of all human concern.

What is the goal of Hiroshima?

We can't even speak in terms of goals yet, because our directions aren't even definite. Our music is constantly changing.

Improving?

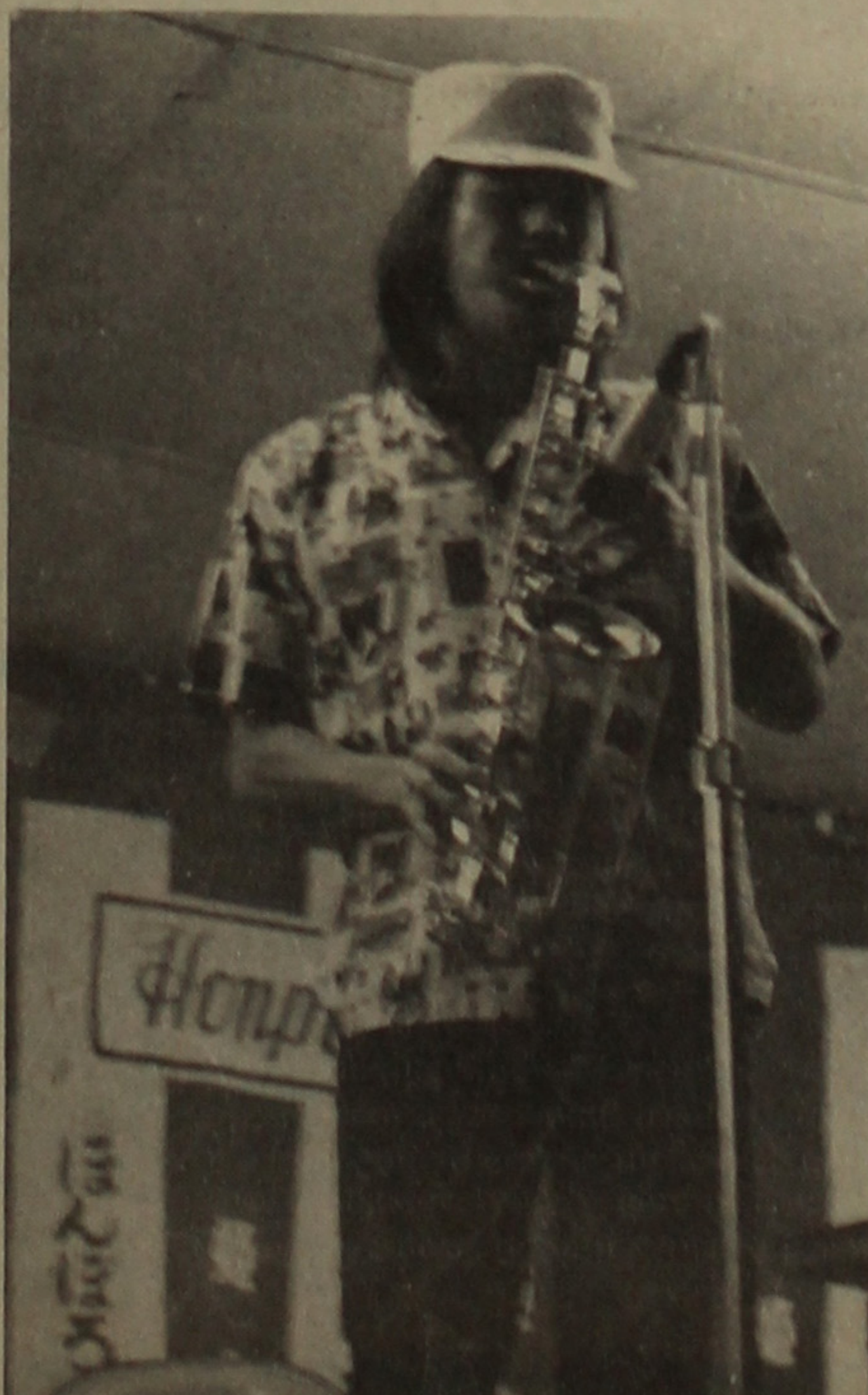
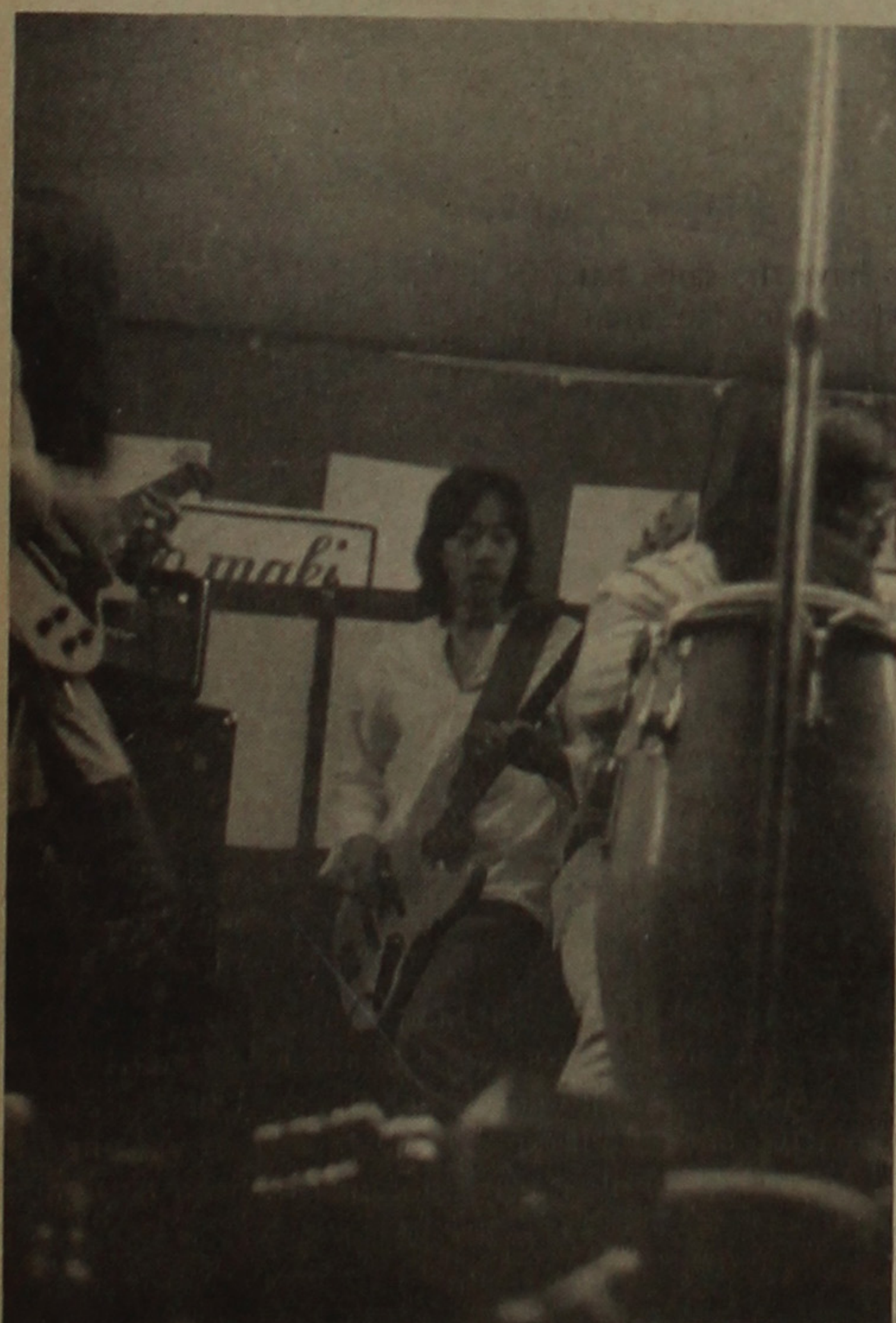
We hope, but for sure its changing.

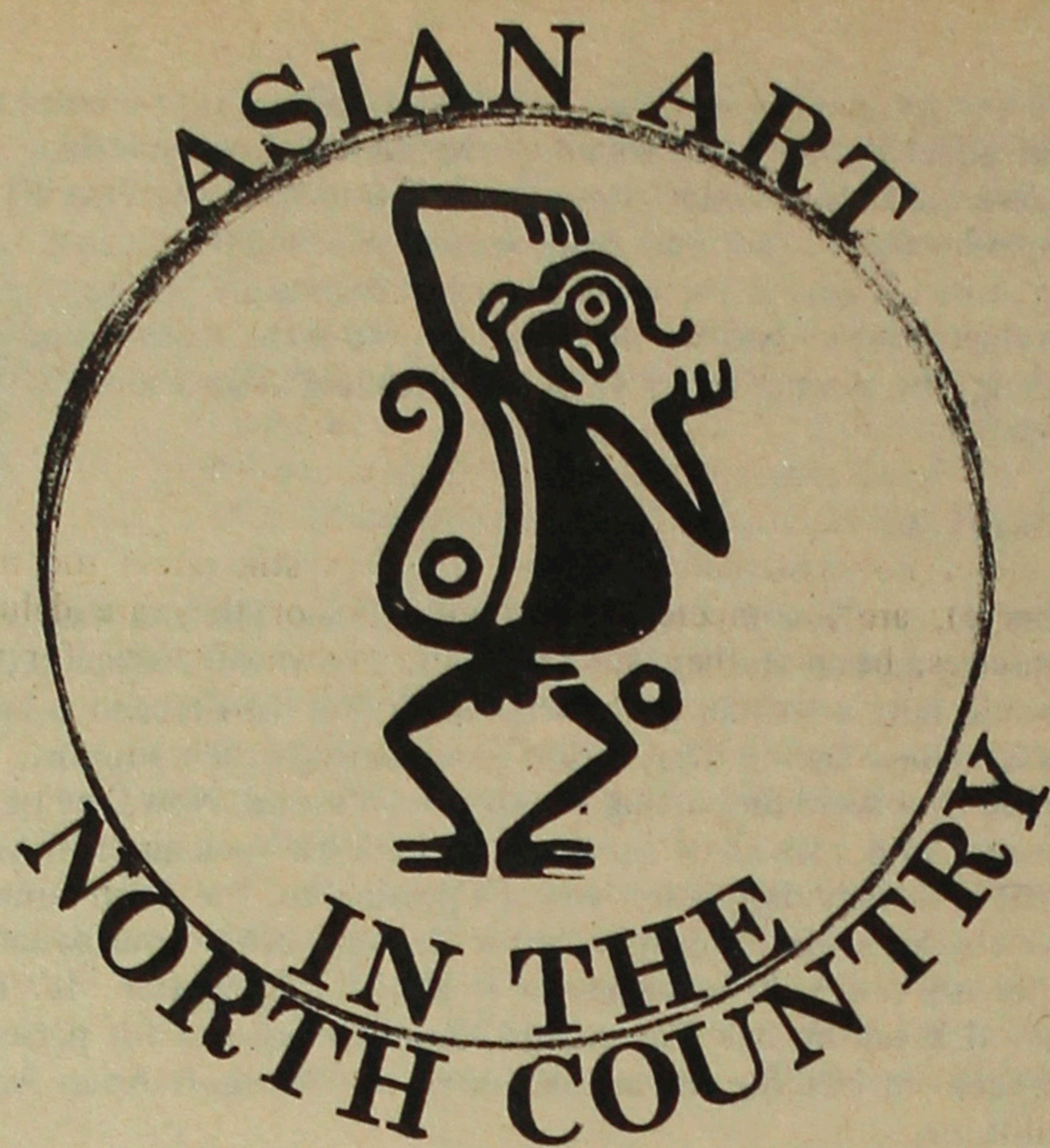
What's in store for the future as far as Hiroshima is concerned?

Dark clouds, dark clouds everywhere!..... No, seriously—a lot of practicing and learning, and growing and improving and striving to reach cosmic awareness.

Well, that's it... I'm out of questions.

Good.





Fortunately most of us are able to retain enough of our sanity to place things; situations, occurrences, circumstances into some type of perspective. Largely based upon our own personal experiences we are able to guide our daily lives in accordance to points of reference which we have preconceived in our minds.

As the cultural revolution or alternative life style develops we are constantly losing more and more of these points of reference and must struggle to adjust to new ones.

The art of a culture, and the artist himself, has long been seen as one of the cornerstones of civilization. And today, like other cultural institutions, the artist is experiencing a confrontation with revolutionary thought and action.

Yet, it is the artist who is often looked upon as the vanguard of a culture developing "new forms", breaking traditions, creating traditions, leading an elite corp of the avant garde into new realm of understanding. This is a form of revolution.

Perhaps it is the artist who best understands what is accepted today may be rejected tomorrow, and unless continuous progress is made obsolescence sets in.

In the following article an Asian Canadian artist provides us with some "points of reference" when relating art as it is and as it can be to the movement for change as it is and as it can be.

by David Suzuki

If any community is to grow spiritually, to develop its creative potential, it must be allowed to look at and criticize itself through art, breaking the bonds that stifle creative forces in any society. These notes are an attempt to explain one reason why the "Asian-Canadian" community has not done this. Citizens of Asian descent find themselves in a strange relationship to the main socio-economic structure of Canada, since, as I will try to demonstrate, they show all the signs of being an oppressed minority (except the most obvious ones like poverty), while the average Asian-Canadian will deny that he is in any significant way different from his European counterparts. Hence, the caution over the expression "Asian-Canadian" or reference to a "community". For most, these are at best facile and politically suggestive labels. But like most oppressed minorities, Asians can be seen to hold the two permissible positions of such groups in Canadian society. Either they are contained within self-sustaining groups which basically serve the state only in economic terms, or they are individually assimilated into white society as a whole. The former applies most readily to the Chinese; the latter, to the Japanese, though it must be seen that the dispersal of the Japanese due to the "relocation" and subsequent discrimination was not in any way voluntary. [Since I am Japanese, my comments will be directed toward the Japanese, but I have no doubt that similar conclusions could be reached regarding other Asian groups with a high rate of "assimilation."]

BEING USEFUL

The basic function of the Asian, the condition of his being admitted to this country in the first place, is to be "useful." The development of the internal structure of the Asian community or the lack of it can be seen as a tacit recognition of this role and of the fact that the survival of the community depends upon Asians staying in their places. This is one reason for the lack of Asian-Canadian artists and thinkers. Since the struggle for self-identity and spiritual growth through the development of Asian-Canadian historians, moral philosophers, sociologists, political scientists, economists, poets, musicians, film-makers, etc. would be detrimental to the sustaining of this subservient role in society, neither Asians nor whites have any desire to encourage Asian-Canadians to move into these fields. It is preferable that future generations be dedicated to such careers as business and engineering, either as part of the Asian community or as individuals. Since these are basically "service" professions, i.e. those which do not actually determine what society as a whole will think, any creativity in these fields will do no harm to the white power structure. A brilliant Chinese scientist will bring in more profits for the company; a creative Japanese advertising photographer will sell more products. Those political leaders within the Asian community, those who one sees posing with the mayor on the front page of the Japanese-Canadian weekly, have never been known to oppose the white establishment. The basic premise is that if you

don't rock the boat, you can get anything you want—as long as you don't want too much, of course.

Whites don't have to oppress the Asians overtly, except through such easily acceptable things as housing restrictions and job quotas. The Asians, desiring to survive, playing defense, manage to oppress themselves quite well. In fact, the youth are determined to destroy the concept of an Asian community, both as a geographical and a spiritual fact. This is also a feature of oppressed societies since they are presented with only two legitimate approaches to survival: self-containment or assimilation. Though any collection of minority people poses a threat, as long as they remain passive, weak and economically useful, one would rather that they stay in some sort of group. On the other hand, those who are "educated" and compatible with white society are tolerated, even encouraged to become "assimilated" into mainstream society (so they do not return to their communities as potential leaders). This, of course, entails a denial of certain cultural ties with their community, and any power that comes from the people. One cannot lead a community while living and identifying with their oppressors. The American Jew is a good example of what "assimilation" entails, though most Asians would consider the self-hatred, the nose jobs, the name changes, to be small prices to pay for economic advancement (with of course, the usual quotas and conditions).

