

EAST WEST REPORT

UNITED STATES PAN ASIAN AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

August 1996

8th Annual Excellence 2000 Dinner Attendees Wowed by Jack Kemp and New Honorees

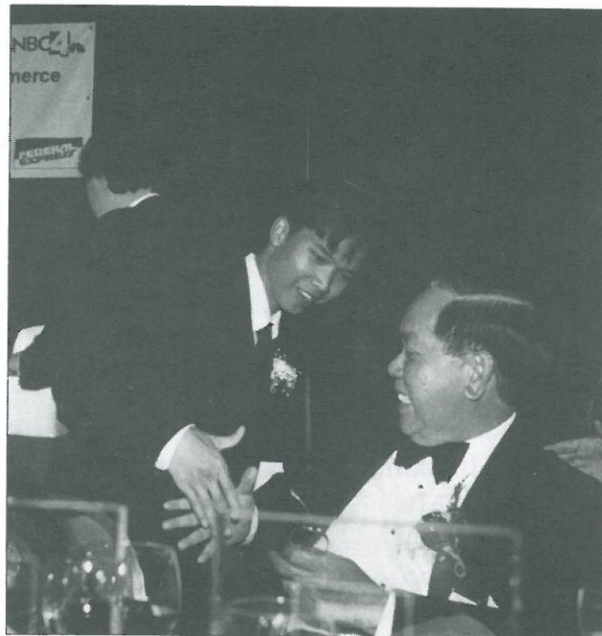
Your Chamber of Commerce in past years, the disciplines this past May convened members for represented by the award winners a new round of major awards, debates and meetings. The awards dinner featured speeches by President Susan Au Allen and a keynote speech by former HUD Secretary Jack Kemp, and tributes to human rights activist Harry Wu -- just one of many outstanding individuals to be honored.

As has been the tradition now for eight years, USPAACC members and guests met May 8th to honor distinguished award and scholarship winners, this time at the spacious J.W. Marriott Hotel in downtown Washington, DC. And just as

reflected a full spectrum.

The major humanitarian (*suo marte*) award went to tireless human rights activist Harry Wu, whose efforts on behalf of prisoners and dissenters in the PRC continue despite harassment by Chinese authorities at many turns. He was joined in the night's ceremonies by two nationally-known performing artists, Brenda Wong Aoki, leading theater artist, and Joan Chen, the internationally-acclaimed actress seen in major films like "The Last Emperor."

Also honored that night were two outstanding government officials, Matt Fong, the California Treasurer, the highest-ranking Asian American elected to state office, and Nimi McConigley, a member of the Wyoming state legislature. Joining these special guests were industrialist Chong-Moon Lee, Chairman and founder of Diamond Multimedia, Inc., a major Silicon Valley producer of computer peripherals, and Dr. Nguyen



Scholarship winner Lan Bui thanks Washington Post representative.

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 8th Annual Excellence 2000

Xuan Vinh, a scientist and educator from Vietnam.

Astypically happens at these awards dinners, the scholarship winners stole the show with their inspired, youthful speeches. (Scholarship funds help fill the gap for the many hard-working and deserving Asian American youth whose access to college scholarships is typically limited.) The scholarship winners included Lan Bao Bui (Vietnam), Nancy Sheau Lan Fu (China), Jeby John Kempil (India), Neil F. Rosenberg (Philippines), Angela Yang Shen (China), and Emily Williams, an Afro-American student who won the Bruce Lee Scholarship.

USPAACC President Susan Au Allen offered the welcoming remarks to the more than 600 attendees, and underscored the evening's theme -- "Reach, teach and inspire" the young with foundations for a promising future. She emphasized the age-old tradition of parents sacrificing for the young throughout the world, and reminded us that these days, it is wisely supported by corporate sponsors who make college educations possible for high-achieving Asian American youth.

HUD Secretary Jack Kemp's

Keynote Speech echoed Susan Au Allen's remarks. He focused on the many extraordinary efforts made daily by immigrants throughout America, and their typical entrepreneurial zeal to succeed. In warm words laced with humor, Jack Kemp's thoughtful and animated comments gave the evening's events an extra measure of



Jack Kemp talks with honorees and guests.

focus and inspiration.

In another highlight from among the award winner's speeches was Nimi McConigley's remarks about her first days in Wyoming's legislature. She described her reaction to fellow legislators who were offended -- despite knowing she was Indian-born -- when she appeared in her *sari* at the state legislature's opening session. The story reminded everyone how, despite occasional reactions to the "strangeness" of immigrant customs and behavior, Americans do offer a welcoming hand to newcomers.

