

The background of the cover features a light gray, textured map of Japan and the United States. Japan is positioned in the upper half, and the United States is in the lower half, with the Pacific Ocean between them. The map has a topographical or relief-like texture.

# **Japan-US Women Leaders Dialogue**

Community Development and the Role of Women

Institute of International Education  
Japan Center for International Exchange

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## **Foreword**

**Richard M. Krasno**

President

Institute of International Education

**Tadashi Yamamoto**

President

Japan Center for International  
Exchange

In the last several decades, women in Japan and the United States have assumed increasingly important roles in the transformation of their societies. In both countries women have become leaders in their communities, promoting voluntarism and seeking to address problems in the areas of community development, childcare, education, public health, the environment, care for the aged, and other issues. However, in spite of the many common concerns faced by women in these two countries, there have been relatively few opportunities for Japanese and US women leaders at the local and national levels to meet, discuss issues, or join forces in addressing common problems.

In order to stimulate greater dialogue among women in these two countries, the Institute of International Education (IIE) initiated the *Japan-US Women Leaders Dialogue* in cooperation with the Japan Center for International Exchange (JCIE) and with support from the Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership (CGP) and other donors. The Dialogue was created in order to provide opportunities for Japanese and US women leaders to exchange ideas on major social issues facing their communities and to discuss the role women play in addressing these issues through leadership in nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), citizens groups, and voluntary service activities. The program was designed to enhance mutual understanding between the two societies and to stimulate the development of networks through which the participants in the Dialogue would be able to work together on issues of professional concern.

In the first phase of the project, a delegation of six women leaders from various regions of the United States traveled to Japan during the period January 23–February 5, 1993. The delegation visited Tokyo, Yokohama, Fukuoka, and Kanazawa to meet with their counterparts and learn directly about Japanese society and culture while sharing with their Japanese counterparts their experiences in the United States. During the second phase of the Dialogue, a reciprocal delegation of six Japanese women leaders visited the United States from June 6–19 of the

same year. Following a similar program outline, these leaders visited Los Angeles, Spokane, Chicago, and New York to meet with related counterparts in these locations.

Throughout both parts of this exchange, the Japanese and US delegations were able to deepen their understanding of the host culture and society. Participants have also begun promoting follow-up activities to further their relations. Although there may be differences concerning specific issues confronting both nations, a great number of similarities were discovered in the issues faced by women in both societies, such as the role women play in social reform. Although both societies have been pursuing very different approaches to such fundamental issues, it was also realized that individuals in both countries have a great deal to learn from each other. Another benefit of this project has been that those striving to foster the development of a US-Japan community of concerned individuals have been provided with new insights, thus the basis for a cooperative network of leaders to promote such relations can hopefully be established.

The delegation members of both sides, serving as individual representatives of their respective communities, have by now begun to share experiences gained in this program with others in their communities. It is hoped that this small circle of 12 individuals will gradually spread its influence throughout the US-Japan community as a whole. In addition, in order to share these experiences with a wider audience, the Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership has provided supplementary funding to produce a report providing a record of this exchange initiative.

Through the cooperative activities of IIE and JCIE, we hope that the ties between women community leaders in the United States and Japan will become an established and viable network that will provide a stepping stone to full-fledged activities in communities in both countries—supported by citizens groups and nongovernmental and nonprofit organizations (NGOs and NPOs). In light of such needs, both IIE and JCIE plan to promote the continuation of this project with a second exchange of women leaders. During the first project, more than 200 individuals representing a wide array of organizations became involved in this endeavor. We would like to express our deepest gratitude to each and every one of these individuals. In addition, we would also like to express our gratitude to the Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership, as well as those US institutions and corporations for their support of the aforementioned initiatives. Our appreciation goes out to these sponsors and individuals. It is our hope that these individuals and organizations will also consider assisting us in meeting the future needs and goals of our joint effort to build a strong and ongoing Japan-US Women's Network.

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**Peggy Blumenthal**  
Vice President for Educational  
Services, IIE  
and  
**Shaun Martin**  
Manager of Asia/Pacific Programs, IIE

### **Overview of Project History and Activities**

In the spring of 1992, IIE's Vice President for Education and the Arts held several advisory meetings in New York, Washington, and Boston with women of local and national prominence in order to identify issues for the Dialogue and to help identify possible candidates for the US delegation. In July 1992, IIE and JCIE held a planning meeting in New York to establish the overall framework of the project. Although the project as originally conceived by IIE was meant to provide opportunities for women leaders in the academic, government, and private sectors to meet and discuss issues facing women, JCIE suggested concentrating the focus more specifically on the nongovernmental sector. Since women in both Japan and the United States are a major force for societal change through their activities in voluntary and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and since little attention has been given to exchanges and dialogue among women in the private voluntary sector, JCIE suggested that a more innovative and fruitful dialogue would give greater emphasis to the role women play in societal change through activities in the nonprofit or independent sector, rather than a more general discussion of women's issues in the two societies. IIE readily agreed to this more focused theme of the Dialogue.

This meeting was followed by a series of consultations held in Japan by JCIE with Japanese women leaders and representatives from nonprofit and women's organizations likely to serve as hosts of local programs. The consultations resulted in the selection of institutions in Yokohama, Fukuoka, and Kanazawa to serve as local hosts for the US delegation.

With the more concentrated focus of the Dialogue, IIE began its national recruitment effort in October, 1992, targeting women based at NGOs covering a broad range of social issues. Over 250 letters were sent to various organizations requesting nominations for the Dialogue. By the November 20 deadline, IIE had received the nominations/applications of 42 women, each a leader in her local community.

After consultation with JCIE, IIE selected six women to serve on the US delegation to visit Japan in January, 1993. The delegation members were selected based

on their own outstanding personal qualifications in addition to considerations of geographic, ethnic, and professional diversity. The women leaders selected for the US delegation were:

Ronne Hartfield  
Director of Museum Education, Art Institute of Chicago  
Chicago, Illinois

Ruth Hinerfeld  
Former President, National League of Women Voters  
Larchmont, New York

Elizabeth Humstone  
Director for Community Stewardship, The Countryside Institute  
Burlington, Vermont

Irene Redondo-Churchward  
Executive Director, Project Info Community Services  
Los Angeles, California

Susan Virnig  
Founder and Senior Consultant, Northwest Regional Facilitators  
Spokane, Washington

Bernarda Wong  
Executive Director, Chinese American Service League  
Chicago, Illinois

The delegation, led by Peggy Blumenthal, IIE's Vice President for Educational Services, visited Japan for two weeks, from January 23 to February 5. Accompanying the delegation on the Japan study tour were: Hideko Katsumata, Executive Secretary, JCIE; Shaun Martin, Manager of Asia/Pacific Programs, IIE; Mio Ohta, Program Officer, JCIE; and Terumi Takenaka, Program Officer, JCIE. A staffmember of CGP's New York office, who accompanied the delegation during the entire visit, was joined by staffmembers of CGP's Tokyo office in each of the cities visited on the study tour.

The study tour began in Tokyo with briefings on the current status of women in Japan by women professionals in academia, business, and government. The delegation then traveled to Yokohama, Fukuoka, and Kanazawa, for meetings with women's groups and community leaders, and site visits to NGOs and places of cultural significance. The tour ended in Tokyo with a workshop that brought together the US delegation members and women leaders from various regions throughout Japan. The delegation members discussed their experiences in Japan and their impressions of Japanese society, NGOs, and the women who have become an important ingredient for social change in the country.

Upon returning to the United States, IIE staff and the six members of the US delegation immediately began preparations for the visit of the reciprocal delegation

of Japanese women leaders. Drawing upon what they had learned about Japanese women and NGOs, the US delegation members arranged for meetings with women leaders of their respective communities and site visits to outstanding organizations, which would represent the diversity of activities carried out by NGOs in the United States and could serve as models for Japanese organizations in their efforts to become more effective in their respective missions.

Members of the Japanese delegation were recruited by JCIE based upon recommendations from women's centers, citizens groups, opinion leaders, and others in various regions of Japan. After an initial screening and interview process, the following six delegates were selected to participate in the program:

Yoshiko Hayakawa

Editor-in-Chief, *Ishikawa no Tamago* (Eggs in Ishikawa)

Kanazawa

Yoriko Imasato

Editor-in-Chief, *Living Fukuoka*, West Japan Living Newspaper Company

Fukuoka

Haruko Numata

Coordinator, Suginami Association for Better Lives in an Aging Society, Association to Provide Friendship Lights

Tokyo

Yaeko Suzuki

Chairman, We Love Asia 21

Yokohama

Mitsuko Yamaguchi

Executive Director, Fusae Ichikawa Memorial Association/Women's Suffrage Institute

Tokyo

Kimie Yokoyama

Director, Workers Collective "Des Femmes"

Yokohama

The group visited the United States on a two-week study tour, from June 6–19, 1993, led by Hideko Katsumata, Executive Secretary at the Japan Center for International Exchange. They were accompanied by Mieko Iijima, Program Assistant, JCIE; and Shaun Martin, Manager, Asia/Pacific Programs, IIE. Joining the group for a portion of the tour were Peggy Blumenthal, Vice-President for Educational Services, IIE; Karyn Wilcox, JCIE New York; and Yoo Fukazawa, Center for Global Partnership, New York.

The study tour began in Los Angeles with briefings by academics and government leaders on the current situation of women and NGOs in the United States and in the Los Angeles area. The group then traveled to Spokane, Chicago, and New

York for continued meetings and site visits. A final workshop, held at IIE's New York headquarters, brought together all 12 program participants to discuss their experiences, issues of common concern, and how women in both countries may continue to build networks and exchange ideas in the future. At the final workshop, several additional women leaders joined the discussion, including Susan Berresford, Vice President of the Ford Foundation, who gave a keynote address on the role of philanthropy in supporting NGOs and emerging women leaders.

### **Detailed Summary of the US Women Leaders' Japan Study Tour Activities**

#### **January 23–February 5, 1993**

The delegation of six US women leaders visited four cities during their two-week stay in Japan: Tokyo, Yokohama, Fukuoka, and Kanazawa (for a list of participant names see page 4). In each of these cities, the delegation members visited local women's centers and community groups where they exchanged views on issues facing their respective communities, measures US and Japanese NGOs have taken to address these issues, and the role of women as a force for social change at the community, regional, and national levels. The goal of these meetings was to create an ongoing dialogue, highlighting areas of mutual concern shared by Japanese women and their US counterparts, and the fundamental differences in the situations faced by the two groups. Brief descriptions of the organizations visited in each of these cities are outlined below.

