

For Asian-Americans, a New Political Resolve

By JAMES STERN GOLD

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LOS ANGELES, Sept. 21 — As the chairman of Al Gore's Presidential campaign, Tony Coelho routinely meets with wealthy Democratic fund-raisers to offer encouragement and listen to their views. But these feel-good pep talks are rarely as blunt or as riveting as the one held with about two dozen Asian-Americans here late one afternoon last month.

As several participants later recounted, Victor W. Hwang, a young lawyer who worked for the Democratic National Committee in 1996, broke the usual pattern of pleasantries and insisted that if Asian-Americans were to be pressed for millions of dollars in donations once again they expected clear benefits, like prime-time speakers at the Democratic convention next summer and a firm promise of a Cabinet-level appointment in a Gore Administration.

But that was just a warm-up for Mary Miyashita, a highly regarded Democratic fund-raiser for more than 40 years. Ms. Miyashita burst into sobs as she asked whether Mr. Gore could make a courtesy telephone call to John Huang, a Chinese-American who was at the center of the furor that erupted over illegal donations by Asians to President Clinton's 1996 re-election campaign. Like many Asian-Americans, Ms. Miyashita feels that Mr. Huang was unfairly vilified in the fund-raising scandal, less because of any violations of the law than because of his Asian ancestry.

"He listened very silently with his head bowed," Ms. Miyashita said, breaking into tears again as she recalled the meeting with Mr. Coelho. "Maybe I put him on the spot, but it was my personal way to begin the healing. I don't think it's started yet, but it so needs to happen because so many people are bitter."

In the relatively brief span of one Presidential cycle the role of Asian-Americans in national politics appears to have changed in fundamental ways. After years as one of the most financially generous but under-represented ethnic minorities in American politics, many Asian-Americans are nursing deep wounds from what they regard as a string of insulting scandals. And this time, they say, things will be different.

There will be less interest in photo opportunities with the candidates, the groups say, and instead a laser-like focus on getting more Asian-Americans appointed to positions in Washington and to judgeships, and on bolstering government efforts to fight hate crimes and discrimination.

In addition, many Asian-Americans say they are now taking political matters into their own hands by trying to transform the diverse Asian-American groups into an elec-

toral bloc where the population is most concentrated, in California, which is also the biggest prize in the Presidential campaign.

These efforts are backed by a great deal of emotion, too, because of the shock of the campaign finance scandals. No one doubts now that some election finance laws were broken by Mr. Huang as well as by two political newcomers who had ties to Mr. Clinton, Johnny Chung and Yah Lin Trie. All have pleaded guilty to charges involving improper political fund-raising and hundreds of thousands of dollars of donations they solicited had to be returned. Privately, some Asian-Americans have expressed anger that the reckless efforts of these people harmed the reputation of the whole community.

But many Asian-Americans feel that the fund-raising scandals put anyone with an Asian surname under a humiliating cloud of suspicion — with many perfectly legitimate donors receiving calls from the F.B.I. They hold both political parties partly responsible. The Republicans, they say, exploited racist fears for political gain, while the Democrats did little to openly defend the loyalty and integrity of Asian-Americans.

Despite the pain, some Asian-American leaders say the process was ultimately beneficial.

"I think this has been a great experience," said Thomas Chan, a founder of the newly formed Asian Pacific American Bar Association of Los Angeles. "Finally, there's something galvanizing the Asian-American community. It's sad, but you have to have an event that shakes people to make them care. There was a paradigm shift. The focus now has got to be on practical things, like

discrimination in jobs, glass ceilings at work, hate crimes and the appointment of Asian-Americans to important jobs in the next administration."

The meeting with Mr. Coelho is regarded here as a harbinger of some tough bargaining ahead by the Asian-American groups — a collection that includes Americans of Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Philippine and Vietnamese descent, among others.

"They were expecting the usual meeting where everyone was real nice and just said their platitudes," Warren Furutani, an aide to the Speaker of the California State Assembly, Antonio Villaraigosa. "But there is a definite residue of bitterness, and that bitterness has really created a political vacuum."

Despite the bitterness, no one is suggesting that the flow of Asian money into American politics will subside. Mr. Furutani and others said donors will scrutinize candidates more closely.

"Fund-raising is a mechanical part of the system, and it can't be avoided," said Henry Tang, an investment banker and the chairman of the Committee of 100, an influential group of Chinese Americans in society and the arts. "But we will be getting into much more of the philosophical core of the candidates and what their policies will do for us."

What has made the campaign finance scandals a particularly bitter pill to swallow is that Asian-Americans have been one of the most generous ethnic groups in the country. They contributed, quite legally, about \$10 million in each of the last two Presidential elections, by some estimates, but the money seems to have earned little open support from the political parties they had financed.

"I haven't completely come to

grips with what I would call maltreatment by both parties," Mr. Tang said. "People drew a linkage between Asians who were breaking the law and Asian-Americans that was completely unfair. We felt helpless."

Those concerns were heightened earlier this year when a Chinese American scientist, Wen Ho Lee, was fired from the Los Alamos National Laboratory, where nuclear weapons are designed, on charges that he had violated security policies by downloading secret data to an unsecure

An ethnic group feels ill-treated by political parties.

computer.

Mr. Lee was widely reported to be under suspicion of handing over nuclear secrets to China, but he has not been charged with a crime and has denied any spying. Adding to the concerns, last month the former head of counterintelligence at Los Alamos, Robert S. Vrooman, said that Mr. Lee was singled out in large part because of his race, something the Energy Department denied.

Mr. Lee's case has particularly enraged Asian-American scientists and engineers who had generally steered away from politics and had felt their work for the national defense would place them above suspicion.