Now once the "best minds" and those with spiritual and creative gifts are integrated into white society, their subsequent loss of identity, their confusion of values, their dissociation from their ethnic past, their rejection of the community, all lead to a castration of whatever spiritual potential they have. A community can be loosely defined as any group of people living according to the same framework of values. It is a historical and sociological fact that the white community presupposes white superiority and white supremacy in all things cultural, economic and political. Any Asian who is a member of the white community because he feels "safer" or more "comfortable" or more "acceptable" with whites still cannot be said to have the same status as those white persons who accept membership in that same group as an inalienable right. The Asian has had to "learn" how to be white, even though brought up in an entirely white environment, because he has had to "learn" his own inferiority and the advantages of being white. The Asian has to "deserve" the privilege of belonging; he is there almost by choice (though one can't say that he has been given any alternatives). Such conditional membership in the white community forces the Asian to make sure that he maintains his "position." This concept of alienable and inalienable possession of membership in the white community is extremely important. A white man is a white man, connected to the Anglo-Saxon tradition by birth; an Asian is an Asian until he's proven white. He cannot ever say "we" and mean the people who produced Chaucer, Shakespeare and Milton or even Bob Dylan and the Beatles. He cannot get up in front of a group of his friends and say, "we have much to be proud of..."

BOUNDS OF CREATIVE EXPRESSION

One does not have to go much further than this to explain why Asian-Canadian artists and thinkers are not to be found in abundance even though the number of college educated Asians is high. The Asian is allowed to be creative within the conventional framework of values established by white society or he can imitate the forms of some foreign, i.e. Asian (but not European), society, but what he cannot do is to challenge the values of white society as a whole. Once he does this, once he begins to become in the fullest sense creative within the white community, he gives up his right to belong to it. In a fundamental sense, a white member of the group belongs regardless of what he does. He has the freedom to protest just as children have the freedom to run away from home. But if a nigger or a jap does it (as a nigger or a jap, and not following some white boy), then that's all for him. The Asian artist, tacitly recognizing this relationship, attempts as much as possible to avoid situations in which he is forced to confront the reality of his status. Hence, his art, his thinking, his involvement is at best a compromise with his deepest self, and the result, not surprisingly, is often something strange and second-rate (from what I have seen). Also, the Asian-Canadian intellectuals, will try to deny any personal relationship to third world artists, the Blacks, the Chicanos, the Indians and others who are struggling for life through the spiritual act of creation, because artists of the third world know that art has meaning and value only within the context of a community, and community is what the Asian-Canadian artist wants to deny is necessary for his work. For similar reasons, the Asian artist and intellectual is not to be found associating with other Asians, since seeing another Asian face (especially in the company of other whites) reminds him of who he is. It is as if the presence of that strange face makes ludicrous his persistent claim that "we are all white here."

WHITE ARTISTIC VALUES

As a consequence of these unseen pressures, the Asian-Canadian artist will totally immerse himself in the values of his white peers, make them the sole arbiters of his success or failure, look to them for love and affection, persuade himself that there is no alternative for him, that white he is and white he must always be. He does not allow himself the luxury of introspection, something his non-Asian friends can afford, though he will probably be seeing a shrink because they do. He does not ask for, let alone demand, anything from art which relates to himself as an Asian in a white society (cf. what Blacks demand of their blues singers), and is satisfied with whatever he receives, be it from his immediate associates or from mass culture, i.e. the Beatles, Warhol, *The Rolling Stone*, McLuhan or other organs of the white liberal elite.

If for once he begins to question the value of the material and spiritual benefits he is receiving from his membership, if he stops telling himself he is satisfied just because those around him are satisfied, if he ever begins to recognize the price of self-hood, blessings of sophisticated middle-class existence, then he will be in grave danger of going out of his mind.

The "solution" to this problem is not simple, but there are a few clear alternatives that must be considered. First, I have been told by white university professors that Japanese-Canadians don't need to develop their own art like the Blacks since their ancestors were not illiterate. The claim is that Mishima and Kawabata should be sufficient to satisfy any desire on the part of Japanese-Canadians to identify with any first-rate literary material. Second, it has been suggested by whites and recently by Daniel Okimoto in his book, *American in Disguise*, that were Japanese-Canadians or Americans (at least as far as the Sansei are concerned) to write or paint or compose music, they would say the same things as the whites—they would have nothing original to contribute because they were Japanese. Now they could no doubt be original American artists, but the originality would not be based on anything ethnic. In other words, the Sansei artist must turn to white models and his point of view in art today, black and white (black music and black poetry are distinctly American but distinctly non-white). So when Okimoto *et al.* say that the Japanese artist will have nothing original to say, they are speaking in terms of the complete assimilation of the Japanese artist into a white world.

ARTISTIC ALLEGIANCES

Third, the artist may himself decide that he is neither white nor Japanese-Canadian but universal. He may claim that he is an individual whose artistic allegiance connects him directly with great artists of all cultures and times. He is not limited by any one point of view, racial or otherwise. Finally, there is the position that says that the Asian-Canadian artist is part of the third world people, that his values and commitments lie within the Asian community. Just as black music is a synthesis of Western European and West African traditions, just as it represents the demands that the African-American community has made on their artists, so must Asian-Canadian art present a synthesis of Eastern and Western values.

Because the role of the artist was different in the 19th century Japanese society, it is difficult to assess how much oriental art can affect the Sansei artist. I think that it would be more relevant to reach an understanding of the Asian community's experience with the land and the people of Canada, an understanding of our cultural and political history moving toward a knowledge of the forces which created the people we are today. This point of view is explicitly Japanese-Canadian and it is not meant to create differences but to clarify the differences that are already there.

THE ASIAN EXPERIENCE AND ART

The power, energy and universal significance of this Asian-Canadian art would begin where we began, with the Issei, with the Nisei. The Sansei artist says there is a generation gap between himself and his parents and grandparents. But this gap exists only because the Sansei wants it to be there, because the farther he is away from understanding his parents and all their problems and frustrations and sufferings, the farther he is away from himself as a Japanese-Canadian and he wants that. He wants to feel that his history is the same as the *hakujin* who lives next door. The third world artist, the committed Japanese-Canadian artist, would never succumb to such corny reasoning. He sees all of his artistic energy come out of that past and how it interacts with the world around him, whites, other Japanese, and himself. He does not try to make everything he does "ethnic," but he is always sure of who he is, where he came from, and the responsibility that his work has in directing the future consciousness of his people.

Unless the Sansei artists preserve the living essence of the Japanese struggle, it will be lost forever. Soon, there will be no Issei who were the children of the emperor Meiji. Soon, there will be no more fishing boats, no more Steveston, no more Powell Street and these things which now are taken for granted will all be lost forever as an insignificant part of Canadian history. Whites may write histories, sociological studies and even attempt to portray this life through art, but they will never present the true picture. We can and must, because we have lived this life which they can only read or hear about. These are our parents and grandparents. It is their suffering and perhaps selfishness that created us. We owe it to ourselves to honor it. I suppose, however, no one will seriously try it, until some *hakujins* start doing the ethnic thing with the Japanese.

Now it is clear that I am in favor of the last approach to Asian-Canadian art. Why? The first position is so stupid that I cannot begin to argue against it. How can one be spiritually fulfilled by the Beatles on the one hand and the *Makioka Sisters* on the other? As much as I like Kawabata (in translation), he cannot represent for me my feelings when I fall in love with a white chick who drives my favorite Corvette or when I get turned away from a motel in Santa Monica (these are just examples and do not reflect my real life). For one thing Kawabata does not go around thinking he is some funny looking *hakujin*. Whenever I see a Japanese rock group or blue grass thing, I cringe, but these people are still Japanese and do not think they are black or white. They have

an identity of their own which allows them to assume other roles, however poorly, and this is what prevents them from speaking for us over here.

The second position is much more interesting, and it is one that not only Okimoto anticipates but one which also follows from Harry Kitano's much more scholarly account of the evolution of Japanese-American society. (*The Japanese Americans*, New York, 1969.) Now Japanese-Canadian artists who think they are white are either not assimilated enough (i.e. they still retain too much Japanese), are incompetent and unoriginal, or they are deluding themselves, because they sure have not shown anything for their whiteness. If it were true that these artists are really white middle class Canadians, then they should surely have produced something—even second rate—but they have not. Our best people are in architecture, in the plastic arts, in photography (particularly advertising)—areas in which they are not expected to be shapers of people's (i.e. *hakujins'*) minds. Just as the Sansei and Nisei have produced no Ellsbergs, no Mario Savios, no David Harris', they have produced no Ginsbergs, no Coltranes, no Glenn Goulds. And this takes care of the third position also, since there is no towering individualist, no *enfant terrible* amongst the masquerading Asian-Canadians. The Asian artist who cuts himself off from not only his people but his own country (like it or not, it is Canada), creates a kind of art equivalent to his spirit—which amounts to absolutely nothing.

But the last position is beset with all kinds of problems and I recognize them as well as anyone else. For one thing, there is no Asian community—at least not for the Japanese. But in the age of high speed transportation and mass communication, the concept of a community as bound by a geographical area is obsolete. A novel, a poem, a film, a photograph—these can go into suburban ghettos and reach our brothers and sisters wherever they may be. The news media will remind the Japanese that there are people working and creating to define his past, present and future. So, lack of any Japanese "ghetto" should not prevent artists from addressing themselves to this community. I think that the vagueness of this concept of community is what has been preventing our best minds from producing great work. The artist cannot get himself together unless he gets his past together. He cannot do this until he recognizes that he has been living a life of repression, fear and isolation. But once he has a concept of the relationship between himself and this community, the moment he begins to define that community and to understand it, to struggle against-it, for it, with it, he begins to feel what it is like to be truly free. He finds that when he speaks for himself, he is speaking for us all. We are here to share his joy and his sorrow. We are here to listen and be moved as brothers and sisters. We see him as making articulate those dark feelings that have been hidden from us for so long, that we have repressed from fear and ignorance.

ART AND THE STRUGGLE

What I am suggesting is a middle class Canadian art—because the Japanese-Canadian is middle class. But there is something that makes him different and this difference does not make him inferior or unworthy. The difference lies in his history as a man of color in a racist society. He has by his being middle class "made it," but not without great sacrifice, as we have pointed out. So although the artist must reach his middle class brothers and sisters, it is not to leave them there in the same space with a few warm feelings for *oji-san* and *oba-san*. No, he must show them the inhumanity of a purely secular existence and the necessity for a life of spirit. He must show them that before they can be spiritually satisfied, they must work to create a society in which *all* men, Indians, Anglos, Chinese, French, can truly live as brothers and sisters. If the Japanese-Canadian were to be moved to act, to love, to be willing to sacrifice for a freer, more human society, then the Asian artist will have performed his greatest and most difficult task. Then he will have the more joyful duty of sustaining his brothers and sisters in the struggle, since it is obvious that if Japanese begin to love, they shall suffer for it.

Many will say this is only a dream, but the dream *can* be made into a reality, and this artistic reality can produce tangible political results—which is the end of all art anyway. Chris and Joanne are a Sansei singing group who are spreading the message of Asian brotherhood and freedom for all Americans across the United States. Chris is from New York; Joanne is from Los Angeles. They sing the songs they have written as well as those of others who up to this time have either hidden behind their white masks or been too embarrassed to say in public what they felt as Japanese. The songs are about being Japanese—of self-hate, frustration, and love; of being American—alienated, disenchanting, lonely. Another example is the newspaper *Gidra* which has for the last few years been presenting the Asian community in Los Angeles and California with poem, artwork, essays and political analyses. By uniting "art" and politics, one can see in *Gidra* the shape of a new culture in which art and life are one and inseparable.

I do not intend that the Japanese-Canadian consciousness be developed along the same lines as the American, even though there are obvious parallels. What Canadians do must come from Canada if it is going to be for real. But I think that the knowledge that our American brothers and sisters are getting themselves together can help in establishing that expanded sense of community which has been lacking so far.

A NARRATIVE

a personal account

In order to put my narrative into the proper perspective, let me briefly tell you something about myself. I grew up in an Asian community in Los Angeles, and my friends were not drug users. During college, I associated with whites and Asians. In other words, my history is pretty "straight"; the activities I now participate in still reflect my past.

I hold many reservations about relaying this experience to you mainly because I still get upset when I think about it. In my mind I have still not resolved all the emotions I felt that day—pride, anger, fear, wrong-doing.

I received a phone call from a close sister. She asked if I would come to a meeting of some sisters who were getting together to deal with R—, a "brother" in the community. He had beat up some sisters while he had been loaded. From the tone of the sister's voice, and because of the trust we had developed, I decided to go. I cringe thinking of the blind faith decision I made, since I really knew nothing of the circumstances which caused the meeting.

When I arrived, I saw the reason why the sisters were angry. E— had a black eye and bruises. I was then briefed of R—'s other instances of getting loaded and beating up sisters. Although I did not know him personally, I learned that his record of woman-beating was pretty poor. I could not think objectively of any reasons why he could continue to beat up sisters unless he was mentally ill or terribly frustrated.

I was brought up in a non-physical way. My brothers were taught that beating up anyone, particularly someone weaker—particularly a girl—was a wrong that showed immoral and sick behavior. I grew up believing that no matter how mad I was, physical violence was wrong.

There were eleven sisters and three brothers at the meeting to plan our strategy. After we made sure everyone understood the plans we went over to R—'s place. Among us were some people who knew him. They cooperated with us by finding a reason to get R— out of the house, but plans did not go exactly right and we were signalled to come inside.

The action which ensued was politically significant. When one sister lunged at him, I felt my heart jump and I was ready for action but the tussle did not last long. The political significance was that the sisters showed their solidarity in a very concrete way. Although many of the sisters, like myself, feel that physical violence is wrong, we chose this method to show our support because we felt that this was the only action which would make an impression on R—. Both brothers and sisters have talked to him, some forcefully and some nicely. He had responded with self-pity and words of remorse, but he continued to get loaded and beat up sisters.

Another point I would also like to express is that the sisters understand that R— is symbolic of deeper problems. When he is loaded he becomes potentially destructive to all those who are around him because he is not totally himself. The huge black market of drugs in ghetto communities is responsible for this. These pharmaceutical firms are making murderers out of our brothers and sisters; a recent example of this is the tragic killing at the YB House.

We are not saying that the R—'s and the H—'s are not responsible and it is solely the Man who is; that would be naive. We are trying to understand the total dynamics of these crimes against the people. We see that such individuals are the pawns of this system which allows these drugs into the community to make murderers of our people. And all of us have a responsibility to see that it stops.

By an Asian Sister.....

&

A LETTER

Brothers and sisters of *Gidra*,

More and more we see brothers and sisters digging on the flag of the Rising Sun. I've seen it on cars, storefronts of self-help groups, T-shirts, and buttons, even in the *Gidra*. Everytime I see this military flag of the Japanese imperial forces, I go through changes. On the one hand, it was under this flag that our forefathers fought against the control of white, Western imperialism which managed, by then, to control every major third world people except the Japanese. It was under this flag that our people showed to the rest of the oppressed people and their future leaders (Sun Yat-sen, Nehru, Filipino, Indonesian, Burmese nationalists, and even Malcolm X) that a colored people could fight and defeat the white imperialist oppressor. The struggle of the Japanese people against western aggressors in the early Meiji period (from the middle of the Nineteenth Century on to about 1880) against extraterritoriality, unequal treaties, imperialist control over tariffs, etc., belong legitimately to the annals of the tragic and heroic history of the Third World peoples' struggle for national liberation. Of this, we can be justly proud. This is the aspect of modern Japanese history that Chairman Mao as a revolutionary nationalist admired in his youth; this is a part of the reason why he calls the Japanese a "great people" and a "great nation" in a recent statement.

On the other hand, this same flag of the Rising Sun was the banner under which the Japanese ruling class and its imperialist forces massacred 25,000,000 Asian people during the second world war, under a nauseatingly hypocritical slogan of anti-white imperialism and 'Asia for Asians'. Japan killed twenty million Chinese people by the infamous 'burn all, kill all, destroy all' policy; tens of thousands in the Rape of Nankin (1937) were buried alive. In the Phillipines, in Indochina, Malaya, Burma, Korea, millions of others were tortured, starved, raped, bayoneted, sliced, and machined-gunned to death under that same flag that some of our brothers and sisters are now using to show their national pride as a people, and their hostility towards Amerika.

Even if the underlying emotions for the use of that flag, in the context of white Amerika, is somewhat understandable, we will not be so liberal with the use of symbols of murderous Japanese imperialism when we fully understand not only the crimes of the past, but also the quickened revival of Japanese militarism and neo-colonialism.

Instead of identifying with the flag stained with the blood of 25,000,000 Asian women, men, and children in order to express our pride and resistance to Amerika, why can we not raise the banner of the heroic National Liberation Front of South Vietnam? It is our fighting brothers and sisters in Vietnam and other Asian lands (including Japan), *not* the Japanese businessmen and politicians, who are truly completing the glorious task that our Japanese forefathers helped to start: to kick the western imperialists out of Asia, and to build a truly human, invigorated Asia by, for and of Asians, that integrates the strength and heritages of our ancients and whatever there is that's valid in western civilization. Nguyen Van Troi, as a human being and as a fighter, has carried on all the positive qualities of Yojimbo and the tradition of bushido. Vietnamese sisters who carry on the daily tasks of living with rifles in their hands have inherited all that is strong and beautiful in Asian womanhood. The shallow girls of Japanese women's weeklies do not strengthen us in any way whatsoever. On the contrary, they and their images perpetuate our weakness, our slavery inside. We end this letter with:

Nihon-minzoku banzai! (Long live the Japanese people!)

