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Photo by J.K. Yamamoto

**NORTHWEST NEWS** — Lori Matsukawa, KING-TV newscaster, and International Examiner editor Ron Chew discuss plans for the newly formed Seattle chapter of Asian American Journalists Assn., of which they are acting co-chairs. (Story on page 12.)

## News in Brief

### Asian American to head women's caucus

ATLANTA—Irene Natividad of New York became the first Asian American to head the 14-year-old National Women's Political Caucus June 30 during a four-day convention here. A native of the Philippines, she is director of the Center for Continuing Education at William Paterson College in New Jersey and a founder of the Democratic Party's Asian Pacific Caucus. Calling her election "a signal that the women's movement is not separate from the civil rights movement," she pledged to fight for ERA, affirmative action and other causes. She defeated Atlanta businesswoman Linda Hallenborg, also a Democrat, by a vote of 312 to 262. The caucus, which has a national membership of 77,000, was established to help put women in political office.

### Lee, Hsieh may run for San Francisco supervisor

SAN FRANCISCO—Civil service commissioner and attorney Louis Hop Lee was endorsed July 11 by the Chinese American Democratic Club as "the most viable and electable candidate" to run for the S.F. board of supervisors in 1986, East West reports. Police commissioner Thomas Hsieh, who was recently appointed to the Democratic National Committee, has also said that he is seriously considering running. Potential contenders Julie Tang, S.F. Community College Board president (and Lee's wife), and Ben Tom, S.F. Board of Education commissioner, recently announced that they have decided not to run.

### Discrimination suit against L.A. County postponed

LOS ANGELES—Kent Wong of the Asian Pacific American Legal Center announced July 11 that a class action discrimination suit against L.A. County on behalf of county employees Wally Shishido and Tom Ohgi is being postponed until other avenues have been exhausted. Negotiations are currently under way with the staff of the county board of supervisors. Attorneys for the two, who claim that they have been denied promotions to supervisory positions despite over 20 years of service in the Health Dept., charge that the department has a quota on promotions based on the percentage of Asians in the 1980 county census (4.7%) rather than on the percentage of qualified Asian applicants (15%). The filing of the suit had originally been planned for June (see June 28 PC).

### Commissioner Mori reappointed despite criticism

LOS ANGELES—Mayor Tom Bradley reappointed attorney Jun Mori to the Harbor Commission July 3 despite recent allegations of a conflict of interest published last month in the L.A. Times. Two city attorneys assigned to the harbor have accused Mori of participating, as harbor commissioner, in matters that could financially affect him and his clients. City Atty. James Kenneth Hahn has agreed to review Mori's conduct. Mori has denied wrongdoing and Bradley reappointed him without comment.

## TV mini-series on internment planned

by J.K. Yamamoto

LOS ANGELES—The producers of "U.S. On Trial," a mini-series based on the experiences of Japanese Americans incarcerated during WW2, are asking members of the Nikkei community to submit stories of how this period affected them and their family, friends and neighbors.

A project of Inner Circle Productions, this 10 to 12-hour docudrama is scheduled to begin production next year, with a projected budget of 25 to 30 million dollars, and to air on network TV in 1987.

Co-producer and executive researcher Kerry Nakagawa, whose family was interned, said the series will cover prewar prejudice against JAs, life in the assembly centers, WRA relocation centers and Justice Dept. internment camps, the exploits of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team in Europe, and the postwar resettlement. He expects the script to be completed within 16 weeks.

Nakagawa described "U.S. On Trial" as "much different from other projects" about Japanese

Americans, such as NHK's "Sanga Moyu," which presented events in the U.S. from a Japanese perspective, and the TV film "Farewell to Manzanar," which told the story of one family in one camp.

He said that he plans to present "as many perspectives as possible" based on both research and community input, particularly interviews with former internees. He emphasized that he is seeking responses from throughout the country, not just locally.

Nakagawa is also interested in the experiences of non-Nikkei who assisted JAs despite the prevailing anti-Japanese sentiment.