#### *Tokyo, January 23–26*

The study tour began in Tokyo, the nation's bustling political, commercial, and cultural capital. Here the participants were briefed on current issues facing Japan, Japanese women, and Japanese nonprofit organizations (NPOs) by prominent women (and a few men) in government, business, the media, academia, and the nongovernmental sector. The delegation also visited the HELP Asian Women's Shelter and stopped at the *Sensoji* Temple in Asakusa on a brief sightseeing break. At a reception hosted by CGP, the delegation had the opportunity to meet many CGP staffmembers and learn more about their programs and interests.

#### **HELP Asian Women's Shelter (The House in Emergency of Love and Peace):**

HELP is a women's shelter that provides refuge, counseling, and legal services to women from many countries, particularly those from Southeast Asia, who have found themselves trapped working in the Japanese sex-related industry. Facilities at the center include single and double rooms, a dining room, kitchen, bath, and a children's room. In 1991 HELP provided shelter for 332 women and received telephone inquiries from over 2,000 individuals seeking advice on a wide range of problems.

#### *Yokohama, January 27–28*

Following their stay in Tokyo, the group moved on to the nearby port city of Yokohama, which was one of the first cities in Japan open to the outside world.

The delegation was hosted by the Yokohama Women's Forum. At the Women's Forum and at the Alternative Lifestyles Opportunity Center, roundtable discussions were held with local volunteer groups active in the community on a variety of issues such as the environment, the arts, and battered women.

**Yokohama Women's Forum for Communication and Networking:** The Yokohama Women's Forum (YWF) is an ultramodern women's center financed and built by the City of Yokohama. The Women's Forum provides a place for women in the community to meet and discuss women's issues. Among the facilities at YWF are a library; conference and seminar rooms; a 380-seat auditorium complete with a sound-proof listening room for parents with small children; a workshop and kitchen; a fitness room; a childcare center; a counseling room; a health education room; and a fully equipped, state-of-the-art video studio available to members of the community.

**Women's Place:** In 1984, the group's founder translated into Japanese *The Adventures of Princess Alice*, a fairy tale told from a woman's perspective. After several major Japanese publishers declined to publish the book, Women's Place found a helping hand in the Yokohama Women's Forum. To date 70,000 copies have been sold, and an annotated English version of the book is now used in high school English classes. In addition, a picture book version is available for young children. A series of tapestries depicting scenes from the tale has been made from old clothing and is used in a travelling show that tells the story to children.

**Naka Ward Women's Forum:** Supported by the Yokohama Women's Forum, this group was founded by concerned housewives who believed that city planners did not take into consideration the needs of women and senior citizens. They produced a video showing what a city would look like if it were planned by women. The video was shown at a festival held at YWF and ultimately led to some changes in government planning. Recently, the group responded to the city's growing waste problem by initiating a successful clothing recycling program in which donated clothing is sent to developing countries, used in the making of carpets or industrial cloth, or used to wrap machinery.

**Artnet:** Artnet is a group composed of any two or more arts groups that come together for a common purpose. Artnet has no fixed number of member groups. The Yokohama Women's Forum supports these groups and asks them to perform and exhibit their work at the Forum. The majority of Artnet members are women. Currently, YWF and Artnet are promoting feminist art, which receives very little support from the public.

**Michaera House:** This is a women's shelter run by a group of Roman Catholic nuns and is the only such facility in Yokohama. The women who come to Michaera House are those escaping abuse from their husbands or parents, runaway pregnant teenagers, and girls referred to the shelter by juvenile courts. Although it receives almost no outside assistance, the shelter has been forced to accept more and more women each year—from 98 women in all of 1990 to 135 in the first quarter

of 1992. A television network has offered to make a drama series based on the stories of the women; however, the sisters at Michaera House are reluctant. In spite of the much-needed increased public awareness, they are afraid that the stories may endanger women seeking refuge.

**Alternative Lives Opportunity Center:** This is an umbrella organization that provides space for the activities of its member organizations, some of which are described below. Members include consumer cooperatives, information clearing-houses, and workers collectives. The directorship rotates among the member groups.

**Seikatsu Club:** The Seikatsu Club is a consumers' cooperative group that was founded in 1965, when a Tokyo housewife organized 200 women to buy milk collectively. This strategy to save money eventually evolved into an entire philosophy encompassing all aspects of life. In addition to cost-effective collective purchasing of basic food items, the club is committed to a host of social concerns, including the environment, the empowerment of women, and the improvement of workers' conditions. Today the Seikatsu Club has over 153,000 members in 10 prefectures throughout Japan. Beginning in 1979, the club became active in local politics. Campaigning on the slogan of "Political Reform from the Kitchen," in 1987 the club succeeded in getting 31 housewives elected to municipal assemblies in the Tokyo area in a single election. The cooperative movement has now spread to Korea.

**Association of Workers' Collectives:** This unique organization is a network of 60 "workers collectives" engaged in a wide variety of activities including restaurant management, care for senior citizens, manufacturing soap from recycled cooking oil, and publishing newsletters. Members of the collectives are volunteers, not paid professionals. A collective is started by women interested in working for themselves, not for others, and interested in making a contribution to the betterment of society. One example is the restaurant "Des Femmes." Staffed by eight volunteer women who had no prior formal training, the restaurant is committed to serving only homemade foods using fresh and natural ingredients produced by cooperatives. Kimie Yokoyama, proprietor of "Des Femmes" and an active member of the Association, was a member of the Japanese delegation which visited the United States in June, 1993.

**Kanagawa Network Movement:** After an unsuccessful attempt to persuade local assemblies to ban the use of synthetic detergents, the Seikatsu Club formed its own local political party in 1984 called the Kanagawa Network Movement (NET). Today, with a membership of over 2,500 housewives, NET has successfully seated 29 women in local assemblies. NET promotes grassroots citizen participation in solving local problems in the environment, community welfare, education, and peace, etc. As a principle, all women elected through NET are required to donate their entire legislator's salary to the NET party and are limited to two four-year terms, at which time they must step down to allow other candidates to run. Members

take turns caring for the children and doing household chores for those women campaigning for and serving in office.

**Alice Center:** Alice Center is an information clearinghouse that aids citizens in promoting volunteer activities in such areas as the environment, peace, and the elimination of racism. The main function of the Center is to refer citizens groups to experts, not to provide answers directly. Alice Center also publishes a bimonthly newsletter, provides management seminars to citizens groups, and recently advised the government on how it could best support citizen activities.

*Fukuoka, January 29–30*

In Fukuoka, a booming industrial city on the island of Kyushu, the delegation was hosted by the Fukuoka Women's Center, AMIKAS. After a tour of the city and a visit to Fukuoka's new city museum, meetings were held with representatives from local volunteer groups and with women prominent in the media, academia, government, and business.

**Fukuoka Women's Center (AMIKAS):** AMIKAS (from the Latin word for friends) is a social facility aimed at facilitating women's independence and their equal participation in society. Funded by the City of Fukuoka, AMIKAS provides space for both women and men to meet, discuss issues, study, and train. At the facility are a library, skills classes, counseling services, fitness facilities, and lectures on women's studies and women's self-development. AMIKAS also conducts research on women's issues and publishes information on local events and organizations in the city.

**Living Fukuoka:** This newspaper was founded and is run by a woman for women of the area. Fukuoka is known as a city of branch offices. Many men are transferred there temporarily by their companies, bringing their wives with them. These women are unfamiliar with the area and may not have family or friends in the city. This newspaper serves as a medium by which women in Fukuoka learn about local activities and events. The paper also features stories on women's issues. The editor-in-chief of this newspaper, Yoriko Imasato, was a member of the Japanese delegation that visited the United States in June, 1993.

**Workers' Study Group on Garbage:** This study group was established in 1990 by a group of 20 housewives in order to raise public awareness of the issue of ever-increasing garbage and to pursue the potential of recycling. Their activities include field studies on garbage, making postcards from milk cartons, and organizing recycling bazaars. They also have produced and sold six hundred reusable cloth shopping bags.

**Hakata Yume Matsubara no Kai:** This environmental citizens' group, comprised mostly of women, was founded in 1987 in order to create a greener Fukuoka. Their primary activity is to plant pine trees along a stretch of artificial beach on Hakata Bay.

**Island Summit:** Island Summit promotes cooperation and the exchange of people living on small islands in Northeast Asia and the Pacific Ocean. Among the islands included are Kyushu, Taiwan, Saipan, Guam, and Cheju.

*Kanazawa, January 31–February 2*

From Fukuoka the delegation moved on to Kanazawa, a snowy city on the Japan Sea known for its remarkably well-preserved traditional architecture and culture. The delegation was hosted by the City of Kanazawa. The group visited the traditional Japanese garden, *Kenroku-en*; the Utatsuyama Crafts Workshop Center; Shijima Elementary School; the workshop and gallery of the world-famous pottery maker, Chozaemon Ohi; the Kanazawa Art Museum; and *Zenrinkan*, a senior citizen center.

**Utatsuyama Crafts Workshop Center:** The Utatsuyama Crafts Workshop Center is a school dedicated to teaching, exhibiting, and preserving the traditional crafts of Japan, particularly those of the Kanazawa area. The school has programs in pottery, *urushi* (laquerware), dyeing, glass-making, and *zogan* (inlaid metal work). Student works are exhibited at the school's gallery. Because of the stringent entry requirements and the individualized attention given to students, the school is able to accept only about 30 students each year. Applications are accepted from foreign students provided they can demonstrate the necessary Japanese language skills. The school also provides workshop sessions for Kanazawa residents.

**Shijima Elementary School:** This elementary school has a total of 613 pupils in grades one through six, with 13 female and 6 male teachers. The school has a very progressive educational philosophy, which challenges the norms often associated with Japanese society. Children are encouraged to speak their own minds, express their ideas clearly, and to listen to the opinions of their peers. Boys and girls are paired together for many activities. Schoolwide activities allow the mixing of age groups.