Smash U.S. Imperialism!


Crush Japanese imperialism's attempt to reconquer Asia!

By the Community Workers Collective

COMMUNITY

FEEDBACK





IN OUR TIME

by Steve Tatsukawa

Many people when attempting to understand revolution as it is in America today merely conceive of it as being the equivalent of political upheaval. In essence they are correct in their assumptions for revolution does mean political upheaval or change or overthrow or substitution, but it means more, much more.

To illustrate the point we must, for a second, look back into history at some of the so-called "great revolutions of the past". Chronologically we come across the English, the first American, the French, the Russian and the Chinese revolutions. With the exception of the Chinese revolution they have all failed. Why?

As for the English, the first American and the French, these revolutions have failed because in each case the revolution was not carried out to its full extent. The "revolutionaries" in each country saw their cause as merely an overthrow of an established political system and the reconstruction of a new one. This is a noble idea but it is not enough to produce lasting change. For instance, the French and the English revolutions sought to replace the monarchy with a more representative government. Basically this goal was reached but while being politically aggressive the English and the French were, and are, culturally conservative and thus, even today we find remnants of the old monarchy still in existence and still being supported. And England and France as political-economic states are choking to death and as cultural entities are dwelling in the past.

The first American Revolution sought independence from an overbearing, imperialistic mothercountry. In this struggle it succeeded yet, less than fifty years after its own Declaration of Independence the United States declared its Manifest Destiny and proceeded along a path of imperialistic aggression from which it has never strayed. America became what it was initially trying to overcome. Again because political change was seen as the total revolution and culturally the American revolutionaries had never revolted against the values and attitudes of their "overbearing" mothercountry. Ingrained into the concepts upon which the United States was founded were the roots of its own destruction.

The Russian revolution took one step further but in the end failed also. The revolutionaries in Russia not only produced political change but also change in the economic system of the state. Since politics is dependent on economics their revolution was more advanced than any of the forementioned. Yet, it failed because they had to compromise their revolutionary political-economic state with a culturally reactionary one. And through the seeds of revisionism the Russian revolution was diluted to the point of ineffectiveness.

The Chinese present an example of the most advanced state of revolution yet. Historically it began as a political upheaval and reconstruction of the "old way". Marxist economics was applied because the revolutionary leaders of the country saw it as the best method of serving the needs of the Chinese people. But for a time the leadership thought political and economic change was the full extent of their revolution and, again, it appeared as though they had sealed their own doom. In 1965 the leaders in China realized that if their revolution was to truly succeed the entire culture of China had to be purified to the point where there was no longer existing any remains of culturally unprogressive or counter-revolutionary values. "The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution" helped to secure the Chinese forward progress. Whether or not the "Cultural Revolution" came too late is yet to be seen.

Once again the pendulum has swung around to America and we find ourselves in the embryonic stages of the second American revolution. This is a revolution unlike any other in modern history

with a potential so great it is still unconceivable by many in the struggle. We find there is a dual emphasis in the movement for change in America. One accent is upon the traditional revolutionary posture of political/economic restructuring of the system and the other accent is upon cultural revolution. It must be stressed that neither are independent nor separate from the other. Nor is one any more important, valid or essential than the other. Instead together they represent the revolutionary movement as it is in America today. It is a true twentieth century revolution geared toward the demands and needs of today.

The "movement" as we know it in the Asian community is oriented toward the more traditional form of revolution. The "Serve the People" programs, the rallies, the campus "Studies Centers", etc. all fit into the concept of revolution through political/economic aggression.

The cultural revolution is being reflected by the "drop-outs". Those who have totally rejected the establishment. Part of this can be felt in the street scene in Berkeley, the New Mexico communes, the people on the move looking for something still undefined. It is also the artists who are moving beyond the realms of comprehension as it is in Western European thought, moving into something which can be, for the time being, only labelled as mystical or even "cosmic" in definition. But the whole cultural trend within the second American revolution is and can be called an Alternative life style because it is giving birth to a way of life totally beyond the limited powers of rationality which the established system possesses. It will be a true alternative and at one time or another it will affect us all for we as humans will have to reach inside of ourselves, investigate and decide whether or not we can or are willing to revolutionize our way of living, of thinking and of relating to people as people.

Asians and other minorities who, on the large part, have directed their energies toward getting into the system may experience "cultural shock" when confronted by the new ways of life now developing. Whether or not we can accept and adapt to the alternative life style will have a bearing on how successful our own struggle for liberation, real liberation, will be.

The cultural changes of the Second American Revolution have been swift and drastic. Within these changes has developed music, art, ways of living, sharing and being which can only be called the products of revolutionary intent. No revolution has ever succeeded unless it was carried through by people of total revolutionary intent. Today in America, this type of person is now emerging. The foundations of American culture have been rejected; the materialism, the profit-motive, the sense of competition; the basis of western culture as we know it.

Perhaps it is just coincidence that a movement with the revolutionary potential of the one in this nation should actually happen here. Perhaps man, himself, has reached a new level of evolution in which a culture with roots in the anglo-saxon, greco-roman past no longer hold "any truths to be self-evident".

The importance of the situation lies in the fact that we are witnessing an old culture dying and a new culture being shaped. This is a rare occurrence in history coming only every few thousand years. And we, the movement people have the responsibility of shaping the new way of life. It will be shaped not by writing, or talking or thinking about it. The new way of life will come about by living it.

Live the Revolution.....

"SPEECH... SPEECH!"

A photograph of Mike Murase is stuck on the dart board in the back room of the Gidra office. Amy said that it was meant that it was up there. It's been there for quite awhile and the fact that there are no holes in it from any darts probably says a lot more. The photograph has him pictured sitting back with his feet propped up on a chair and his mouth open about to say something. The picture is deceiving in a way, though according to Evelyn, he usually does try to get in the last word. Moving around, abounding with nervous energy, he is rarely sitting back. It's funny, though you can't see it in the picture, Amy calls him fatso because of his pot belly. A middle age bulge can creep up to even an extremely active twenty-four year old.

A more appropriate photograph of him would probably have him awkwardly sweeping the floor at the Gidra office. Being overly consciously conscientious, he loves to tell people that he tries his best so much to keep the office clean at all times that he sweeps the floor whenever he has the chance. He was in Japan and Okinawa for about a month this last August and Candice noticed how messy the office got. It was more than just a coincidence.

When he was in Okinawa he was given the opportunity to speak before some six hundred people. It was at a gathering called "The Seventeenth World Conference Against the A and H Bombs," and when he returned home he told us that words couldn't express the feeling of seeing so many people singing and moving as one. He also said that the people of Japan, Okinawa and probably the rest of the world had no conception of what was the Asian American movement. The text of the speech is presented here and since he is capable of incoherent babbling in a public gathering just like the rest of us one can appreciate the text even more.

The picture accompanying the text has him standing at the podium with his mouth open about to say something as usual. No darts, please, or there'll be trouble.

On behalf of the American Delegation to the 17th World Conference Against the A & H Bombs, I wish to convey to the people of Okinawa our warmest greetings. I am privileged to be a part of the delegation from the peace movement in America.

I come to you as a citizen of America.

I come to you as a person born in Japan.

I come to you as a minority person living in racist America.

I come to you as a representative of Asian Americans for Peace.

I come to you as a 24 year old man who is subject to being conscripted into America's imperialistic armed forces.

And above all, I come to you as a delegate of thousands of peace loving people in America.

Because of this background, I must speak to you from a very personal perspective.

In Tokyo and Hiroshima, through my participation in the 17th World Conference Against A & H Bombs, I have learned immensely of the struggles of the peoples of Asia. In particular, the suffering of the A Bombs victims, the heroic struggle of the Indochinese people, the dehumanizing treatment of the Korean residents by the Japanese government, and the struggle of the Japanese peace forces have left an indelible mark in my mind. I hope to learn much more here in Okinawa. Already I have learned much about Okinawa by talking to many of you and by touring the island and its many military bases which occupy over 60 percent of the land in Okinawa. They are one military complex which combines Kadena Air Base, Chibana Arsenal and others in which tens of thousands of tons of poison gases capable of committing genocide upon 1.1 billion Asian people are stored. I also would like to express sympathy for the islanders of Yayeyama and Ishigaki who are suffering from water shortage. The water monopoly of the U.S. occupational forces must be broken.

It is my sincere desire to transmit all these experiences to as many people as possible when I return to America.

I came not only to learn from you, but to share information and ideas with you about our own struggle in America. To say the least, the American people's movement for peace and justice is a complex one. We have been brought together by the war in Vietnam, a criminal action taken by the American government against an entire people, and we have been brought together by a deepening crisis in our own nation—the need to deal with racism, sexism, disproportionate distribution of resources, and political repression.

In order not to misinform you, I must say very frankly that the "American Left" is comprised of many individuals and organizations who have various political persuasions. Despite the differences, we are solidly united in the cause of peace and justice.

As you probably know, countless rallies and demonstrations have been staged. And many dramatic personal appeals for peace have been made.

Already, 600,000 young men have fled to Canada in order to evade the draft. Hundreds more have been jailed for refusing induction. I myself will soon face this unenviable task of deciding between self-exile and jail because I will not participate in this immoral war...or any war against mankind.

Earlier this year, 500 veterans of Vietnam publicly testified to committing war crimes against the peoples of Indochina. Many

others have deserted without testifying.

Mothers throughout the country are secretly hoping and praying that their sons have some irregularity of biological functions, some deformity of limb or organ, some rare disease, so that their sons will not pass the induction physical. This is the extent of the insanity that American imperialism has produced. The recent disclosure of the Pentagon papers is a reflection of the ever-growing conscience of the American people.

Vietnam is no mistake.

Hiroshima is no accident.

The lives of millions of men, women and children have been destroyed so that the rich in America can rob and plunder the lands belonging to other peoples throughout the world. American policy is a policy of genocide. Genocide is racism because it justifies the destruction of an entire people with the lie that the Asian people are "inferior."

This policy of genocide is rooted in the history of America as a racist society, whose system places profit and material wealth as a priority above the respect for lives and the dignity of people.

Racism is the ideological justification for war and imperialism, which have permitted a series of atrocities to mankind. Our history is that of a nation that virtually wiped out the aboriginal North American Indians. Our history is that of a nation that enslaved Black people for over 400 years. Our history is that of a nation who stole land and property from Chicanos and Puerto Ricans. Our history is that of a nation that lynched and slaughtered Chinese Americans. Our history is that of a nation that imprisoned 110,000 Japanese Americans in concentration camps without due process of law. Our history is that of a nation that oppressed working people, poor people and women as well for many years. Our history is that of a nation that introduced to the world the terror of nuclear weapons by dropping bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

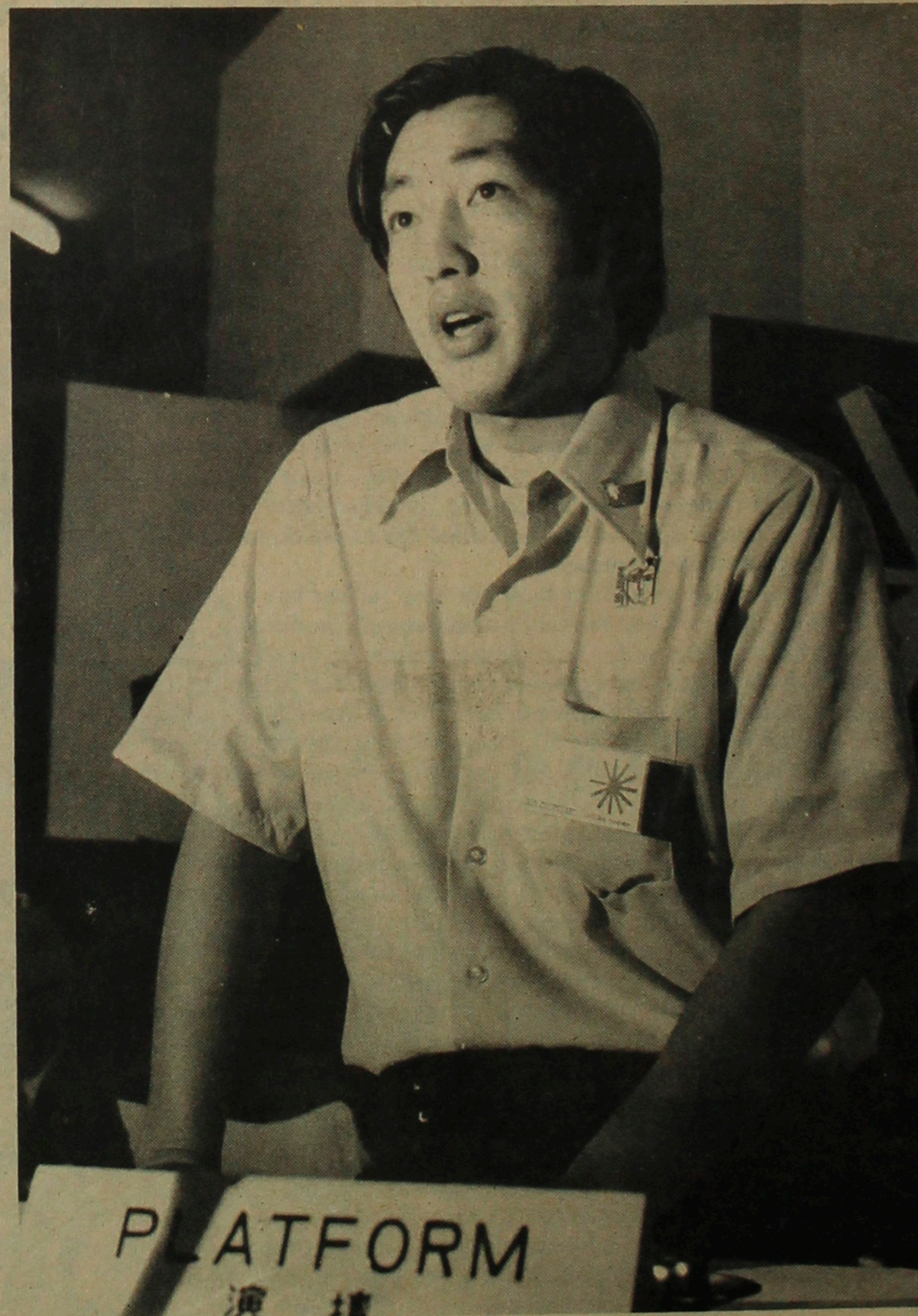
This same genocidal and racist policy continues today, both at home and abroad. American Indian "survivors" are imprisoned in "reservations," Blacks and Chicanos as well as Asian Americans are still enslaved in ghettos, barrios and psychic prisons. Our country is plagued by a deepening sickness as manifested in drug addiction, pollution of natural resources, crime, police brutality, and political repression.

As an American of Asian descent, I feel it my duty to share with you one symptom of this sickness of which we are victims. Soldiers are trained methodically to hate and kill the enemy. The feeling of hatred and the process of dehumanization of the enemy are internalized by the G.I.s. War veterans return with warped states of mind, believing that *all* Asians are inferior whether they be in Vietnam, Okinawa, San Francisco or Los Angeles.