"Nothing remains the same today," said Bill Chang, a former bank chairman and now the president of the Chinese American Engineers and Scientists Association of Southern California, which has about 800 members. "I do have reports from other scientists, even professors, that they have suffered some kind of prejudice since this happened. It is just amazing to many of us. A lot of times we are looked at not as Americans, but as Chinese, even after all these years."

Matt Fong, a Republican who ran unsuccessfully against Barbara Boxer for a United States Senate seat in 1998 and is now a fund-raiser for Gov. George W. Bush of Texas, said the attacks on Mr. Lee were a catalyst for the new strains of political thinking.

"There's a new mood of activism that hadn't existed before, and it has a different flavor," Mr. Fong said. "The different flavor is Wen Ho Lee. That has caused a far more broad-based chill. What the community fears is the broad brush strokes, in

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which everyone of Chinese ancestry is suspected of spying for China."

As a result, party loyalties are being abandoned and Asian-Americans are looking to candidates who appear to offer benefits to their community. Jackson Tai, an investment banker and a lifelong Republican, said he had abandoned his old party because of what he felt was its eagerness to fan the flames of Asian racism. Now, he is raising money for former Senator Bill Bradley.

Indeed, Mr. Bradley has been picking up significant support in some Asian-American circles, in part because of what he is not: neither a Republican nor a member of the Clinton Administration. "The biggest failure was the Administration's unwillingness to openly defend Asian-Americans in the campaign financing scandal," said Dale Minami, who heads the Coalition of Asian Pacific Americans, based in San Francisco, and was a co-chairman of President Clinton's northern California committee in 1992. "That kind of sticks in the craw of a lot of Asian-Americans, and will for some time."

Though he did make a small number of appointments of Asian-Americans, Mr. Clinton is perceived as having not been vocal enough in supporting them during the scandals. And Mr. Gore has his own problems. He participated in a fund-raiser for Asian-Americans at a Buddhist temple here in 1996 at which, it was later disclosed, many improper contributions were made at a venue, a non-profit religious institution, where candidates are prohibited from soliciting donations. Mr. Gore's staff returned many of the improper donations, and some Asian-Americans say they detect a reluctance on his part to be identified too closely with them.

Kiki Moore, a Gore campaign spokeswoman, denied this, saying, "Absolutely not. This is a community he wants to work with." Indeed, the Asian Pacific American Bar Association said that the White House has just confirmed that Mr. Gore will deliver the keynote address at the group's annual convention here on Nov. 13.

Senator Dianne Feinstein, who has endorsed Mr. Gore, said she thinks he will win over many Asian-Americans once they hear his views, but she conceded he has a problem. "The Vice President, because of the Buddhist temple thing, may not have wanted to have ventured forth," Ms. Feinstein said. "My own view is that the community itself needs to come together and speak out."

That is what many Asian-Americans are doing. They are focused on the local, grass roots level, and are working on long range plans to develop a broader base for influence

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over the political process. For instance, a new group was formed here, called Vision 21, to quicken the pace of voter registration and to do extensive exit polling after elections. Much of the polling will be used to convince candidates of the importance of the Asian-American votes.

There are also efforts to get more Asian residents to become citizens and, importantly, to find and train potential Asian-American candidates for public office.

"The community needs more facets and dimensions," said Don T. Nakanishi, director of the Asian-American Studies Center at the University of California at Los Angeles. "One can't participate effectively with just one means, like giving money."

Another effort is something called the 80/20 Initiative. This is a campaign to persuade the Asian-American community in California to vote as a bloc for the candidate — no matter which party — who demonstrates the strongest commitment to offering tangible policy benefits. The

aim is to get 80 percent of registered Asian-American voters in the state to back the endorsed candidate.

This is not a completely fanciful strategy. In the 1998 elections here, Mr. Fong, a Republican, received nearly 59 percent of the Asian-American vote in his unsuccessful campaign against Senator Barbara Boxer. In the gubernatorial race, 64 percent of Asian-Americans voted for the Democratic candidate for governor, Gray Davis, who defeated a Republican candidate perceived to be anti-immigrant.

Some Asian-Americans consider the initiative slightly unrealistic, but at the least a potent symbol of the new mood. "It's a vehicle for peoples' frustration," said Mr. Tang of the Committee of 100. "80/20 is one of the new arrows in our quiver."

He added: "The word naïveté is too simple a word for where we were four years ago. Maybe sophomoric, in terms of the whole process. We were probably set back 10 years by what happened, but at least we're far more realistic now."

Asian Americans in California turning away from GOP

By Ken McLaughlin

Knight Ridder Newspapers

SAN JOSE, Calif. Because of their staunch anti-communism and unswerving loyalty to the Republican Party, Vietnamese refugees have long been dubbed the "Cuban-Americans of California."

But a new analysis of California voter registration data has uncovered a striking trend: Vietnamese Americans are beginning to abandon the GOP in favor of the Democratic Party or no party at all.

And although the trend isn't as dramatic, Chinese-American voters

the only other major Asian-American group that has favored the GOP are now beginning to register more often as Democrats or decline to state a party preference.

In Santa Clara County, home to the second-largest Vietnamese emigre community in the country, more new Vietnamese-American voters registered as Democrats than Republicans in the past three years, according to American Data Management Inc., a Santa Clara firm that sells voter-registration data to political campaigns nationwide.

Last year, 33 percent of new Vietnamese-American voters in the county registered Democratic vs. 27.9 percent Republican. That contrasts sharply with the early 1990s, when there were three Vietnamese-American Republicans registered to vote for every Democrat.

"You're kidding? That's amazing!" said Minh Dovan of San Jose, a Vietnamese-American attorney who has been a registered Democrat for almost three decades.

