

# Asian and Pacific Islander-American Heritage Month 2000



**Voices for the  
Millennium**

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## **PREFACE**

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## **SCOPE**

The Topical Research Intern Program provides the opportunity for servicemembers and DoD civilian employees to work on diversity/equal opportunity projects while on a 30-day tour of duty at the Institute. During their tour, the interns use a variety of primary and secondary source materials to compile a review of data or research pertaining to an issue of importance to equal opportunity (EO) and equal employment opportunity (EEO) specialists, supervisors, and other leaders throughout the Services. The resulting publications (such as this one) are intended as resources and educational materials and do not represent official policy statements or endorsements of the DoD or any of its agencies. The publications are distributed to EO/EEO personnel and selected senior officials to aid them in their duties. Additionally, all publications are posted on the World Wide Web at [www.patrick.af.mil/deomi/deomi.htm](http://www.patrick.af.mil/deomi/deomi.htm).

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Since 1886 the Statue of Liberty has symbolized the freedom and values Americans honor, welcoming immigrants to the United States with the following words: “Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me. I lift my lamp beside the golden door.” Today, John F. Kennedy Airport, rather than Ellis Island may be the first introduction many immigrants have to the United States, but Miss Liberty’s principles still ring true. Immigrants and their progeny are still a vital part of America’s future, and during the month of May we recognize Asian and Pacific Islander Americans, a segment of our population who continue the proud heritage of America’s forefathers. Like those before them, they have overcome barriers of language and prejudice and, through hard work and education, have taken their place among the United State’s vital citizenry.

In many ways, the Department of Defense (DoD) is a microcosm of our larger society. As in the larger society, Asian and Pacific Islander Americans have contributed substantially to our Armed Forces. Along with other Americans, we celebrate Asian Pacific Islanders’ contributions to the military during this special month as well.

Asian Pacific Islander Americans are identified through their geographic and cultural roots. One boundary of the continent of Asia is eastward from the Ural Mountains. (39:3) However, the term Asian and Pacific Islander American has been defined by the DoD as, “[a] person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent, or the Pacific Islands. This area includes China, India, Japan, Korea, Philippine Islands, and Samoa.” (18:10) It is this definition that shall be followed for purposes of this publication.

The cultural diversity of Asian and Pacific Islander American immigration over the past three decades can be compared to that of European immigration in the early 1900s. There are as many differences in language, food, and religion among Asian and Pacific Islander Americans as among the Greeks, Irish, Italians, or Germans. (5:72) Each group, regardless of size, is important and is making essential contributions to the diversity of the United States. While it is not possible to cover details of every group, this publication is intended to leave the reader with a clear sense of the depth and breadth of the impact of Asian and Pacific Islander Americans on U.S. society.

The May celebration began in 1978, when resolutions drafted by Representatives Mineta and Horton as well as Senators Matsunaga and Inouye resulted in President Carter signing a joint resolution on October 5, 1978, proclaiming the week of May 4, 1979 as Asian-Pacific Heritage Week. May was chosen because it is a month with several significant milestones in Asian and Pacific Islander American history. One such milestone was the arrival of the first Japanese immigrants to America on May 7, 1843. Another was the driving of the Golden Spike for the transcontinental railroad on May 10, 1869. The spike signified the contributions of Chinese Americans in building the western leg of this important commercial artery, which was finished one year earlier. (47:17)

This publication is designed to help equal opportunity advisors and others by providing information on Asian and Pacific Islander American heritage. The publication is divided into four primary sections: the history of Asian and Pacific Islander Americans, military conflicts and contributions, current issues among Asian and Pacific Islander Americans, and immigration.

## II. HISTORY

America was created and shaped by successive waves of immigrants, and has often been regarded as the world's melting pot, salad bowl, or cultural mosaic. America first experienced a great wave of European exploration and colonization. Later, enslaved Africans were brought to work on Southern plantations. Next, the Chinese came to work on the Pacific Railroad, and Japanese, Filipinos, and Koreans to work on Hawaiian sugar plantations. The New Immigration Act of 1965 abolished immigration quotas, bringing many different groups from around the world. A last great wave of immigration saw Southeast Asian refugees arrive after the fall of South Vietnam in 1975.

Pushed out of their country by economic, political or social conditions, and pulled by hopes and dreams of fortune, emigration to America by Asians and Pacific Islanders was seen as an opportunity for a better life. Hawaii has been the point of arrival for many. There, and in other parts of the country, Asian and Pacific Islander immigrants took on the jobs that others did not want because they were too difficult, too labor intensive, did not pay enough, or a combination of all three. Since the *Immigration Act of 1965*, there has been a huge influx of brainpower from Asia and the Pacific Islands.

For the full contributions of Asian and Pacific Islander Americans to be realized, they must first be understood and accepted by the rest of America. A complete review of the histories behind 30 different cultures is not possible here, but the following is a brief history of the process through which many of the major Asian and Pacific Islander American groups came to call America home.

### 1. CHINESE AMERICANS

China is one of the oldest cultures in recorded history. A feudal society bound by traditional roles and responsibilities according to age, sex, birth order, and class within society, it was highly influenced by Confucianism. (40:361) Confucius (551-479 B.C.) was the greatest of the Chinese philosophers, and China continues to be guided by his teachings. (57:18) Confucianism created an orderly society by regulating relationships within the family. Parents and grandparents taught values to the young, and were in turn cared for during their old age. (57:19)

Less than 150 years ago, there was almost no contact between China and the Western world. The Chinese were forbidden to teach their language to a foreigner or to send books abroad. (52:66) Chinese first arrived in the U.S. in 1847 when a missionary brought some schoolboys to Massachusetts for schooling. (28:106)

With the push by America to open up China to trade, the year 1848 saw the arrival of silk merchants and the first true immigrants, two men and a woman, to work in mining areas. (28:106) Soon thereafter, news of the gold rush and tales of riches reached economically depressed Canton in South China. As a result, 25,000 Chinese immigrated to California by 1851. The Chinese had developed mining throughout Southeast Asia (40:366) and they named America Gam Saan, or Gold Mountain. (56:31)

America also needed access to cheap labor for the Central Pacific Railroad and the economic conditions in China made for a frail but mutual alliance between the two countries. Most of the Chinese who came were poor male villagers. Known as sojourners, they left their wives and children with the idea of making enough money to return to China. (40:363)

To Americans, the Chinese appeared alien, due more to cultural than racial differences. (40:366) Compounding the problem, Chinese sojourners maintained a psychological and social separateness from American society by maintaining the values, norms, and attitudes of their homeland. Men still dressed according to the Chinese custom with queues (a long braid of hair at the back of the head), felt slippers, cotton blouses, and little round hats. (40:363, 366)

Opposition began as Chinese gold miners created profitable mining locations from those others considered worthless. Further, because men far outnumbered women, Chinese seized opportunities as cooks, laundries, and household servants. Charges were made by Whites that the Chinese depressed wages and the standard of living. This backlash, along with the lawless setting of the frontier, resulted in violence against the Chinese.

Government intervention in this hostility began with a treaty with China in 1868. The treaty gave Chinese in the United States the privileges of travel or residence as citizens of nations with most favored status but excluded the right of naturalization. The *Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882* restricted Chinese immigration. From 1908 to 1930, 72,796 Chinese departed while 48,482 arrived in America. (40:362)

#### A. Chinese Immigration to Hawaii

In 1865, Hawaii sent Dr. William Hillebrand, the Royal Commissioner of Immigration, to bring back cheap labor for sugar plantations. Two vessels transported 500 workers, each with a five-year contract to work in Hawaii. The percentage of Chinese in Hawaii's population rose from one-half of one percent in 1853 to 22 percent in 1884. The increased Chinese presence in Hawaii became a political issue, and during the 1880s, Japanese were substituted for Chinese. Later the Japanese would be replaced with Filipinos. (52:73)

During the early 1900s, the Chinese were able to move off the plantations by saving part of their meager wages. (52:75) However, legal impediments were contrived to block the advance of Asians to more lucrative occupations. In 1903, Hawaii implemented a law that permitted only citizens or persons eligible to become citizens (thus excluding Asians) to be employed as mechanics or laborers on work carried on by this Territory. (52:76)

## B. Chinese Reaction to Growing Hostility

Growing White-American hostility forced sojourners in the United States to either return home or, for the vast majority of Chinese, to withdraw residentially and economically, establishing Chinatowns in larger cities. The Chinese sought out the anonymity that metropolitan areas afforded. (28:108) Chinatown in San Francisco was for many years the most powerful network for Chinese in America. (40:369) Chinatown was also the home for many activities, illegal in America, but acceptable in China. San Francisco was headquarters for merchant associations known as tongs. To some, the tongs served for the betterment of merchants and business people. To others, tongs were criminal organizations that exerted a tyrannical force over the Chinese. (28:109)

During the 1930s and 1940s there was an exodus from Chinatowns. (40:372) Younger and better-educated Chinese landed positions in mainstream America. Many Chinese restaurants and laundries closed their doors, and because the defense industry needed manpower, Chinese were readily recruited. The barrier to employment opportunities was broken. (9:199)

Two important political changes in the 1960s positively affected the Chinese in America. (9:203) First, the *New Immigration Act of 1965* abolished immigration quotas. Second, the *Equal Opportunity Act* opened opportunities for Chinese beyond the traditional businesses, such as restaurants and laundries. Compared to the pre-1945 era, there was a great improvement in Chinese assimilation in America. Only since the mid-1960s has the integration of Chinese into American society begun to resemble that of immigrant groups of earlier generations. (9:7) The current Chinese-American population is in excess of 1,645,000, representing the largest subgroup of Asian Americans. (54:31).