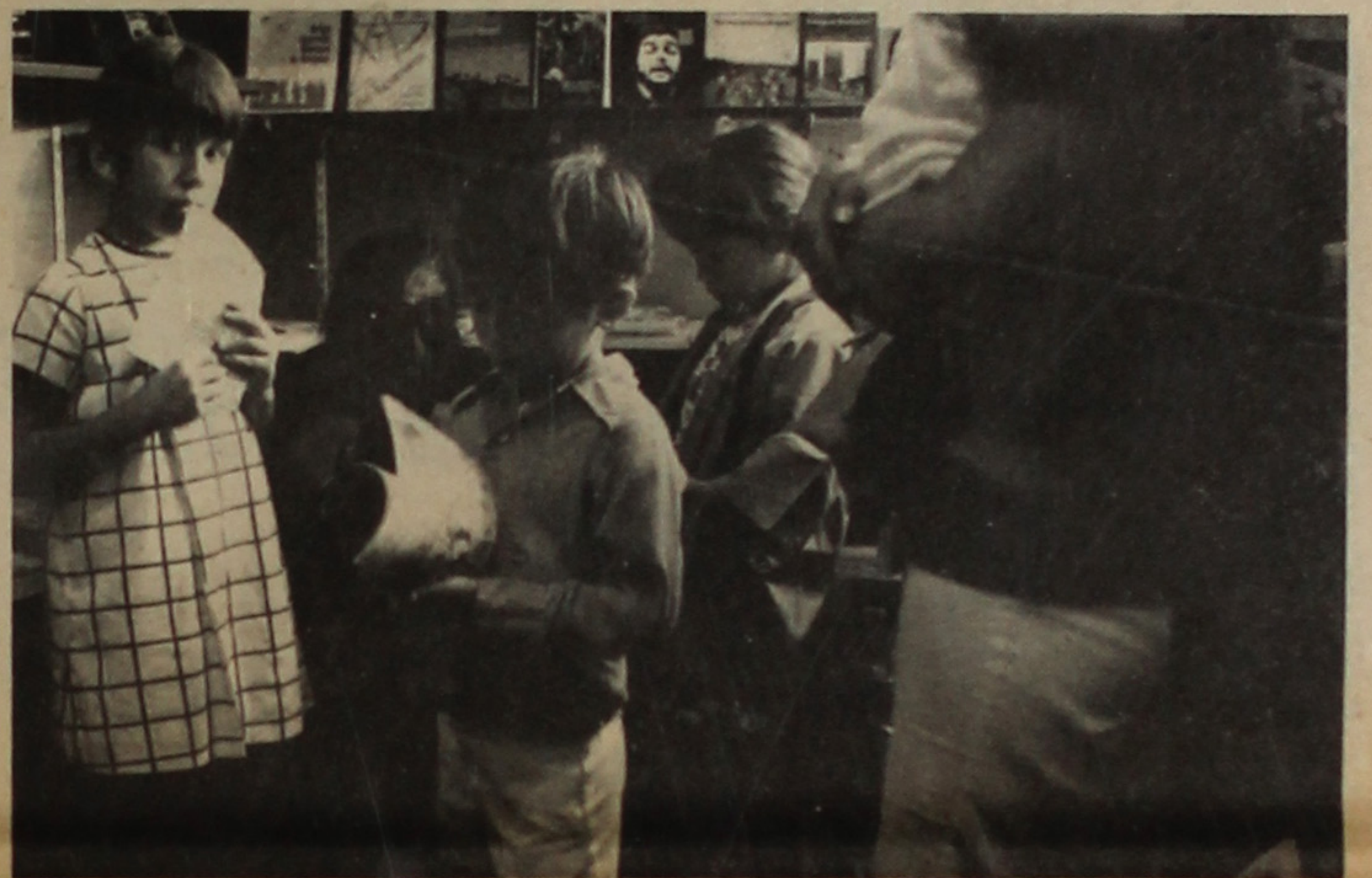
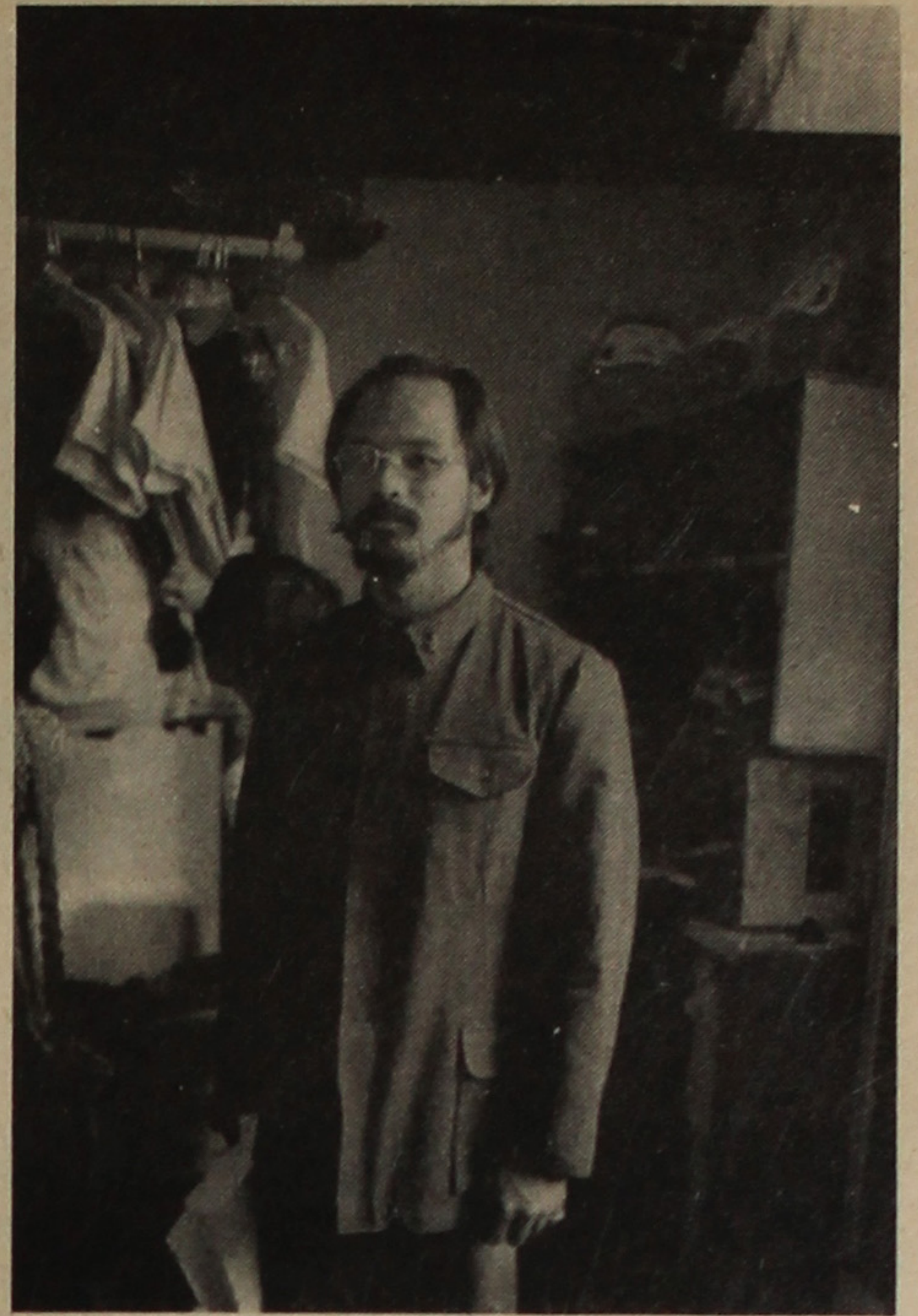
Finally, the most terrifying manifestation of this genocidal and racist policy is the condition of the lands and peoples of the "colonized" countries—Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, South Korea, and Okinawa itself. Whatever their political status and whatever the extent of their struggle, America's ugly hand of imperialism has touched them. This hand which spans the Pacific must be slapped away in the name of peace, justice and of mankind. All the colonized and oppressed peoples of the world must unite in this struggle...and because this struggle is just....

We will win!

by I. Mike Murase



**THE PEOPLE'S
STORE.... BOOKS,
PERIODICALS,
CLOTHING,
ARTS AND CRAFTS**

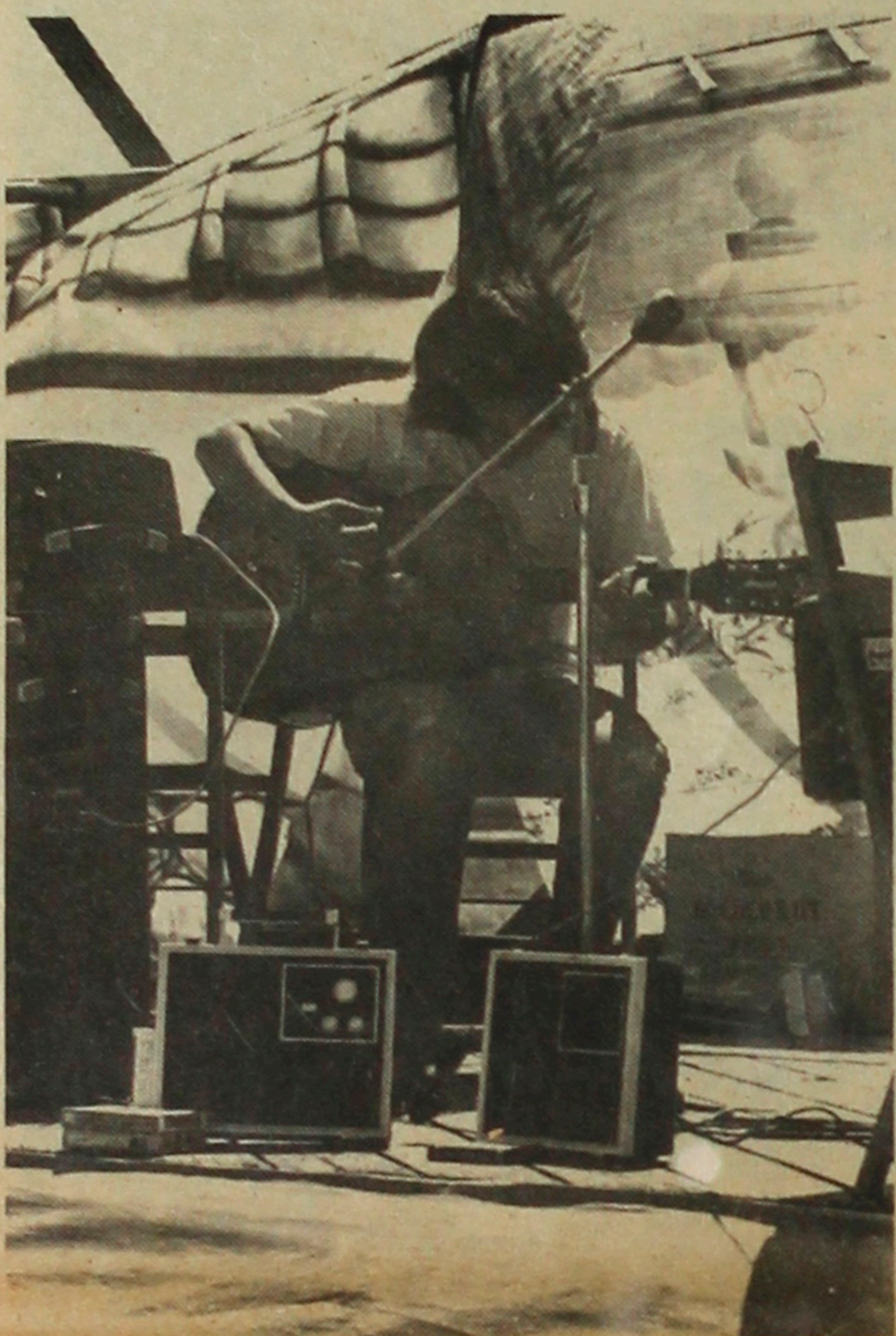


**THE
AMERASIA
BOOKSTORE**

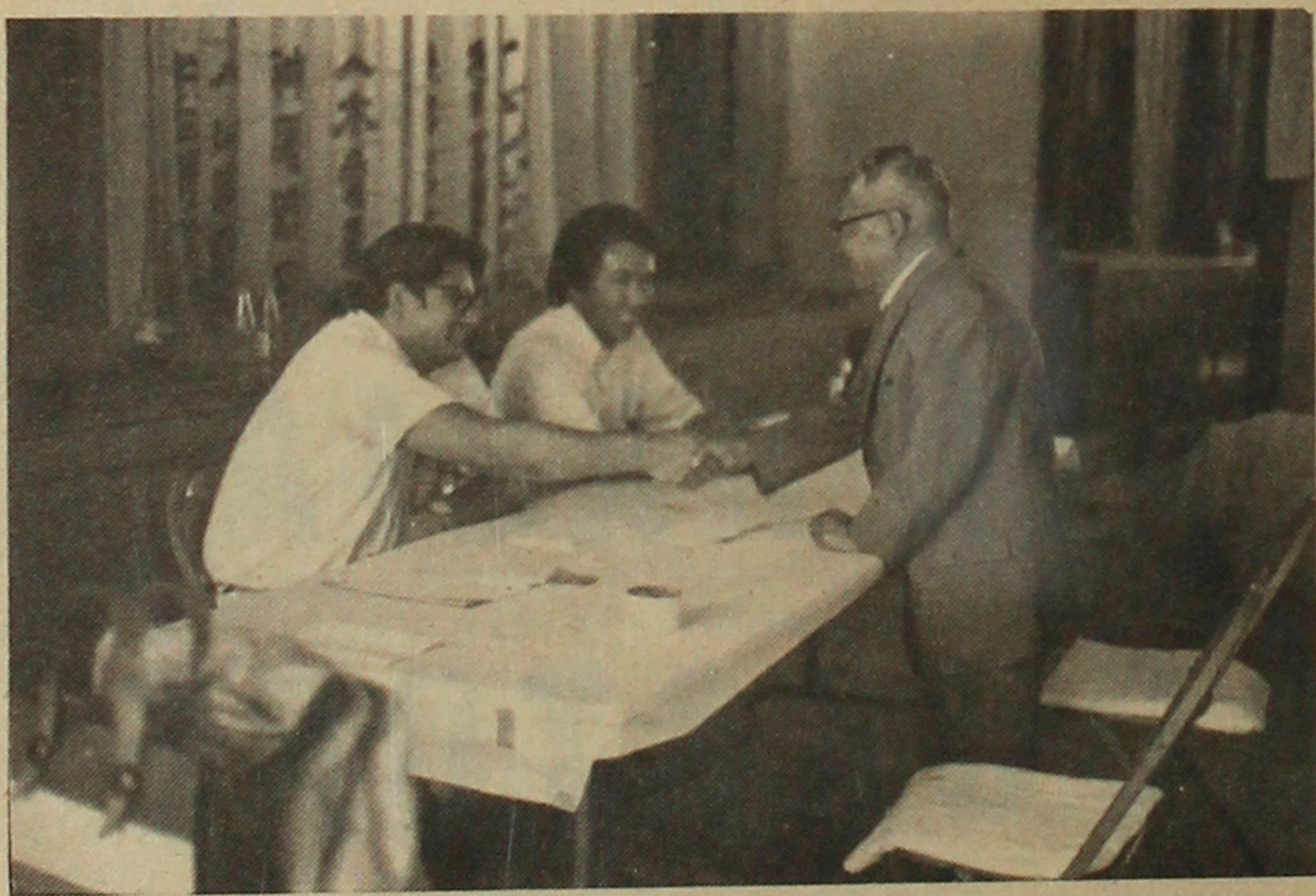
There's a lot of talk going around about the Asian American 'community' these days. But what is a 'community'? Well, for one thing, a community has institutions that are established for, of, and by the people within that community. If we look around our existing 'communities,' we don't see many such institutions. But there are a few such institutions that have been created in the last few years. Pioneer Center, for one. It is run by, of and for Issei pioneers. And another such community institution is the Amerasia Bookstore.

We at the bookstore feel that we all need to build a sense of community and begin caring about each other once again. Our bookstore carries books, periodicals, arts and crafts that various people from different parts of the community have made. We aren't really looking towards making incredible profits or making it, in general. But we do want to see that Asian American community truly become a community once again. And this is our way of taking a step in that direction. Come down and check us out.