Although he plans to incorporate humorous anecdotes about camp life, such as those of Nisei who were children at the time, Nakagawa stressed that the show is "not pulling punches, not compromising" with regard to the death, illness, trauma and property losses caused by the internment. His main purpose is to show the "spirit and courage" of the Japanese Americans.

Actors expected to star in the series include James Shigeta, Robert Ito, Mako, George Takei, Michael Yama, Sab Shimono, Dale Ishimoto, Jeanne Mori, Kim Miyori and Jim Ishida. Nakagawa indicated that some "name" Caucasian actors have also expressed interest in the project.

Funding could come from a number of sources, but Nakagawa said that he would prefer that all of it "come from one entity."

Negotiations for possible on-location filming are being conducted with the governors of Arkansas, Wyoming, Texas and other states where JAs were detained during WW2.

Writer and co-producer Maria Elena Cellino, who is scouting locations, has a particular interest in the project because she was raised by Japanese American parents. Through her influence, Nakagawa said, the project is gaining support not only from the Italian American community but also from Italy because of the role the 442nd played in liberating the country during WW2.

John Curran is serving as executive producer.

Nakagawa feels that "the time is right" for the project because "a lot of Nisei are coming forth with stories" about the camps. He hopes that with the collaboration of the JA community, the end result will be a program that will make younger JAs "feel proud of their heritage."

Persons interested in being interviewed may contact Cellino at (213) 684-1791 or Nakagawa at (213) 665-6818, or write Inner Circle Productions at 2206 Las Lunas, Pasadena, CA 91107.

## State senate endorses redress

SACRAMENTO—The California state senate passed a resolution supporting reparations for Japanese Americans interned during WW2 by a 29-3 vote on July 18.

Seven Republicans joined 22 Democrats in voting for the measure, SJR24, which was carried by Sen. Ralph Dills (D-Gardena).

"It's the only thing about Franklin Delano Roosevelt that I cannot forgive," Dills said, referring to FDR's signing of Executive Order 9066 in 1942. "In time of war, the gross exaggerations of fact and fiction get blurred. We owe a debt. It's time to pay."

Sen. Walter Stiern (D-Bakersfield), who is of German descent, noted that German Americans were not incarcerated en masse as Japanese Americans were.

The resolution calls on Congress to pass redress bills HR 442 in the House and S 1053 in the Senate, which would, among other things, pay \$20,000 to each living former internee.

Sen. Jim Ellis (R-San Diego), who voted against the measure along with Sens. H.L. Richardson (R-Glendora) and Robert Presley (D-Riverside), said that the executive order "was done by one person. He [Roosevelt] signed the order. I don't see why we should pay for the mistake."



**MORE SUPPORT** — At its annual meeting May 31 in San Francisco, the Calif. Assn. of Human Rights Organizations unanimously endorsed passage of congressional redress bills HR 442 and S 1053. From left: Randy Shiroi, Sacramento Human Relations Commission; David Yamakawa, S.F. Human Relations Commission; keynote speaker Arthur Flemming, formerly of the U.S. Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians; Toshiko Yoshida, PSWDC JACL Redress Committee, who introduced the resolution; and Clara Harris, Heartland Human Relations Committee director.











# Oldest Japanese-language newspaper in Hawaii folds

by Roland Kotani  
Hawaii Herald

HONOLULU—During the centennial year of Japanese government contract immigration to Hawaii, the oldest Japanese language periodical in the Islands has ceased publication. On May 4, The Hawaii Times Ltd., which has served its Nikkei readers for 90 years, closed its offices. Four days later, the company filed for reorganization and protection from creditors under Chapter 11 of the federal bankruptcy law.

According to the Honolulu Advertiser, the decision to file for bankruptcy was made shortly after the company's board determined that liabilities exceeded assets. However, Dennis Davis, Hawaii Times bankruptcy attorney told the Pacific Business News that the company only had cash-flow problems and its assets far exceeded its liabilities.