## 2. JAPANESE AMERICANS

Japanese have been in the continental United States for more than a century. Some Japanese slaves held by several Indian tribes were in the Northwest before the arrival of the first Europeans. (28:122) From 1636 to around 1860, Japanese were forbidden to emigrate from Japan. (41:230) The Tokugawa shogunate imposed an embargo on emigration in the 17th century, and because of fear of the corrupting influence of the West, had effectively sealed off the borders. But the arrival of Admiral Perry in 1853, and the signing of a peace treaty between the United States and Japan, briefly reversed Japan's xenophobic emigration policy. Laws forbidding emigration were reinstated when Japan feared that the export of labor would lower their prestige among nations of the world. Emigration laws were later relaxed again only because of severe economic conditions and crop failure in southern Japan. (28:131) From 1886 until 1924, 238,758 Japanese immigrated to Hawaii, and 196,543 Japanese immigrated to the United States. (40:382)

### A. Japanese Arrival in Hawaii

Sugar is believed to have been first milled in Hawaii as early as 1802. However, it was not until the 1840s that sugar became a major crop. (35:4) Initially, native Hawaiians were hired to grow,

harvest, and mill the sugar, but there was soon an acute shortage of Hawaiian laborers. Compounding the problem was the Hawaiian emigration to California during the gold rush and thousands of Hawaiians dying from diseases brought to the Islands by foreigners. (35:5) The Hawaiian ambassador to Japan recognized the need for cheap labor for sugar plantations and persuaded the government to allow 180 contract laborers to sign up for work.

The Japanese found harsh conditions on sugar plantations. They worked from dawn to dusk, unaccustomed to the scorching Hawaiian sun. Since they did not understand orders spoken in English, workers were often bullwhipped. (35:9) Special Commissioner Katsunosuke Inouye was sent to Hawaii to investigate charges of cruelty to Japanese workers after the Japanese government learned of the poor working conditions. Japan threatened to stop sending workers unless something was done to stop the abuse. Frightened by the possibility of termination of the labor source and hoping to satisfy Japan's concern for Japanese workers in Hawaii, the Hawaiian government entered into an agreement with Japan making Japanese immigrants wards of the Hawaiian government. Waiting to see if the agreement with Hawaii stopped Japanese worker abuse, Japan did not allow further emigration until 1886. Between 1886 and 1894, 26 ships brought 29,069 Japanese immigrants to the Islands. (35:22) Another 30,000 Japanese immigrants were brought in during the two years after Hawaii's annexation to the United States in 1898.

After the *Organic Act* was passed in 1900, granting Japanese laborers more freedom, there were several strikes for increased wages and better working conditions. Dissatisfied and unhappy, over 40,000 Japanese left for employment in the continental United States. (35:27) This phenomenon, and an outbreak of Bubonic Plague among the immigrants of Honolulu, caused a critical labor shortage in Hawaii. Sugar planters then turned to the Filipinos as a source of cheap labor.

## B. Japanese in the Continental United States

At a current population of approximately 848,000, the Japanese-American population is in stark contrast to its historical population. (54:31) In 1880, two years before the passage of the *Chinese Exclusion Act*, fewer than 200 Japanese lived in the United States. A decade later, Japanese immigrated at an annual rate of 1,000. From 1899 to 1903, another 60,000 entered the United States, largely because of the acute labor shortage in California. (21:268) The *Chinese Exclusion Act* had left many menial and unskilled job positions unfilled.

The Japanese population at the turn of the century was concentrated largely on the Pacific Coast, with the center in San Francisco. (28:133) The majority were rural farmers from southern Honshu and Kyushu. Unlike the Chinese who migrated to urban locations, the Japanese preferred rural farming. The early Japanese farmers and farm organizations laid the groundwork for future Japanese immigrants by providing capital and agricultural expertise. Like the Chinese, the Japanese received few loans from banks, so a Japanese rotating credit association would accept subscriber deposits and give loans to the most needy Japanese workers who wanted to purchase land. The cooperation between the association and the workers was built on trust and honor, and the rate of default was low.

As with the Chinese, the Japanese welcome began to fade as their numbers began to rise. Unlike the Chinese, the Japanese did not disperse. America began to stereotype Asians into two categories: the Chinese as humble and inferior, who could be tolerated, and the Japanese as cunning and aggressive, who required domination to keep them in place. (40:382)

In 1907, President Theodore Roosevelt negotiated a Gentlemen's Agreement that called for Japan to issue passports to Japanese immigrants to the continental United States only if they were coming to join a parent, husband, child, or to return to a former home or farm. (40:383) This agreement greatly diminished Japanese emigration to America. Between 1930 and 1940 the number of Japanese returning to Japan exceeded new immigrants to the United States. This trend continued until the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941. Many Japanese parents sent their children to Japan to be educated. It is estimated that more than 25,000 Asian Americans had been educated in Japan by 1942. (40:389)

### C. Japanese-American Internment During World War II

Until World War II, both the Chinese and Japanese were subject to discrimination under American law. During World War II, employment opportunities opened up to Chinese Americans, while Japanese Americans were stereotyped as potential enemies of the United States. (52:81) Military officials acknowledged the loyalty of most Japanese, but felt that the task of screening the loyal from the disloyal presented too great a problem. Shortly after the start of the war, President Roosevelt signed legislation ordering the evacuation of all persons of Japanese ancestry.

At first the Japanese were given time to leave the West Coast. A few did leave, but found no acceptance in other areas of the United States. Eventually they were told to stay where they were pending relocation under a newly created federal agency, the War Relocation Authority (WRA). Across the Western United States, all those of Japanese descent were transferred to relocation camps. These camps, located in Utah, Arizona, California, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, and Arkansas, resembled military barracks and privacy was minimal. More than 110,000 men, women, grandmothers, grandfathers, children, and babies were kept behind barbed wire and guarded by armed soldiers. The Supreme Court of the United States upheld the constitutionality of the Japanese evacuation. (49:257)

The situation in Hawaii was different, however. Hawaii's population was one-third Japanese at the outbreak of World War II. (40:395) Seen as a source of needed labor, limited restrictions were imposed on the Japanese. However, the lack of evacuation of the Japanese may have been due more to the courageous efforts and deliberate bureaucratic foot-dragging by General Delos Emmons, the military governor of Hawaii. As the war continued, only a few Japanese whose record before the war rendered them suspicious, were interned.

Charles F. Marden sums up the effect of the evacuation in his book, *Minorities in American Society*:

The whole process of evacuation, the operation of the centers, and the effort of the WRA to relocate the evacuees cost time, money, and energy that could have been used for more constructive purposes. (40:397)

#### D. Japanese Americans After World War II

Most Japanese Americans who were interned incurred considerable losses by the forced sale or destruction of property during their absence. The Japanese-American community disintegrated during the war, and after the war much of it was never revived. However, instead of succumbing to bitterness and apathy, most lived up to the Japanese proverb, "Six times down, seven times up." (52:84)

In 1948, President Truman signed an evacuation claims bill authorizing the Attorney General to settle Japanese-American claims of losses incurred as a result of evacuation. Estimates placed the value of Japanese-American losses from \$200 million to \$350 million (41:250), but the Attorney General was authorized to pay individual claims only up to \$2,500. Awards higher than \$2,500 had to have the approval of Congress. The fiscal year 1951 budget contained \$450,000 for evacuation claims, but awards amounted to only \$55,000 and paid only \$26,000 for the first half of the year. (41:251) Many years later, President Carter created a special commission of inquiry that acknowledged the government's mistake and recommended financial compensation to each internee. (49:258)

Following World War II, the Japanese were free to go where they wanted, but news that the Japanese were coming back to the West Coast evoked the same racism that had caused their evacuation. However, White groups and individuals demanded fair play for Asians. (40:399) Court decisions invalidating discriminatory laws and practices against the Japanese and Chinese were handed down between 1948 and 1950. Immediately after the war, the status of the Japanese Americans showed a change from hostility during the war to friendly acceptance. (40:399)

### 3. FILIPINO AMERICANS

Filipinos were the third group of Asians to come to America in large numbers. After changes in immigration laws and the decline of Japanese labor, Filipinos were brought to California and Hawaii in 1907 as a source of cheap labor. After the Spanish-American War of 1898, Filipinos were classified as nationals, free to enter Hawaii. From 1920 until 1935, Filipino immigration increased until the *Tydings-McDuffie Act* of 1934 granted deferred independence to the Philippines. The legislation, supported by California politicians who opposed cheap labor, limited Filipino immigration to a quota of 50 a year. (20:12)

Filipino immigrants had many of the same characteristics as the Chinese and Japanese. Typically, they were young men with a minimal level of education who filled low paying manual jobs such as bellboys, waiters, cooks, busboys, janitors, and hospital attendants. By 1930, 110,000 Filipinos had gone to Hawaii and another 45,000 lived in California. (56:58; 49:260)

Filipinos in Hawaii had different experiences compared to their counterparts in the continental United States. On the Islands, Filipinos did not face racism from the White-American working class, and through a carefully regulated rivalry, Filipinos and Japanese managed to avoid violence. But in the United States, as the Depression of the 1930s worsened, increased objections were made to the presence of Filipinos, and several riots erupted in California.

Unlike Chinese and Japanese men, Filipino men dated and attempted to marry white women. In response, several states passed laws prohibiting marriages between Filipinos and Caucasians. Due to a lack of Filipino females, many Filipino males remained single. The Chinatown pool rooms, gambling houses, and taxi-dance halls became their recreational outlets. (49:262) Filipinos lacked the family ties to establish the same types of formal institutions founded by the Chinese and Japanese.