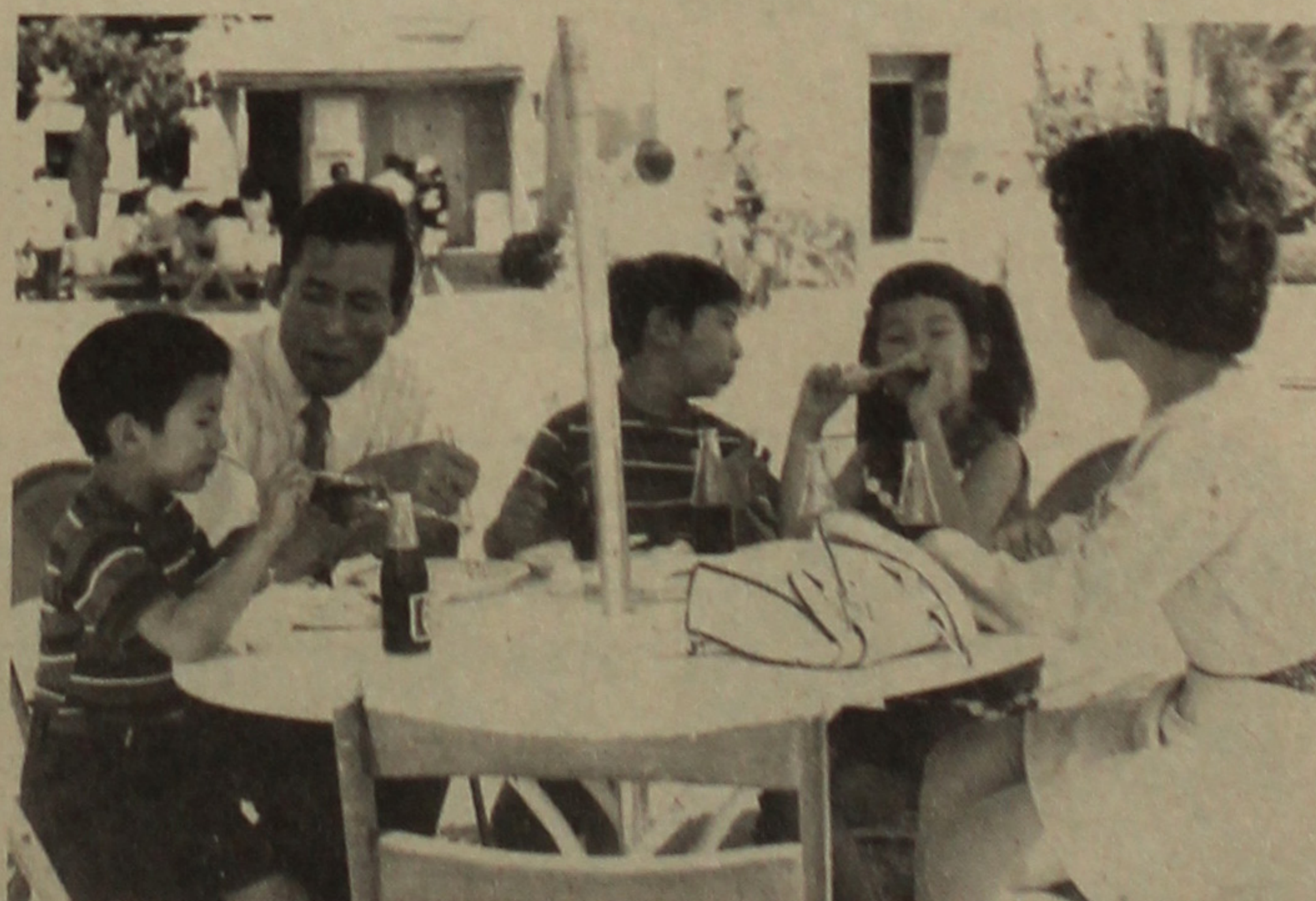


**GARDENA
JAPANESE
COMMUNITY
WEEK**





"Did you go to the photo exhibit?"
 "There was a photo exhibit?"
 "Yeah, man. It was too much all kinds of photos on Gardena and buddhaheads and that kind of shit."
 "Wow, what day was that?"
 "Same day as the film festival."
 "Oh, I went to the film festival. Some of them were really, uh, good, others were, uh....."
 "Yeah, I know."
 "I think next year it'll be better."
 "Yeah, next year Gardena is gonna have the most outtassite Community Week ever.....if we have one."
 "I went to the martial arts exhibition."
 "Yeah, I'd hate to meet any of them cats in a dark alley."
 "I know what you mean."
 "How many people do you think turned out for the whole week?"
 "Ah, let's see.... I'd say about a thousand."
 "No shit? A thousand people, that's beautiful."
 "Yeah, it was beautiful."
 "Did you make it over to the dance?"
 "You mean the Nisei-Sansei Dance?"
 "Yeah them Nisei were really getting into it."
 "They really got into the Open Forum too."
 "Some really off the wall shit, huh?"
 "Naw, man. It was real communication for the first time. Sansei and Nisei really told it like it is."
 "Man, I can't wait until next year."
 "If there is a next year."
 "There will be a next year....the question is will there be another Gardena Japanese Community Week?"
 "Right on, bro."

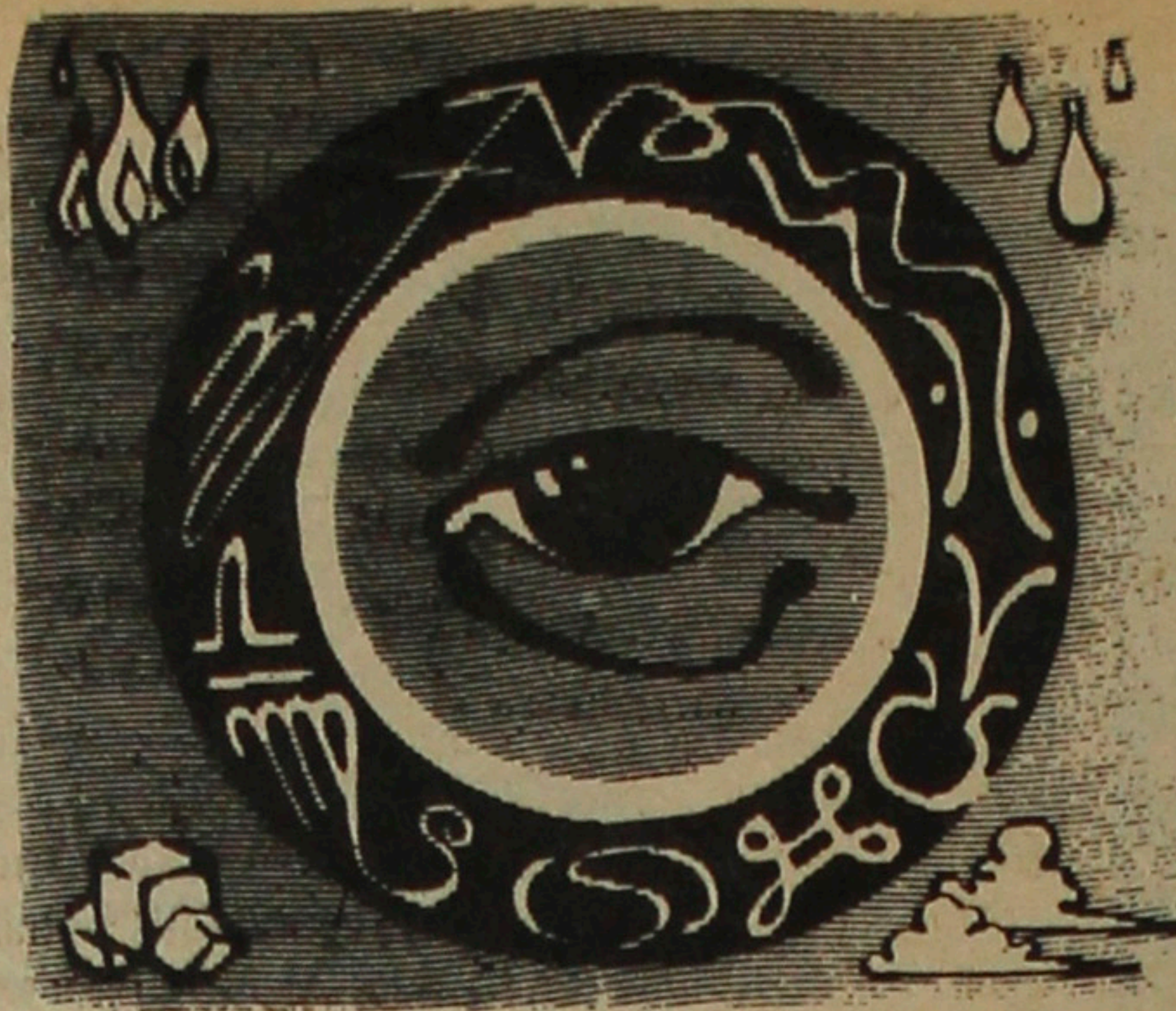


Photos by SBAI brothers: Tosh Nakano and Gary Uyekawa

Asian families
Numb infectious rooms
two-story standards
A private plot of private earth
embroidered by brittle walls
Having grown to hood-tube heights
causing red-eyed rhetoric
Green childhood heroes
going, going, gone:

Asian funks
One room bungalows
A heartful of soul
inside...tearful razzing
jumping otta their skins
letting neighbors in
foaming hypnotic honesty
Hey baby-
Third World Maturity

Yo - Chea



- In this huge world in wichh we live in, a person is but a tiny segment, like other segments. To-gether these tiny segments make up a universe.
- When discouraged and dissatisfied, this tiny segment steps outside to look in. And there in darkness he stands bear, naked and alone. ..
- But it gives warmth to his soul, it gives life, when he sees that people really care about him.
- It radiates a will to pull on when all else seems impossible, to once more step inside, to be a part.

People's Page



Racism is
a prejudice of
other races
Just because the color
or kind
doesn't mean
to go against
our people

Even
if the color
black
white
yellow
brown
etc.

is different
than you
in appearance
doesn't mean
they're different

We are
all people
and we need
to stand together
as one
as people

Some get torn
because of difference
of color
some get beat at
some laughed at
but we the people
have to be strong
and be sorry

that they can't understand
that we were all
born by the
creator

Maybe someday
if we're lucky
everyone will realize
that they are are the same
and can accept his brother
as just a brother

not as his
yellow brother
black brother
brown brother
or.....whatever.

-Celeste Iwamoto

as I think about
the year I have
lived
I cannot help myself
to put words of
love, happiness
struggles
for our people
liberation
feelings emotions
of hope and enlightenment

365 days ago
to think I was on the
verge of finding
myself

from embarrassment -- to brotherhood
from denial to -- acceptance
from shame -- to awareness
the day I was
to begin
to realize
my people
beautiful

hopes of compassion
a day when this fu
cked society
will be one
of humanness
not
plastic

but even as these words
emerge on blank paper
to create a poem
a brother
sister
is dying

can you feel the pain ?

-Gary Fujimoto

"Love can conquer hate
any day."

Ask a reasonable soul
if he thinks this statement is true
and he will answer yes
at least ten times out of ten.

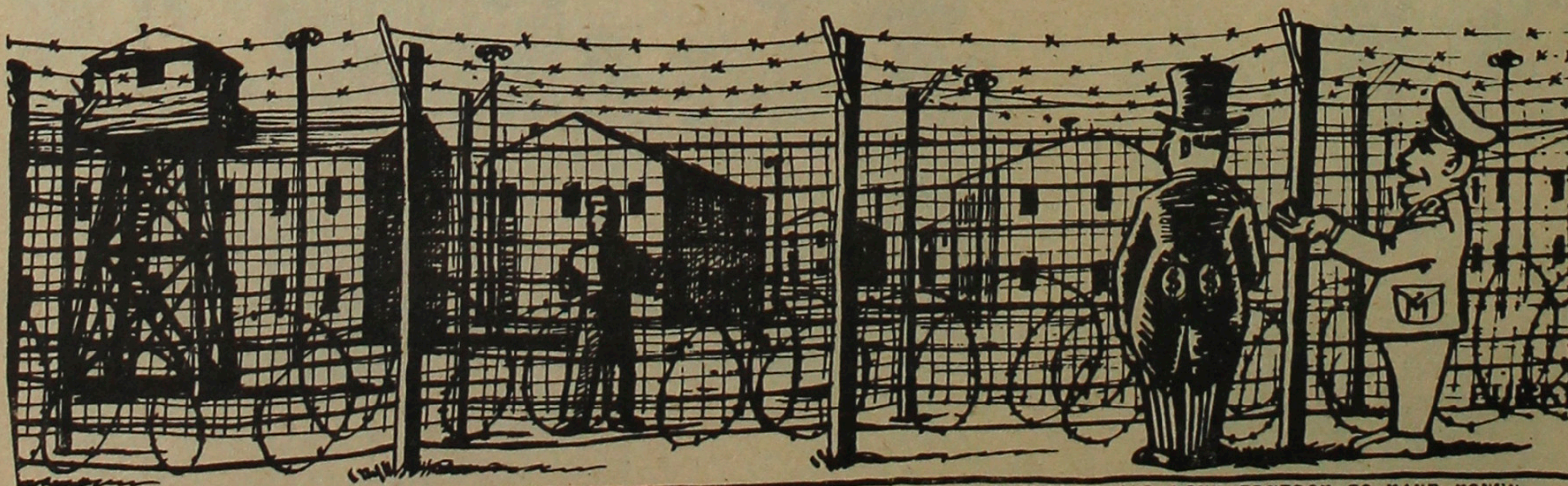
"Yes, I believe that love
can conquer hate any day."

Unfortunately,
it is still night

- Ron Chew

Like a moth
it flutters
noiselessly
from lantern
to lantern --
not knowing
that the lantern
is no more
than a fire
capable of burning ,
as well as warming
the friends
that it makes.

- Ron Chew



THIS IS THE STOCKADE. IT'S TO PROTECT FREEDOM. MY FREEDOM TO GIVE ORDERS. AND YOUR FREEDOM TO MAKE MONEY.

"ALL LITERATURE
AND ART BELONG
TO DEFINITE CLASSES
AND ARE GEARED TO
DEFINITE
POLITICAL
LINES."



Many people were riding false hopes when the government's power to induct was suspended this summer. Although most of the administrative work of Selective Service kept going—registration, classification, appeals—lots of men had a false sense of security. The dream is over. The draft law has been extended for another two years.

Student Deferments

Perhaps the most important change is the President's power to abolish deferments for undergraduate college students. Eliminated are student deferments for those who entered college in the summer of 1971 or later. However, those enrolled as full-time undergraduates during the 1970-1971 regular academic school year shall be allowed II-S deferments until graduation so long as they continue to qualify under the old II-S rules. Note that a student who had not yet registered for the draft, did not request deferment, or for some other reason was not classified II-S during the 1970-1971 school year, should nevertheless be able to get a II-S and keep it until graduation, so long as he met the "academic requirements" for II-S during the 1970-71 school year.

I-S(C) and I-S(H) are also abolished. The former were previously available to college students who were sent induction notices while attending school full-time. Instead, the new law allows for postponements of induction until the end of the semester with no appeal rights. As a substitute for I-S(H) deferments for high school students the law requires that students ordered for induction be allowed postponements until graduation or age 20, whichever is earlier.

Also eliminated will be the II-A deferments for apprentices and students of trade schools and junior colleges.

Procedures

Other important changes in the law are new procedural rights for registrants. Now a man must be allowed a personal appearance before any appeal board considering his case, in addition to the one with his local board. It is likely that the State and Presidential appeal boards will grant a higher proportion of classifications requested after men start appearing before them.

Two other changes are that a registrant may now bring witnesses in his behalf to local board meetings, and that a personal appearance before a local board or appeal board must have a majority of the board's members.

Finally the law says that whenever a local or appeal board turns

down a man's claim it must state its reasons if the man so requests.

Other Changes

Besides liberalizing requirements for "sole surviving sons," and aliens, the law lowered the required ages for draft board members from 30-75 to 18-65. Another point is very important for those young men who choose not to register for the draft at all. The law now makes non-registrants subject to indictment and prosecution until age 31, not age 26 plus 5 days as before.

New Medical Review Procedures

There have been other changes in Selective Service this summer not resulting from the new law. Most important are the changes in the informal "appeal" process for physical examinations. Previously, a registrant contacted a U.S. Congressman and requested that he intervene in his behalf to the U.S. Army Recruiting Command (USAREC). Now there are three separate methods to appeal physical exam results to the Army.

First, there is the "papers only" review—the induction center (AFEES) reviews a man's medical records and then makes a "final" decision. Second, there is the full "Registrant Medical Re-evaluation and Review." This includes a review of a man's medical papers, sometimes a re-examination, and always a "tentative" decision by the induction center followed by a final decision by the headquarters of the U.S. Army Recruiting Command. It is very important to note that those who do not want just the "papers only" review must ask for "registrant medical re-evaluation and review system" by that name when writing to the local board and the state director. Third, for men who complain about improper procedures, facilities, or administration at the AFEE station (rather than just protesting the decision) there is, at least theoretically, direct petition to USAREC headquarters, with or without the aid of a member of Congress.

Those who have questions about the new changes in the draft should see a counselor soon.

Asian Draft Aid has moved its offices down the street to the Storefront on Jefferson Blvd. and Ninth Avenue. Counseling is available at:

Asian Involvement

125 Weller St. (Little Tokyo)
689-4413 (call first)

The Storefront

2826 Jefferson Blvd.
Mon.—Fri. 3-6 and 7-10
Sat. and Sun. 1-5
737-8887

C O L D D R A F T



This is an attempt to explore the possibilities and limitations of what is known as the Asian movement. Also, it's an attempt to apply some principles and insights of international revolutionary experience to the concrete and unique situation of Asians in Amerika—in particular, Japanese Americans. If anyone is looking for a rigorously worked out, consistent strategy for revolutionizing Asians, that person will be disappointed.

There are even some important contradictions in the notes themselves that are left unresolved. Most of these contradictions cannot be resolved by pure reflection; only through practice of organizing and trying different things within our community will one begin to find an answer. So then, these are really notes to be used to, perhaps, encourage discussion, debate and reflection.