On hand were representatives

and their guests from the leading corporate sponsors, including Federal Express, NBC (TV) 4 Washington, General Motors, AT&T, J.C. Penney, McDonald's, the Washington Post, Anheuser-Busch and Bell Atlantic.

In the afternoon prior to the Awards Dinner, Excellence 2000 honorees and alumni engaged in a vigorous debate mod-

erated by physicist Michio Kaku, Ph.D. Both events were carried and covered by electronic and print media. NBC (TV) 4 Washington aired its interviews with scholarship winners Lan Bao Bui and Emily Williams, and with the Excellence 2000 Award winner Harry Wu. Excellence 2000 alumnus Grant Ujifusa, Senior Editor at the Reader's Digest and USPAACC

President Susan Au Allen took telephone calls live (on the air) to answer questions about Asian Americans and their heritage celebration in May.

It was a festive and eventful night, and its obvious success had the hallmarks of President Susan Au Allen's tireless efforts on behalf of USPAACC members. Next year, we may have a return visit from what should be *Vice President* Kemp.



HONG KONG AND "GREATER CHINA": WARNING SIGNALS?

The clocks for Hong Kong's 10 million residents tick away, and people must be wondering what will happen to their thriving city on July 1, 1997. That's when, as readers know, the international city reverts to Chinese communist control.

Outsiders have rarely understood how well the British system (imposed on the city when it was a colony) and its laissez faire economy matched the entrepreneurial spirit of Hong Kong's Shanghainese and Cantonese citizens. Today's journalists are starting to appreciate how these centuries old British and modern traditions will clash with the martial administration expected to assume power in July 1997 -- as the former colony and current city-state is transferred to Chinese communist hands.

Visitors can sense a noticeable and growing fear throughout Hong Kong, but even more so among its politicians and civil servants. What will happen to Hong Kong's currently elected legislature -- which is scheduled to be replaced by an appointed one? Will the PRC's sometimes draconian martial rule live up to its reputation once it achieves plans for civil servants to take loyalty oaths to China (not Hong Kong)?

Perhaps an even larger question, given the changes next year, is whether there is much in the idea of "one country, two systems" -- China's way of defining its plans for Hong Kong rule. If we take the Chinese at their word, the first of their systems is the communist one used in the PRC; the second system is the one reserved for administering Hong Kong and its recent traditions. *Can* twin systems coexist?

Investors worldwide want

answers to this question because it is crucial to all the financial markets and the stability they demand. Put differently, as one Heritage Foundation Roundtable suggested, the "future of Greater China determines the future of China; China's future, in turn, determines the future of Asia; and Asia's, finally, determines the future of World." "Greater China," of course, refers to the People's Republic of China, Shanghai and Hong Kong combined. Little wonder, then, that many are calling the next century "the *Chinese Century*."

Answers to these and other key questions are now collected in a valuable "insider's" book, Ted Thomas' *What Will Happen in 1997?* USPAACC is making it available to our membership at a special price (see flyer-insert). The book provides answers to 55 solidly researched questions, plus glossaries of acronyms and names critical to the political changes of 1997. Author Ted Thomas, as many readers know, is an expert veteran reporter and radio host in Hong Kong.



**FOR ANSWERS TO
YOUR QUESTIONS on
HONG KONG in 1997,
REACH FOR TED THO-
MAS' "WHAT WILL
HAPPEN IN 1997?"
NOW AVAILABLE
FROM USPAACC. (See
flyer-insert for details.)**

NEWS AND VIEWS ON THE AFFIRMATIVE ACTION FRONT: AMERICANS ARE READY TO "SET ASIDE" GOVERNMENT SET-ASIDE PROGRAMS

As the U. S. Supreme Court continues to make precedent-setting rulings in recent cases, it simply affirms what most Americans believe: Government set-aside programs using preferential treatment are no longer justified. So most programs now offering such treatment to specific groups may be ruled invalid -- unless those programs are shown to be remediating past injustices.

To fully appreciate this topic, readers should remember the two working definitions of affirmative action: (1) *Equal opportunity* affirmative action, which opens up opportunities to all groups and races; and (2) *Preferential treatment* affirmative action, which selects only some groups and races for favored treatment. In key Congressional testimony on this hotly-debated topic, USPAACC President Susan Au Allen skillfully analyzed the concept of affirmative action in October 1995.

Awareness of both definitions is critical. Even proponents of affirmative action like Kweisi Mfume (head of the NAACP) admit that there is much confusion about the topic (July 7, 1996 interview). Ask 10 people what it is, and you'll get 10 different views of "affirmative action." So when its chief beneficiaries misunderstand the idea, there's bound to be general confusion throughout the country. In fact, affirmative action

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Affirmative Action

discussions usually bog down with proponents shifting focus away from "preferential" action, while opponents try to keep the debate focused on it.