"At one time, the community considered people who were Democrats communist sympathizers," said Dovan, 48. "So you kept quiet."

New Chinese-American voters, traditionally Republican but much less so than Vietnamese Americans, are also now registering more as Democrats

with a huge percentage of those new voters declining to identify with either party.

Political analysts attribute the trend to two main reasons: the growing assimilation of Vietnamese and Chinese Americans, and a perceived "anti-immigrant" GOP attitude that began with former Gov. Pete Wilson's push to pass Proposition 187, the 1994 ballot initiative that sought to cut off public benefits to illegal immigrants. The measure fueled a national debate on immigration and resulted in federal legislation two years later that cut off most public aid to legal immigrants who weren't yet citizens.

"For the Asian-American community, 1996 was a huge turning point," said Daphne Kwok, executive director of the nonpartisan Organization of Chinese Americans. "The community realized these were Republican bills that were mean-spirited not only anti-immigrant but also anti-American."

The trend has significant political ramifications. If it continues, the Asian-American vote could become another large Democratic bloc of minority voters, as are Latinos and African Americans. Until now, Japanese Americans, Filipino Americans and Korean Americans have voted Democratic only to be "canceled out" by Vietnamese-Americans and Chinese Americans voting Republican.

Asian Americans make up 3.5 percent of California's registered voters, but that percentage is growing rapidly as immigrants become citizens. In Santa Clara County, Asian Americans already represent 9 percent of voters.

American Data Management, which scrutinizes ethnic voting trends for Democratic campaigns, has developed a computerized list of 38,000 ethnic surnames. At the request of the Mercury News, the firm analyzed data on new Vietnamese and Chinese American voters statewide.

The analysis of the past three years found that in Santa Clara County and statewide, Vietnamese and Chinese American voters registered slightly more Democratic than Republican, with a burgeoning number declining to state their political preference. The new registrations have greatly narrowed a huge GOP-Democratic gap among Vietnamese Americans and nearly wiped out a smaller one among Chinese Americans.

The GOP still holds a lead among Vietnamese and Chinese American voters in Santa Clara County and statewide. But Democratic and Republican registration among Chinese Americans statewide is now almost equal 31.7 percent Republican vs. 29 percent Democratic. Vietnamese-Americans statewide are now registered 40.4 percent Republican and 29.2 percent Democratic.

The first wave of Vietnamese emigres came to the United States in 1975 after South Vietnam fell to the communists. Many were

members of Saigon's elite top military officers and others with close ties to the U.S. government.

When the emigres began becoming citizens in the early 1980s, Ronald Reagan was president. Reagan, a longtime Cold Warrior, was viewed as the perfect commander-in-chief. So the overwhelming majority of the emigres signed on with the GOP.

"No party could ever maintain those kinds of lopsided numbers," said Michael Schroeder, past chairman of the state Republican Party. "As Vietnamese-Americans move out from Little Saigon to the suburbs, they're just becoming more politically diverse."

Take the case of Huan Vu, a San Jose software developer who had fled South Vietnam with his family in 1975 at age 10.

When Vu registered as a Democrat in 1996, he broke with the Republican tradition in his family.

"I'm basically very Americanized, and I just feel that the Democrats better represent my social philosophy," said Vu, 34. "In general, I like what they represent as far as higher spending for education, social services and health care."

Mike Madrid, a GOP analyst in Sacramento who was Schroeder's political director, noted that a similar phenomenon is evident even in south Florida, where assimilation of Cuban-Americans into the American mainstream has undercut the near-unanimity of their vote.

"The Republicans used to get 75 to 80 percent of the Cuban-American presidential vote," Madrid said. "But Clinton managed to get nearly 50 percent in 1996."

Bob Mulholland, campaign adviser to the California Democratic Party, said party officials launched a plan to attract voters like Vu in 1992, when candidate Bill Clinton met with Vietnamese-American leaders in Orange County's Little Saigon.

"That was the first time we had broken through the glass wall," Mulholland said.

"In the case of both Chinese and Vietnamese Americans, a lot of people ran from persecution from communists, so they registered as far away from the Communist Party as possible and that was the Republican Party," said Democrat Paul Fong, a Chinese-American political science professor at Evergreen Valley College. "But the American experience for Asian Americans also includes prejudice and discrimination, and the Democratic Party has been lot more responsive to them. They see the Democrats as the party of diversity."

Barry Chang, a Cupertino, Calif., real estate agent, said he's come to agree with Fong.

Chang, 47, said he had joined the Republican Party after he became

a citizen in 1985 because he saw it as more anti-communist and pro-business. In recent years, though, the Taiwanese immigrant began to realize he disagreed with Republicans on most issues from gun control to abortion to school vouchers.

He decided to try to make the party more moderate and open to diversity from within. He even ran unsuccessfully for a seat on the county's Republican Central Committee.

Eventually, he gave up in frustration. "I just figure it's better to switch than to fight," Chang said.

Chang, a Cupertino school trustee, said that when he filed for re-election in late July, he changed his registration to Democratic.

Chinese-American Lester Lee, a Silicon Valley entrepreneur, agreed that "there is a perception that the Democrats care more for the minority groups." But Lee, who is registered as an independent but usually votes Republican, argued that California Republicans simply need to promote themselves better.

Lee said most Asian-American voters are moderates at heart, one reason so many Chinese- and Vietnamese-Americans decline to state a party preference.

"Being in the middle is a safe place to be," Lee said.

In Santa Clara County in 1998, 53.4 percent of new Chinese-American voters chose not to list a party preference, compared with 34.6 percent of new Vietnamese-American voters and 26.2 percent of all new voters.