Some Filipinos circumvented immigration quotas by enlisting in the Armed Forces. In 1942, with the Philippines an American ally, legislation was passed that allowed Filipino residents to become naturalized American citizens. Some Filipinos bought land in California, often from Japanese who were about to be interned.

The Catholic Church and social, cultural, and union organizations have provided a unifying network for Filipinos. In 1980, there were more than 400 social and cultural organizations in California, representing many Philippine provinces. (37:32)

Since the *Immigration Act* of 1965, which eliminated immigration quotas, Filipino immigration levels have been high. The Filipino population in the United States more than doubled in size between 1970 and 1980. (49:263) In 1990, a total of 1,406,770 lived in the United States--almost half recent arrivals--with 92 percent living in urban areas. (54:31) Hawaii has a high concentration of Filipinos, and in the continental United States, Filipinos tend to settle on either the West or East Coast.

#### 4. ASIAN-INDIAN AMERICANS

A year after the first group of Filipinos arrived in Hawaii, workers from India began arriving on the West Coast. Originally from the districts of Ludhiana, Jullunder, and Hoshiarpur, most of the immigrants were Sikhs (members of a Hindu religious sect). Sikh men never shaved their beards or cut their hair. They wore traditional clothing, turbans, a sword or dagger, and were often described as picturesque.

The emigration of Asian Indians was conditioned by British colonialism in India. (56:63) A famine from 1899 to 1902, and the changed laws of land ownership by the British government sent hundreds of thousands of Asian Indians to the British West Indies, Uganda, Mauritius, British Guiana, Canada, and the United States. Fewer than 800 immigrants arrived in the United States from India between 1820 to 1900. (49:294) Between 1900 and 1920, 7,000 Asian Indians immigrated to the West Coast and Canada.

Most Asian-Indian immigrants coming to Hawaii were farmers from the fertile plains of the Punjab (land of five rivers). (56:63) After arriving in Hawaii, they were organized into labor gangs with 3 to 50 workers in a group. The gang leader (the one most fluent in English) received a commission from the gang and was also paid a wage by the employer. The gang leader found employment for workers, negotiated the terms of labor, and acted as a general supervisor. (56:303) Gangs traveled from farm to farm and offered companionship and security that became a substitution for families.

Like other Asians, Asian Indians experienced discrimination and aggression. On September 5, 1907, several hundred Whites raided the living quarters of Hindu workers near Bellingham, Washington, forcing about 700 workers to flee across the Canadian border (49:295). The San Francisco-based Asiatic Exclusion League labeled Asian-Indians a menace. In 1910 and 1913, the courts held that Asian-Indians were Caucasians and eligible for citizenship under the 1790 naturalization act, but in 1923 the U.S. Supreme Court reversed previous lower court decisions (*U.S. v. Bhagat Singh Thind*), ruling that a White person meant an immigrant from northern or western Europe. (56:299) Under the new ruling, Asian Indians, now considered non-whites, were prevented from owning or leasing land because many states had laws against alien land-holding.

About 3,000 Asian Indians returned home between 1920 and 1940. (49:296) The 2,405 remaining Asian Indians, most of who lived apart from society, congregated in Stockton, California. Over the years, because of infrequent intermarriage and the strong retention of Indian culture and society, the Asian-Indian community became stronger and more unified.

Conditions in India were an important factor in the increase in immigration. India is the world's second most populous country (after mainland China), with 15 percent of the world's population on 2 1/2 percent of the world's land. With two-thirds of the population engaged in agriculture, India does not have much to offer in terms of economic security. This helps explain why many recent Asian-Indian immigrants are professionals working as physicians, dentists, and teachers.

There has been a dramatic increase in recent Asian-Indian immigration to the United States. While only 15,513 entered the United States from 1901 to 1965, between 1966 and 1970 24,587 Asian Indians immigrated, 66,650 from 1971 to 1975, and 97,484 from 1976 to 1980. (49:296) Between 1981 and 1990 another 261,841 came to the United States. (31:411) The total of 815,447 Asian Indians in this country in 1990 was just behind the number of Japanese (847,000). (31:569; 54:31)

## 5. KOREAN AMERICANS

The first group of 101 Korean immigrants arrived in Hawaii on January 13, 1903, to work on Hawaiian sugar plantations. (37:13) Economic and political forces pushed out about 8,000 Koreans between 1902 and 1905, and a severe famine struck the northern provinces of Korea in 1902, driving even more peasants from farmlands.

Unlike the Chinese, Korean immigrants came to Hawaii to stay. They had a high rate of literacy (40 percent), and practiced Christianity before they immigrated to Hawaii. (37:14) Korean immigrants quickly adapted to Hawaii's sugar plantations; however, they left the sugar plantations faster than any other group. (37:15) Village councils, acting in a law enforcement capacity, were organized on every sugar plantation that had ten or more Korean families.

Japanese officials resisted the first wave of Korean immigration to Hawaii. Japanese workers would go on strike demanding better working conditions and higher wages, only to see the Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association replace the striking workers with Koreans.

Many of the first Korean immigrants who came to the United States settled in California. During a second wave of immigration, from 1906 to 1945, only a small number of Koreans came to the United States. By 1907, 1,000 Koreans had relocated to work in the copper mines of Utah, the coal mines in Colorado and Wyoming, and on the railroads in Arizona. (56:270)

Koreans were quick to establish churches as soon as they arrived. Most immigrants in the second wave were picture brides (who came to America to marry Korean immigrant males), students, and political refugees. Picture brides came from rural backgrounds. Others were students who were born and raised in urban areas in Korea and chose to go to small universities and colleges in America.

After Korea became a protectorate of Japan in 1905, anti-Japanese sentiments were pervasive in the Korean immigrant community. Koreans in America organized around the movement for Korean independence. More than 20 independence organizations were created by Koreans in America to work toward the restoration of Korean independence, promote business development in the Korean community, and protect freedom and equality among Koreans. The most notable of these independence organizations was the Korea Nation Association. (37:17)

A third wave of Korean immigration lasted from 1946 to 1964. Major reasons for the wave of immigration included the American economic and political influence in Korea, the Korean War (1950-1953), a strong desire among Koreans to study in the United States, and a large number of Korean women who married American soldiers. More than 10,000 Korean students enrolled at American colleges, but only a few returned to Korea. Many Korean women saw marriage to American soldiers as their ticket out of poverty. (37:18) Thousands of Korean children, either orphaned during the war or born of Korean women and American soldiers, were brought to the United States.

The current wave of Korean immigration began with the 1965 *Immigration Act*, signed into law by President Johnson on October 3, 1965. Every year since 1973 more than 20,000 Korean immigrants have come to the United States. (37:20) Currently, there are in excess of 799,000 Korean Americans. (54:31)

## 6. SOUTHEAST ASIAN AMERICANS

Refugees from Southeast Asia came to the United States in three waves. The first wave was Vietnamese, part of a United States evacuation, which came after the collapse of the government of South Vietnam in 1975. In 1975 alone, approximately 130,000 refugees entered the United States from Vietnam, Kampuchea (formerly called Cambodia), and Laos, and between 1975 and 1977 about 1,800 refugees entered per-month. (37:39) In 1990, the population of residents from those countries totaled 911,000. (54:31)

A second wave of boat people came to the United States from refugee camps in Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, and Hong Kong. Not part of the evacuation, there were the Vietnamese who left because of their government's economic and rural resettlement programs and Laotians and Kampuchians who fled from famine, civil war, and political repression. A third wave, beginning in 1978, saw refugees come to United States as a result of the expulsion of ethnic Chinese from Vietnam.

America has struggled with its refugee policy. The United States only admitted a fraction of the millions of people fleeing war and famine in Laos and Kampuchea. Nearly one million refugees remained in camps in Southeast Asia in 1982. Since World War II, there has been no single refugee policy. Policy toward refugee immigration and resettlement has been formulated on an *ad hoc* basis. Refugees admitted before 1980 were parolees, and in the month before the fall of Saigon, the United States government raised, lowered, and raised again the number of Vietnamese who would be allowed in the country. (37:40) It was not until the *1980 Refugee Act* that refugees were given resident alien status, which meant they were eligible for citizenship.

Resettlement of Southeast Asians was accomplished through private voluntary agencies such as the United States Catholic Conference, the International Rescue Committee, the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, and the Tolstoi Foundation. (37:42) The State Department contracted with each of the voluntary agencies to find sponsors who would be responsible for each individual refugee, and the federal government gave the voluntary agency a resettlement grant of \$500 per refugee.

The federal government urged the agencies to disperse the refugees throughout the United States to prevent the development of large Southeast Asian communities that might create hostility and undue strain on local resources. However, within six months after resettlement of the first wave, the refugees tended to relocate, often moving to urban areas in Southern and Western states. (37:42) By 1978, one-third of all refugees resided in California, and by 1983, 90 percent of refugees were located in 10 states. A greater settlement of refugees in Southeast Asian communities was seen in the second and third wave because volunteer agencies were less willing to act as sponsors. In 1983, relatives and families sponsored over 50 percent of the refugees. (37:43)

## 7. PACIFIC ISLANDER AMERICANS

The Pacific Islands can be divided into three groups on the basis of physical and cultural identities. The first group, the Melanesian Islands, are in the Southwest Pacific, Northeast of Australia, and include New Guinea, Fiji, and the Solomon Islands. First colonized by European countries, they are now independent nations or part of Indonesia.