The social reality Asian Americans live within has a dual character. On one hand, it has a unifying oneness (identity). We share the experience of racist stereotyping ('we all look alike') imposed by white, imperial Amerika. And also, we are beginning to share the feeling of identity as Asian people, following our roots back across the Pacific, and finding that the people there are carrying out a fierce and valiant struggle against the same white, imperial Amerika. These two things—racism and an identity with each other and our brothers and sisters across the Pacific give us a historical potential for unity.

On the other hand, the concept of 'Asian American' is diverse, with opposition and contradiction a part of its character. We are Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Filipino, Indian; we speak Cantonese, Japanese, Toisan, English, Okinawan, Mandarin, Pidgin English. We are women, we are men. We range from fifth-generation descendants of the earliest immigrants to Hawaii, to recent arrivals from Hong Kong; we are old, middle-aged, young; rich, middle-class, solid working-class, poor; college kids, freaks and street people inside of prison; we can count among ourselves super-macho Sansei Samurai, and sisters struggling against male chauvinism; the most tight-assed scholastic who spends 80 percent of his waking hours reading Mao, to totally spaced-out freaks; loyal Americans and revolutionaries.

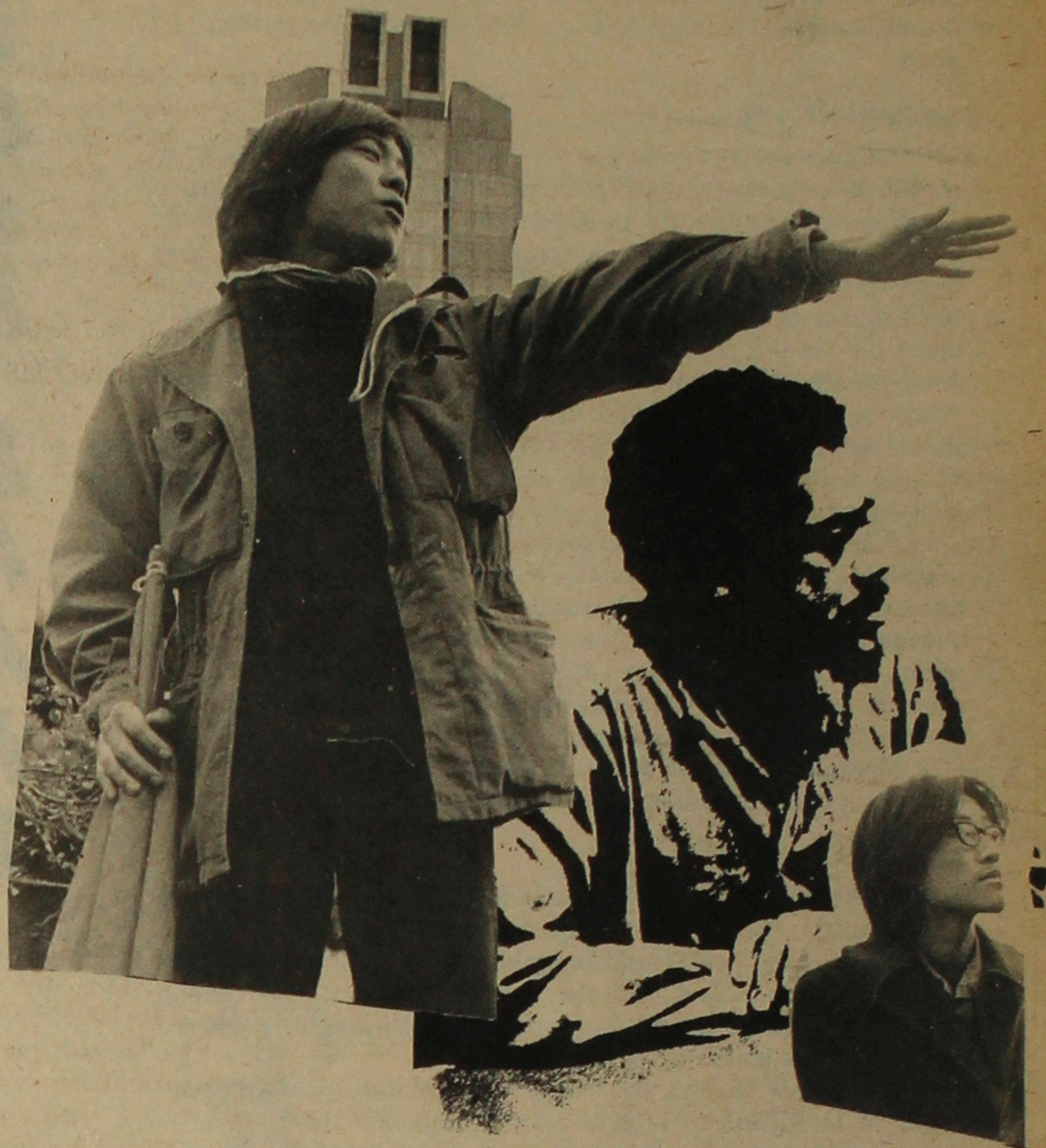
It doesn't matter what names we choose to describe all the different things we're into—the main truth is that we are diversified and different; sex, class, income, life-style, level of education, culture, language, degree of distance from (or closeness to) Asian culture and Amerikan society. But although the differences, and sometimes contradictions are real, many of them overlap and criss-cross each other within all of us, so that we usually find at least one or two things in common.

So we have an identity in common, but many differences, too. Historically, the differences have been greater than the unity. So much so that for most of the 100 year-long history of our people in Amerika, it would not have made much sense to call ourselves 'Asian Americans.' A consciousness of the common experiences we shared was almost completely lacking. Today, the situation has changed, but the differences are still real, and are something we must bring out and analyze. Then we can begin to build, to develop a common identity of shared experiences—to feel a common destiny with each other—to make that identity a day-to-day reality.

(So far, we've dealt mostly with Chinese and Japanese people. The same goes for the rest of this outline. But our movement must begin to include all Asians in North Amerika, if that can be real.)

The variety in our lives and consciousnesses has been reflected in our movement. Although our movement is only two or three years old, we can see different trends, groupings, approaches and forms of action and organizing. For example:

Campus-based student organizations and Asian American studies; community based service groups, programs, and institutions (like JACS-AI office, Amerasia Bookstore, etc.), as well as clearly and self-consciously revolutionary groups like (the J-town Collective, I Wor Kuen, etc.); attempts to create parallel structures within already-established organizations (like the liberation chapters within JACL, the emerging movement among young Buddhists, etc.); a new awakening among Asians in the professions (lawyers, doctors, teachers, social workers, artists, technicians and mechanics,) who are beginning to relate to their own people again by bringing the skills and training they've received back into the community; broad, adhoc coalitions of many different Asians on specific, over-riding issues, like the Vietnam war, Title II, etc.; and last, but not least, the struggles carried



on by Asian women from Patsy Mink to sisters in disciplined collectives against all forms of male chauvinism. (Obviously, this list is not complete.) With all this variation, the potential for splits, based on bull-shit theoretical arguments must be recognized as real. So, the question of how we are going to bring about a unity of purpose, step-by-step must be one we ask ourselves now, before movement in-fighting begins.

We must not fall into two 'easy,' but in the long run, incorrect solutions.' The first is a tendency by some to pose the whole problem as: "What is the correct strategy for organizing Asian Americans?" It's ridiculous to think in terms of a one-dimensional strategy. The sectarian says: "Your heads are in a wrong place. You should be into this, rather than that." There might be some truth in what he says, but to try to make the diverse reality of the Asian American experience fit into a single, narrow mold of analysis is foolish, and becomes destructive to achieving any kind of real unity.

Our heads, concerns, priorities and life-styles are different because they have grown directly from our individual and unique life experiences. It's not only futile, but idealist (based on what 'should' be) to push this view. Marx said: "Our consciousness is socially and historically situated, it's not something that we make-up arbitrarily, by voluntary will power." And Sartre: "We are a product of our own product." That is, society and history are determined by us, but we in turn are products of society and history. Revolution and revolutionary activity must be a day-to-day process through which, and in which we change ourselves and the reality around us; but to really be able to do this, we have to understand and express our individually unique realities. Only by understanding those realities, can we recreate the world around us, and become the kind of men and women we want to be. The sectarian, in trying to impose what "should be" upon the reality becomes destructive to our movement, and to himself. Because in trying to carry out this view, he will make the "less advanced" or "less committed" people feel trashed, and cause splits and make people want to drop out of things; and also, he will usually end up feeling isolated and trashed himself. (I speak here from personal experiences, having been a sectarian myself.)

It's wrong, at this point in our struggle to demand priorities to be set among the various forms of activity, organizing and struggle that exist. For one thing, the different types of struggle and work we are into are not that easily changed. For example, if a sister is into creating Asian American culture through her music or painting, it would be wrong to look down on that form of expression (or try to force her to change her form by telling her she should join an organizing collective in Chinatown, etc.) It's true that the sister 'should' relate to the community—she probably wants to—but it must be in the ways that she can be for real, and express herself without fear of being put down. At this point in time, that way might be through composing songs, or dancing, and not necessarily through leafletting or canvassing. If she is able to gain political understanding of her reality through a natural expression of that reality, then she may eventually see the necessity of and desire to leaflet, canvass and even fight in the street. But for those activities to be for real, they must stem from and relate to her own life.

—ASIAN NATION—



Another thing we must remember before we jump to choosing priorities is the very young-ness, and new-ness of our thing. For all of us, so much is new. Most of us are just beginning to re-enter, re-explore and relive the long-forgotten territory of being Asian. This is understandable as we realize that we have lived most, if not all our lives in the wilderness of white Amerika. We shouldn't be ashamed to

REVOLUTION AND REVOLUTIONARY ACTIVITY . . . A PROCESS THROUGH WHICH, IN WHICH WE CHANGE OURSELVES AND THE REALITY AROUND US . . .



admit it: we hardly know anything about what it means, what it has meant to our parents and their parents, to be Asians in Amerika. We have only vague intuitions, flashes of the limits and the possibilities of what we can become, individually, and together. Everyday that we are into being Asian, digging on being Asian, something new and exciting happens; some new insights are discovered, some old memories, submerged feelings of anger, pain, joy, come out. Nothing is definite, shaped or stabilized. So much is in flux, in a state of motion. But it's alright. In fact, it's great! Let it flow out.

We must encourage organizations, projects, newspapers, magazines, groups ideas to flow out. They'll grow and blossom if they are organic, natural, historical and for real—if they touch our Asian soul. If they aren't, they will fade, naturally. We don't need dragged-out theoretical debates to promote this correct strategy or that single tactic, or to smash or put down other approaches. Like Mao put it some years ago (following an ancient sage): "Let a hundred flowers blossom; let hundreds of schools of thought flourish!" Right on! Dig the richness of all this variety and diversity.

We can probably agree that the sectarian, "correct strategy" approach is destructive. But there is another approach, actually, for some it's a way of life, that is equally destructive. We can call it *bourgeois liberalism*. It works like this: "Since we are all Asian brothers and sisters, and we're in this thing together, let's be nice. Let's not criticize, evaluate, get angry or fight with each other. After all, we all have to do our own thing." This view is destructive because it keeps us from growing in several ways:

For one thing, it denies that there is right and wrong, truth and falsehood about reality. Thus, it keeps us from being able to develop a real perspective, understanding and analysis of the world around us. If we can't righteously perceive, understand or figure out what's happening around and within us, we can't do much to make either situation better. For instance, can we really ask questions like "Is there U.S. imperialism? Is there really a full-scale genocide being carried out in Vietnam? Are there really pigs? Has Amerika really committed physical, cultural and spiritual genocide against people of color all over this world, including we Asians in America?" We aren't bourgeois philosophers engaged in a debate as to whether these are normative, empirical or ejaculative statements. We are not engaged in a game of scholasticism. Either millions of people in Southeast Asia have and are being killed, or they haven't.

But most of us probably realize that the genocide is real. Then if we are aware of this reality, and still decide that we are for it (or not actively against it), then we will have to face the consequences of trying to hide from reality. And if we are deceiving ourselves, it would be unfair, a shine-on for other brothers and sisters not to struggle with us to make us see this self-deception. They, and we can't shrug our shoulders and say "Well, that's your trip. It's cool." Not if we really care about each other. We must struggle with each other. After twenty-some odd years of feeling and internalizing the sickness of Amerikan 'culture,' we have some heavy, deep-rooted pig within all of us. For us to really deal with it, we must struggle with each other. If we really want to become free from our hang-ups, we can't be liberal with each other. But this does not mean that strug-

WE MUST ENCOURAGE ORGANIZATIONS, PROJECTS, NEWSPAPERS, MAGAZINES, GROUP IDEAS TO FLOW OUT . . . TO TOUCH OUR ASIAN SOUL . . .

gling with each other should be used as an excuse to vent your frustrations and your own pigishness. Real struggle should take place in a way where we can criticize each other for our fuck-ups, always feeling that we do so because we are sisters and brothers, and really love and care about each other. Our goal in criticizing should be unity; to gain a higher level of understanding and perception of each other. We all fuck-up, so the criticism should be shared and felt by all who are involved.

Bourgeois liberalism tells us not to be for real and upfront with our feelings, anger of hurt, and confusion, when all of these things exist within all of us. It tells us instead, to gloss over and cover them up. Since the feelings are real, to shine them on causes them to build and accumulate. This weakens our unity, creates a basis for misunderstanding and splits. It makes us less powerful all around. Many sisters and brothers drop out of movement work because so much shit is allowed to pile up, and it become insurmountable.

"Being nice," when it provides an out from struggling keeps us from being able to really change ourselves and to become more free. All that pig we have internalized growing up within a racist, sexist,



inhuman society like Amerika has distorted our humanity and made us mental, spiritual cripples. In order to make ourselves whole again, we have to deal with those hurts, those disabilities upfront.

This struggle we must go through, and are going through, and have gone through is making us feel more alive, more free and more real. We can't forget the feelings of fullness and warmth that we have felt in digging on our Asian-ness and on each other during the past months, years of struggle and getting together. There's been a lot of good vibes created between many of us; we have to continue creating this feeling with each other.

What I am trying to say is this: we can't grow up in this country and not feel and live its effects on us. The Amerika that we all have internalized is the very thing that keeps us holding back from being able to open up and love each other without shame or embarrassment. It keeps us from really coming together and really feeling together, as one. How can we rid ourselves of these hang-ups without being pissed and angry sometimes; without yelling and screaming once in a while? We must try to feel and operate within the dialectic of (that is, find the balance between) creating good vibes between each other, and struggling with each other.

We've seen that we are a group of extremely diverse people. And that we can't feel a real sense of unity by taking a sectarian approach that pushes a narrow, "correct" strategy. Nor can we take the road of bourgeois liberalism. Then how are we going to achieve this unity so we can move together towards the same goal, given our different starting points?

The concept of building an Asian nation here in North Amerika is an attempt at finding that unity. There are two main premises that we can think about: first, Asians of all kinds, regardless of where their heads are at must be reached out to, and touched. There will be, there are a few exceptions; those Asians among us who have actively participated in strengthening the oppression we are being subjected to for a sustained period, and who refuse to turn over a new leaf after sincere efforts to warn them. No others should be thought of as enemies.

Second, every form of activity, service, organizing, struggle and digging each other that makes us more aware of our oppression

WE MUST BEGIN TO BUILD OUR OWN CULTURE . . .

SONGS, POEMS, LITERATURE, MUSIC . . .

and also makes us feel more powerful and human is valid and legitimate as part of our movement. This includes everything from a dignified peace vigil, a scholarly teach-in, Asian studies, community cultural festivals like Nisei Week, family softball games, martial arts, petitions, social services, dances, to even trying to relate to people at Holiday Bowl. It will be a long time before we could even guess which of these different seeds we plant would bear the largest number of fruits. And activity that can reach out and honestly touch a particular group of Asians is correct.

Beyond these two premises, the idea is a simple one: to build a power base as Asians—culturally, geo-politically, economically, and as it becomes necessary, militarily. This base we build must be broad in scope, touching all levels of our social existence, so that we can grow, together towards forging our own nation right here in Amerika.