**Ishikawa no Tamago:** This bilingual publication was started by a woman who saw the need for greater mutual understanding between Japanese citizens and the foreign community living in Ishikawa Prefecture. The publication is a means for non-Japanese residents to share with Japanese readers the problems they encounter while living in Japan, a medium to provide useful information on daily living to foreign residents, and a way to introduce other cultures to Japanese citizens. All articles are printed in both Japanese and English, with many of the readers speaking only one of the two languages. The publication has a total readership of 2,250. The editor of the newspaper, Yoshiko Hayakawa, visited the United States in June, 1993 as a member of the Japanese delegation.

**Tea Time:** Tea Time is a forum for residents of Kanazawa to discuss issues of the day. It was founded nine years ago by a woman who opened her home to friends and neighbors to have tea and informally talk about issues such as nuclear energy, the environment, and AIDS. The group has had many activities, including the publishing of an environmental newsletter (circulation 1,000), and the making

of a "Friendship Quilt," which has travelled to New Zealand and to refugee camps in Thailand. The group was successful in stopping the development of a golf course near the city reservoir. The group's founder published a collection of essays she wrote about many of the topics discussed at Tea Time. The open house movement is now spreading across Japan, with many similar groups springing up in other cities.

**Ishikawa Environmental Network:** This group was founded by citizens of Kanazawa who were troubled by Japan's voracious appetite for tropical wood products. After learning that most tropical wood in Japan is used for laying concrete and then discarded, they developed an environmental picture story for children that is currently travelling around Japan. They also publish a monthly environmental diary that is circulated to 100 individuals and 37 organizations. Recently the group has been focussing on preserving Japan's own forests.

**Izumi Kyoka Translation Society:** In 1977 this group started a movement to open Kanazawa to the outside world and began with volunteers teaching the Japanese language to non-Japanese residents of the city. More recently, the group translated six works by the Kanazawa author, Izumi Kyoka, and made the published books available to university libraries abroad. The group aims to promote the culture of Kanazawa through literature.

**Zenrinkan:** *Zenrinkan*, which literally means "good neighbor house," is a social service facility for senior citizens and is unique to Kanazawa. It is run almost entirely by volunteers, most of whom themselves are elderly. Among the various activities in which volunteer seniors are engaged are making handicrafts and preparing box lunches for homebound elderly citizens. One unique feature of the *Zenrinkan* is the intergenerational contact built into its design—services are provided for 60 senior citizens inside the same building that houses a daycare center for 50 young children.

*Tokyo, February 3–5*

Finally, the group returned to Tokyo where a workshop was convened at International House of Japan for the members of the US delegation, Japanese women who participated in earlier meetings, and selected guests, to discuss how the experience of the Dialogue might be shared more broadly and how the experience could strengthen community development efforts by women in the two countries. The following day the participants had the chance to follow up on their personal interests with individual visits to organizations of their own choice.

### **Summary of Major Findings of the US Women Leaders' Japan Study Tour**

The reports from each US delegate reflect the depths of their learning experiences and the wide-ranging findings of their discussions. Below are summarized the key findings of most delegation members.

1. **The nonprofit, nongovernmental sector as known in the United States is nonexistent in Japan.** The delegation members soon discovered that the

concepts of community spirit, volunteerism, grassroots citizen participation, and NGOs had very different connotations than what is assumed by these terms in the United States. Although these concepts do exist in Japan, for the most part Japanese society seems to have developed other mechanisms for dealing with societal problems. It is true that many Japanese women have taken initiative to better society through voluntary activities, while at the same time adapting these activities to work harmoniously within the framework of Japanese society. Still, to the members of the US delegation, it seemed that Japanese women might be much more effective in their roles as community leaders if their efforts were bolstered by a healthy nonprofit sector.

There are many disincentives to the development of a strong nonprofit or "independent" sector in Japan. The group was surprised to find that, in a country with half the population of the United States, there are only 700 nonprofit agencies with the equivalent of 501(c)(3) status.

The first major legal hurdle an organization must overcome when seeking nonprofit status is that it must receive official approval from one or more related government ministries, a process that requires an enormous investment of time and resources. In addition, a prospective NPO must show capital reserves of around \$1,000,000 before it can be considered for nonprofit status!

In addition to the huge capital requirements placed on nonprofits, there are other obstacles that limit their ability to raise funds. Philanthropy as known in the United States is an only recent phenomenon in Japan, and many corporations prefer to give to communities abroad rather than at home. Furthermore, there are no incentives for individuals or corporations to make donations to NPOs, as contributions to charitable causes are generally not tax-deductible. This situation severely restricts the potential number of donors. While the Japanese corporate community has developed some mechanisms for tax-deductible contributions to agencies approved by the *Keidanren* (Federation of Economic Organizations), there are very strict constraints on the amounts and the kinds of agencies approved.

A third factor limiting the growth of the nonprofit sector is the traditional relationship between the government and the citizens and their respective roles in society. In the United States private voluntary organizations are often seen as a way of filling the gap when government services are inadequate and thereby serve as a vehicle for social change when the government is unresponsive to the needs of the community. The situation is quite different in Japan. Since the Meiji Restoration in the 1860s, it has been the government that has served as *the* driving force in bringing about societal change—in its mission to ensure that Japan catch up with (and even surpass) the West. Today, government ministries still vigorously guard their respective spheres of influence. It is still a widely held notion that if a service is needed in a community, it is the government's responsibility to provide that service, and that the involvement of local citizens is neither necessary or desirable. In fact, many nonprofit

agencies in Japan are actually funded almost entirely by the government. This top-down approach to responding to the needs of society is seen as a significant inhibitor to the growth of a truly independent sector.

Finally, work in the voluntary sector in Japan is not widely regarded as a true profession. From our discussions it was learned that this situation has at least two effects. First, it means that married women make up a large proportion of the voluntary sector, as they often have more free time to serve as volunteers while their husbands toil long hours in the office; these wives for the most part are not dependent on their own incomes. Secondly, the lack of a nonprofit profession means a group founded by one or two individuals would probably not continue to function without the participation of its founding leaders. This is especially true in the case of small local groups. When the executive director of a US nonprofit leaves her organization, there are trained and experienced professionals who can be recruited to fill her place. The lack of professional status for persons working in the voluntary sector means this is not the case in Japan. This fact, combined with the legal and financial obstacles facing voluntary groups, serves to prohibit the institutionalization, and therefore the longevity, of NPOs.

This is not to say that there is no nonprofit or independent sector in Japan. The Dialogue co-sponsor, JCIE, has played a crucial and effective role in legitimizing and expanding the NGO sector in Japan. In spite of the many barriers described above, there are countless examples of private voluntary groups successfully bringing about significant change in their communities—groups that would be recognized as 501(c)(3) organizations in the United States. However, these barriers do limit the number and size of Japanese voluntary organizations and the scope of their activities. Many groups work on only a single issue, have influence in only a very small geographic area (such as a city ward), and many probably do not survive their founding leaders.

2. **There are many examples of activities in Japan from which the United States could learn a great deal.** The fact that Japanese voluntary groups face enormous challenges made the women who lead those groups seem all the more remarkable. The delegation was impressed with the creativity with which obstacles were overcome, the innovative ways community support was enlisted, and the fresh solutions that were being tried in dealing with common problems. Particularly noteworthy is the consumer cooperative movement, which was founded by housewives and has evolved into a successful political party, environmental movement, and major promoter of grassroots citizen participation. This and other examples of private voluntary organizations in Japan are highlighted in the reports of the US delegation members.
3. **There is almost no opportunity for Japanese citizens to further or continue their education once they have entered the workforce.** In speaking with the many women we encountered on our study tour, it soon became apparent to the delegation that the concept of continuing education for individual growth

is virtually unknown in Japan. Other than company-sponsored training, it seems nearly impossible to further one's education, complete an unfinished degree, or explore a new professional direction, particularly if this involves temporarily dropping out of the workforce. This is due to at least two major forces. First is the fact that, once one leaves his or her job, it is impossible to return to the company at the same or a higher-level position. The same obstacle that keeps women from progressing in their professional lives once they have children and must leave the company to raise their families also prevents their advancement through further education. This limits the opportunities for women to develop new skills after their children have grown—skills that could be employed in the nonprofit sector.

Second is the fact that university entrance is based on a highly competitive entrance examination system. Any person wishing to return to university must take the entrance exam and must compete with high school seniors studying for a few coveted spots. Students obviously have an overwhelming advantage as they devote most of their waking hours studying and preparing for these exams, a luxury which working adults can not afford. Furthermore, there is no institution comparable to the US community college through which one can take courses part-time. Universities do not offer continuing education programs through which nondegree coursework may be pursued. Thus the opportunity to better oneself through further education later in life, a major vehicle for the advancement and empowerment of women in the United States, is largely absent in Japan.

4. **There is very little networking, coalition building, and sharing of information among volunteer groups working on similar issues in different prefectures or regions of Japan.** In traveling to four different cities throughout Japan, the delegation members became aware that many communities were facing similar problems, and there were numerous groups working to solve these problems and effect change in their communities. There is tremendous potential for replication of successful projects and activities in many regions of Japan. However, we were surprised to learn that citizens groups were often unaware of the many other groups working on similar issues in other prefectures and cities, thus limiting the possibility of sharing ideas and acting cooperatively.

This seemed odd since Americans are so used to hearing about Japan as the ultimate group society and about the Japanese talent for consensus building. However, we eventually learned that "group" has a different meaning and different functions in Japan than "group" in the United States. Groups in Japan tend to be much more closed and exclusive. Whereas Americans feel free to join many groups (and leave just as many), it is much harder for the Japanese to join a group or to separate themselves from one. These factors may hinder the sharing of information among different groups and may deter groups from joining forces and forming powerful coalitions. We were told the Japanese are uncomfortable with the idea of simply picking up the telephone or writing a

letter to get information from an individual or group with whom they may have not had previous contact. Although the custom of distributing business cards is much more widespread in Japan than in the United States, it appears this is a simple formality (often to establish rank and seniority among various parties) rather than part of the networking process, the concept of which seems to be absent.