Walter Soga, Hawaii Times vice president, stated that operations will be suspended "while we assess the financial condition of the company and see whether it's possible to bring it back ... It's sad when any organization that has such a historical legend has to close. But it just wasn't possible to continue without tremendous losses."

Attorney Davis also stated that the company's "liquidity problem" apparently could be resolved but admitted that he was unsure whether the publication of the Times would resume. "The records are jumbled but from what we can determine, the newspaper is the main moneyloser," he said.

## Founded 90 Years Ago

The newspaper was founded on Oct. 15, 1895 as a six-page mim-

eographed semi-weekly called the Yamato. Under proprietor and editor Shintaro Anno, the newspaper served as the organ of the Japanese private immigration companies. Between 1895 and 1905, ownership changed hands four times and the newspaper offices were relocated four times. In 1896, the periodical became the tri-weekly Yamato Shimbun.

When the private immigration companies began liquidating their assets in Hawaii, Yasutaro Soga, the grandfather of Walter Soga, became the editor in 1905. Yasutaro Soga, a former student at the Tokyo Pharmacy School and the English Law Institute, had arrived in Hawaii in 1896 and had worked as a storeclerk and as a staff member of the prominent Hawaii Shimpo newspaper. According to his memoirs, the immigration companies had donated all their real estate holdings to the Japanese Benevolent Society and the Yamato Shimbun was their only remaining undisposed property. The owners agreed to underwrite Soga's losses for the first few months if he maintained the periodical as an independent newspaper.

Under Soga, the newspaper was enlarged to eight pages and became the Nippu Jiji on November 3, the birthday of the Emperor Meiji, in 1906. The following year, the company was incorporated as Nippu Jiji Co. Ltd. The newspaper became a daily beginning with the issue of May 2, 1908.

## Times Supports Workers

During the Great Japanese Strike of 1909, the Nippu Jiji played an important role in agitating for higher wages for Japanese plantation workers. Soga and reporter Yokichi Tasaka were

jailed for conspiracy to undermine the profits of the sugar companies. "Other large newspapers of that time, such as Hawaii Nichinichi and Hawaii Shimpo, with circulations of 1,200 each, were against the strike," write Franklin Odo and Kazuko Sinoto in *A Pictorial History of Japanese in Hawaii, 1885-1924*. "Later, when it was discovered that those newspapers had been bribed by the planters, the Nippu Jiji won strong support from the community and its circulation greatly expanded."

Although the newspaper carried one or two columns in English as early as 1903, this practice was later discontinued. However, the newspaper established a regular English section in 1919, becoming the first bilingual Japanese-English daily newspaper in Hawaii. According to Soga, he wanted the Nippu Jiji "to enable Americans to understand what was happening in the Japanese community, to acquaint the children born of Japanese parents in Hawaii with what was occurring in their own community, and to promote better understanding between the Japanese and Americans." In the 1920s, the newspaper adopted a conservative editorial stance and opposed the controversial legal test case organized by Fred Makino, publisher of the Hawaii Hochi, when the Territorial government cracked down on foreign language schools.

During the prewar period, the Nippu Jiji and the Hawaii Hochi became the leading Japanese language newspapers and contended for influence in the Nikkei community. By 1938, the Nippu Jiji was a member of two leading American news agencies—the Associated Press and the International News Service—and received radio

news from the Domei News Agency of Japan. The bilingual daily newspaper of 12 or more pages was printed on a rotary press and had a circulation of 15,000 and a work force of 200.

## Wartime Name Change

With the outbreak of World War II, publications of the Japanese language newspapers was temporarily suspended. On January 8, 1942, the Nippu Jiji and the Hawaii Hochi were allowed to resume publication under orders of the military government to provide information on wartime directives and regulations to the non-English speaking Japanese. As a concession to the anti-Japanese mood, the Nippu Jiji changed its name to The Hawaii Times. During the war, publisher Yasutaro Soga was interned in concentration camps on the Mainland.