The second group, the Micronesian Islands, are located in the Middle Western region of the Pacific Ocean. These islands are small land areas scattered over 3 million square miles. The United States acquired the largest island, Guam, from Spain in 1898. Guam's residents became United States citizens in 1952. Most of the other Micronesian islands were Trust Territories formed by the United Nations after World War II. Under the Nations Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, the trustee of the territory was the United States. Recently, all of the Trust Territories have become either commonwealths of the United States or independent island nations. They are now the U.S. Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, and Palau. (8:7)

The third group, the larger Polynesian islands in the central and eastern Pacific, were colonized by Great Britain (New Zealand, Tonga), France (Marquesa, Tahiti), and the United States (Hawaii, Somoa). (37:34) Data from the 1990 census show 211,014 Hawaiians, 62,964 Samoans, 49,345 Guamanians, 17,606 Tongans, and 7,036 Fijians are in the United States. (6:269; 54:31)

#### A. Pacific Islander Immigration

Before 1941, immigration to the United States from the Pacific Islands was minimal. As with other immigration, political events, poor economic conditions, and an exploding birth rate caused many Pacific Islanders to immigrate after World War II.

The largest migration has come from American Samoa. The United States and Germany divided Samoa into American Samoa and Western Samoa at the end of the 19th century. Persons born in American Samoa are United States nationals. The United States has controlled American Samoa continuously and New Zealand controlled Western Samoa from World War I until independence in 1962. From 1900 to 1951, the Navy administered American Samoa. The naval presence ended when the base moved to Hawaii in 1951, and Samoans connected with the naval base were allowed to immigrate to Hawaii. Nearly 1,000 Samoans, five percent of the 20,000 residents, moved to Hawaii. (37:35)

Since then, immigration to Hawaii and to the West Coast of the United States has increased. Like other Asians, Samoan culture stresses the extended family and kinship system. (49:271) Original Samoan immigrants, who moved to the United States through military enlistment or assignment, became the first link in a chain that eventually saw entire family units migrate. When one family unit became too large, adult members moved out and formed other kin-connected residences. (37:35,36) In 1986, more Samoans lived in the United States (62,964) (most in southern California) than the entire American Samoa population in 1980. (37:35)

Migration from Guam is similar to that from American Samoa. Guamanians traveled to the United States for relatively high paying jobs in the armed forces. Little is known about the migration of other Pacific Islanders, because the 1980 Census was the first actual count of Asian-Pacific Americans by specific categories. (6:269)

## 8. NATIVE HAWAIIANS

Spanish mariners may have visited previously, but Hawaii was not generally known to the White population prior to Captain Cook's arrival in Hawaii in 1778. Captain Cook, flying the British flag, was on a 10-year expedition in the Pacific. While trying to reach the North American coast, he accidentally discovered Kauai, the large island farthest to the Northwest. (23:7) After Cook's arrival, fur traders, sandalwood traders, and whalers of the North Pacific established themselves at the Islands. (58:1) The majority of the world's whaling fleet operated in the Pacific and the majority of the ships were from New England. The cultivation of sugar replaced whaling as the largest industry in Hawaii during the 1860s.

Until the middle 1800s, except for missionaries, few Americans came to Hawaii. However, when the Hawaiian sugar plantations began to grow and flourish, so too did American influence and power. When they needed more labor, the Americans brought Chinese, Japanese, and Filipinos to work on the sugar plantations. Conquest and disease brought by the foreigners reduced the native Hawaiian population. Although disputed, some estimates of the native Hawaiian population were as high as 300,000 in the 1770s, to less than 135,000 fifty years later, to about 70,000 at the time of the first formal census in 1853. (7:9)

Facing American expansion in the Pacific during the 19th century, Hawaiians found their islands gradually transformed, their sovereignty eroded, and their culture and social fabric undermined. (7:8) They believed their islands would soon be annexed after the passage of the Monroe Doctrine in the 1840s.

In the latter half of the 1800s, White Americans established a firm control over Hawaiian society. In 1893, when negative reactions by native Hawaiians arose concerning annexation by the United States, a small but powerful minority of Whites overthrew the government of Queen Liliuokalani, leading to a provisional government favorable to annexation. The government was overthrown with the aid of 154 bluejackets from the *USS Boston*, who landed ashore and marched 250 yards past the Queen's palace. (58:178) It was indeed ironic that the White settlers, viewed with awe and friendliness by the natives, would later overthrow the government.

Five years later, against the backdrop of a war with Spain, the United States annexed Hawaii. The annexation of Hawaii was consistent with a large policy of a two-ocean fleet with appropriate bases for it. Before the war, a strategic argument for the annexation of Hawaii had received little attention. If not for the Spanish-American War, Hawaii might not have been annexed for years. (58:311)

The sugar industry remained Hawaii's economic backbone through the 1930s. About one-third of the population lived on plantations and were dependent on the sugar industry for employment. Under United States tariff laws, after 1900 the sugar industry was afforded equal treatment with mainland sugar. However, in the 1930s, the *Jones-Costigan Sugar Act* seriously reduced Hawaii's sugar quotas. The Act outraged the community, and without congressional representation, they felt they could

not expect equality. In the view of native Hawaiians, the need for statehood was not just for political, but also economic reasons. (7:61)

#### A. Statehood for Hawaii

There were arguments for and against statehood. One argument considered Hawaii's strategic importance. The *New York Times* reported in 1940 that the United States was the only Western power whose position in the Pacific was compromised. The other argument resisted statehood since one-third of Hawaii's population was Japanese. There were doubts about the loyalty of Japanese residents in Hawaii. It was believed that only some kind of crisis could indicate which view was the correct one. (7:75) The crisis occurred at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941.

After World War II, statehood faced new energies and pressures. Hawaii had previously been isolated from the continental United States' issues of the communist threat and civil rights for ethnic minorities. Hawaii's admission threatened to disrupt the conservative coalition of Republicans and Southern Democrats. In March 1947, the House Public Lands Committee recommended for the first time that the House of Representatives approve statehood. For another 12 years, Hawaiian statehood would be an annual issue in Congress. In 1959, Alaska's Senator Bartlett said, "Everything that can be said . . . on the subject of Hawaii statehood, for or against, has been said." (7:271) In that same year the Senate (composed of 46 Democrats and 30 Republicans) voted for Hawaiian statehood. Fourteen Democrats and only one Republican voted against it. President Eisenhower signed the Hawaii Statehood Bill on March 18, 1959.

After generations of Americanization, it is difficult to assess the actual reward statehood brought to Hawaii. On the United States mainland, no one had seriously contemplated giving Hawaii self-government as an independent nation. Hawaii was too integrated into America's economic, political, and ideological structure. However, on November 23, 1993, President Clinton signed the Apology Resolution acknowledging the historical significance of the 100th anniversary of the illegal overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawaii on January 17, 1893. The resolution also apologizes to native Hawaiians on behalf of the people of the United States and urges the President to support reconciliation efforts between the United States and the native Hawaiians. Opposition arose to the resolution when some Senators believed the resolution would provide for a legal basis for special treatment or for the return of land. (2:1)

### **III. MILITARY CONFLICTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS**

There is clear evidence of Asian and Pacific Islander American abilities and willingness to serve the U.S. honorably. Prior to World War II, there is little documented about the contributions of Asian and Pacific-Islander Americans to the country's defense. A notable exception, however, was the Army's Philippine Scouts, formed after the Spanish-American War. Members of the Philippine Division fought in World War I and World War II, but the Philippine Scouts were decommissioned in 1947. (25:253)

## 1. WORLD WAR II

World War II would be a turning point for the relationship between White Americans and Asian and Pacific-Islander Americans. Whites could not logically oppose the racist ideology of Nazism while at the same time practicing racial discrimination. Formerly treated as strangers, Asian and Pacific-Islander Americans would now be asked to support their country and serve its Armed Forces. The war required immigrants and their children to define and delineate their identity as Asians and as Americans. (56:357)

### A. Chinese American Contributions

The day after the Pearl Harbor attack, the United States and the Republic of China declared war on Japan. The Chinese Americans were faithful in their support of the defense of their homeland against Japanese imperialism. Chinese Americans could serve in the military if they had no dependents in the United States. Most were male, of draft age, and eager to fight. Chinese-American boys, too young for the Armed Forces, enlisted by giving their Chinese age, usually a year or two older. (56:373) World War II was important to Chinese Americans because it was the first opportunity for many to get out of Chinatown, make a contribution to American society, and receive the same treatment as European immigrants. The war also provided employment opportunities for Chinese-American women.

### B. Japanese American Contributions

At the beginning of the war, Japanese Americans were classified as 4-C enemy aliens, not eligible for military service. Some joined the Hawaii Territorial Guard, assigned to guard vital civilian installations. However, Japanese-American members of the Guard were discharged six weeks later without any explanation. Disappointed, Japanese Americans turned to the military governor and offered themselves "for whatever service you may see fit to use us." (35:150) On February 25, 1942, the military governor authorized the formation of the Varsity Victory Volunteers (VVV), a group of 169 University of Hawaii students. They worked building roads and fences, stringing barbed wire, and maintaining military buildings. They lasted only a year; however, the hard work and dedication of the VVV had a significant, positive impact on military officials.

At the time of Pearl Harbor, there were 1,432 *Nisei* (a person of Japanese descent, born and educated in the U.S.) volunteers in the Army. About 200 were members of the 1399<sup>th</sup> Engineering Construction Battalion, the rest were in the 298<sup>th</sup> and 299<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiments, who guarded the shorelines during the early days of the war. Six months after the attack on Pearl Harbor, the Army transferred all Nisei soldiers, except those from the 1399<sup>th</sup>, to Camp McCoy in Wisconsin. Because

some military officials thought the Japanese Americans would be difficult to distinguish from the men of the Japanese army, it was believed they should be used in combat only in the European Theater of Operations. They would be the first combat unit composed of only Japanese Americans, the 100<sup>th</sup> Battalion.