5. **There is very little, if any, mentoring of young women professionals by their senior colleagues.** The delegation was very fortunate to meet with numerous outstanding women in a wide range of professions. However, in spite of their extraordinary talents, skills, and experience, it appeared to the delegation members that these women were not sharing their knowledge with younger women. The concept of mentoring does not seem to have developed among Japanese professional women, perhaps for the same reasons as outlined in finding #4 above. Most of the delegation members believed that the practice of mentoring would greatly benefit Japanese women in all fields and professions, particularly those involved in the NGO sector, where professional training was thought to be needed most.
6. **There is very limited citizen participation in government decision-making at the both the national and local levels.** With the centuries-old top-down approach to government, it is perhaps not surprising that modern Japan has not developed a significant mechanism to accommodate citizen participation in public policy formation. Many of the women we met believed there was little citizens groups could do to influence government policy. During the study tour, the delegation encountered many women who gave examples of how the government seemed unresponsive to, if not uninterested in, the concerns of the tax-paying public. In Kanazawa, we were told the city would not send representatives to citizens' group meetings to listen to their concerns on the environment, because they claimed this would be perceived as the government officially endorsing the opinion of a specific interest group. In Yokohama, we learned that the Seikatsu Club had been largely unsuccessful in its attempt to persuade local assemblies to ban the use of synthetic detergents, in spite of having collected over 300,000 signatures in support of the ban.

In spite of the government's apathy towards citizen involvement, the Japanese, and in particular Japanese women, have developed very creative strategies to advance their causes, adapting their methods in an environment that would render many US activists helpless. After their proposals fell on the deaf ears of the government, the Seikatsu Club established its own political party called the Kanagawa Network Movement, and by 1991 had succeeded in seating 27 women in local assemblies in Kanagawa Prefecture. This extraordinary political party, whose membership is composed entirely of housewives, requires that women elected through the party return their entire salaries back into the movement so that the funds can be used to further promote their cause. The delegation also learned of one environmental group's strategy that capitalized

on the fact the government is more responsive to *gaiatsu*, or pressure from abroad, than to pressure from its own citizens. The group sent postcards to members of the United States Congress asking them to protest the Japanese government's bringing plutonium from France.

The above findings are a mere summary of what the delegation learned in Japan. It is impossible to outline all the experiences and lessons learned on the study tour in these few short pages. The pages that follow, written by the participants, capture more fully the profound impact of this trip on each of these thoughtful American women, as well as their commitment to build on a unique learning experience.

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**Ronne Hartfield**  
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It was Saturday evening, seven days since I had left Chicago for Tokyo and entered another world. We arrived in Kanazawa, amidst the justly fabled snowfall that westerners have seen imaged in Hokusai prints. These were amazing snowflakes—five times as dense as their Chicago counterparts, falling from a dark sky in straight unrelenting lines to cover the sculptured branches and black tile roofs of Kanazawa. This city was not bombed during World War II, we were told, and the small, orderly houses conveyed a little of what Japan was like in the pre-Toyota, pre-Toshiba age. This was to be our first vision of that world, and we talked a lot about the confluence of old and new in modern Japan.

The next morning we spent some time in Kenrokuen Garden, one of the most famous public gardens in this part of the world. We learned of its samurai history, beginning with Lord Maeda: We learned of the philosophical and aesthetic principles informing the structure of the garden, and of the importance of the small bridge; we viewed, with some wonder, the elaborate and elegant manner of tying tree branches to preserve them from the weight of the fabled Kanazawa snow; and walking in the late January chill, we saw ahead of us a cache of plum trees, already showing their purple/pink blooming. We were astonished.

For me, this seminal experience in snowy Kanazawa serves as a powerful metaphor. Our experience in Japan presented us with an intensive introduction to the cultural situation, present and historical, of Japanese women leaders. It also presented us, intermittently but insistently, with radical challenges to a tendency to formulate facile assumptions.

My overall—and very preliminary—summary statements about the trip reside within that framework. From the moment we entered the Akasaka Tokyu Hotel, everything reflected the storied Japanese efficiency. Lost bags were retrieved within minutes, and accommodations were wonderful—much more modern than I anticipated, including a television set with innumerable translation capabilities. The room was equipped with a small refrigerator that included Coca Cola as well as Japanese drinks, and, of course, a lovely tea service.

Our morning meeting was one astonishment after another, as I met not only our impressive American delegation, but an assortment of Japanese women leaders,

all of whom seemed to me extremely smart, poised, knowledgeable, and overwhelmingly impressive. I characterize them, without negative overtones, as a sort of Asian *Überfrau*. Some things that were surprising were the number of them who had gone to US colleges and universities and their accompanying capability for speaking and understanding English.

Immediately it became apparent that the women knew and appreciated their own talents, but were culturally conditioned to make room for the males of the group. The male journalist presented an interesting counterpoint to the women, and made visible a certain inherent tension that I only began to understand later. By the time we left Tokyo, I understood the sharp corner being turned by these women, who were not only bright, but vocal, formerly not a necessarily admirable characteristic in their society. Nonetheless, speaker after speaker was highly articulate, competent, and self-assured. What emerged fairly quickly was the personal empowerment of these women, rooted in a sort of triumph over cultural obstacles. What accompanied that, however, seemed to be a lack of group gestalt. I think we are fortunate in the United States in that our women's movement was built on the shoulders of rap groups—women's talk-cells—which allowed us a welcomed mutual network and a means of contextualizing ourselves within a larger social movement. I think this is one area in which we have some models to offer the Japanese.

As we moved to Yokohama, with its state-of-the-art women's center, a more highly articulated centrality of women's purposefulness was evident. It was in Yokohama that we learned of some of the problems of the new Japan, with its rapidly diminishing birth rates; little present planning for an aging population; few structures for elderly caretaking or for adequate childcare; severe space shortages/housing shortages/growth problems. All of these seemed to us problems of a perhaps too-rapid cultural change. It was here that we first heard about "internationalization," a term that appeared and reappeared many times in different translations. It seemed that these women were anxious to take their place on the global scene, but perhaps ambivalent about how much westernization they were willing to adopt in order to do so.

It was also in Yokohama that we had the opportunity to listen to some women activists very much involved in community development. They seemed to us not terribly unlike their American counterparts. However, when we visited the soap factory, with its cooperative community of women entrepreneurs, we were entirely impressed. Here were women operating at the grassroots, in a culture with little or no historic referent for such activity, and operating with a thriving capability and a powerful sense of their importance as initiators with a present and potential impact in society.

In Fukuoka, a trip to the 21st century, state-of-the-art museum synthesized old and new Japan. The museum exhibited ancient artifacts and artworks in a pristine, high-tech environment. This city, so close geographically to Korea, illumined close

interchange between the two countries. It also afforded us a beautiful seaside lunch/reverie in contrast to the thriving industrial city center.

In Kanazawa, we had the opportunity to extend our dialogue with women who are operating at the grassroots. It was here that we met, for example, a local volunteer woman who runs "tea times" in her home, providing a regular space for women to come together to discuss their own lives, the society, and frequently to initiate social action. Their interest in two areas, the environment and translation, held particular excitement for our delegation. It was here that I first became powerfully aware of the importance of translation in allowing these women access to the thought and experience of women in the west.

Also in Kanazawa, we had the opportunity to visit an elementary school and a daycare center, introducing us to the deep concern of these women for children. One of the most fascinating models was the Zenrinkan, a senior citizens' daycare center occupying the same space with a childrens' daycare center, with significant interchange between the generations. We were completely impressed with this idea, and would like to see it extended to the United States. We were amazed by the outpouring of volunteer effort in Japan, particularly in Kanazawa. The United States has adopted, sometimes to our own detriment, a posture that meaningful work should be remunerated by a salary or fee for service. Observing the quiet commitment and deep gratification of the volunteers in Japan, one must call this notion into question. Also in Kanazawa I had one of the most exceptional experiences of the entire trip. The visit to the Ohi home and studio, with all of us clumsy Americans shaping our individual tea bowls, is an unforgettable memory. As a museum person, I treasured this excursion into the Japanese idea of art, with its particular dimension of value in that culture.

Finally, we welcomed our wrap-up workshop back in Tokyo, with the opportunity to share with representatives from other parts of the trip. We also welcomed the opportunity to share our own experiences, and I think all of us felt a tremendous degree of energy and excitement that developed throughout the day. It seemed to us that we had much to share with one another from our own experience in struggling with problems of the longer versus shorter school day; quality daycare in a context of long working hours and long commutes; care for aging parents; and other family-related issues. The United States perhaps places some less profound expectation on its women in these areas and allows more sharing and responsibility on the part of men. Perhaps the Japanese have something to learn from us in these arenas. On the other hand, their sharp awareness of the rapidly polluted planet and the need for radical changes in the way we live offers us a revelation which is only dimly perceived in our country at most levels. It seemed to me very interesting that on entering Japan I brought with me a really quite pervasive US admiration for Japan, for its technological marvelousness, for its concern for its elders, for its lack of urban problems such as drugs, homelessness, and street crime. The Japanese women we met were not so aware of that admiration

across the ocean. On the other hand, we were not so aware, I think, of their own respect and idealization of the freedom that characterizes American society. It seemed to me that they were perhaps more aware of the freedom than of some of the costs that accompany those liberties.

In conclusion, it is clear that this kind of exchange teaches all of us important lessons and opens further possibilities for long-term dialogue and exchange of ideas. It was a marvelously illuminating experience, and one for which I am singularly grateful. I will not forget the plum blossoms in the snow, the abiding Japanese hospitality and courtesy, and the strength and power of the Japanese women.

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**On a Personal Note**

This was not my first visit to Japan. I have made several, including one over 20 years ago, when a League of Women Voters delegation was invited by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to learn about Japan, particularly its economy and bilateral relationships with the United States. I did learn a great deal. Moreover, I became an inveterate observer of Japan, and was delighted by the opportunity to return afforded by the Japan-US Women Leaders Dialogue.

One of the main lessons of my earlier visits proved itself again in the course of the Dialogue: The more I learn about Japan at first hand, the more I become aware of how little I really know.