What should be remembered is that high courts in the U.S. and Europe have ruled similarly in *preferential affirmative action* cases. Decisions in the past year -- in "U.S. v. Hopwood" (regarding the University of Texas Law School admissions program); and in a European Court of Justice ruling on preferential hiring of Bremen industrial workers -- on two continents agree with the mood of Americans. That is, *preferential treatment* affirmative action is justified only in "strict scrutiny" cases, where there are *clear examples* of past injustice. So if there are no instances of proven injustice, there are no reasons to preferentially treat any one, or any select groups. These rulings, we should note, fully allow *equal opportunity* affirmative action, which Americans and Europeans generally approve.

These rulings seem to have confounded affirmative action's champions. Courts won't sanction "preferential" action, so proponents are turning to new fronts. The basic new strategy is to "feminize" affirmative action. Those favoring the program are urgently promoting the idea that women need it more than ever. And they're joined by some in the Asian American community who echo this sentiment and stress the value of the set-asides for Asian Americans in schools and work sites.

The "backbone" of the new strategy is a U.S.-government-sponsored

"Glass Ceiling Report," which shows most corporate boards of directors lack women or minorities in their ranks. On close analysis, we see the value of this report, but cannot agree that it proves the claim that women and Asians specifically need new affirmative action now. If private company boards show under-representation of particular groups, surely the remedy *cannot be* affirmative action. The right remedy must be to vote with the pocketbook -- by simply refusing to buy from such companies.

USPAACC's broader response to this new wrinkle on the topic is straightforward. Women *have* already "diversified" the ranks of corporate management probably more than other groups. Most studies show that the key beneficiaries of affirmative action are women and middle-class African-Americans. Furthermore, Asians in general are beginning to have their impact felt in the workforce, and they are doing especially well in areas like Silicon Valley and in science-engineering fields.

To put it most simply, neither Asian Americans nor women need the special treatment being offered by affirmative action's proponents.

Ideas on the future of related issues are equally straightforward. Just as with other groups whose "careers" in America have been tinged by past discrimination, Asians and others must look to the example of the Irish -- who arrived here in large numbers since 1850, and eventually "had" their own President (Kennedy). We have no reason to expect anything less for Asians, for other immigrant groups, or for women in the future.

The reality, despite what *preferential affirmative action* proponents say, is that a great deal has already been achieved since the first civil rights laws in the 1950s and 1960s. **America is now different.**

So Asian Americans should not be confused by new calls for them to join the ranks of *preferential* affirmative action champions. This controversial approach to affirmative action (unlike equal opportunity affirmative action) is an idea whose time has truly passed -- precisely as courts on two continents have ruled.



TAIWAN'S ELECTION MILESTONE: NEW ERA, NEW HOPE

March inaugurated a new era and new victory for democracy in Asia. This is the message from Taiwan's election of Lee Teng-Hui earlier in March this year. His victory marks the rise of the first democratically-elected leader in China in over 5,000 years.

Some observers have raised an intriguing question about Lee Teng-Hui: Will he become another Sadat? To understand the question, readers may need to refresh their memories.

While not exact, the parallel is striking. Anwar El Sadat rose from obscurity to become prime minister in the Egyptian government by replacing a nationally-revered leader, Gamal Abdel Nasser -- after Nasser's death. Slowly, he purged his path to the top of obstacles. He did so by ridding the government of the "old guard," and replacing key ousted or transferred officials with people loyal to him.

Sadat's achievements were impressive. Once in power, he broke the "mold" and the expectations set by others. He extended himself into areas previously considered untouchable by most Egyptian leaders,

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Taiwan's Election

and specifically, he embraced an unprecedented peace agreement with Israel.

In Taiwan, this same pattern may be played out. Like Sadat, Lee Teng-Hui started from a similarly obscure post, consolidating his power by doing much of what Sadat achieved -- eliminating those unfriendly to him, and offering patronage posts to others who would remain loyal to him.

If this tentative parallel holds, the natural next question is: Will Lee Teng-Hui offer any type of reengagement with the PRC, especially before the death -- or retirement -- of Deng Xiao Ping?

Answers to such political questions are hard to find, but we do know that in 30 years, Taiwan has gone from being a poor island to becoming a wealthy "cousin." Lee Teng-Hui inherits this new found wealth and optimism among his people. So he is bound to continue the expansion of trade his citizens have worked hard to develop recently. And by further developing Taiwan's trade options, he expands both the economic horizons for all of his citizens, and for Asian Americans looking to do business in the region.



Excellence 2000 Debate Topics:
See how you would answer these.