### C. The 100<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion and 442<sup>nd</sup> Regimental Combat Team

The 100<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion nicknamed themselves One Puka Puka (puka means hole in Hawaiian), and landed at Salerno Beach in southern Italy on September 22, 1943. Their success came at a very high price and they were named the Purple Heart Battalion. Casualties were so high that 202 men were sent from the 442<sup>nd</sup> Combat Team to fill in the ranks. Additionally, at Civitavecchia, Italy, the 100<sup>th</sup> Battalion became a part of the 442<sup>nd</sup> Regimental Combat Team. (35:152)

In 1943, the War Department had a change of attitude regarding military service by Japanese Americans and called for 1,500 volunteers. Within a month 9,507 Nisei volunteered, and 2,645 formed the nucleus of the 442<sup>nd</sup>. Among the volunteers were many members of the Varsity Victory Volunteers. The 442<sup>nd</sup> trained as a unit for one year before being shipped to Italy where they joined the 100<sup>th</sup> Battalion at Civitavecchia. After service in Italy, they reached France, taking on the Germans in the Rhineland Campaign. According to the French, the 442<sup>nd</sup> did not just push the Germans out, they "wiped 'em slick." (29:25) Every few years, a reunion is alternately conducted in Hawaii or France commemorating the liberation of the Sain Die region by the 442<sup>nd</sup>.

One of the 442<sup>nd</sup>'s best-known exploits was the rescue of 275 men of the 141<sup>st</sup> Regiment of the 36<sup>th</sup> (Texas) Division. The Lost Battalion had been cut off in France and previous rescue attempts were unsuccessful. The 442<sup>nd</sup>, supported by artillery of the 36<sup>th</sup> Division, rescued the Lost Battalion in less than a week at a cost of 800 casualties. The Lost Battalion gave the 442<sup>nd</sup> a plaque, which read:

With Deep Sincerity and Utmost Appreciation for the Gallant Fight to  
Effect Our Rescue after We Had Been Isolated For Seven Days.  
(35:160,162)

In less than two years the 442<sup>nd</sup> distinguished themselves in seven major campaigns, receiving over 18,000 individual decorations. Members of the 442<sup>nd</sup> were probably the most decorated unit in United States military history. Ironically, coincident with their heroic efforts, many of their parents and relatives were interned in detention camps. (56:402)

Although Japanese-American soldiers had been in the Pacific since Guadalcanal in early August 1942, there was little publicity about them. (35:164) Military authorities thought it was important to keep Japanese-American participation in the Pacific secret to be effective. Japanese Americans contributed to the Battle of Midway by intercepting messages, and towards victory in the Battle of the Philippines by translating captured battle plans and sending them to Admiral Halsey, Admiral Nimitz, and General MacArthur. After the occupation of Japan, Japanese Americans assisted with communication and administration of the occupation at all levels of government.

#### D. Filipino-American Contributions

Seven hours after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, Japanese forces invaded the Philippine Islands. At the Bataan Peninsula on the Philippines, thousands of Filipinos fought beside American soldiers. After the fall of the Philippines, Filipino Americans worried about loved ones still on the island. Filipinos wanted to get back to the Philippines to fight for the liberation of their homeland. After President Franklin Roosevelt changed the draft law in 1942, 40 percent of the California Filipino population registered for the draft. (56:359)

In 1942, the First Filipino Infantry Regiment and the Second Filipino Infantry Regiment were formed. As members of the Armed Forces, Filipinos were allowed to become citizens, and on February 20, 1943, 1,200 Filipino soldiers stood proudly in "V" formation at the parade ground of Camp Beale as citizenship was conferred on them.

#### E. Korean American Contributions

Many Korean Americans welcomed World War II, hoping it would lead to the destruction of Japan and the restoration of Korean independence (Korea had become a protectorate of Japan in 1905). (56:364) At first, government policy failed to distinguish Koreans from the Japanese. In Hawaii, Koreans were classified as enemy aliens and had to wear badges with black borders. After protests, Korean Americans were allowed to have printed on their badges, "I am Korean." (56:366)

Koreans had an invaluable weapon in the war: they knew the Japanese language, and they were often employed as translators of Japanese secret documents. In Los Angeles, 109 Koreans formed the Tiger Brigade of the California National Guard. On August 29, 1943, Korean National Flag Day, the Los Angeles mayor raised the Korean flag to honor the men of the Tiger Brigade as they marched past City Hall. Korean women served in the Red Cross, and elderly Korean men volunteered as fire wardens.

#### F. Asian-Indian American Contributions

The United States needed India's cooperation in the war against Japan. Japan could push westward, trying to join forces with Germany in the Near East. In an effort to build goodwill with India, in March 1944, Congress considered a bill that would provide a quota for immigrants from India and naturalization rights for Asian Indians. Two years later Congress permitted India to have a small immigration quota and granted Asian Indians naturalization rights.

## 2. KOREAN WAR

The division of Korea between North and South at the 38th parallel was chosen as a convenient demarcation at which Russian and American forces could accept the surrender of the Japanese in 1945. (44:39) The 38th parallel was hardened by the inability of North Korea and South Korea to agree on

the structure of a unified Korea. About 10 million people, approximately one-third of the Korean people lived North of the 38th parallel. The ambition of the North Korean Workers Party, molded by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, was to reunify Korea under communist rule. South Korea, slightly smaller in land size than the North, was home to over 25 million people. Under American occupation from 1945 to 1948, a variety of political parties were formed in South Korea, each representing factional support among the Korean elite. (44:42)

In 1949, the United States military forces withdrew from South Korea as part of a policy of military pullback from Asia. Taking advantage of the American pullback, and assured of Stalin's continued support from the Soviet Union, North Korean forces moved across the 38th parallel on June 25, 1950.

Immediately after the invasion, America pledged its support to Korea, and quickly built forces there to 600,000. Peace had taken its toll on American soldiers, who were ill prepared to meet the challenge. In 1950, threadbare American units were hurriedly filled with South Koreans, termed KATUSAs (Korean Augmentation To United States Army). (25:253) The achievements of Asian and Pacific Islander Americans during the Korean Conflict confirmed their loyalty and patriotism. Asian and Pacific-Islander American troops were not segregated into separate units in the Korean War; however, like other minority groups, Asian and Pacific Islander Americans suffered disproportionately heavy casualties. (7:88) Despite extensive support from the Communist Chinese and the Soviet Union, the North Koreans were driven back. An armistice was signed in July 1953, and in October 1953, the United States signed a mutual defense treaty with South Korea. A military problem that remains today is that no peace treaty has ever been signed to end the Korean War. The two sides talk to each other regularly around a table in a shed at the 38th parallel in the city of Panmunjom.

### 3. VIETNAM CONFLICT

During the Vietnam conflict era, recruits represented a variety of class, race, and gender groups. Throughout the Korean War, and for several years after its end, about 70 percent of draft-age American men served in the military. However, those who fought and died in Vietnam were largely drawn from the bottom half of the American social structure. For Asian and Pacific Islander Americans, even the most basic statistical information about their role in Vietnam remains unknown. (3:12) The 1990 Census reflects 88,118 Asian and Pacific Islander-American Vietnam veterans or just over one percent of all Americans who served. Since the Armed Forces did not track Asian and Pacific Islander Americans during those years, there is no accurate count of their actual participation.

One dimension of the Vietnam experience was unique to Asian and Pacific Islander Americans. They endured friction, and often abuse, not only from the American public, but also from within the ranks of the military itself due to their physical and cultural background similarities in the eyes of non-Asian Americans. As a result, many of these veterans came home with not only war-induced stress, but also with race-related, post-traumatic stress disorder. (64:17) That Asian and Pacific Islander American veterans of Vietnam contributed so much as part of the military service and still remained loyal to their country is a testament to their fortitude and character.

#### 4. ASIAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER AMERICAN MEDAL OF HONOR WINNERS

The following Asian and Pacific Islander Americans have received the Medal of Honor:

1. 1911, PVT Jose B. Nisperos, Philippine Scouts.
2. 1915, Fireman 1st Class Telesforo Trinidad, United States Navy.
3. 1942, SGT Jose Calugas, Philippine Scouts.
4. 1945, PFC Sadao S. Munemori\*, 100th Infantry Bn, 442nd Regimental Combat Team, United States Army.
5. 1951, CPL Hiroshi H. Miyamura, United States Army.
6. 1951, PFC Herbert K. Pililaa\*, United States Army.
7. 1951, SGT Leroy A. Mendonca\*, United States Army.
8. 1967, S/SGT Elmelindo R. Smith\*, United States Army
9. 1969, SFC Rodney J. T. Yano\*, United States Army.
10. 1969, CPL Terry Teruo Kawamura\*, United States Army.

\*Awarded Posthumously

### IV. CURRENT ISSUES AMONG ASIAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER AMERICANS

#### 1. CURRENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Asian and Pacific Islander Americans currently number 10.5 million and comprise approximately 3.9 percent of the population of the United States. (50:1) That figure is expected to rise to 9 percent of the nation's population, or approximately 40 million, in the year 2050. (16:13) Today's population reflects the outcome of a rapid growth in population. The 1990 census reflects that the number of persons of Asian and Pacific Islander descent almost doubled between 1980 and 1990, from 3.7 million to 7.2 million. The Asian and Pacific Islander American population has grown 10 times faster than the overall United States population and 70 percent of all Asian and Pacific Islander Americans are either first or second generation immigrants. (13:29) In 1996 alone, the population of Asian and Pacific Islander Americans grew by approximately three and a half percent. (14:7). This rate of growth is one factor that will make Asian and Pacific Islander Americans more visible in the years to come.