Schroeder acknowledges that the 1996 welfare bill wounded the GOP badly in Asian immigrant communities. "It was one of the dumbest things the Republican Congress has ever done," said Schroeder, who as state party chairman in 1998 helped run a campaign to line up ethnic votes for the GOP.

But Schroeder believes the Republican Congress regained support among immigrant groups by restoring Supplemental Security Income to legal immigrants who'd been in the country before the welfare bill was signed.

"The issue is not going to be forgotten, but it will be a less driving issue," he said.

Madrid, too, maintains that once the sting of the party's past immigration stances wears off, Asian Americans will return to the GOP.

"Vietnamese who came here in the '70s were not interested in a capital gains tax cut. They were interested in stopping communism," he said. "But their kids are interested in the tax cut."

To some extent, Madrid said, "Asian Americans embody the emerging New Economy worker. They're interested in tort reform, allowing more high-tech workers to come into this country, improving higher education."

Schroeder agreed. "Most Asian-American communities are socially conservative and very libertarian in not wanting the government involved in their business," he said.

But Mulholland contends that more Asian Americans will continue turning away from a party they see as led by "mostly white, older fellows who are affluent and a little bit selfish."

UN peacekeepers arrive in East Timor Monday

By Michael Zielenziger

Knight Ridder Newspapers

JAKARTA, Indonesia The first contingent of international soldiers finally arrived on the scorched ground of East Timor Sunday, but it may be a week before Indonesian troops turn over control of the battered territory to a UN-sponsored peacekeeping force led by Australia.

The first peacekeepers did not stay long enough Sunday to assess the damage or assist the thousands of refugees left homeless and hungry after a two-week rampage of violence. Australian Major Gen. Peter Cosgrove, the commander of the Interim Force in East Timor, landed in the provincial capital of Dili in a small jet for a 90-minute meeting with his Indonesian military counterpart and promised that a sizable force would arrive Monday morning.

After Cosgrove flew back to the peacekeepers' staging area in Darwin, Australia, however, his Indonesian counterpart, Major-General Kiki Syahnakri, said his troops might not hand over control of the blood-soaked before the end of the week.

"The TNI (the Indonesia abbreviation for the army) has been given the task to rehabilitate and the takeover will take place a few days later," Syahnakri said in brief press conference in Dili.

It remains unclear whether the first foreign troops, primarily Australian and British soldiers, will be greeted peacefully or with a burst of gunfire. President Clinton's National Security Adviser, Samuel Berger, said Sunday that the international force would respond "sternly and sharply" to any attacks, and UN Secretary General Kofi Annan seconded the pointed warning to the militias and their allies in the Indonesian military.

The deployment of Caucasian soldiers on Indonesian soil and the possibility of casualties on both sides already is raising concerns about a possible anti-Western backlash in other parts of Indonesia, already smarting from tough economic reforms dictated last year by the International Monetary Fund.

Militant Muslims in East Java have reportedly pledged a "holy war" against invading Australians, while militia members in Timor have suggested that the multinational peacekeepers will not have an easy time subduing pro-Jakarta forces.

One militia leader, Eurico Guterres, pledged to attack the Australian-led peacekeeping force "because they are white people." He warned: "We East Timorese are thirsty for the blood of white people."

The birthplace of the so-called "non-aligned movement", which professed independence from both Communism and the West but often tilted against the United States and its allies, Indonesia has long prided itself as a leader among the nations that threw off Western colonialism after World War II.

The possibility of gun battles between multinational forces, compromised primarily of soldiers from Australia, and local militias has begun to concern expatriates in Jakarta, who fear that pitched battles could lead to a violent anti-Western reaction.

"It's one thing when brown people shoot brown people," said one local businessman, an American, who asked not to be named. "But when white people start shooting brown people, then that become a somewhat more complicated matter, doesn't it?"

Already, the Australian government has closed its school in Jakarta, and some Australian business executives have sent their families home, fearing for their safety.

The first meeting between Indonesian and Australian commanders in East Timor Sunday went smoothly, however. Cosgrove said he was pleased by the "first class" cooperation he had received from the Indonesian troops during his first visit to the territory. But he

acknowledged that the first foreign soldiers landing in Dili might face danger.

"There may be some disquiet at our arrival," Cosgrove said. "Of course I am concerned that any soldier will have contacts with the militia or any armed persons who resent our presence," he said.

"This is a cause of concern and I really hope that they will understand that our mission here is only to bring assistance to all East Timorese who are in need of assistance."

More than a week has passed since Indonesian President B.J. Habibie agreed to accept international troops in East Timor, saying his own military had lost control of the situation. Subsequent reports have suggested, however, that the militias looted and burned the homes of pro-independence supporters with the complicity of at least some members of the Indonesia armed forces.

Hundreds of thousands of East Timorese were forced to abandon their homes and head into the mountains after heavily armed militias rampaged throughout the province to protest the results of an August 30 referendum on independence.

While a few thousand were airlifted to safety in Darwin, where the 7,500-strong multinational force is gathering before heading into East Timor, about 200,000 East Timorese have been shuttled by land to West Timor, where many are being held under armed guard in refugee camps.

On Sunday, militia leader Guterres tailed Sadako Ogata, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, as she visited some 6,000 refugees being housed in a half-finished soccer stadium in Atambua, West Timor. The refugees, mainly women and children, were being guarded by armed police.

Asked about the presence of a militia leader during her tour, Ogata said later, "I don't know how to distinguish them."

Ogata said she hoped to win Jakarta's permission to send UN workers into West Timor within a day or two with food and medicine for the refugees. But some aid workers worry that food airlifted into an area controlled by pro-Indonesian soldiers would not end up in the hands of refugees, but rather in the grasp of those who forced them into exile.