Take a recent personal experience I had, for example. I bought myself a *yukata*. Having noticed that the *yukata* provided in the hotels where we stayed were "one-size-fits-all," I bought a handsome one in the Daiwa Department Store in Kanazawa without bothering to unfold it. When I did so, on our return to Tokyo, it unfolded . . . and unfolded . . . and unfolded. I discovered that there are, indeed, different size *yukata*, and I had purchased the one that fits sumo champions.

Wary as I usually am of letting preconceptions or first impressions inform my judgement, I had done so, and was reminded how poor the fit could be between assumptions and reality in Japan.

**Citizen Participation**

A less frivolous example—in fact, one that was close to the purpose of the Dialogue—was my inability to find a fit between what I saw, heard, and learned in Japan and what I know, believe, and have experienced with regard to citizen participation—the aspect of American life I helped represent in the Dialogue because of my background in the nonpartisan political activity of the League of Women Voters.

Perhaps Americans abroad should leave terms like "citizen participation" at home, loaded as they are for us with meaning derived from the history of Western political philosophy and the frontier, reform movements, the US Constitution, and a system

of government that not only allows for, but has institutionalized, a role for nonpartisan political organizations and influence.

I often felt when we were talking about citizen participation during the Dialogue that we were speaking a language that could not be translated. What frustrated me when I was describing the League of Women Voters in the Dialogue at the Alternative Lives Center in Yokohama wasn't the seven and a half minutes I had to do it in. (That's either too much or too little time to explain the purposes, structure, and operations of the League to someone born and bred in the United States!) What was frustrating was the sense that what I was saying wasn't connecting at all to the interests and needs or the situation of the Japanese women there, not even to the representative of the Alice Center, many of whose activities in assisting citizen activists are similar to the League's. By the same token, I had a hard time relating the polite advocacy she described to what's considered effective action to influence government in the United States.

Such gentle persuasion would not work in the United States. Nor did it work for the next speaker and colleagues from allied groups in seven cities. When their efforts to secure a ban on synthetic detergents were brushed off by local government, they decided they had to join the system to lick it. So they formed the Kanagawa Network party and elected her—and other women among them—to the Prefectural Assembly.

Perhaps the most telling illustration of the difference in Japanese and US understanding of the role and value of citizen participation was the process for securing public input on the proposed use of an important piece of public land in Kanazawa. Members of the public, we were told, would have a chance to comment *after* the city government had made its decision and formulated its land use plan, so that they—the citizens—would have something to react to. In the United States, there would be screams of a scandal and organized protests. In Kanazawa . . . the Mayor's longterm incumbency speaks for itself. But governments in the United States and Japan have their grassroots in very different soil.

### **Obstacles to NGO Development**

The role of citizen activism is seen as an inherent and useful, if sometimes disruptive, part of governance in the United States. In Japan, according to what we observed, nonpartisan political participation seems to have a marginal presence and effect, which is not surprising in a country where conformity, respect for position, and the absence of confrontation are fundamentals.

Add to this context the practical difficulty of raising money faced by all Japanese NGOs due to extremely stringent conditions for tax deductible status, and it was easy for us US women to understand why politically oriented NGOs seemed so anemic and sparse compared to what we're used to.

A big piece of the NGO puzzle fell into place for us when Tadashi Yamamoto pointed out that, until recently, citizen participation in Japan has been viewed as

a largely left-wing phenomenon. It made sense, then, that references to environmentalism were frequently linked to mention of the antinuclear movement; and almost all the women we met who are engaged in environmental activities eschewed the environmentalist label and identified themselves with specific activities such as recycling, waste reduction, reclamation, or saving the rainforests. Most of the stories of political activism we heard were about "anti-establishment" actions, action in opposition to something planned by the government—military bases, airport expansion, nuclear facilities, participation in UN peacekeeping. There were only a few stories of successful government/NGO cooperation, such as the public-private partnerships at work in the Yokohama Forum and AMIKAS in Fukuoka. Granted, in politics it's always easier to oppose a policy or program than to promote one. (Lobbying in the US Congress is a clear case in point.) Nevertheless, it's harder to be a political activist in Japan. It's clearly harder for NGOs to get a hearing, make proposals, and forge working relationships with elected representatives or administrative officials.

### Questions

Given the obstacles faced by political NGOs, is it realistic to surmise that citizen participation has emerged from its left-wing shadow and is becoming respectable? And if it does, in time, earn respectability, will it have to be at the cost of past or potential effectiveness?

In either case, is there a special role for women as agents of change? Women have already changed Japanese society to the extent that recently there has been a gradual, inexorable redefinition of roles and improvement in the status of women. Are they now better able than men to foster "internationalization," or opening up of Japan, because they are less circumscribed by jobs or position? Or do they have just as much to lose in terms of their own jobs or position . . . or those of their husbands? And don't they still face tremendous odds as a force to be reckoned with in the male-dominated arena of public discourse?

The only power strong enough to nudge the reigning consensus of the LDP/bureaucracy/business, we were frequently told, is *gaiatsu*, or pressure from the outside by foreign governments or public opinion. It's a lever that even the "grass-roots" recognize and use, to wit, the letters sent by women in Kanazawa to members of the US Congress protesting passage of the Japanese ship bringing plutonium from France. Although no one in the Dialogue mentioned the possibility that *gaiatsu* can be a double-edged sword, isn't it capable of causing a nationalistic reaction to foreign pressures seen as "Japan bashing?" Might it not cause a turning inward, rather than toward "internationalization?" Isn't *gaiatsu* too dangerous and unreliable to serve as Japan's principal agent for change?

My last question is the one that haunted me throughout our dialogues, and still does. Is the whole subject of promoting citizen participation a timely product of widespread unhappiness with the status quo in Japan? Or, if the apparent frailty

and paucity of NGOs in Japan is due to the fact that the Japanese are generally satisfied with government, the way it's doing things, and the system in general, was citizen participation a "straw man" in our dialogue? Where does it go from here?

### **Certainties**

While my view of citizen participation in Japan was colored by the strictly US brand of nonpartisan political activity I've practiced, I had no trouble seeing and recognizing the quality of the women in Tokyo, Yokohama, Fukuoka, and Kanazawa with whom we met. They represented a variety of backgrounds and occupations, and ranged from the enterprising and inventive to the sophisticated and established—from the grassroots volunteer organizing activities with a group of neighbors to the top tier of prominent women officials, executives, and academics; from those just starting something to those at the height of their careers. They were intelligent, talented, purposeful, energetic, and enjoyable. They were the kind of women I'd want to recruit and like to work with.

Our Japanese host organization, the Japan Center for International Exchange, did a superb job of selecting host organizations in the four cities we visited, and those organizations, in turn, assembled impressive women leaders in their respective programs.

Everything about the Dialogue was first rate. The itinerary and local agendas were beautifully planned and executed with unbelievable efficiency. We US women leaders were treated graciously and attentively by people who (amazingly) always seemed to be in good spirits.

Thanks to JCIE, the Center for Global Partnership, and those wonderful Japanese women leaders, I had a great time, and I learned a lot. (Just before leaving Tokyo I even bought myself a *yukata* that's a perfect fit.)

I've concluded, after rereading my notes and thinking about what to say in this report, that the Dialogue raised at least as many questions in my mind as it has answered. My preconceptions were, indeed, overtaken by new ideas in the Japan-US Women Leaders Dialogue, a voyage of discovery.

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**Elizabeth Humstone**  
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### **General Observations**

#### *About the Four Settings for the Dialogues . . .*

Each place had something unique to offer us and all were important to my understanding of women and my area of interest—community planning and the environment.

Tokyo provided us with an overview of women's issues in Japan. The women we met there were among the most powerful in Japan, representing elected officials, academia, government, corporations, and foundations. They presented us with information on national economic and social trends, the role of women in politics and government, and the changing role of Japan in the world (internationalization) and how it is affecting women and the variety of issues we came to discuss.

Yokohama and Kanagawa gave us our first view of a women's center and the variety of ways in which women network in Japan, from women's workers collectives to the Kanagawa Network Movement, which elects women to political office.

In the rapidly developing Kyushu city of Fukuoka we visited AMIKAS, another women's center, and met with women from many fields including two involved in the first major sexual harassment case in Japan. I spoke with many women concerned for their neighborhoods, the environment, and development—in their city, in Japan, and globally. It is here that we heard Takahashi-san say that women are like "silk"—soft, smooth, beautiful, of high quality and strong.

Kanazawa seemed a very different stop from the others but very valuable to me. What stood out strongly in Kanazawa was the natural and cultural heritage in Japan and how it is integrated into modern life. It was here that I learned about the planning system in Japan and gained further insight on citizen participation. It was here also that we heard how women were working locally to tackle such global problems as tropical rain forest destruction and nuclear power plant safety.

#### *About Common Threads Between Japanese and US Women . . .*

Women in both Japan and the United States lead full, rich lives balancing careers and/or outside interests with home, family, parents, and community. As a single, working mother I found much in common with the Japanese women, married,

single or divorced, who face a similar lifestyle. It seemed to me that Japanese women were planning and living their lives without men or men's support, but with the support of other women, which is what keeps them bonded. In the United States single women face similar situations.

In spite of the constraints on their time and their opportunities, Japanese women are finding ways of self-improvement and community activism.

Women in both Japan and the United States share a concern for balancing conservation and development. In Japan we found women in Kanazawa concerned about a golf course development that would pollute their water supply and about a nuclear power plant over which they were involved in a four-year law suit. In Fukuoka many women expressed concern about the tremendous growth of the city and its impact on traditional neighborhoods and the environment. As one woman said, "women are nature-, earth-, and people-centered." The women we met were very sensitive to their environment and concerned about their communities and the changes that were impacting them.

#### *About Differences Among Women in Japan . . .*

Many of the women we spoke with in Tokyo who held powerful (for women in Japan) academic, political, government, and corporate positions had different perspectives than the women working at the community level on social issues affecting women. Our first evidence of this was when we visited HELP, the Asian women's shelter, where we learned from the director about the plight of Southeast Asian women in Japan. In Yokohama and elsewhere we learned more about the problems of Asian immigrant women, domestic violence, single mothers (feminization of poverty), and the divorce rate from women directly involved in these issues. While the numbers of women experiencing these conditions are still small compared to the United States, these community activists were aware of the increasing significance of these problems for Japan, whereas the "Tokyo women" seemed to be less so.