With a median age of 31.1 years, Asian and Pacific Islander Americans are over six years younger than the median age for the non-Hispanic, White population. (10:1) Unlike other minority populations, Asian and Pacific Islander Americans, comprising 27 percent of the 10 percent of U.S. residents who are foreign born, have a greater increase in population because of migration to, rather than birth in, the United States. (14:7) The majority of Asian and Pacific Islander Americans live in three states: California, Hawaii, and New York. (14:46).

Throughout history, Asian and Pacific Islander-American men have far outnumbered women. However, there has been a shift in the gender of Asian and Pacific Islander Americans immigrating to

America. In 1992, there were 155 Filipino women for every 100 Filipino men immigrating. For Koreans and Japanese, women outnumbered men 145 to 100. For Chinese immigrants, women outnumbered men 122 to 100. The shift in gender can be explained due to new laws encouraging nurses to immigrate, marriages of Asian women to servicemen, and women finding easier access to low paying service jobs in hotels or nursing homes. (60:8A) Census Bureau projections indicate that Asian-Pacific American women will continue to immigrate to this country in higher numbers than men do every year through at least 2050.

With well over 400,000 in Honolulu alone, Asian and Pacific Islander Americans have constituted the majority of Hawaii's population for nearly a century (70 percent at last census). Three hundred thousand Chinese live in New York City, the largest Chinese community outside of China. About one-fourth of San Francisco's population is Asian. In California, Asian and Pacific Islander Americans (nearly a million in Los Angeles alone) represent nine percent of the state's population, surpassing the African-American population. As of September 4, 1998, the states with the most Asian and Pacific Islander Americans were (in the thousands) California (3,777), New York (953), Hawaii (749), Texas (524), New Jersey (424), Illinois (383), and Washington (311). (53:1)

The above sampling of statistics relative to the Asian and Pacific Islander American population represents more than just numbers. The continued influx of Asian and Pacific Islander Americans is very significant. For example, as part of the overall picture of population growth through immigration, Asian and Pacific Islander Americans will play a vital role in helping to maintain economic growth for America. The average American is getting older and fertility rates have been declining, so immigration will become the major source of population increases. If there were no immigration, population would decrease over the next 50 years, and it is difficult for a nation to experience a rising economy when the population is decreasing. (5:73)

Another significance of Asian and Pacific Islander-American population growth through immigration is that these diverse cultures will require greater shares of common resources and will have greater input as to how wealth and capital are distributed. In addition, new domestic markets for goods and services must be satisfied as culturally based demand is generated. Finally, with the increasing population, the proportion of Asian and Pacific Islander Americans in the civilian labor force is expected to increase at a rate of approximately three and a half percent a year until the year 2006. (26:1) Suffice it to say that assimilation and accommodation of Asian and Pacific Islander Americans will take on more and more importance in coming years. Likewise, their collective contribution to the demographic landscape of America will also be enormous.

## 2. ASIAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER AMERICAN LEADERSHIP IN THE MILITARY SERVICE TODAY

As of March 1998, there were 46,848 Asian and Pacific Islander Americans on active-duty. They comprised 2.6 percent of all officers, 1.9 percent of warrant officers, and 3.4 percent of the enlisted community. (17:12) The total Asian and Pacific Islander-American population within the active-duty forces is 3.3 percent, up 1 percent since 1988. In general, the population is rising consistent

with Asian and Pacific Islander-American population projections of the United States, according to the 1990 Census. The Navy has the largest percentage of Asian and Pacific Islander Americans at 5.7 percent; followed by the Army, 2.6 percent; Coast Guard, 2.4 percent; Air Force, 2.3 percent; and the Marine Corps, 2.1 percent. (17:13-17)

Within the enlisted community, Asian and Pacific Islander Americans have slightly higher percentages of representation at the more senior levels, especially at the E-9 level. However, within the officer distribution, Asian and Pacific Islander Americans have the greatest percentage of representation at the junior level (O-1 through O-3). As of July 1998, there were three Asian and Pacific Islander American active-duty members at the rank of O-7 or higher, all Army.

The overall U.S. population trend towards more Asian and Pacific Islander-American women than men is reflected in the Armed Forces as well. From approximately 1.6 percent in 1988, the percentage of Asian and Pacific Islander-American women in the Armed Forces nearly doubled to 3.1 percent by 1998. (17:18) Not surprisingly, the percentage of DoD civilian Asian and Pacific Islander-American women is much higher at 5.3 percent. (17:34)

Asian and Pacific Islander Americans number 38,299, or 5.4 percent of all DoD civilians. Of these, 20 currently hold Senior Executive Service (SES) positions (17:33). Asian-Pacific American reservists account for 2.5 percent of the total (892,000) Armed Forces Reserves. (17:19) It is important to note that the Asian and Pacific Islander-American presence and influence within our Armed Forces is certainly much larger when considering the population of dependents of U.S. military and civilian personnel.

### 3. EDUCATION

Between 1980 and 1990, Asian and Pacific Islander Americans were the fastest growing ethnic group in higher education. While total enrollment was 14.3 percent during the period, Asian and Pacific Islander Americans experienced a 100 percent increase from 286,000 to 573,000. (30:455) In the early 1990s, 90 percent of Asian and Pacific Islander-American students aspired to go to college.

The 1990 census showed that Asian and Pacific Islander-American high school graduation rates varied widely however, from 31 percent for Hmong to 88 percent for Japanese. For Pacific Islanders, high school graduation rates varied from 64 percent for Tongans to 80 percent for Hawaiians. Asian-Indians earned the most bachelors degrees (58 percent) while Tongans, Cambodians, Laotians, and Hmongs earned the lowest percentage (6 percent or less) (45:2) Nine out of 10 men, and eight out of 10 women, in the Asian and Pacific Islander-American community have high school degrees. (24:2)

Regardless at what point in the education process, many Asian and Pacific Islander Americans have made the most of their opportunities to learn. Thirty-six percent of Asian and Pacific Islander Americans are in the top third of their fourth-grade class, 43 percent in the top one-third of their eighth-grade class, and 46 percent in the top third of their twelfth-grade class. (31:149)

Asian and Pacific Islander-American high school seniors also show greater participation in higher level mathematics and science courses than the average student. They frequently score higher on the SAT and have higher degree aspirations. They are more likely to major in biological sciences, engineering, and health, and less likely to major in education. (30:496)

Opportunity for learning in the world's leading universities has long been a primary factor behind a great deal of Asian and Pacific Islander-American immigration. For example, children of Korean immigrants often describe their parents' obsession with the Ivy League. Leaders at these schools estimate that nearly five percent of their students are Korean-Americans, while this group constitutes less than one percent of the total U.S. population. (32:50)

Asian and Pacific Islander-American representation at prestigious colleges and universities far exceeds their representation in the population as a whole. As of 1995, Asian and Pacific Islander-American enrollment at the University of California, Los Angeles, was 40 percent of the total, as is the enrollment at University of California, Berkeley. (61:14; 55:90) In 1990, 1,282 Asian and Pacific Islander Americans received doctorates, and another 3,336 received their first professional degree. (31:169) Forty-two percent of Asian and Pacific Islander Americans have completed college. (14:47).

Although Asian and Pacific Islander Americans consist of a small fraction of America's students, they have achieved a disproportionate share of academic success. Some of the keys to this success are reported to be high standards of parents and peers, a strong belief in the outcome of effort, positive attitudes about achievement, diligent study habits, and less schoolwork interference from jobs and peer social distraction. (11:1215)

#### 4. INCOME

Although Asian and Pacific Islander Americans have higher educational standards, their per capita income is lower than that of the White-American population. In 1997, the median per capita income for Asian and Pacific Islander Americans was \$18,226, compared to \$20,425 for White Americans. Asian and Pacific Islander Americans with a bachelor's degree had an annual income of \$37,000, compared to \$42,000 for White Americans. (43:ix; 14:47).

The median family income for Asian and Pacific Islander Americans was, however, higher than that of the White-American population. Asian and Pacific Islander-American family income was \$45,249 in 1997, compared to \$40,577 for White Americans. One reason for this difference might be that Asian and Pacific Islander Americans have an average family size of 3.2, compared to the 2.6 family size of White Americans. (43:ix)

Family poverty levels among Asian and Pacific Islander Americans have decreased from 12.2 percent in 1989 to 10.2 percent of the population being below the poverty level in 1997. However, the percentage of individuals below the poverty line is higher than that of White Americans. Fourteen

percent of Asian and Pacific Islander Americans are below the poverty level, while only 11 percent of White Americans are below the poverty level. (15:vii).

## 5. THE GLASS CEILING:

Unfortunately, despite federal laws, Asian and Pacific Islander Americans still experience legal, social, and economic discrimination. Chinese Americans find federal employment extremely difficult. (9:209) Like other minorities, Asian and Pacific Islander Americans often experience the glass-ceiling phenomenon during their struggle to climb the ladder to success. While true at all levels, this problem is especially visible in managerial ranks and senior level professional positions. Frustration with hierarchical limitations of the corporate world has also caused many Asian and Pacific Islander Americans to pursue additional higher education with the hope it will make them more competitive. (4:16)

As a result of discrimination, many have also left companies to start their own businesses. Some Asian and Pacific Islander Americans are escaping these problems by taking advantage of economic opportunities in Asia itself. This type of employee turnover can be very costly for U.S. businesses.