GOP candidates caution against new gun-control measures

By G. Robert Hillman

The Dallas Morning News

MACKINAC ISLAND, Mich. Three Republican presidential contenders Saturday cautioned against a spate of new gun-control measures in the aftermath of the Forth Worth church shootings, urging instead better enforcement of existing laws.

Appearing separately at a weekend GOP retreat, Gary Bauer, Steve Forbes and Alan Keyes discussed gun control in their speeches or in meetings with reporters afterward.

Their remarks echoed those made earlier by Gov. George W. Bush, who canceled his campaign schedule in Michigan after the shootings Wednesday night at Wedgwood Baptist Church. He referred to a "wave of evil" sweeping the nation, which he said could not be stemmed by new gun laws.

Bauer, the former president of the conservative Family Research Council, agreed.

"I don't think the problem is guns," he said, citing what he called a nationwide "pattern of hatred" directed toward people with strong religious views.

"We need to look more deeply at this problem," Bauer said. But he added, "we're barking up the wrong tree" in believing that more stringent gun laws would, or could, curtail violence.

Like Bauer, Forbes, the magazine publisher, also urged a broader assault on violent crime, starting with law enforcement and extending into the community.

"Enforcement works if properly done," Forbes said. "But we have to do more as parents, as teachers, as neighbors to teach our young people a strong sense of right and wrong."

Keyes, a radio commentator, was even more vocal.

"The media will now play into the hands of the liberal leftists in the society in order to turn that tragedy of death for individuals into the tragic death of one of our most fundamental basic rights the right to defend ourselves and our liberty," he said.

In California on Friday, Vice President Al Gore, who is seeking the Democratic presidential nomination, criticized Bush for not building a "breakwater" against the "wave of evil" and taking "as many weapons as possible away from the evildoers."

Gore's supporters have complained repeatedly about Bush's approval of legislation in 1995 to allow properly trained and licensed residents to carry concealed handguns in Texas.

But Bush was quick to note Thursday that the law had nothing to do with the Fort Worth church shootings.

Los Alamos - 9/17

Booked

Previously, ^{Richard} met w/ APA coms & were happy.

APA leader mtg w/ Sec. Richardson this week on the issue of ethnicity - statute

Henry Jang, Cmte 100 - issue is much broader DOE - DOB ^{espionage} ~~DOB~~ ^{on the security} ~~DOB~~ ^{is in fact} ~~DOB~~ ^{symbol}

- left leadership issue more broadly

- requested a mtg w/ John Podesta (in OPL weekly) follow up mtg
He ~~could~~ ~~spoke~~ ^{confirmed} spoke to Ceb. - no ~~the~~ ^{no} race policy

CRAPAC

- 10/4 holding a briefing on Los Alamos

like a hearing. Panels ① Sec. Richardson, Quonme Lee ^{DOE} ~~(Fush)~~ ^(the member)
Dep. Sec. Gantner

DOE Task Force is issuing a report on broader issue

② Cmty Leaders -

Daphne Bowles, Henry Jang

Will involvement?

③ Paper by press - but include members

What to do w/ other recon?

2 Issues

Wen Ho Lee

Will don't get involved

Will take the broader issue

~~APA~~

Security Clearances are difficult generally

Espionage resonates in Am com

In intelligence com - difficult battle to change the circumstances

Nexus

- Bully Pulpit
- Clearance process - to Agency
- 440400m guide

Laura spoke to Chris B. - Cdb Affairs (got DOE direction)
 Chris suggested ~~she~~ ^{he} meet w/ COS.

Options

- Task Force - Interagency - need to do something.
- Podesta - Issue a guide to COS on how ~~not~~ ^{to} party.
- Bully pulpit -

Next Steps

- ~~FA~~
~~RE~~

- Mtg on Fri w/ Malcolm + Gerald
- Cdb Affairs - COS
- B dech?

Subject: Los Alamos Incident

Date: Fri, 17 Sep 1999 15:24:05 -0400

From: Cheuk-Yin Wong <wong@orph01.phy.ornl.gov>

Organization: Oak Ridge National Laboratory

To: aagen@ibm.net

Talk presented at the Meeting on "Scientific Freedom and National Security" of the Association for the Advancement of Science, Washington D.C., August 31, 1999. It will be published in the Newsletter of the Forum for International Physics of the American Physical Society.

The Los Alamos Incident and its Effects on Chinese-American Scientists

By Cheuk-Yin Wong,
Chairman, Overseas Chinese Physics Association

On March 6, 1999, the New York Times broke the news about an alleged "Chinese spy". The attention of the media and the government was soon focussed on Dr. Wen Ho Lee of the Los Alamos National Laboratory as the suspect. On March 8, Dr. Wen Ho Lee was fired from his Los Alamos position by Energy Secretary Richardson for security lapses. Dr. Lee has not been charged with any crime even today.

Past espionage allegations were centered on the individuals without implicating the ethnic group of the suspects. This was however not the case with Dr. Wen Ho Lee. Without taking time to check the evidence, certain members of the media stated uncritically that hundred thousand Chinese students and scientists working in this country provided ready targets for PRC intelligence gathering. The source of these categorical statements was the Cox Report, which was subsequently published on May 26, 1999. These categorical statements have incited irrational public fears and misconceptions about the ethnic Chinese-American scientific community. The good reputation of the Chinese-American scientists, which took many generations of hard work to build, has been tarnished. Their loyalty and their contributions to this country have been challenged and questioned.

Chinese-American scientists wish to state on the outset that they strongly support rigorous measures to safeguard America's national and military secrets. They oppose categorical statements which damage the reputation of the whole community, especially when the statements were not based on substantiated facts. They believe strongly that the serious charge of espionage should be prosecuted and punished according to the due processes of law, but not be tried in the news media by innuendoes. They oppose ethnic profiling in security matters. They strive to uphold equal opportunity for Chinese-Americans and support America's good values of fairness, justice, and equality.