- 1. Is Pat Buchanan's brand of protectionism truly anti-Asian?**
 - 2. What will happen to Asian American identity in the future, and what can be done to retain the heritage?**
 - 3. How should politics (including "human rights") influence America's international trade policies?**
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AMERICA'S CHALLENGE: DEBATING IMMIGRATION

When American citizens debate immigration issues, most say they want controls on the arrival of everyone into the country -- guests and immigrants.

These issues have new political "muscle" this year. Immigration reform has already been tested by a 1995 vote in California. This was the referendum on Proposition 187, which California citizens approved, but which was invalidated by court action. "Prop 187" would deny schooling and other benefits to children of undocumented immigrants -- a move the USPAACC opposes, as do police chiefs throughout the U.S. The reason: We don't need more kids on the streets (and out of school).

Drawn by interest in that vote, many more American citizens in communities throughout the country continue to debate a shifting array of related topics.

A natural question arises: How do we sustain America's current immigration levels? This is not an idle question, because immigration levels are rising, and some countries send more immigrants than others -- South Korea, Vietnam, India, for example, whose immigrant numbers notably doubled in the 1980s.

Despite the controversy, what happened in California will no doubt echo throughout the country, mainly because of California's ability to set the national agenda. In the 1970s, for instance, the state's citizens were first to roll back local taxes (thru Proposition 13), and other states soon followed. The "Prop 187" issue itself is plain enough: What are legal immigrant's rights, and what are the rights of those entering the U.S. as "undocumented" immigrants?

Among the problems posed by these American debates, few are as vital as the idea of having a "national identity card." As for this, there is

little reason to do anything but say "No" to this proposal. Why?

For one thing, it may lead to yet another Filegate, the current fiasco in the White House. Put simply, there is a real chance for excessive and unprotected uses of government-filed information, and we have to look no further than today's White House as the prime negative example.

With files on individual citizens centralized, for example, it takes little ingenuity for someone with "hacker-skills" to tap the information on file, and then use it for simple blackmail, even if the information is simply gossip documented through routine FBI "background checks." If national identity cards were available, every individual would have on-file information, and as a result, would face the threat of blackmail routinely whenever he was being considered either for government policy or "security-sensitive" positions.

We know that security experts consider this a very serious problem because the Pentagon recently confirmed 250,000 different "break-ins" into their (presumed) secure file systems. If Pentagon files can't be secured, how can ordinary citizen's information be any more secure? Equally important, and much as in the Filegate fiasco, the problems related to any potential national identity card can become very large, and, quite quickly, totally unmanageable.

We at USPAACC certainly support the regulation of immigration, but we say "No" to any suggestion of a national identity card.





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EXCELLENCE 2000 AWARDS DINNER: MEMORIES



Susan Au Allen presents award to Brenda Wong Aoki.



Scholarship winner Angela Shen asks honoree Harry Wu for autograph.



Honorees Joan Chen and Matt Fong chat.



Emily Williams accepts Bruce Lee Scholarship.



Honorees, sponsors for Excellence 2000.



Jack Kemp meets Lisa Chiew of Federal Express, John Chuang of MacTemps, and honorees at dinner.



Susan Au Allen welcomes Jack Kemp, California State Treasurer Matt Fong in the back.



Scholarship winner Jeby Kempil accepts his award from General Motors.



About USPAACC

USPAACC was organized to provide advocacy, education, information and network opportunities to its members; promote activities that will further the business and professional interests of its members; collect, evaluate and disseminate among members information of interest to them; represent, express and give effect to the

opinions of its members with respect to trade, finance, commerce, industry and related issues; and conduct charitable, educational and similar programs for the benefit of its members and the Asian American communities.

USPAACC members are Asian Pacific American business owners and

professionals, and others wishing to develop business ties with Asia. Current membership includes high technology and international trade consultants, retailers, government contractors, manufacturers, import and export traders, lawyers, medical professionals, Fortune 500 Companies, construction companies, etc.



Membership Application

Please remit application to USPAACC, 1329 18th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036 Tel (202) 296-5221 Fax (202) 296-5225. Annual dues cover the period from January 1 through December 31.

Yes, I would like to be a member of the **U.S. Pan Asian American Chamber of Commerce.**

Enclosed is \$50.00 for a yearly individual membership.

Enclosed is \$250.00 for a yearly corporate membership, for corporations with up to 500 employees.

Enclosed is \$500.00 for a yearly corporate membership, for corporations with more than 500 employees.

Yes, I would like to make a contribution in the amount of \$_____ to the **Asian American Scholarship Fund**
[contributions to this fund are tax-deductible under IRS Code 501 (c)(3)].

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