Our first, and constant task is to spread this kind of social-national, and (yes) political awareness by talking, interacting on all levels, struggling to reach out and touch each other and ourselves, to begin to feel and live and fight for each other and for ourselves. We must dare to feel and be different. These initial attempts to survive, to be ourselves, to discover and fight for ourselves for the first time in our lives may at times seem bizarre, strange, and a little mad to some people; it really does seem to conflict with the Amerikan way of life. Many whites, and even some of our own well-meaning people will not understand what we are into. We'll have to explain, rap, and listen patiently—especially with our own people. But beyond a certain point, we must say: "This is me. So I am a bit crazy. Maybe a little ungrateful, and bad, even. But this is the only way I know that I can really be (become) myself and survive in this society. So you must deal with me and with my reality." (I'm not saying all of us should be bad or crazy just for the sake of it. Many of us are, or have become 'crazies' or 'extremely bad and dangerous' in the eyes of white Amerika. That's alright.)

But it's so important that we begin right now to create our culture, our way of life. This doesn't mean necessarily to turn blindly towards our traditional Asian culture. Although there are things of value in those cultures, much of it is as confining as what we are rejecting. What we must begin to build is our own culture—one that relates to our experiences of struggling to survive mentally and physically in this crumbling thing called Amerika. In doing so, we must pick and choose from the rich heritage of our Asian cultures as we feel the need to. But much of it will be very new—songs, poems, lit-

erature, music, films, paintings that truly expresses our own life experiences; whatever that helps us to survive through this nightmare whatever that makes us strong enough to destroy this monster around and within us, so we can create something more human and real.

As we begin to build our culture, we will feel the necessity more and more to start building our own parallel institutions within and for our communities: For instance:

Legal, medical and social service clinics in and for our communities, manned and serviced by us. (After all, not all of us are into dropping out. It's to all of our advantage that there are sisters and brothers who are strong and together enough to finish school and to those of you who are ready to give up some of your class and educational privileges!)

*Day-care centers, liberation schools where we learn to be strong and proud and sure of ourselves; food co-ops, garages, dress and garment shops that really serve our needs.

*Churches—both Buddhist and Christian—transforming themselves into total community centers, as well as places to gain a spiritual



perception of ourselves.

*Pioneer centers where our grandparents can share their experiences and skills with the rest of us.

*A network of our own media (community newspapers, magazines, radio, TV, films, art centers and theaters.

Last, but not least, our own farm-communes in the country where we can learn agricultural skills (from, yes, Issei and Nisei gardeners and farmers); where we can grow our own organic crops, flowers, fish and animals; craft workshops to train and produce; where we can establish rest and recreation centers for brothers and sisters working in the cities; where our children can dig on a righteous and real nature trip. We can go on and on.

Our imagination and our willingness to put our ideas into practice are our only limits; you can and will probably add to this list. Actually, none of these ideas are new. The only thing new about them is that they will be a part of one, unified theme: our own nation-community. And there will be a totally different quality of experience for all involved. For the first time, we will be doing our own thing for and with each other.

Right about here, some important questions begin to arise. One is: "Can this nation-community that we talk about exist within, and

UNITE

survive within Amerika as it is today?' Our historical experiences seem to say 'no.' Ask your parents if they are any more 'hard-working' than they were in 1942 when they were put into concentration camps for being sneaky, subversive, and undesirable in the eyes of white Amerika. The people who run this country, who control it decide who is alright and who isn't very arbitrarily. It's what is convenient at the time. At that time, it was convenient to down us because they needed the land we had developed; they needed a focus for the discontent that was brewing throughout Amerika, and especially in California. Today, they have found it convenient to patronize us and set us up as 'model minority' to off-set the unrest among other Third World people here in Amerika.

With the heavy vibes between Amerika and the Peoples' Republic of China; with the trade hassles between Amerika and Japan; with the ass-kicking Amerika has and is suffering at the hands of the Vietnamese people, we should remember that 'we all look alike.'

In this context of Amerika today, our Asian nation-community seems a necessity for our physical and mental survival.

Another very related question is: 'Is this nation-building a

with other oppressed people who are also getting together to survive.

Which brings us to another question: "After the destruction of Amerikan imperialism, how will our nation-community find its place along side of black, brown, red and revolutionary white nations?" We can't answer that question by just thinking about it. It has to be worked out concretely, starting right now. That is, we must begin to deal with the contradictions between our various groups, within each of the groups, and inside each one of us.

Although we have been talking in terms of Asian 'nation,' this is not the narrow, nationalistic, exclusive definition of 'nation.' We have gained our revolutionary Asian consciousness by learning from the Vietnamese, the blacks, and to a lesser degree and in a different form, from some of the white youth culture. Keeping this in mind we can be aware, and watch out for tripping out on reactionary nationalism.

We must begin to form ties with the various other groups now. But this unity cannot be for real if we are liberal and operate off of guilt. Black and other Third World people (not to mention white people in the struggle) need to be educated correctly about our people. No one is immune from the racism that is so deep-rooted in the Amerikan reality. This racism has caused us to feel anti-black and anti-brown racism. And in turn our racism has encouraged many other Third World people to believe that most Asians are impotent, weak, passive snobs. We must struggle with them on this, by rapping, through our practice, by becoming stronger and becoming the soulful people that we have always potentially been.

At this stage in the Amerikan struggle, it is legitimate for Japanese Americans to focus their energy towards building a mass movement among Japanese American people. This movement should be national in form (primarily organizing our own people), and international in terms of the politics we apply and the goals we work towards. This national form is necessary because the specific ways in which we have been hurt are different than the ways in which other Third World people in this country have been hurt. For them, racism has meant break-down of families through the inhumanity of institutions like welfare and the prisons; overtly unequal opportunities income, housing, education, etc. Their oppression primarily takes the form of visible and 'feelable' in the external world. It is as a day-to-day concrete reality. The system outside of them is more visible as the enemy.

But the ways that we have experienced racism is much less visible, and therefore, much more internalized. It takes the forms of passivity, nihilism (finding everything meaningless), defeatism; instead of being able to point at a concrete enemy outside of us, often we turn these feelings inwards, and we repress our anger; we have no identity; we have no real feeling of belonging anywhere; we are alienated from our culture and national roots, and we become envious of other peoples' identity, energy and soul (be it blacks', browns', and even white freak culture).

Therefore, it is so very important that we begin to build our own culture from all the richness, talent, feelings and soul that is in each of us. We must begin to be able to release all that anger, hurt, frustration, and love that we have been holding in for so long. We must kick that defeatism in the ass, and righteously take a hold of our lives. We must begin to determine our own lives, to feel powerful and able to feel all that hurt, and all the love we need to share. We must be able to love each other, and to struggle with each other because of that love. We must re-gain that fighting spirit that we once had, in order to be able to really live and be able to fight back when we feel the push from this dying monster called Amerika. Together, we can do it. If we can truly come together, on a for real, upfront basis, then we have already won!

Che Guevara once said: "At the risk of seeming ridiculous, let me say that the true revolutionary is guided by great feeling of love. It is impossible to think of a genuine revolutionary lacking this quality."

**All power to the imagination!
Intensify our struggle!**

written and revised by two people from the collective

WE MUST BEGIN TO BUILD OUR NATION - COMMUNITY NOW
WE CAN, AND WE WILL WIN



realistic goal?" Again, we must look at Amerika today; this time the answer seems to be 'yes.' The objective conditions of today—attack from without and within by Third World people who feel the push the most, coupled with the fact that even within white Amerikans it's children (trying to create their own counter-culture), it's women (organizing on the side of other oppressed people), some of it's professionals, and even it's military (emerging into a strong movement also siding with other oppressed people) seems to indicate the slow, but steady crumble of the Amerika of today. With the victory of the Vietnamese people being a mere question of time now, and other Vietnams exploding all over the rest of Asia, throughout both Latin America and Africa—where people are valiantly determined to throw Amerika out of their countries, the immediate crisis for Amerika is pretty real.

We must begin to build our nation-community now; to survive the crumble of Amerikan society. We can, and we will win, along

ASIAN NATION

Collective Rapping

Driving over to the Eastside. It felt like really early in the morning but I thought that I was late. I drove faster and it made me more nervous. I had forgotten my list of questions at the office and I wondered if the tape recorder would work

Inside the big comfortable house only two people were awake eating breakfast. I set up the tape recorder and waited for the rest of the people to wake up. They were soon all around the table and the house seemed filled with the sound of the start of another day.

With morning still on our faces and in our voices we began the interview over cantaloupes, tomato juice, coffee and stuff - I didn't think that it would be so serious, but then I guess that's how most of us approach new things.

How long have you been living together?

K : Well, the collective came together in May, but some of us didn't move in until later, in June.

How did you come to live here?

R : What happened originally was that some of us were living in the Hard Core pad, it used to be a drug abuse house, where people came in to try to kick off drugs. At one time about six of us in the pad decided that we cannot just deal in drug problems alone; there are so many things that have to be done. So we decided to have another house where we could get our heads together in politics. Then we decided to form a collective.

About the people who moved in later, how did that happen?

E : Well, part of it was that the brothers who were living here thought that it was important that some sisters who wanted to do the same kind of thing, that is form a political collective, move in so that male chauvinism would be dealt with too. And at that point for me I was looking for something more serious than what I was doing.

L : In terms of this collective attempting to be a political collective, I think the brothers and sisters here are a lot more serious about what they are doing. In terms of struggling with our own individualism and with chauvinism, male and female chauvinism, this is the highest level of struggle I've ever been involved in.

H : And another thing was that the collective was a kind of natural growth process for people who were going through a drug thing and who wanted something more concrete. Like in the Hard Core pad, some people wanted to become more political and some people didn't want to involve themselves at all. No politics! Oh yeah, and prior to moving in here there was a series of four eight-hour struggle sessions involving the people here and some who were thinking of moving in.

M N: After the rest of us moved into the house we decided that the house was going to be closed. If other people wanted to join the collective, they would be encouraged to form others instead.

What were some of the individual apprehensions you had about coming into this kind of group situation?

T : The old, petty, bourgeois hang-ups, insecurities and loneliness. I wondered whether it was going to be a sloppy place, a crash pad, or was it going to be a home. Would people feel the responsibility for a home or not? Could I put my life and trust in these people, that's what it boiled down to.

E : I looked at this collective as something that was going to discipline me because I had no discipline, and that kind of scared me because I thought it might become a matter of the group controlling me. But what actually happened was not so much that discipline was enforced upon me but that trust built up and that feeling built up so that I felt a responsibility to form my own discipline.

What about things like privacy?

L : That was one of the things I was afraid of because I've never lived with a whole bunch of people before and there's a lot of times that I really feel the need to be by myself. But there is a lot of privacy here because people respect other people's privacy.

K : But it sort of goes beyond things that are visible in terms of space, you know. Privacy-it's more like psychological and attitudinal space in a way that I feel. It's not something that I can visibly point to and say that someone is imposing on me but sometimes feeling that need to hang on to something.

What are some of the problems you find in living together?

L : Generally, this is sometimes a problem and then sometimes a very positive point, but our actions all affect each other. Some people show a lack of discipline and it kind of spreads around the house - getting up late, the house is messy, you know, forgetting to do minor details. But some people are very disciplined and very conscientious and that feeling also passes around to other people.

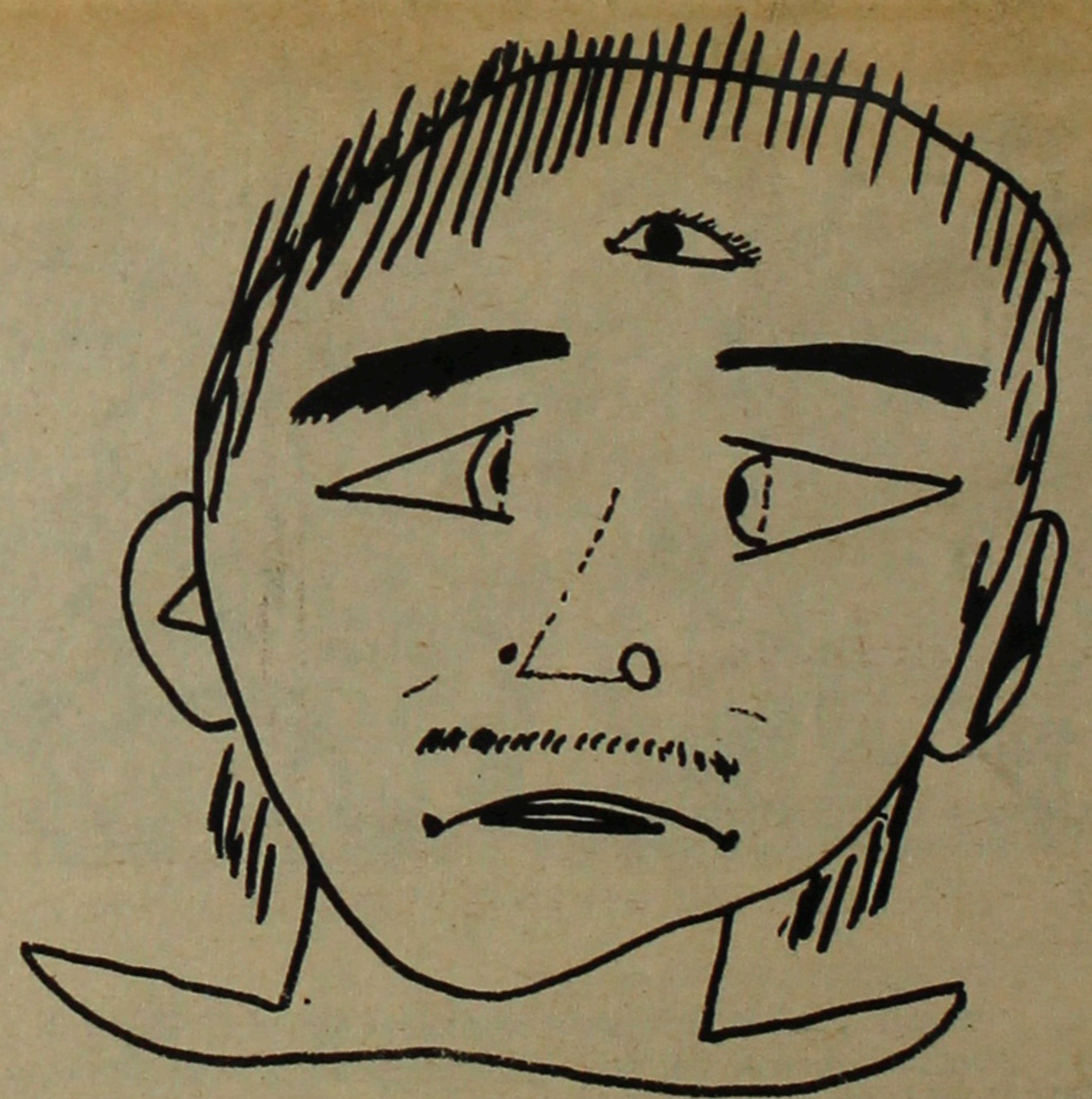
M N: I think one of the main problems is things external to the house. When emergencies come up in the community, the house is always, for some reason, one of the first to be called to react to any given situation. And it kind of throws off the directions that we're going in. We had set up systematic sessions which we haven't been following through the way we planned to because of the emergencies that come up day to day.

K : And not only that, another problem is that this being a collective, other people feel out of it and feel that we are withholding a lot of information from them because we live together.

M N: Like distribution of labor, we don't have any schedules of who's supposed to cook on what day, or who's supposed to wash dishes, mop the floor, clean the bathrooms. We all know that we have a common goal. It's more or less understood by the people that certain things have to be done and people take the initiative to do it, most of the time. There are a few things left undone and we have to ask ourselves why and then do it.

E : I think too that when people ask me about the collective and about the work, especially cooking and doing dishes and housework, they're really surprised to hear that it's not a matter of the sisters doing most of the work and the brothers not, and the sisters having to get on the brothers. On that level of male chauvinism the brothers in the house are pretty advanced.

H : It's not that overt anymore, it's very subtle.



Confused. I don't like myself.

Most of you have lived with other people before, in other group situations. Can you describe the difference between those and the collective?

L : We have activities together like political education (PE), house meetings, and we share more information than in other group situations that I've been in.

M Y: That whole feeling of openness has never existed in any of the other places that I've lived in before. With the past roommates that I've had, things got pretty tight and it would be hard to bring things out in the open. There would be just the two of us and we'd end up not wanting to see each other or bring things up in the house.

E : When I lived with these two sisters before, we wanted to have a sharing kind of experience there too. There was a lot of openness and we would hassle things out and have good vibes together, but the main difference between that and the collective is that everybody here is consciously trying to do something together. It's not a matter of well, when we feel like it

we'll share things and go places together but when we don't feel like it then we don't have to deal with it. But here, I feel that I have to eventually, or immediately, deal with sharing things with everybody else because that's part of the goal.