Chinese-Americans do not know all the facts about possible charges against Dr. Wen Ho Lee. However, they are painfully aware of the tragic Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and the internment of Japanese-Americans in 1942. They are therefore deeply concerned and disturbed that Dr. Lee might have been singled out for investigation because of his ethnicity, as stated recently by the former head of the counterintelligence unit at Los Alamos. If the statement is true, it will be an act of ethnic discrimination which should itself be taken

seriously and be thoroughly investigated.

Before we discuss how the Los Alamos incident has affected the Chinese-American scientific community, we would like to briefly describe this community. Most of the Chinese-American scientists came to study in this country as foreign students. They became permanent U. S. residents and were later naturalized to become American citizens. Many others were born in this country. By recent accounts, Chinese-American scientists amount to about 8% of the American scientific population. Chinese-American scientists are therefore an important component of the work force in American science and technology, both in unclassified research and classified works. They have contributed their shares to the advancement of American science and technology, and to the development of American national defense. In their ranks are 6 Nobel Laureates and numerous recipients of science and technology awards. They are law-abiding, and along with other American scientists, working hard to build a strong basis for American science, technology, and national defense.

How has the Los Alamos incident affected the Chinese-American science community? The effects depend on the nature of their work. Chinese-American scientists performing classified work in weapons labs and in defense subcontractors find their loyalty severely questioned. They have been subject to distressful jokes and innuendoes. Equally awkward are instances when their fellow American colleagues avoided conversations on classified projects in their presence, as if their loyalty could not be trusted. In such a climate of distrust and suspicion, some Chinese-Americans in classified work have requested transfers to unclassified projects. Some have opted for early retirement. Others stay on knowing very well that their upward mobility would be even more limited now. Chinese-Americans are concerned that in this atmosphere, project managers in weapons labs and defense subcontractors may have reservations about employing Chinese-American scientists, about promoting Chinese-Americans in leadership roles, and about putting them to head a major project. The working environment of these Chinese-American scientists has deteriorated as a result. Their contribution to American science, technology, and national defense may also suffer as a consequence.

For those Chinese-American scientists doing unclassified research in national laboratories and universities, the immediate impact is not as severe. Chinese-American scientists are however concerned whether the negative media reports might affect the perception of science programming officers and proposal reviewers when they apply for research grants.

For those ethnic Chinese scientists who are not U.S. citizens (Chinese nationals) working in unclassified research in national laboratories, there are now greater restrictions on security matters and on funding of some areas of unclassified research. These restrictions apply to foreign nationals from sensitive countries which include Chinese nationals. For example, in one of the unclassified areas of a national laboratory, nationals from sensitive countries performing unclassified work must be escorted by Americans when they walk outside their own building to go to the cafeteria or the library. In another national laboratory, several foreign nationals from sensitive countries have been denied access to their offices, postdoctoral fellows have not been renewed based on newly-applied criteria, foreign nationals have been denied the opportunity to apply for laboratory positions for which they are qualified, and foreign national staff members are sometimes unsure about their sources of funding. In that weapons laboratory, a number of talented foreign national postdoctoral fellows, limited term staff, and permanent staff have already accepted positions elsewhere because of the uncertainty associated with the

environment at the laboratory. A number of laboratory staff members who traditionally mentor postdoctoral fellows have decided not to recruit foreign nationals because of their uncertain future.

The long-term effects of the Los Alamos incident are not easy to predict but we are particularly concerned about the opportunity for upward mobility for Chinese-American scientists. Racial prejudices come in many different ways. Some of the prejudices are so well entrenched that the people holding these prejudices may not be aware of them. It has been known for a long time from employment statistics that there exists a disparity between the Chinese-American scientific population and their ranks as senior managers and administrators in national laboratories, defense industries, and universities. For example, in a typical science subcontractor, about 14% of the white-male population are in official and manager positions, while only 4% of the Asian-American scientists are. In universities, there are only six Asian American administrators for every hundred Asian American faculty and professionals. This number is less than one third of the 20 white American administrators for every hundred white faculty and professionals. Chinese-Americans are greatly under-represented in senior and leadership positions. While part of the disparity may be attributed to the characters of the Chinese-Americans themselves, a significant part arises from prejudices in which Chinese-Americans are often considered as "outsiders" in matters of upward mobility or leadership positions. The end result is the existence of a glass ceiling above which Chinese-Americans (and other Asian-Americans) have great difficulty breaking. Because prejudices already exist in the working environment, the additional distrust brought on by the Los Alamos incident will only further reinforce the existing prejudices.

It is important to take actions to prevent the above adverse effects in order to bring the best out of the Chinese-American scientific community. It is also the right thing to do, in accordance with the honorable American tradition of fairness, justice, and equality.

Therefore, we urge people in leadership positions to rectify the gross misconceptions which may have been propagated by the media about Chinese-American scientists. The American public ought to know that Chinese-American scientists are just as law-abiding, just as hard-working, and contributing just as well to the progress of American science, technology and national defense, as their fellow American scientists.

America is a land of great opportunities for Chinese-American scientists. It is also a land full of people of good will and people of the high ideals of fairness, justice, and equality. We are therefore grateful that upon our appeal, the American Physical Society and the American Association for the Advancement of Science have issued public statements to uphold scientific freedom and speak against unjustified ethnic generalizations. Proactive steps from capable leaders are needed to maintain a favorable working environment for Chinese-American scientists, for the benefit of the nation and the whole world.