Since 1941, The Hawaii Times and the Hawaii Hochi have been the only Japanese language daily newspapers in the islands. The Times continued publication during the postwar period, appearing every afternoon except Sundays and holidays until three years ago. In the first decades of the statehood era, the Times managed to keep its head above water financially and criticized the Hochi for selling out to Shizuoka Shimbun, a Japanese company, in 1962. According to the 1978 Hawaii Business Directory, the Hawaii Times had 98 employees.

Nevertheless, declining circulation and aging presses undermined the company's financial position, leading the Times to sell its historic building at 928 Nuuanu Avenue in downtown Honolulu and move to a new location on Reed Lane in 1982. In June 1982, the newspaper became a Japanese-


only weekly publication. Before the newspaper became a weekly, the Hawaii Times still had as many as 40 employees.

Following the sale of the Nuuanu building, several directors of the company filed suit against president Roy Soga, grandson of Yasutaro Soga, alleging misuse of the proceeds of the sale. The suit is unsettled. When Roy Soga stepped down as president two months ago, his brother Walter, company vice-president, assumed a more active role in the corporation.

Earlier this year, The Hawaii Times moved to its present site at 656 Queen Street. According to Walter Soga, the relocation of the business has hurt business and made it difficult to piece together the company's financial records. However, he blamed the newspaper's situation on the economic recession and declining circulation with the death of older readers. By the time of the suspension of operations, the Times' labor force had declined to only 12 workers. Some employees may return to work when the commercial printing business is restarted.

Despite the financial problems, Warren Higa, a Honolulu attorney and minority stockholder, has been trying to gain a controlling interest in the company. "We're still negotiating," Higa said in a Star-Bulletin interview on May 20. However, Soga said that Higa's efforts have been hampered by the Hawaii Times' majority ownership of the Japanese-language radio station, KOHO-AM. According to Soga, the Federal Communications Commission must approve any stock sale. Station management reported that KOHO operations have not been affected by the newspaper's bankruptcy filing.