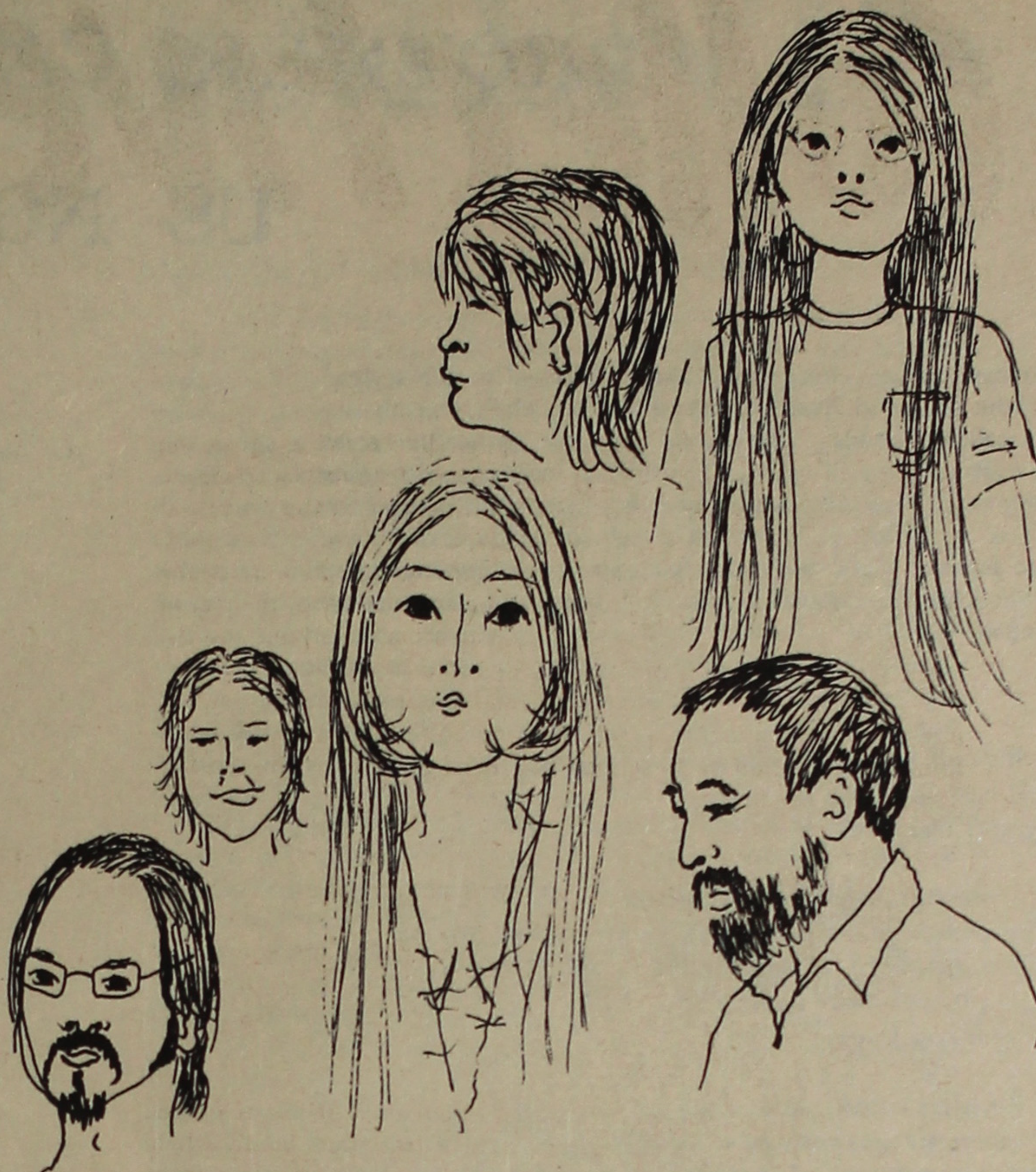
L : On a certain level this is an economic collective because we pool our money. But it's not like a work collective because we're working in different aspects of the movement. What's really collective is that we have a direction; it's not crystal clear because we're still struggling on strategies, but there are some definite changes we want to see in this country and that's our primary working goal, and it always will be.

K : Yeah, and the goal is not like outside of the collective but working at the goal day to day. It's a living goal. That's why we can feel the importance of what happens in this collective.

M **N**: Everybody in the house feels the collective is a priority over a lot of the other work so that when an emergency meeting is called we feel that we can call any member of the house to get together at any time to talk about whatever issue has come up.

E : I think part of the priority comes from how much we feel of ourselves is at stake and involved in the collective: how much we've given and how much the success of the collective depends on our lives.

C For me, from just living this way I'm beginning to see more of the contradictions under this system in this society. And just looking back on my own life, all the contradictions I've lived and all the things I've gone through is just so messed up that I want to change my life and other people's lives too.



There aren't as many cars as there are people here, how is that kind of thing arranged?

L : We fight a lot.

E : Yeah, we don't put out schedules.

L : One thing is that there's enough trust within the people here that, you know, there's always a bunch of meetings and things, we can divide up what areas we're most interested in or we'd be most effective in and have enough trust in the people to bring back accurate reports. Sometimes when there's more than four different meeting or places to go to then we have to hassle with arrangements. And we usually place personal, or pleasure, interests last in priority.

K : We get a lot of help too from outside of the collective in terms of transportation.

M **N**: The cars belonged to individuals who became part of the collective, and at that point the cars became property of the collective. Similarly with our savings: a lot of us put our savings into the household fund and it became property of the house and we didn't claim any individual property.

L : I've been working since I was 16 so I was always saving up money and I went through a couple of changes about that, but I really feel good about it. It's sort of like I chopped off those old values that I had, what my old sense of security was, and my security really lies in this collective now. But it's not like I had a thousand dollars or anything either.

E : But it also wasn't a matter of being forced to do those things too. It was stressed that people should collectivise only that which they were ready to collectivise, so it was natural a thing coming out of growth.

T : Yeah, because it didn't happen all at once, everybody didn't turn it in all at once. It happened over a period of a couple of months.

L : That really made me feel good about people too.

E : Yeah, me too because it wasn't a matter of having to do it and having bad vibes but doing it because you were ready to do it.

M **N**: It seems to me that we've been talking about really general things. Probably one of the main things we're trying to do here is to formulate our politics through study and relating the study, the theory, to our own experiences and historically the experiences of our families and our people and the people in this country. Seeing the effects of the type of system in which we live and the values it puts into people's heads. That's the primary aspect of this collective and we haven't really gotten into it. You said that you didn't want to get that much into the content of politics, but I don't really think we stressed the importance of it.

H : I think that what we are striving for is to become communists. It's like going against the grain of twenty or so years of brainwashing, constant brainwashing. It is a hard struggle because you have the tendency to slip into comfortable roles, and that's one thing that we constantly have to struggle with.

E : Sometimes I think just because of those twenty years of brainwashing and constant reinforcement everyday you look in the media that sometimes, for me, it's easier to slip back into being an American than to try to struggle with becoming a better person.



How big of a problem is money?

L : None.

H : That's very important because of the way we regard money; how we're made to believe in money, it's power and so forth. But the whole thing is that we don't have to have money to be happy.

T : It's a conflict within this society. This society is trying to say that the needs are that you have to have what the Jones' have to be comfortable and healthy.

M **N**: Not everybody has a full time job. There are a couple of people that are working for the basic income for the house and it becomes a part of the house pool, and those individuals don't feel that it's their money, but that it belongs to the people in this collective.

L : That's one good thing about a collective because we were talking about putting our theory into practice. We share our material goods, we share experiences, we share criticisms, we share ideas, we share support for each other. And that's really important because that doesn't happen and it's good to work toward making that happen more than it is right now.

E : I think we live pretty comfortably in terms of basic needs.

L : You don't see a bunch of skinny people.

K : Yeah, that's my conflict, that it's a little bit too comfortable. Sometimes I think that it's a little bit too comfortable and too easy because we don't have to struggle for those basic needs that we're always saying that we should have that some of the people don't have.

L : In terms of like our basic needs we don't have a money problem. It's just things like cars and big things, but those aren't basic needs.

Drawings by Collective people

BROTHER, CAN YOU HEAR US NOW ?

So here we are, bullshitting about "alternative life styles," talking about how good "it's" gonna be but all the while remembering that the realities of today still remain. For some, the realities mean holding a job or going to school. To others, it means survival—plain and simple survival. Sometimes the question of survival becomes too great for an individual to handle. Then comes death. Tony Yano fought to survive. . . and in the end, lost. So now we remember him in print thinking "it's the least we can do." But we wonder if he can hear us now. . . .

Tony. We call you Asian brother, comrade
But can you hear us now?
Or is it too late...

We say, "he was a righteous brother
"He would give a brother or sister his last dollar,
"Man, he had a feeling for the people!"
But, can you hear us now?
Or is it too late...

Tony. We used to call you Loach,
We were never really sure how you got that name
But you were a bad motherfucker and
You could kick ass and
There was never a reason to ask
Tony, can you hear us now?
Or is it too late...

Why did you have to get loaded, brother?
"You got a lot of things going for you, man"
"Tony, your artwork is heavy!"
"Hey man, you don't need to get high to be for real!"
Did you hear us then?
Or was it already too late...

Should we have been there when you were born.
Or while you were going to school and taking all those
bullshit classes that didn't relate to what was real to you.
Classes taught by teachers that were even less real to you
(Who and Where did they come from?)
Would you have heard us then?
Or was it too late...

Should we have been there after school, during the summer, lollygagging
around street corners, playing hit tonk, shooting pool, going to the same
parties, going to the flicks, hanging out at Holiday, searching for
something to do, trying to find something real, trying to be real.
Getting loaded—fucked up—high—mellow—down.
Could you have heard us then?
Or was it too late...

Should we have been there when Amerika (which fucked you up in the first
place) and Lilly Mfg. Co. started mass producing reeds
And began pouring them into our community
Knowing people wanted the real thing
Something — anything real
And this seemed like a good substitute
We called it getting loaded, but it was a "good high"
Did we hear anyone then?
Or was it too late...

Who was there when Amerika laid the foundations of this
system, and told us "the way things should be"
Was it done in 1776? Or before?
Did you have a say in determining what course you
wanted your take?
Did we?
Would anyone listen to us then?
Or was it too late...

Tony, did you ever have a chance to:
Determine the school you went to
Determine the classes you took
Determine the direction of your life
Determine the jobs that would be open to you (a person with a jail record)

Did they ever give you a chance to:
Feel strong
Feel a sense of people's power
(A power beyond neighborhood power such as the Minister's had)
Feel a sense of unity — like a coming together of gangs to defend our people.

Or did they instill a sense of defeat through
Cultural genocide:

Making us ashamed of our culture, our traditions
Making us use our Amerikan name because they had a hard
time pronouncing our traditional names.
Keeping us confused about our identity (who were we really?)
where were we going? shit! fuck! might as well get loaded.
Looking down on the actions, politics, religion, and traditions
of the country our forefathers came from.
Making us ashamed.
Or did they instill a sense of defeat through indoctrinating us with
a sense of their strength and immortality by:
Making us pledge our allegiance every day
Teaching us only one side of history, that side giving the illusion
of their omnipotence.
Meeting every protest or cry for change with an onslaught of police,
police informers, spies, provocateurs.
Controlling what we saw on TV, heard on the radio, read in newspapers

Did anyone ever ask for our opinion? Our feelings?
Did we dare say anything then?
Or was it too late...

Tony, did you feel defeated?
Yes, when you were loaded
But not always.
I saw the fire in your eyes when you were going to fight
You knew you were bad, you could kick ass.
That's probably why Harry shot you — he was scared of that fire,
scared to death of you.
You were bad when you were by yourself
But you were even "badder" with your boys
Gangs inside and outside of Westside feared you.
Was that defeatism?
Do you hear what I am saying?
Or is it too late...

Tony, why can't we feel that sense of power now?
What stops us from uniting all our people and
Determining our own future?
What stops us from broadening the sense of power you had within
the Ministers and the Westside into
A People's Power which includes all of us who are pissed off about
our lives, who are searching for a real life.

Tony, can you hear what I'm saying?
Is it too late...

Tony, it's not too late — we weren't there but
We saw you when you were born
when you were in school
when you were at Holiday
while you were fucked over by this insane, insensitive system
Tony, remember?

We were born together
We went to the same school
We hung out at Holiday together
We were fucked over by the same system
And I hear what we're saying, what we're screaming, shouting, teaching
It's not too late!
It's not too late!!

Tony, you helped wake us up
You helped shake this fucked up feeling of defeatism out of our souls
You may be gone from us physically
But I know you can hear us
Your spirit...
What you stood for
Stays with us
And you can hear us
And we can hear you
And it's not too late
And it's not too late!!
We're going to fight, Tony
And you're motherfuckin right we'll kick ass, Tony
For you
For ourselves
For everyone
For the revolution...

Linda

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ASIAN AMERICAN FILM

Saw some films the other day at the Storefront. Asian American films. Pretty hard to explain the exact feeling I got watching 'em. A sense of pride. Maybe. Or maybe just a sense of relevance. Been watching too many cowboy flicks or something cause it was great learning about other pioneers. You know — pioneers you rarely hear of — Asian pioneers.

Especially liked the film about the gardener. Well, the old man's a gardener. He doesn't seem like much in the eyes of his customers, I guess, but I doubt if people really know what kind of man he is. This film really got into the life of the gardener. I found the man really at peace. You know, no jiving or fronting off people. He liked where he was...no more, no less.

There were other films. Even one on the camps. Concentration Camps. Manzanar to be specific. It was a kind of autobiography by a film-maker who was there. Never did see a film on the camps before. Saw a lot of films on World War II in my high school history class, but not one on the Concentration Camps. I guess there weren't any before.

Oh yeah, almost forgot the craziest one. I won't even tell you the story cause it's hard to believe. The title was something like Genghis Khan meets the L.A. Smog Basin - A Motion Picture Epic. Most crazy-assed flick I've ever seen. Try to see it, man, and you'll probably think that the filmmaker has his head in the cosmos.

Anyway, the films were from Ethno-Communications of UCLA. And they'll be showing Part II of the film series at the Storefront, 2826 W. Jefferson Blvd. this Friday, October 8. It's a great thing, man, check it out.

If you can dig films like these, call or write:

The Asian American Film
3232 Campbell Hall, UCLA
405 Hilgard Avenue
Los Angeles, California 90024
(213) 825-2974

COMMUNITY TEACH-IN IN CHINATOWN

One hundred years ago, on October 24, 1871, nineteen Chinese were shot, hung, or beaten to death in Chinatown by the Los Angeles Vigilance Committee. The massacre of nineteen Chinese people and property damage and theft totalling thousands of dollars were to avenge the death of one white American who tried to intervene in a fight between two Chinese.

One hundred years later, conditions have not much changed: Chinese still fight Chinese, while the "massacre" by white America continues unchecked. Unemployment, poverty, poor working conditions, sickness, exorbitant housing costs, lack of meaningful education and training programs, racism—these conditions in Chinatown continue to massacre our people and community. And these very same conditions make our people—both young and old—suspicious, afraid, unfriendly, and even violent with one another. And violence in our community only brings The Man down even harder—nineteen Chinese dead in Los Angeles, 1871.

On October 22-23, Friday and Saturday, the Chinatown Youth Council will sponsor a community teach-in to commemorate the Massacre and examine conditions in Los Angeles Chinatown today. The presentation on Friday will be in Cantonese, on Saturday in English. A program of guerilla theater, slide show and speakers is planned. The teach-in will begin at 7 p.m. in the auditorium of Castelar Elementary School on Yale Street, Chinatown.

The Massacre is important not only to the Chinese in Chinatown, but to the broad Asian community and other poor and non-white people in America today. Self-destruction, fear, and violence have divided and kept us all in our places. But let us prove that history does not repeat itself, by standing up and uniting our community and communities. *Unity is Strength!*

CALENDAR

October 6—The UCLA Asian Rock & Soul Stone Nation (formerly Asian American Student Alliance) Fall Git Together at the Asian American Studies Center, Student Lounge, Campbell Hall—anytime is fine. All Power to the People!! Keep on Rockin'.

October 8—Westside Storefront, 9th Ave. & Jefferson, presents Part II of a special showing of the UCLA Ethno-Communications films, 8:00 p.m.

October 15—Sigma Phi Omega will hold its Informal Presentation of the 1972 Pledge Class in the Crystal Room of Hacienda Hotel, 525 N. Sepulveda Blvd., from 10 p.m. to 1:30 a.m.

October 19-31—Women's Multi-Media Festival at the Ash Grove. Poets, singers, dancers, musicians, theatre, film, arts and crafts. If you want to participate call Donna at 821-4629 or Cindy at 619-0385 as soon as possible (groups or individuals).

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TUES., WED., SAT.: 10 A.M. TO 6 P.M.

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