

SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION ANDREW H. CARD JR.  
ASIAN AMERICAN FESTIVAL  
AUGUST 8, 1992  
MILE SQUARE PARK, FOUNTAIN VALLEY CALIFORNIA

Event: Opening ceremony. 10-13 minute remarks

Thank you Bau Van Nguyen (WIN) and all you organizers for the invitation to join you today on this very special occasion.

Rudyard Kipling -- the British poet -- once said that "East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet." He said that exactly 100 years ago. But that was in another century and on another continent. Here, today, in America, his words couldn't ring more false. East does meet West and we're all better for it! America -- and especially California -- has been greatly enriched by its Asian Pacific Citizens.

California itself -- given the large number of people of Asian Pacific heritage -- is a true melting pot of Asian Pacific cultures and learning. As one Asian businessman described his background: "My body was made in India, my science was learned in England, and my management philosophy comes largely from the Japanese. But I'm putting it all together in California."

As you know, our President -- whom you will be hearing from tomorrow -- and this Administration, is strongly committed to family values. And Asian Pacific Americans typify our nation's commitment to the principles of hard work, honesty, education and sacrifice.

The contributions made by the Asian Pacific community to this nation are well known. Designer I.M. Pei ... musician Yo Yo Ma ... Nobel Prize winners Leo Esaki and Yuan Lee ... to name but a few examples ... have enriched all of our lives.

But you have contributed more than inspiration. Throughout this country, Asian Pacific Americans are bolstering our economy. From small "mom and pop" stores to large multi-national corporations, you are in the forefront of creating new job opportunities for all Americans -- and we appreciate and applaud your entrepreneurial spirit.

But today there are some dark clouds over the American dream of opportunity. The recent riots in Los Angeles and the terrible tragedy of Asian Pacific stores being burned and looted have shocked all Americans.

To see one's business -- the work of 25 years or more -- reduced overnight to ashes, is a deeply disturbing thing.

But in America, racial discrimination and hatred will not be tolerated or accepted under any condition. And this Administration will do all it can not only to see that your businesses are restored, but to see that your rights as Americans will be fully respected. Nothing less will do! Asian Pacific Americans are part of the fabric of this country and no one may rip it apart!



The time has come to finally put sorrow behind and once again rebuild your lives. As President Bush recently said in an address to the Asian Pacific community." You came to this country to earn your share of the American dream -- don't let this tragedy shatter it for you."

And don't let this tragedy especially shatter your belief in democracy -- the ideals of political participation, of voting and running for office.

Politicians all over this country are awaking up to the fact that Asian Pacific Americans are the fastest growing and most affluent minority in the U.S. It's time that you put your influence to work -- to better your lives and enrich America even further.

Today, more Asian Pacific Americans are running for office than ever before. And that's the way it should be. This nation's survival depends upon the participation of all its citizens -- no one should be or feel left out.

I, in fact, come from a family where political participation was the norm -- not the exception. Let me tell you a story about my grandmother -- no doubt some of you have a similar story to tell . (Grandmother Story).

So, my Grandmother was a major influence in my life -- an agent for change you could say. Just like the President is a positive agent for growth and change in this country and around the globe (President as agent of change remarks).

I've spoken long enough ... let me stop here.

Thank you again for the invitation to be here today. Enjoy yourselves .. take part in all the festivities .. and have a good time.