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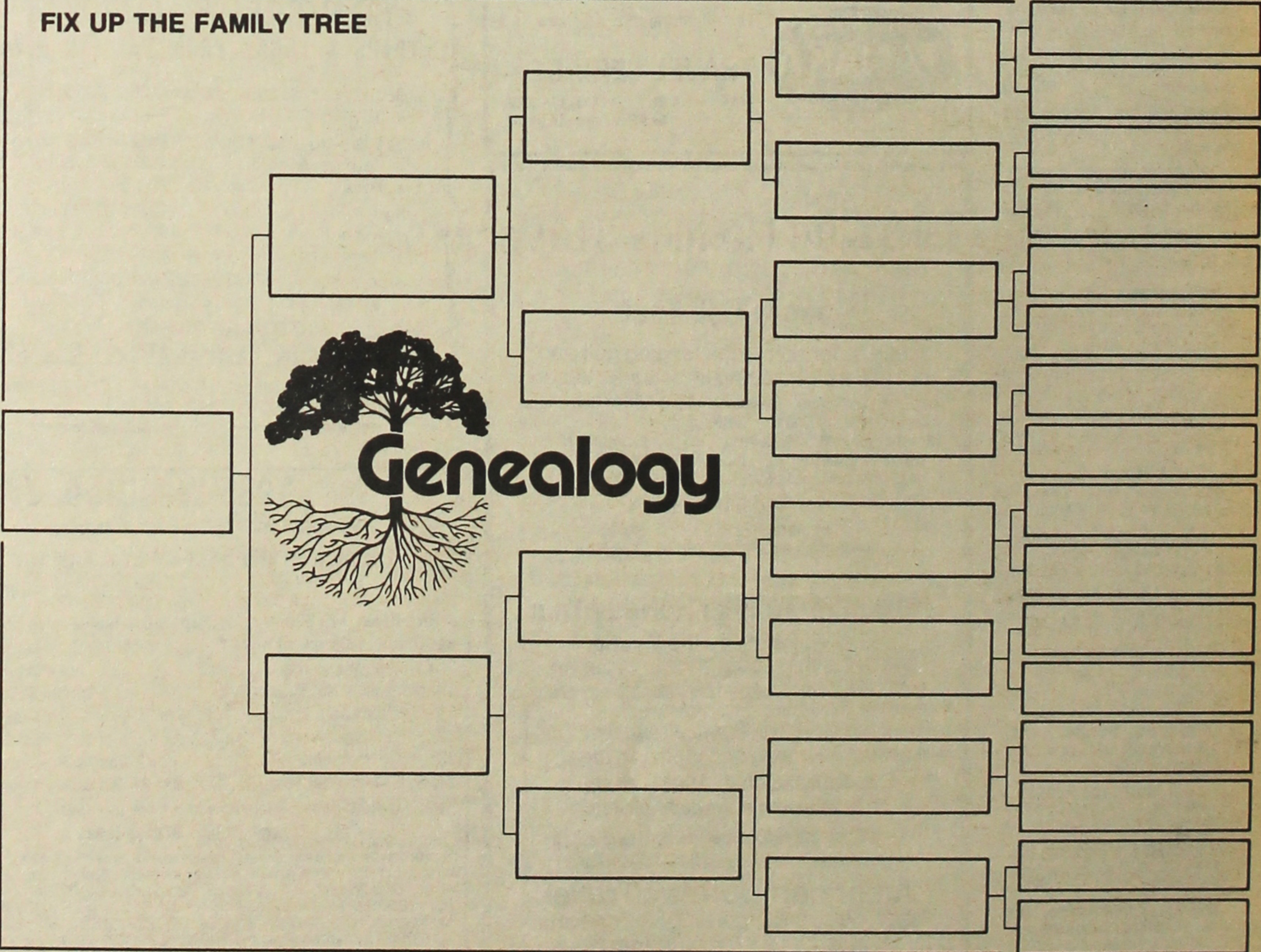
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## Journalists add third chapter in national push

by J.K. Yamamoto

SEATTLE—The Asian American Journalists Assn. (AAJA), which recently established a Northern California chapter, took another step toward becoming a national organization with the launching of a Seattle chapter on July 13.

About 45 persons, most of them local journalists, attended the kickoff reception at Bush Asia Center in the International District. Speaking on behalf of AAJA were acting Seattle co-chairs Lori Matsukawa, KING-TV news anchor, and Ron Chew, editor of International Examiner, as well as Southern California chapter president Tritia Toyota, chapter chair Bill Sing, and national executive director Karen Seriguchi.

Toyota, a news anchor for KCBS-TV, and Sing, a Los Angeles Times reporter, helped form AAJA in 1981. "Initially, we had no idea that it was going to become as big as it has," said Toyota. "Just in four years, AAJA has become a nationally recognized minority journalism association... We have done phenomenally well in fundraising and just in terms of general visibility."

Last month's San Francisco reception for the Northern California chapter had "an incredible turnout and lots of enthusiasm," she said, "and we're hoping to generate the same kind of feeling up here in the Pacific Northwest."

Noting that minorities in general and Asian Americans in particular are underrepresented in the field of journalism, Sing said, "There really is a need, not only to get more of us into the profession, but also to get us into management, where we can really make a difference."

To help Asian American students seeking a career in journalism, AAJA has awarded thousands of dollars in scholarships



Photo by J.K. Yamamoto

Journalists attending the Seattle AAJA reception included KOMO-TV newscaster Marianne Kushi and KIRO-AM reporter Frank Abe.

over the past four years.

A member of the audience mentioned a recent incident in which the Seattle Times, in an article about the WW2 internment of Japanese Americans, frequently referred to JAs simply as "Japanese," giving the impression that they were foreign nationals rather than Americans. Seriguchi said that a local chapter of AAJA could respond to such problems or, preferably, prevent such incidents from occurring.