Economically, many Asian and Pacific Islander Americans are still in the ethnic niche composed of restaurants, laundries, grocery stores, and similar businesses. (9:209) The 1990 census showed that almost all Asian and Pacific Islander-American groups have higher than average rates of self-employment than the national average. Koreans were most likely to be self-employed (27 percent) with other Asian groups at 10 percent or above. The only Asian group with self-employment rates similar to non-Asian U.S.-born individuals (5 percent) was Filipino-Americans. (30:512)

### A. Breaking the Glass Ceiling

Asian and Pacific Islander Americans are actively organized in seeking ways to address the difficult problem of glass ceilings in business as well. To accomplish this, the Asian and Pacific Islander American community is looking at leadership from an Asian cultural standpoint as well as across cultures to understand how different cultures affect the behavior of potential leaders. Several organizations to counter this problem have been formed.

One example of an organization with these goals is the Asian-Pacific American Women's Leadership Institute (APAWLI). This unique program is the most extensive and valuable program for Asian and Pacific Islander American women, designed specifically for them. Asian and Pacific Islander American leaders from across the country come together to discuss relevant issues and analyze and develop leadership styles. Well-known Asian and Pacific Islander Americans such as Connie Chung attend and share experiences with other Asian and Pacific Islander American women. (46:6-7)

The Executive Development Institute (EDI), founded in 1993 by the Japanese-American Chamber of Commerce, is another such organization. The EDI is intended to spur Asian and Pacific

Islander-American professionals and managers “to become risk-takers, to move beyond what is comfortable and to achieve their highest level of accomplishments.” During the nine-month program, the institute provides opportunities for sharing, networking, and support as well as training in public speaking, self-promotion, mentoring, and strategic management. (46:5-6)

## 6. BUSINESS

In 1987, Asian and Pacific Islander Americans owned 355,000 businesses, a 328 percent increase in just 10 years. (31:44) By 1992, there were 705,697 firms owned by Asian and Pacific Islander Americans. Almost half of those businesses however, are in the service sector. (38:3;11)

Asian and Pacific Islander-American entrepreneurship has played an important role in their upward mobility in our society. Successful Asian-American small businesses have been explained as middlemen businesses between relatively privileged and underprivileged groups or niche businesses providing unmet host country needs. The fact remains, however, that the number, size, and diversity of Asian-owned businesses is increasing. These businesses are providing valuable services to our communities and are a major source of employment to a growing minority. (30:527-28)

In the 1990s, Asian and Pacific Islander Americans have continued to make remarkable progress. Stanford graduate and Internet entrepreneur **Jerry Yang** co-founded the Internet search company, Yahoo!, in 1994. Yahoo! became an instant success. In 1996, when the company made its initial public offering, share prices jumped from \$13 at the start to \$33 at the day’s close, making Mr. Yang a multi-millionaire. When the company reached its peak, it was valued well in excess of a billion dollars. (59:1) **Dr. David Ho** was voted *Time* magazine’s 1996 “Man of the Year” for his ground breaking AIDS research on the effects of protease inhibitors and other antiviral drugs on HIV. Dr. Ho joined the likes of Kennedy, Churchill, and King on the cover of *Time* for how he “shaped the course of this century’s history.” (1:3)

Innovative entrepreneurs have collectively created new retail industries. In 1995, approximately 85 percent of all produce stores in New York were Korean-owned, as well as 3,500 grocery stores, 2,000 dry cleaners, 800 seafood stores, and 1,300 nail salons. (32:45) However, while earlier immigrants have gone on to bigger ventures, Korean entrepreneurs remain in small grocery and retail stores. When ready to expand, Koreans vertically integrate their businesses by obtaining wholesale and distribution firms that supply their businesses. (51:2B) The positive impact of small Korean businesses has been profound, especially in urban areas. In New York, for example, whole neighborhoods have been rescued from decay and schools and churches have been reinvigorated.

Similarly, Asian-Indians are dominant in convenience and stationery stores and create competitive advantages by pooling resources and exercising buying leverage. In 1994, Asian- Indians owned and operated nearly 45 percent of America's budget motels/hotels. (42:35)

Chinese Americans have also made a visible impact in business and industry. **I. M. Pei** is among the world's most famous architects. He is the designer and architect of the Kennedy Memorial

Library and the new wing of the National Art Gallery. In 1957, Chinese-born physicists, **Yang Chen-ming** and **Lee Tsung Date**, were the first Chinese Americans to win the Nobel Prize. **Dr. M. C. Chang** discovered the birth control pill. **An Wang** was the creator of the memory chip and has a multi-million dollar electronics business, and **Rocky Aoki** founded the famous Benihana restaurant chain. (57:89)

Filipino Americans have been active in labor. **Carl Damsco** served as president of the Hawaii branch of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union. Important leaders of the farm workers movement were **Larry D. Itilong**, **Philip Vera Cruz**, **Pete Velasco**, and **Andrew Imutan**. (37:32)

Expert projections show that the 3.2 million Asian and Pacific Islander-American workers in 1990 will more than triple to 10.2 million by 2020. (48:29) Asian and Pacific Islander Americans are projected to have a growth rate of 3.5 percent through the year 2006 in the civilian labor force, the largest projected growth rate for any segment of our population. (26:1)

## 7. ASIAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER AMERICAN LEADERSHIP IN THE POLITICAL PROCESS

Asian and Pacific Islander Americans have not been a powerful electoral force in the past. This may be in part due to the different philosophies on politics. (66:114) In the 1980s, Asian and Pacific Islander Americans rarely won federal or state elections in the continental United States. However, the 1990s have shown a reversal of that trend. In 1993, 731 Asian and Pacific Islander Americans held elected or appointed positions in state, county, or local government. (31:724-725) **Gary Locke** was elected the first Asian and Pacific Islander American governor of a continental state, Washington, on November 5, 1996. It was **Wing Luke**, one of the America's first Asian and Pacific Islander American city council members who inspired Locke to get into politics. **Locke** stated, "I was completely mesmerized. I realized that if I really cared about the issues affecting our community, I ought to run for office." Not only will minority representation ensure Asian and Pacific Islander Americans are protected, but it will promote group pride and encourage others to enter the political arena. (1:4)

One reason for this positive trend in Asian and Pacific Islander Americans in government, might be the attention Asian and Pacific Islander Americans have been paying to organizational strategies. (27:69) In 1992, there were over 5,200 private and public organizations concerned with Asian and Pacific Islander-American issues, according to the Asian-Americans Information Directory. This growing base of advocate groups can be expected to increasingly influence public policy and perceptions via lobbying efforts and by helping to increase the public awareness of Asian and Pacific Islander Americans. A recent example is the Congressional Asian-Pacific American Caucus Institute (CAPACI) formed in 1995. The CAPACI goals include "being a national umbrella for grassroots Asian-Pacific American organizations throughout the country." (34:3)

Asian and Pacific Islander American elected political influence is greatest in Hawaii, where Asian and Pacific Islander Americans are a majority of the population. Soon after Hawaii gained statehood in 1959, **Hiram Fong** and **Daniel Inouye** became the first Asian and Pacific Islander Americans to be elected to Congress. (27:70) In 1990, Hawaii's governor, lieutenant governor, and 54 state senators and representatives were Asian and Pacific Islander Americans. At the state and local levels, Asian and Pacific Islander-American appointed officials are concentrated in California and Hawaii.

Prior to 1976, there were few Asian and Pacific Islander American political appointments. From 1976 to 1980, more Asian and Pacific Islander Americans were appointed to Presidential Commissions, advisory councils, and federal judgeships than in all other previous administrations combined. In 1988, President Reagan appointed the first Asian and Pacific Islander American, **Sherwin Chan**, to the United States Commission on Civil Rights. In 1989, President Bush appointed **Elaine Chao** as Deputy Secretary of Transportation, the highest office ever reached by an Asian and Pacific Islander American in the Executive Branch. President's Bush and Clinton appointed 124 and 197 Asian and Pacific Islander Americans to federal positions, respectively. (31:723; 62:11) During the Clinton administration there has been unprecedented Asian and Pacific Islander American involvement in key government positions.

Further evidence of Asian and Pacific Islander American progress is in the high visibility they have recently had in various aspects of the political scene. In the Clinton administration Asian and Pacific Islander Americans are recognized as much for their work for the nation as for their progress for their community. Asian and Pacific Islander-American politicians are widely known now in important inner circles by their first names, for example Bob and Doris Matsui. (62:11)

For the first time, the percentage of Asian and Pacific Islander Americans in a Presidential Administration approximates their representation in the total U.S. population. In areas such as San Francisco, where the Asian and Pacific Islander American population represents a large constituency, political representation through appointments to local posts is also roughly equivalent to population ratios. During his acceptance speech in February 1996, newly appointed San Francisco Supervisor, **Michael Yaki**, commented that he saw government as an asset, rather than a hindrance, to society's social and economic advancement. (63:7) His observations and those of **Gary Locke**, mentioned above, signal the significance of Asian and Pacific Islander-American involvement in politics at every level.