There seemed to be a gulf between professional women and housewives in Japan: Women appeared to be either part of a "housewives" group or involved in their career. By comparison, US women who are housewives and professionals might be part of the same community group (social service organization or environmental group, for example).

Mentoring—a word that was not familiar to many Japanese women we spoke with—is very limited in Japan. Young women were not connected to older women who were more experienced in their chosen professions. Older, successful women did not seem to feel the need to help younger women with career advice.

Networking, while strong at the community level, appeared to be weaker between communities and among national and international organizations. Groups that were very active locally on an issue such as the environment were not strongly linked with national or international organizations. Small local organizations were only tackling local issues, even though they were aware of broader national and interna-

tional issues. Women did not seem to move beyond their local venue either through participation in politics or in building a national agenda in their area of interest. This may be due to the weakness of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in general in Japan.

*About Planning and Environmental Protection in Japan . . .*

While my information about the planning system in Japan is still extremely limited, several things struck me from what I did learn. Urban planning is practiced separately from resource conservation, environmental protection, and recreation planning. The profession of urban planning appears to be primarily urban engineering, trying to find technical solutions to meet urban growth requirements. Resource conservation is governed by national and prefectural laws; planning for resource conservation occurs primarily at the prefectural level. Thus, the integration and balancing of values of growth, economic development, resource conservation and environmental protection—a fundamental practice in urban planning in the United States—cannot occur in Japan because not only are these values handled separately but also they are administered by different levels of government.

Sadly, there appear to be very few women involved in planning in Japan, in contrast to the United States where women's participation in planning is strong.<sup>1</sup> Due to women's ability to make connections and forge integration, they are ideally suited to address the deficiencies that were apparent to me in Japan's planning system.

Citizen participation in community planning is very underdeveloped in Japan. Public participation is primarily ceremonial—an opportunity for bureaucrats to present the polished plan they have come up with. It is expected that people will be in agreement with the plan presented; direct confrontation in a public setting over the content of the plan is not the accepted custom. In Kanazawa we learned that neighborhood assemblies were where government bureaucrats work with citizens to get "consensus" on city policies. Typically, citizens do not take the initiative, but rather respond to the government.

Despite this situation, we learned of several examples where women's groups had been effective in challenging developments and practices by the planning officials. The "Tea Time" group in Kanazawa was instrumental in stopping a golf course development that endangered a water supply. The Naka Ward Women's Forum in Yokohama developed a video of ideal town planning that illustrated failures in urban engineering from the perspective of women and the elderly. Their work

<sup>1</sup>A 1991 survey of women in planning showed that 26% of the professional planners in the United States are women. In Vermont this percentage is much closer to 50%. These percentages compare favorably to other fields—architecture (18%), civil engineering (5%), landscape architecture (23%), and law (21%). Women's earnings in the planning field are still only 84% of men's, however. In addition, white males dominate "director" positions (director of agency or department, CEO, owner or partner of firm, or chair of academic department).

resulted in improvements to paving materials and installation of railings along walkways in steeply sloped areas.

In addition, the Setagaya Community Design Center in Tokyo offers a promising change in the role of citizens in planning and development. Through funds contributed by the Setagaya Ward to the Design Center, citizens are given grants for small design projects. The staff of the Design Center (Ward employees) provide technical advice to the citizens and mediate between the citizens and the Ward, City, and other public agencies. The projects range from elderly citizens planting flowers along streets, to a community garden on a vacant lot, to an alternative design for a children's center that will protect green space.

The plight of NGOs in Japan is inhibiting the development of strong national environmental organizations, which in turn limits the ability of citizens to pressure the government for environmental reform. On our first day in Japan, Tadashi Yamamoto of JCIE explained the problems facing the establishment of strong NGOs in Japan, and I will not reiterate them here. My observations are that fledgling women's organizations, such as Tea Time in Kanazawa and Naka Ward Women's Forum in Yokohama, may not survive to accomplish more than very local, small-scale actions, and due to their dependence on the activism of a few women, may not survive the participation of these individuals.

### **Ideas for Future Actions**

1. **Bring more women into the nontraditional careers of city planning, architecture, engineering, landscape architecture, and economics in order to bring more balance to the decisions on urban growth.** Women seek and make connections, are sensitive to nature and their communities, but are also practical, and thus are ideally suited to address urban growth issues.

In order to bring more women into these careers, they must be introduced to them early in the educational system. Perhaps some of the US models could be helpful here. We offer internships for students in offices. Women planners come to schools and discuss their careers with students. Universities such as Harvard offer Career Discovery Programs in the School of Architecture.

Women professionals in these fields must also network with each other to strengthen their role and their support for change. In the United States, the American Planning Association has a Women in Planning Division that works to increase the visibility of women in planning, to promote women's issues, and to encourage more women to enter the field of planning.

2. **Forge better networks among the women activists groups concerned with environment and development.** Ideally this would occur through restructuring NGOs in Japan (see #3 below). In the absence of such a fundamental change, there are still ways this need can be addressed.

- a. ALICE, in Kanagawa, offers a good model for a local or regional network of environmental organizations. ALICE's experiences need to be shared

with environmental organizations in other regions. For example, the Friends of the Earth and Tea Time groups in Kanazawa could benefit from ALICE's knowledge.

- b. Professional women should provide technical training to volunteer women in environmental issues and should advise them on how to influence government decisions.
  - c. More women should seek political power. The example of the Kanagawa Network should be shared with other regions of the country.
  - d. Groups such as ALICE that offer networking to local groups should themselves become networked with US and other international groups for new ideas, creative approaches, and mutual support.
3. **There is a need for fundamental changes in the way NGOs in Japan are structured in order to advance the causes of better planning and environmental protection.** Regardless of how well government is doing its job, NGOs are needed for the following purposes:
- to advocate for change and keep issues alive
  - to watchdog the government to be sure it is doing its job
  - to educate the public
  - to conduct research
  - to carry out nongovernment, private voluntary approaches to conservation
  - to participate in and forge coalitions with other interest groups in order to advance mutual causes.

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First of all, I want to offer my sincere appreciation to the Institute of International Education and to the Japan Center for International Exchange for arranging this magnificent opportunity for our six-woman US delegation to participate in a "Dialogue with our Japanese counterparts in an effort to create a better global understanding of our roles in promoting change and transformation in our societies." I also want to commend, as well as thank, the Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership for its vision as evidenced by the support it has given this project.

On a very personal level, my visit to Japan did much to correct many misperceptions that I had about the status of women in that country. Their awareness of the existence of these misperceptions became clear when one of the Japanese women we met asked us if we were surprised that they were not "walking three steps behind our men." We met many interesting women from a variety of backgrounds. The added benefit of getting to know the rest of the US delegates of the Japan-US Women Leaders Dialogue made the trip even more special, not only because we were so compatible, but because we were able to check out our observations with one another and learn from each other's area of expertise.

Reading all the background information I was sent, as well as anything else pertaining to Japan that I could get my hands on, provided me with a frame of reference more consistent with the reality we experienced. In spite of this, there were still many surprises, because, of course, nothing can take the place of actually being there and talking to people in their own familiar surroundings. The two weeks we spent in Japan were like looking into a constantly changing kaleidoscope, with many different exposures to people, venues, and experiences.

The women we met were intelligent and well-educated with much to say about their current status and the need for more changes in Japan that directly affect them. They were concerned about human rights, education, quality childcare and care for the elderly, and environmental issues. They were so open and eager to share their thoughts and ideas. Since many of them had gone to school in the United States, it seemed they knew a great deal more about us than we about them, though two of our group had attended a year of schooling in Japan and knew more about the country and the culture than the rest of us.

## Tokyo

During our first orientation, we learned that the concept of "nonprofit corporations or nongovernmental organizations (NGOs)" is a fairly new one in Japan. It seems that "the best and the brightest" are always tapped by the government, which reduces the pool that might be interested in this area. But there now appears to be a growing awareness that government and business do not hold all the solutions for the Japan of the future. We were told by Tadashi Yamamoto, the president of the Japan Center for International Exchange, that "thinking Japanese want change, and women need to be involved as change agents."

From him we also heard the word "internationalization" for the first of what was to be many times during our visit. We were told that it no longer means just learning to speak English. It now includes the goal of transforming Japanese society to make it more compatible with the outside world and consistent with being a global power.

It was acknowledged that in fact some of the leaders in Japan perceive other groups as inferior because they are not "economically efficient." But at the same time, it was also stated that Japan is now examining its emphasis on economics and its goal of "catching up with the West" at the expense of the values surrounding the "quality of life." In addition, the Gulf War brought about much self-examination, as most Japanese were surprised at the reaction of the rest of the world to their involvement—which was limited to financial support only. Their failure to provide manpower while smaller, less powerful nations were doing so brought into question whether or not Japan could remain an economic power without becoming a more visible participant in global politics as a military power. It is in this larger context that one begins to see the changing conditions in Japan and what roles women will be playing in this transitional period.

Professor Yoriko Meguro from Sophia University gave us her definition of internationalization as "people to people exchange, not just goods and trade," and a "sharing of global key concepts of equality, human rights, justice, and fairness." She indicated that the United Nations Year of the Woman, which began in 1975 at the Copenhagen Conference and went on to become the Decade of the Woman (with the 1980 and 1985 conferences in Mexico and Nairobi, respectively) had significant impact on the lives of Japanese women.

She lamented the fact that though the government started to offer conferences on gender equality, only women attended them which, unfortunately, limited the impact. She also said women at that time were more interested in equality than in peace and development, but now they see the interrelatedness. She felt strongly that Japanese women must share with other women from different countries in order to reconceptualize how they relate to others around the world.

Media expert Akira Kojima brought to our attention some key issues related to the "quality of life." The Japanese birthrate at 1.5 children per family, and the world's longest life expectancy at 81 years for women and 75 years for men, are combining

to create major problems for the future. In addition, a recent survey found that 54% of the young women interviewed wanted to remain single. If these trends continue, he predicted the extinction of the Japanese in 800 years.

We learned that there is a shortage of farmers and that farmers are mostly over 65. There is also a shortage of spouses for younger farmers. We heard from others that a solution chosen by some is to bring in and marry women from other Asian countries, such as the Philippines and Thailand. We also learned that these women are expected to work the farms, that they are not treated respectfully, and that they are often victims of domestic violence. Others that spoke later stated that Asian immigrant women get all the "dirty jobs."

