

Undated: Asian American: Breaking Down Stereotypes

Senator Daniel K. Inouye Papers
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**** -- Most Asian Americans would find it difficult, if not impossible, to differentiate between an Irish-American and a German-American, or for that matter, between an Italian-American or a Spanish-American.**

*Maybe Masochia - mas Satou
Redness -*

- voice of anguish, shame, anger

- One stands taller

● Why? Because they all look alike.

And, in the same way, an Irish-

American may find it difficult, if

not impossible, to differentiate

● between a Chinese-American and a

Japanese-American or Korean-American

and a Vietnamese-American.

●

Why? Because we all look alike. The above may sound humorous and facetious, but it does describe a major problem that exists in our community.

● ** -- We don't take the time to
acquaint ourselves with each other --
neighbors -- each other's cultural
heritage, each other's contributions
● to our national history -- so we rely
on stereotypes:

●

- stereotypes generated by prejudice, hatred, and lack of respect;

- stereotypes generated by exaggerated war stories; or stereotypes generated

- by a false sense of superiority.

**** -- Needless to say,**

productive and friendly relationships

between diverse peoples cannot be

based upon a foundation of negative

stereotypes. And this seems to

describe the present day situation.

**** -- Our nation is fast
approaching that moment in our
history when the European Americans
will no longer constitute the
majority of our nation's people. We
will soon be a nation of diverse
ethnic and racial minorities --**

- minorities viewing each other with unease, distrust, and in some cases, outright hatred. This nation cannot long survive as a viable democracy under these conditions.
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● ** -- So what should we do?

1. Recognize and

acknowledge the existence of this

problem -- racism up front. Let's

● attack racism -- as an evil disease.



2. Improve our

educational system -- (cite

statistics on illiteracy). This

situation cannot be tolerated. Equal

opportunity is not possible with

unequal education.

3. Convene a summit
conference of national leaders to
openly and candidly discuss this
matter. A national dialog must be
started.

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4. Begin a national

educational program utilizing our

school systems, business leaders, and

their communities, national ethnic

leaders, together with expert

guidance, to simply acquaint

ourselves with each other.

**** -- Today, for example, we
are confronted with a problem brought
about by misunderstanding and the
lack of open dialog. May I explain.**

- ** -- Those who know anything about global trade will agree that today's world marketplace is in the Pacific. This is where the

- opportunities exist for growth, development, and creativity.



Yet, in listening to the American
debate, one would get the impression
that that is still Europe and the
Atlantic.

*Dollar value of Trade -
double 1979 1-4 Feb*

** -- The two most important
powers in the Pacific are Japan and
the United States.

- For this reason, it would seem

obvious that good relations be

maintained between these two nations.

Because any deterioration would

- result in economic, political, and

social havoc for the United States

and Japan,

-

● as well as the other Pacific Rim
nations.

** -- On the other side of
America, Europeans have realized that
● as separate nations,

- it would be very difficult to compete against such economic powers as the United States and Japan.

Accordingly, they have coalesced and

- pooled their strengths. Together, they constitute a formidable economic force,

-

- and are calling for open competition with both the United States and Japan, and may also consider playing one against the other.

- In closing, I believe it is well that we remind ourselves that bashing --

-

● whether it be Japan-bashing, China-bashing, Philippine-bashing, Vietnam-bashing -- that all bashing begin with eloquent words. They are well

● couched with words of diplomacy.

●

- This diplomatic rhetorical bashing is then taken up by those who are accustomed to harsher words -- words of hate, words of racism, and words of anger. Rhetorical bashing can then easily deteriorate into violent bashing.
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- It was not too long ago when two unemployed auto workers in Detroit beat a Chinese person to death.

Their explanation of innocence was

- their belief that they were beating a Japanese. Somehow they felt justified in beating a Japanese.

● Eight months ago, our nation
paused to observe the 50th
anniversary of the bombing of Pearl
Harbor.

● I hope that Americans, after 50
years,

●

● will begin to put behind us the pain
and hatred that December 7th

represents. We should not continue
to look back to the past by keeping

● this pain and hatred in the forefront
of our memories --

●

● it can only hamper and narrow our path into the 21st Century. We, as Americans, must look forward, closing the dark chapter of December 7, 1941, and each nation accepting each other's hand of friendship.

●

Hand-in-hand -- let us move forward
for the next 50 years.

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