#### A. National Asian and Pacific Islander American Political Unity

Established ethnic-specific advocacy groups have taken on broader constituencies and pan-ethnic goals as well. One such example is the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL). Established in 1930 as a Japanese-American organization, it now represents other Asian and Pacific Islander American communities, building political leverage and speaking as one voice. (27:65-66)

Various Asian and Pacific Islander American organizations are also banding together to make a concerted effort to establish a unified coalition of forces to speak clearly and convincingly on Asian and Pacific Islander-American issues. Asian and Pacific Islander-American leadership summits have been organized in recent years, bringing together leaders from throughout the country to discuss how to tackle the task of forming coalitions. (65:1)

A sign of progress absent just a decade ago, this important national effort now involves six groups. These groups include the Asian-Pacific American Labor Alliance (APALA), Congressional Asian-Pacific American Caucus Institute (CAPACI), Japanese-Americans Citizens League (JACL), National Asian-Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA), National Asian-Pacific American Legal Consortium (NAPALC), and the Organization of Chinese Americans (OCA). Asian-Pacific American political organizations historically had limited their broad-based organizational strategies to the local and regional levels. Their current goal is to provide “one voice, the one presence--perhaps in the nation’s capital--to constantly remind politicians of the issues facing Asian-Pacific Americans.” (65:1-2)

## V. IMMIGRATION – PAST AND PRESENT

The first *Naturalization Act* in 1790 offered benefits only to Whites. Persons of African descent were permitted to naturalize in 1870. Another amendment to the *Naturalization Act* in 1940 permitted naturalization of almost all persons except Asians. (12:281) In 1952 that naturalization became an option for all Asians. With the ability to be naturalized it became easier to immigrate and to have relatives join the immigrants. With immigration as the major source of growth among the Asian and Pacific Islander-American community, the importance of the topic cannot be overstated.

The immigration system is subject to little judicial oversight. It is a creation of Congress, and is run by executive agencies, such as the Immigration and Naturalization Service. Unlike other laws that are challenged for unconstitutionality, immigration and naturalization laws have very little judicial recourse. Therefore, many of the Constitutional protections afforded other laws are inapplicable in this context. (33:1-14)

### 1. PRE-WORLD WAR II IMMIGRATION LAW

From approximately 1776 to 1875 America needed settlers to populate the country. Immigration was promoted as a result of that need. (33:2-6) With increasing Asian immigration in the late 1800s, exclusionary immigration policies began to develop. A prime example of such a policy is the *Chinese Exclusion Act* of 1882. Similarly, in 1885 and 1887, Congress passed the *Contract Labor Laws*, aimed at decreasing cheap foreign labor. (33:2-7). The year 1917 saw the passage of the Asiatic Barred Zone (legislation aimed at keeping Asians out of the United States). The immigration-restricting Gentleman’s Agreement between the governments of the United States and Japan resulted in Japan being the only country exempt from the Asiatic Barred Zone. (33:2-9).

The *Immigration Act of 1924* tied immigration to the right to naturalize. Immigration was made difficult for those who were not eligible for naturalization. As Asians were not permitted to naturalize, they were not permitted to immigrate. (12:281) The 1924 Act was also the genesis of the quota system. This system limited the number of people emigrating to the United States based on the number of people in the United States as of 1920 who originated from the country from which the prospective immigrant was applying. Persons from Western Europe were exempt from these provisions. (33:2-10).

## 2. POST WORLD WAR II IMMIGRATION LAW

During World War II, China was the most important allied power in Asia. China's support was essential to contain the spread of the Japanese Army. The hypocrisy of excluding the Chinese through the *Chinese Exclusion Act* while asking for their support during the war soon became apparent. This became particularly poignant with Japanese propaganda aimed at undermining the support of the Chinese by pointing to the racism in the American immigration system. In 1943 the *Chinese Exclusion Act* was repealed and the Chinese were permitted to naturalize. In 1946 Filipinos and Indians were permitted to naturalize, and in 1952 all Asians were given this same privilege. (12:282-285). Though Asians were permitted to naturalize, the numbers in which they could naturalize were low because of the quota system.

With a newfound appreciation of the importance of immigration laws, proponents of a bill in 1952, which would have eliminated discriminatory quotas, argued that the current legislation undermined the Korean War effort. (12:294) The bill was defeated and the quota system stood. It was later argued the debilitating effects of the Communist propaganda in Korea and Vietnam based on discriminatory immigration laws far outweighed any projected benefits of immigration control. (12:292, 296)

The 1952 Immigration and Nationality Act established special racial quotas for Asians, but once again exempted countries in the Western Hemisphere. (33:2-13). Countries were given quotas of one-sixth of one percent of the number of inhabitants currently in the United States who traced their ancestry to that country in 1920. Therefore, the lower the number of inhabitants from a particular country of origin, the lower the number of quotas available for citizens of that country. (12:279)

Legislation in 1965 was groundbreaking in that for the first time race was not a factor in immigration. The national origins provision was abolished, and a new one begun. (12:298) All persons became subject to quotas; however, there were still substantial preferences for persons from the Western hemisphere. (36:1-9). The Eastern hemisphere had a limit of 170,000 visas per year, a maximum of 20,000 from any one country, and was subject to a preference system based on skills and family relationship. Immigrants with certain employment skills and close relatives were given priority as to when they would be permitted to immigrate to the United States. The Western Hemisphere had a limit of 120,000 visas per year and was not subject to the preference system or the per-country limitation. (12:298) The number of people applying from the Western Hemisphere was also much smaller.

### 3. CURRENT IMMIGRATION LAW

The underlying framework of the 1965 legislation is still substantially in effect. In 1976, the preference system was extended to the Western Hemisphere. (33:2-21) The number of immigrant visas given worldwide steadily rose until 1990 to 700,000 annually, then decreased to 675,000 annually. (33:2-39) There are currently three tracks of immigration: family sponsored, employment related, and diversity based. A particular country cannot exceed the cap of seven percent of the worldwide visas for the family sponsored and employment based categories. (33:1-24)

#### A. Family Sponsored Immigration

The majority of the immigrant visas are from this category. A citizen or a legal permanent resident can be reunified with members of his or her family by requesting or acting as a sponsor for them. There is a worldwide annual cap on this figure of 480,000, and different preferences depending on the status of the immigrant. Close relatives of United States citizens are given the highest priority. The process can take months or years depending on the country of origin of the immigrant and degree of proximity of the relationship.

Applications for immigrant visas are dated and a chronological priority system has developed. As only a certain number of applications can be processed annually from each country, once that number is reached, no further applications are considered. The following year, the remaining applications will be considered in chronological order. This creates a backlog of several years depending on how many people from any particular country have applied. For example, brothers and sisters of adult United States citizens applying for an immigrant visa today will have to wait until over 10 years' worth of prior applicants have their petitions considered. The backlog is so large for certain countries and categories that applications for them are not currently being accepted. (33:1-24-26)

#### B. Employment Based Immigration

Recognizing the need for certain skilled immigrants, each year 140,000 people are given employment visas. Once again, how quickly a certain group obtains a visa is based on the type of skill that immigrant possesses. The categories vary from extraordinary persons, such as researchers and professors, to those who invest a million dollars in an enterprise that creates at least 10 jobs. (33:1-22) (Canada has a similar provision but requires a lower investment amount of \$250,000). As a result, many of the residents of the former Hong Kong are now living on Canada's West Coast. Certain countries such as India may have periods of ineligibility because of an oversubscription for such visas. (33:1-26)

#### C. Diversity Based Immigration

An annual number of 55,000 immigrants are given visas for permanent residence if they are from countries that have a low representation of admission in the United States during the previous

five years. In 1999, 21,409 visas were allocated for countries in Africa, 7,254 to those in Asia, 23,024 to those in Europe, eight to those in North America, 837 to Oceania, and 2,468 to countries in South America. Citizens from the countries of Canada, China, Columbia, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, India, Jamaica, Mexico, Philippine Islands, Poland, South Korea, the United Kingdom, and Vietnam were ineligible to participate in the diversity lottery. (22:394-95) It is interesting to note that there are over three times as many diversity visas available for Europe, a continent represented by the majority of the population, than there are for Asia, a continent represented by less than four percent of the population.

#### 4. DIFFICULTIES IN ASIAN IMMIGRATION TODAY

Asians are at a disadvantage in their piece of the annual worldwide quota. Simply put, there are many more of them asking to share that piece than is the case for other continents. The reason for this is partly historical. Due to past immigration laws, relatives living in the Western Hemisphere could immigrate to the United States with little difficulty prior to 1976. The demand for family reunification may, therefore, be lower for them now. In contrast, Asian immigrants being relatively recent, must now contend with significant backlogs created by the flood of family sponsored applicants.

### VI. CONCLUSION

Approximately 50 years ago, Asian and Pacific Islander Americans were given the ability to become citizens of the United States. With the ability to naturalize has come a sense of belonging and affiliation with the United States. Asian and Pacific Islander Americans are increasingly growing roots in American soil, and each year thousands of talented and industrious new immigrants join them, contributing immeasurably to the United States.

Today, Asian and Pacific Islander Americans are becoming increasingly integrated in the mainstream of American society. Second and third generations of Asian and Pacific Islander Americans are part of society while, at the same time retaining their distinct culture and heritage. In becoming a part of American society, Asian and Pacific Islander Americans are becoming more politically vocal and have increased the number and size of their businesses.

As a country of immigrants, we speak in the same voice for our mission and our vision of a better life.

As a nation, our harmony in diversity is not an absolute, but it is something that we work toward and are getting better at achieving. I think that is because we share one thing in common. Whether our ancestors endured hardship to escape from tyranny and poverty of a distant land or from the tyranny and poverty of slavery, they became American citizens to seek a better life for themselves and their families. This common goal ties us together in a relatively harmonious community that is unique in the world.

Fred Pang, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Force Management  
Policy, May 17, 1997 (19:1)

In this goal, we are fundamentally the same. We aspire to the same ends. In the Department of Defense we support the ability of our country to provide a better life, and we defend its borders and interests to ensure all of us can continue with our dream. In envisioning a better life, and together, making this our mission, we are an example to the rest of the world of what a diverse community can achieve when its members work together.

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