Sing added that in such instances, AAJA could not actually take a position for or against a particular issue such as redress,

but would instead focus on fairness and accuracy in coverage.

Matsukawa and Chew said that the results of a questionnaire being distributed to potential members would help determine the kinds of programs the new chapter will undertake.

Other founding committee members in attendance included Marianne Kushi, KOMO-TV; James Hattori, KING-TV; Cary Quan Gelernter, Seattle Times; and Frank Abe, KIRO Newsradio.

The chapter's mailing address is c/o International Examiner, 318 6th Ave. S., Suite 127, Seattle, WA 98104.

## Columbia University to host civil rights conference

NEW YORK—A conference entitled "Perceptions, Policies and Practices: Asian and Pacific Americans in the 1980s" will be held by Minority Rights Group at Columbia University October 4-5.

Panelists scheduled to discuss civil rights issues include Setsuko Nishi, New York State Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights; Judge William Marutani, 1st Judicial District, Pennsylvania; Dale Minami, attorney for *coram nobis* plaintiff Fred Korematsu; Benjamin Gim, Chinese Lawyers Assn. of New York; Jim Shimoura, an attorney involved in the Vincent Chin case; and Ronald Takaki,

professor, UC Berkeley.

Topics will include the WW2 internment, immigrant rights, and anti-Asian violence.

Also scheduled to speak are: Desma Holcomb, Immigration and Refugee Program, Church World Service; Shirley Hune, Medgar Evers College, City University of New York; Illsoo Kim, Drew University; Jeanette Kwok, National Assn. for Asian and Pacific American Education; Wilfred Masumura, U.S. Bureau of the Census; Bob Suzuki, California State University Los Angeles; Vuong Thuy, Indochinese American Council; and Elizabeth Ahn-Toupin, Tufts University.

## Schools to promote Asian awareness

BOSTON—The Asian American Resource Workshop (AARW) has recently been funded by the Massachusetts Council on the Arts and Humanities for the project "Ten Minutes Away: The Cultures of Southeast Asia and China," a collaboration between Chelmsford Public School District, AARW, and members of the Southeast Asian communities.

The project's goals are to develop understanding and sensitivity among non-Asian students toward the experiences of Southeast Asian immigrants and refugees through the arts and humanities; develop new approaches to studying history through the use of the arts; and develop within students an appreciation of similarities and differences between their own culture and that of Southeast Asians.

"The impetus for the project came from the council of the Chelmsford Parent-Teacher Organization," said AARW director Julian Low. "They should be commended for recognizing the increased presence of Southeast Asians in their community and wanting to formalize the study of their cultures and history."

"The underlying goal is to promote understanding, respect and

appreciation within the students for diverse cultures and people. We've been advocating for a long time for the inclusion of Asian American studies into the curriculum of public schools and universities. If you were to judge from U.S. history books, Asian American history is practically non-existent."

"They [the PTO council] were concerned that our children and their parents have little knowledge of the fairly large number of families from Southeast Asia that have moved into the Greater Lowell area," said Roger Smyth, assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction.

"They were concerned that we are unaware of the problems many of the families have had in relocating in this country, let alone knowledge of the rich cultural background they bring with them. It is hoped that our program will have considerable positive impact on what could be a future problem if it is not dealt with in an intelligent manner."

The project will incorporate into the 6th grade social studies curriculum the history and culture of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos.

"The unique part of the program is the involvement of the community in the developmental stages," Low said. "We, along with consultants from the Southeast Asian communities, will work with the teachers to establish the main issues, attitudes and perspectives of the curriculum. It will ensure an accurate and honest portrayal of Asian history and culture, and not as some form of exotica."

The curriculum development will take place between August and December, with the classroom activities beginning in the spring semester. The material will be tested on 6th grade classes at two Chelmsford elementary schools. The project will end with a town-wide performance by Southeast Asian artists, musicians, and dancers as well as the students themselves.

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