The Overseas Chinese Physics Association is a professional association established in 1990 and chartered in the State of New York. It has about 400 members, with about 160 lifemembers. Most of the members are Chinese-Americans, with a small number of foreign members. The author Dr. Cheuk-Yin Wong graduated from Princeton University in 1961 and earned his Ph. D. also at Princeton in 1966. He has been working in

- Oak Ridge National Laboratory since 1966, with sabbatical leaves at Niels Bohr Institute, Copenhagen, M.I.T., and Institute for Nuclear Studies, University of Tokyo. He is a fellow of the APS since 1978.

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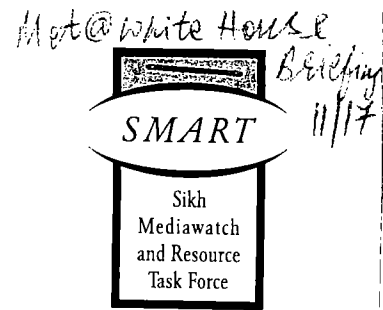
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Synopsis

The United States immigration policy toward Asians and other groups has varied from outright discrimination to a relaxed standard. In one of the first cases dealing with Asian immigration, a Sikh gentleman challenged the 1917 Naturalization Act claiming that he was ‘white’ under the statute and should be granted citizenship. The relevant section of the Naturalization Act provided that “aliens being free white persons and to aliens of african nativity and to persons of African descent” could apply for naturalization. The Supreme Court ruled that he was not considered ‘white’ and could not legitimately apply for citizenship.¹ Although a number of changes have occurred in United States policy toward Asian immigration, a great deal could still be improved.

As political tensions and violence towards Sikhs increased in India, the number of Sikh’s claiming refugee/asylum status has risen;² unfortunately, the Immigration and Naturalization Service has not afforded the Sikh community the same status as other persecuted groups, such as Cuban dissidents, Soviet Jews, Serbians, or Bosnians. While the number of Sikhs wishing to visit their relatives in the United States has also grown, the visa process has been both difficult and belligerent. In addition, the United States should continue and increase the number of H1-B visas permitted from India to help maintain the growing U.S. economy. As a growing minority group

¹ See *United States v. Thind*, 261 U.S. 204 (1923).

² See e.g. *Singh v. I.N.S.*, 35 F.3d 572 (9th Cir. 1994); *Singh v. I.N.S.*, 107 F.3d 17 (9th Cir. 1997); *Kumar v. I.N.S.* 94 F.3d 651 (9th Cir. 1996).

within the United States, the United States Department of State and the Immigration and Naturalization Service should be more sensitive to the needs of the Sikh community while maintaining their professionalism.

In the areas of Hate Crime and Religious Freedom, the United States has a duty to protect its citizens and an affirmative obligation to prevent any serious injury occurring to any minority community. Within the United States, Sikhs like other religious communities make easy targets for violence and religious discrimination especially since practicing Sikhs are required to maintain their turban's, unshorn hair, and kirpan's. The violence and discrimination ranges from preventing individuals from wearing a turban in a court of law to a Sikh prevented from being served in a restaurant.

For example, in 1984 a trial judge refused a plaintiff's attorney to appear before the court unless he could show he wore the turban for some 'legitimate' purpose. The attorney challenged the judge, charging him with bias and prejudice. Later, the court permitted the attorney to wear his turban without having to reveal why he wore it.³ Even though the plaintiff involved was not a Sikh, the prejudicial attitude of the judge could be applied to any Sikh attorney.

In the corporate sector, Sikhs have also faced discrimination. In 1997, a Sikh job applicant filed a complaint against Dominos Pizza with the Maryland Human Rights Commission on Human Relations alleging religious discrimination arising from Domino's failure to hire him for managerial position in a store, due to his refusal to shave the beard he wore for religious purposes. The court ordered Domino's to comply with the Commission's finding to revise its no beard policy, to pay applicant back pay, and offer applicant next available position as manager in training.⁴ This result, however, came about after a bruising fight within the court system.

While a number of hard fought cases have come down upon the plaintiffs favor, adverse

³ See *Jensen v. Superior Court of San Diego*, 201 Cal. Rptr. 275 (Cal. Ct. App. 1984).

⁴ See *LOOC, Inc. v. Kohli*, 701 A.2d 92 (Md. 1997)

decisions have resulted where major setbacks have occurred. In late 1984, a Sikh employee brought an action against his employer, Chevron, claiming that Chevron had discriminated against him on the basis of his religion since an employer policy required all employees whose duties involved potential exposure to toxic gases to shave any facial hair that prevented them from achieving gastight facial seal when wearing a respirator. The court held that the plaintiff did establish a prima facie case of religious discrimination, but that the employer had made a good-faith effort to accommodate his religious beliefs, and to the extent that its efforts were unsuccessful, further accommodation would have caused an undue hardship upon the employer.⁵ While, the court may have believed Chevron made every effort to accomodate the Sikh's religious needs, the simply solution of providing similar chemical hoods, as worn by Orthodox Jews in Israel during the Gulf War, could have allowed the Sikh employee to continue to work at his job.

In recent news, a Sikh religious leader may face criminal charges for wearing a kirpan in Mentor, Ohio. During an investigation of a minor traffic violation, the police observed that he was concealing a weapon, his kirpan. Police Chief Richard Amiott said his officers acted properly in enforcing the law banning concealed weapons and asked, "How can you describe for me the difference between a ceremonial knife and any knife?" Finally, another example of religious discrimination, involved a Princeton University professor who was not served in a New York restaurant when he was told he would have to remove his turban. Prof. Jaswinder Pal Singh filed a civil suit against the restaurant is awaiting the outcome of the court's decision. As the United State deals with religious plurality, religious tolerance issues for many communities will become a common occurrence.