It is interesting to note that while "change" is the main agenda for both government and business in Japan, Mr. Kojima feels men are less qualified to handle it than women because "men are hostages to companies," and therefore lack freedom to explore and be innovative. It was also noted by Professor Meguro that men are afraid to change because they don't know where they will fit.

As a third-generation Mexican-American, I see similarities in cultural thinking between countries. I have felt the same struggle with "traditional sex-role concepts" from some of our men. However, though we still need to improve and are a long way from where we need to be, I have also witnessed tremendous growth by men in general, and Hispanic men in particular, in the last 10 years. I see more acceptance and appreciation of womens' strengths and abilities to rise to all challenges and deal successfully with "change." I also see them recognizing womens' ability to manage several things simultaneously (as opposed to being singly focused) as something to be emulated.

Akiko Domoto, a member of the House of Councillors in the Japanese Diet since 1989, said she is often surprised by how little people around the world know about Japan. She spoke of her many interests, including biodiversity, which has to do with how culture is determined by the shape of the environment surrounding it. She spoke of meeting then-Senator Al Gore when they were both members of "Global Legislators Organization for a Balanced Environment (GLOBE) and was very glad to hear him say "it's time to hear women's points of view for problem solving."

She is also very involved in trying to change the Eugenics Protection Law, which is the embodiment of the eugenics ideal to promote the increase of a population with desirable characteristics and prevent one with inferior genetic ones. She sees it as discriminatory, because some eugenic surgery cases can be performed without the patient's consent. Moreover, compulsory sterilization was forced on women at a rate four to five times that of men and completely ignores women's rights. She wants to promote a new law that guarantees every woman's right to decide whether or not to bear children, as well as every woman's right to contraception and abortion. Her statement was very consistent with how most of the women I know in this country feel about that issue. It seems incredible that the outcome of this issue,

which has such a significant impact on women, could be determined primarily by men. It brought to mind how many women felt in the United States during the "Anita Hill" portion of the Clarence Thomas confirmation hearings.

From Wakako Hironaka, another member of the House of Councillors, we learned that, though they are few in number, there are more women elected on a national level than on a local level. This is definitely the reverse of the trend in the United States, though we are making significant gains nationally. Overall actual positions of power for women, however, seem much more limited than in our country.

Professor Iwao said Japan is a "singles culture" while the United States is a "couples culture." Her description of the independent lifestyles led by married couples bore that out. Of great concern, it seems, is the issue of men who, having worked all their lives, retire with the expectation of being "taken care of" by their wives. However, since little energy has gone into working at the marriage relationship, the expectation proves to be unrealistic, because women have learned to lead independent lives while the men have focused almost exclusively on their jobs. It appears that, while men focused on "material satisfaction and quantity," women were more focused on "spiritual fulfillment and quality." Since one of their major concerns is the rapid "graying of Japan," this could be a source of significant problems in the future.

Because of my professional background in social services, particularly in the prevention of abusive behaviors, I found it interesting that there are no statistics to show to what extent such behavior exists in Japan. For example, when asked about the incidence of rape, we were told that crowded conditions don't allow for it to happen. In addition, "domestic violence" seems nonexistent, though it was acknowledged that in fact it could be seriously underreported. With regard to alcohol abuse, we were told that Japanese lack the enzyme to metabolize alcohol, and therefore it appears that things done under the influence are not judged too harshly. There was reference to "kitchen alcoholics"—women who drink at home alone—but again there was very limited information.

It appears that the main deterrent to abusive behaviors is the very admirable value of "not bringing shame to the family." This is one for us to emulate for prevention purposes. However, since this value could also be the reason why such behaviors are seriously underreported, and thus a reason for the government to perhaps reject abuse prevention as a priority item, it would seem that NGOs would be the appropriate vehicles to respond to the issue of abuse.

The Director of the Prime Minister's Office for Women Affairs informed us that there is a "National Plan of Action" to improve all aspects of women's lives. When asked to describe the mechanism for input from women around the country, she told us that all ministries have advisory councils, and that she is often asked "informally" to make recommendations. The impression is that, while government wants to establish policies that create favorable conditions for combining work with family life, it will happen neither because of a great push from women in power,

nor because of significant input from women in general, but rather for economic reasons.

As we began to meet the women working on the local community level, it became apparent that they were actively involved in solving what they saw as problems in their respective communities without waiting for government action. I loved the passion they showed for the multitude of activities they were involved with and was thankful for the opportunities we had to really "dialogue" with them.

At the HELP Asian Women's Shelter, we learned that the main recipients of services are women from the Philippines and Thailand. I felt great admiration for the director and was inspired as she spoke of her battles as a human rights activist. Her concern for the welfare of these women she felt had been exploited and physically and/or emotionally abused was followed with significant action on their behalf. She felt strongly that the underutilized women's centers found in each prefecture should accommodate those women victims from other countries who married Japanese men. I saw parallels with our country in terms of similar exploitations of some undocumented farm workers in California.

### **Yokohama**

Our visit to the Yokohama Women's Forum provided us with a very modern example of some of the facilities available to women for growth, support, and enrichment. We saw examples of their activism, including the production of videos to create awareness of environmental hazards for women and the elderly and the translation of books while giving them a female perspective. Their pride was evident as they shared their work with us. They also have counselling and women's support groups that are now beginning to gain momentum. Over dinner we discussed and agreed on the importance of "women helping women."

Visiting the Alternative Lives Opportunity Center gave us a good example of how community women are taking charge and going forward with environmental concerns. Their co-op buying and recycling concepts have expanded to other quality-of-life issues with, priority given to "ending consumerism and depletion of resources." One woman had even started her own successful restaurant which operated on the first floor of the three-story building; she graciously provided us with an "American" style meal.

Another woman had political aspirations and was part of a group that seeks to support women candidates. Believing that the future of Japan lies in the development of systems to access government, she realized that becoming an elected official is one important avenue. She told us how other women came to her aid when she ran for office by helping to take care of her children, cleaning and cooking dinner, etc. It was encouraging to hear of this type of a support system, an example of how women often work differently than men. Again, I see parallels in my own life to the support I received from women who joined me in a common cause and

helped in whatever way needed, with no expected reward other than making strides for women in general.

### **Fukuoka**

Fukuoka is an impressive city with many impressive women as well. Here we met two women lawyers who were involved in and won the first sexual harassment case in Japan's history. Tsujimoto-san said she used the US definition and won on the grounds of "hostile environment." She spoke of the lack of effective laws for divorced women seeking alimony or child support, and that many women seeking her counsel were not economically self-sufficient. Japan, unlike the United States and especially California, is not a litigious society, so there are only 40,000 lawyers, of whom only 700 are women.

In conversation later, she shared how, in spite of her professional career, she was feeling guilty being at the reception because she still had to go home and fix dinner for her children. We talked about the difficulties of single parents. I empathized as I recalled similar feelings when my children were younger, and how very difficult it was to "find the right balance," in spite of the fact that I was blessed with a very supportive husband who would fill in for me on different occasions. It appears that this is an issue that women with young children in both countries share in common. The constant desire to be the "best mother," as well as the "best in the working world" is a demanding challenge, but one that will become more manageable as society becomes more responsive to working mothers.

Here we also heard from Takahashi-san who believed "women are like silk, i.e., soft, smooth, and beautiful, but also of high quality and enormous strength." She talked about the need to divert the current emphasis and obsession from "competition and economics to earth and people." Hearing her words inspired me to think of creating a "SILK Earth Network" of women who shared the same ideas and beliefs. SILK could become an acronym for "Sisterhood of International Leaders, for a Kinder Earth Network." Such a network could become a viable tool for creating more international exchange of ideas and support.

It was also in Fukuoka that two of us from the United States were invited by Professor Kano, who teaches Modern Japanese Literature at the University of Kurume, and by Imamaru-san, a film maker, to eat at a sidewalk *udon* noodle shop. We later went for a walk and talked about our families and special challenges in our lives, our joys and disappointments, with one of them saying to me: "Well, *que sera, sera*," which of course in Spanish is "what will be will be." Later we stopped at a place where we sang *karaoke* in English, Japanese, and to my surprise, in Spanish as well. Though I could only attempt to hum along with the Japanese songs, my fellow US delegate, Susan, was able to sing them well, having spent a year in Japan as a student. I was thoroughly impressed with the women who could sing the Spanish songs along with me. Though we were all very tired at the end of the evening, it was sad to say goodbye to our new friends who now

felt like old friends because we had shared so much laughter and enjoyment. And it also pointed out how we are much more alike than we are different.

I enjoyed talking with the Deputy Mayor of Fukuoka, Dr. Kato, who formerly practiced medicine at the University of Kyushu Hospital, and who at the age of 67 looked at least 20 years younger. She spoke of the need for health promotion in this aging society. She also said she preferred the term "ageless" to "aging."

### **Kanazawa**

Kanazawa provided us with the most in-depth look at the arts in Japan. We were treated to spending time with two very famous artists, a father and son combination, who not only welcomed us to their home, but graciously prepared a formal "tea ceremony" together with all the needed explanations. Later we were their guests for dinner and were invited to visit their gallery the next day. They are the seventh- and eighth-generation creators of world-famous Ohi pottery.

We learned from the Mayor that this beautiful city was not damaged during World War II and consequently is well preserved. However, students now are more interested in modernization than traditional preservation. He felt strongly that the younger generation needs to be better educated to appreciate the value of preservation and to respect history more. He wants to promote his city as an "international community" and spoke of the city's 30 year history with its sister city, Buffalo, New York. He was also very proud that he had appointed one of the only two women school superintendents in Japan.

It was here too that we learned women cannot return to a university education in later life, since most students are the same age and entrance requirements are rigid. This made a strong impression on me, as I was a "returning student" and graduated from the university at age 38 when my three children were all in school.

Though we were assured that some things are changing, I regard this as a significant block to achievement for many women in Japan. And I could not help but think of the many women I have known and encouraged over the years to return to school and the avenues of empowerment that it opened for most of them. We were asked more than once if we were "normal" or "typical" women. My response was that I was indeed a very average housewife and mother after my children were born, though, like many housewives, I had worked prior to having children. The difference for me, of course, was pursuing my college degree as a mature woman and then becoming a professional. It is my sincere hope for the women of Japan that, in the near future, continuing education will not be limited to life enrichment courses as they are now, but will include academic courses as well.