⁵ See *Bhatia v. Chevron U.S.A., Inc.*, 734 F.2d 1382 (9th Cir. 1984).

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Immigration Concerns

Refugee/Asylum Issues

- Sensitivity training for Immigration and Naturalization Service and Customs Agents in areas of Sikh refugee and asylum needs;
- Sensitivity training for Administrative Law Judges within the Immigration and Naturalization Service;
- Record, by ethnicity, number of Sikhs denied/allowed refugee/asylum status;
- Concerned with the new Refugee/Asylum expulsion without review or potential of review, in that legitimate people are turned away or discriminated against;
- Outreach and education in the community by hiring Punjabi speaking individuals to assist in the refugee/asylum process.

Immigration Issues

- Record, by ethnicity, number of Sikhs denied/allowed visa to enter the United States;
- Sensitivity training for State Department personnel issuing visas in overseas Embassies;
- Attempt to get through the back-log of family sponsorship visas;
- Continue United States policy of granting H1-B Visas to high-tech employees from India;
- Outreach and education in the community by hiring Punjabi speaking individuals to assist in the visa process.

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Hate Violence Concerns

- Count and recognize religious crime against Sikhs;
- Establishing a relationship within the Sikh community so that aggressive report may occur;
- Appointment of a Sikh on the religious persecution panel at the United States Department of State;
- Sensitivity training for police personnel in dealing with hate crimes against Sikhs;
- Outreach and education in the community by hiring Punjabi speaking individuals to assist police personnel.

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Religious Freedom Concerns

- Freedom from legal discrimination in being able to wear turban, kirpan (short-ceremonial dagger), and beard;
- Sensitivity in Occupational Safety Health Administration regulations toward Sikh issues of being able to practice their religion;
- Sensitivity for personnel within Equal Employment Opportunity Commission who deal with workplace discrimination against Sikhs;
- Coordinated efforts between other religious groups in drafting policies;
- Support for Religious Freedom legislation in Congress



Maureen T. Shea

11/15/99 09:09:00 AM

Record Type: Record

To: Irene Bueno/OPD/EOP@EOP, Edward W. Correia/WHO/EOP@EOP

cc:

Subject: Background on Sikhs

Hope this is useful.

Eddie, although I could not find mention of it in press reports, anecdotally I've been told that there have been problems for Sikhs at schools because of the carrying of the dagger - which I am also told is usually about as sharp as a butter knife.

BACKGROUND ON SIKHS

ORIGIN AND BELIEFS

Sikhism was founded in the 15th Century in the Punjab region of northern India. Establishment of an independent state, to be called Khalistan, has long been advocated by some in the Sikh community.

Sikhism combines elements of Islam and Hinduism. It is thought to be the world's fifth largest denomination with 15-20 million followers worldwide.

Sikh spiritual life includes prayer, hard work, honesty and sharing earnings with the poor. They worship at gurdwaras and take meals while sitting cross-legged on the floor. Sikhs are vegetarians and forbidden to use alcohol, tobacco, or intoxicating drugs.

Men and women are regarded as equals although they are separated during worship. Men share the name Singh, which means lion, and women the name Kaura, which means princess.,

In 1999 they are celebrating the 300 anniversary of the founding of the Khalsa (the Order of the Pure Ones), the tenets of the modern Sikh religion. These include the "five Ks": the kesh, or uncut hair, symbolizing acceptance of God's creative beauty; the kangha, or comb, reminding Sikhs of their stewardship duties; the karha, or steel bangle, representing the unbroken connection among mind, body and soul; the kirpan, or dagger, symbolizing the fight against injustice; and the hachha, or undergarments, which embody the Sikh belief in physical activity, sexual fidelity and social volunteerism.

PRESENCE IN U.S.

The first Sikhs in the United States came to California in the early 1900s, and the largest Sikh temple in the world is in Yuba City. Estimates as to the number of Sikhs now in the U.S. range from 150,000 to 250,000. They are concentrated in California, Texas, Ohio, New York, and Arizona. The majority came after the liberalization of immigration law in 1965 and have tended to be business and professional people.

DISCRIMINATION AGAINST AND ASSIMILATION OF:

Members of the faith say they suffer from widespread public ignorance. Because of their turbans, adults often mistake them for Arabs. Some Sikhs say they have been denied service at restaurants or rejected for jobs because of their turban.

There are estimates that 90% of the children now cut their hair.

Central Sikh authorities have banned the growing Western practice of using tables and chairs during community meals in the temples. The controversy has caused near riots in Canada. In the U.S., about 90% of the temples have removed tables and chairs and the other 10% give worshippers the option of using tables and chairs.

Like other immigrant religious groups, Sikhs have organized a summer camp for young people to stave off total assimilation.. The Sikh's is in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania and named Logharh Retreat, for the a Sikh fort in the Punjab where they defended themselves against attacking Mughals. Their web site says: "the battle here and now is against the armies of ignorance and hatred, and the lure of assimilation."

Challenges

Symptomatic -

Fed Govt responsible to educate ~~and~~ conf

Appointments

- INS Restructuring

- Naturalization Backlog

- Asian Pacific American Executive Order - Sharrina Singh
Education Executive Director

Q + A

- Detention - Sen Redo, - Sikhs - CA

- INS - ~~2~~

o Expedited Removal - summary reviewed - guidelines & language

o Unfair.

- FIX 94

- Asylum is granted - Political - substance - distinctive - political

- Invitation in ~~the~~ February - resident = feelings

- ~~last~~ Screening =

- ~~the~~ INS - Punjabi - ~~speaking~~ - Sikh - not just Punjabi speaking

⊕ Detention - remove their clothing = what are the guidelines - urban, hair -

- Visitors visas = Denied, lot of delay