Shijima Elementary School provided us with a first-hand look at an example of the educational system. We enjoyed having lunch with the students and heard from one young man of his concern for the environment and his plans to address it in the future. It was interesting to note that all children, regardless of grade, were

seated or worked in groups of four, two boys and two girls. There seemed to be no separation by gender in any of the classes, and girls were even operating woodshop tools in the sixth grade. Perhaps this will be a significant factor in continuing the trend that more girls in Japan graduate from high school and junior colleges to the university level than do boys.

The senior daycare center we visited was unique in that it offered cross-generational opportunities for interaction, since there was a childcare center at the same facility together with social services. Among the most important challenges Japan faces in the future are its rapidly aging population, which is approaching 25 percent over age 65, and the question of who will be responsible for taking care of the elderly. We heard from many women that they are the ones who must bear the responsibility not only for taking care of their aging parents, but for the husband's as well. Combine this with the world's longest average life span, and it appears that more attention will have to be paid to maintaining healthy lifestyles after age 65.

In the United States, seniors are a very powerful lobbying group and as a result have many centers that encourage involvement and participation in a wide range of activities that help keep them physically and emotionally fit, as well as mentally alert. There is generally a component that allows for home delivered meals to the frail elderly who may live alone. In some cases there are also respite caregivers who take over for the primary caregiver for a limited amount of time. This then prevents or delays the onset of the type of problems that require 24-hour individualized care from family or others. Perhaps the feasibility of using the same model in Japan could be an area for greater information exchange.

One of my special memories of beautiful, snowy Kanazawa will be of the elderly lady in a department store who, recognizing me as not being Japanese, took it upon herself to guide me onto an escalator and showed me how to get off as well. I found it charming that she was concerned that I, a perfect stranger and a *gaijin* (foreigner), not hurt myself, in the event that I didn't understand how this machinery worked.

### **Tokyo Revisited**

Upon returning to Tokyo, and after our last official meeting, I was asked by Akiko Mashima, a member of the Niigata City Council, to join her for lunch at a Mexican restaurant as she wanted my opinion on the quality of the food. This provided us with an excellent opportunity to discuss issues on a one-to-one basis. We talked about the lack of a systematic training or mentoring process to help younger women learn how to effectively access the current power structures. Her conclusion was that most women who are in a position of power, herself included, need all their energy to maintain it. Further, she believed serving as a role model was equally effective.

While this is undoubtedly true, I shared how valuable the training was that I received from the *National Hispana Leadership Institute*, which is dedicated to "creating

positive global change through personal integrity and ethical leadership.” It was not only excellent training, but was also significant in that it was started by women in power with a vision of helping other women be the best they can be, and simultaneously created a national network that has grown and multiplied every year. I believe that a similar model could be started in Japan and that the rewards and benefits could be substantial, not only for women in general, but for the entire country as well.

On my final day in Japan, I went back to spend more time with the director of the HELP Center, who then introduced me to the women at the Christian Temperance Union. We spoke of the problem of vending machines, which dispense alcoholic beverages along with soft drinks and are everywhere, making them easily accessible to teenagers even though the official drinking age is 20. It seems that it is difficult to get government to see this as a problem, since the vending machines provide a great source of tax revenue. Furthermore, because of the significant amount of money spent on advertising by the alcohol industry, they did not feel enough support could be gained by approaching the newspapers to cooperate on this issue.

We talked about how advertising was an issue for us in the United States as well, not only regarding liquor but tobacco products as well. When I suggested approaching the PTAs as a source for advocacy, it was stated that most PTAs are controlled by the principal, who in turn is a government employee. Therefore, this seemed like it would not be a workable solution. They were, however, hopeful that in the near future vending machines may in fact be removed from the sidewalks because they take up too much space and don’t allow enough room for pedestrians. This approach then seems less confrontational and much more consistent with their value system. For me, it was a valuable lesson in understanding and respecting how we can solve problems very differently and still achieve the same desired results.

I left Japan with a variety of impressions and thoughts. I know they have a “bamboo barrier” that corresponds with our “glass ceiling.” I also know that frustrations over limited opportunities in some areas is something else we have in common. But I was also very impressed with the women in general and with some of the supportive men we met as well. The level of awareness of the need for change is growing, and women need to create national networks to assist each other in finding the places where they can be the most effective.

I’m looking forward to the Japanese delegation coming to the United States in June. I only hope we can offer them an experience as gracious, informative, and enlightening as they did for us.

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## **Susan Virnig**

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I came on this trip wanting to learn everything I could about the experience of Japanese women. I brought with me the baggage of my own experience: my struggles to juggle the many roles in my life and my efforts working with nonprofit organizations (NPOs) to effect social change. These two issues quickly became the focus of my questions and discussions with my Japanese peers.

### **Balance**

One of the burning issues I face daily is the question of balance in my life as the mother of a six-year-old, a spouse, a community volunteer, a professional, and an individual. As I traveled around Japan, I asked women everywhere we went how they dealt with this issue of balance. I received many answers to my question, but the clear pattern which emerged was this: Most Japanese women don't balance all these aspects of their life because they can't—yet—in Japan. Some few manage to continue a life-long professional career, but usually they are either wealthy or blessed with an older relative who cares for their children; they are also very dedicated, as they must be to overcome the obstacles they face.

There are all sorts of challenges facing women who want both a career and a family:

Legally, women are not well-protected against discrimination in hiring or promotion.

Changing jobs is not a normal part of doing business, so if a woman quits for any reason—because she wants to stay home until her child enters school or because her spouse is transferred—it is unlikely that she could return to an equivalent job anywhere in the country.

Part-time workers—of whom over 80 percent are women—receive significantly lower wages, few or no benefits, and have no job security. This is the main work avenue open to women with children.

Women do not have the same access to higher education as men. More than twice as many men as women enter four-year universities (34 percent to 16 percent in 1991). At Tokyo University, perhaps the most prestigious college in the country, there were 65 women in a class of 2,500 30 years ago; today

the number is 200 women out of the same 2,500 students. It is nearly impossible to enter a graduate program later in life—unless one goes abroad—so women can not further their education after having children.

Women are not represented in the decision-making levels of the society. Less than one percent of managerial positions in the civil service are filled by women. In business, women managers range from one to five percent of the total, depending on the level. In politics, 6.2 percent of the national Diet are women, and at the local level 3.2 percent of elected officials are women.

Daycare centers, while numerous, are geared toward part-time workers and often are located far from suburban areas, so they rarely serve the needs of full-time professional workers.

There is no widespread belief that men and women should share household chores and the provision of care for children or elderly parents, so women who work outside the home almost universally return to a second job in the home.

In spite of these difficulties, we met many pioneering Japanese women, who as volunteers, mothers, part-time workers, and full-time professionals are forging ahead, changing their own lives and the life of their nation. Here are some of the stories I heard as I asked about balance:

A professor spoke of spending a year abroad on a fellowship. Every day she would look at the sky and weep, knowing that her children were back in Japan also seeing the blue sky. After months of grieving, she managed to arrange for her mother to bring the children abroad and they lived together for the duration of her studies.

A journalist told of being devastated because her employer fired her as soon as it was known that she was pregnant. With her children grown, she now has an interesting position, but is responsible for the care of her elderly parents and wonders how she will manage, since leave to care for sick relatives is not available.

An attorney, one of the five percent of attorneys who are women, could not find a job after graduating. Eventually she started a law office run by women for women. Contrary to what many firms require, they don't work nights so that they can spend time with their children.

A judge explained how she managed to continue her career: first, she had the resources to hire full-time help, and second, when it came time for her mandatory three-year assignment to a branch court, her supervisor chose a city close enough that she could commute. (It would have been inconceivable for her family to relocate for her job or for her to live elsewhere during that time.)

A father, when asked if he missed his children since he's so seldom home, replied that he was always giving orders when he saw them, so they didn't

like it much when he was home. He added that there is a Japanese saying that it's better for the father not to be at home.

Several women spoke hesitantly about being divorced, which is not common and carries some stigma. I was told of difficulties divorced mothers faced in getting child support from ex-spouses.

Hearing these stories and others, I came away believing that, until and unless basic changes are made in the social infrastructure, Japan will not be able to fully utilize the human resource that its women represent. This will require a fundamental change in a cultural way of thinking, both for women and for men. Men, too, are short-changed, missing out on their children's lives, lacking much quality of life outside their incredibly long work hours, being viewed and valued as "work animals," and then nicknamed "big garbage" after they retire. This is a daunting task—to change a culture, a way of thinking—but it is happening slowly, with forces external to Japan, as well as internal, pushing the process along.<sup>1</sup>

### **Social Change and Voluntary Groups**

A second major issue I have faced for 20 years is the challenge of using nonprofit organizations as vehicles to effect social change. As we traveled around the country, we were introduced to dozens of groups—usually led by women—working to bring about change in their society. One group committed to preserving tropical rain forests studied the issue and discovered that forms for pouring concrete are the biggest use of such wood in Japan; the group created a "picture-show" that is now traveling throughout Japan educating the general public about rain forests. (Incidentally, their city government is now researching whether to ban concrete forms made from tropical wood.) Another group became aware of the exploitation of Asian women who are brought to Japan for prostitution, set up a shelter for them and their children, intervened with their sometimes underworld bosses to retrieve the women's passports and airline tickets (held for "security"), and are providing counselling support, legal advice, and medical care to them. Yet another group studied garbage patterns in their city, began publishing the "Garbage Times" newsletter to inform citizens and businesses about the problem, and figured out how to make milk cartons into lovely postcards, which they sell to support their activities.

<sup>1</sup>Some of these driving forces bringing about change in Japan include: internationalization; *gaiatsu*, or foreign pressure; the dramatic decline in the birth rate (were the present rate to continue, we were told, in 800 years there would be no Japanese people); the graying of the population, with 25 percent expected to be over age 65 by the year 2003; the United Nations International Decade of Women; the shift from a production/supply economy to a consumer/quality of life economy; the aspirations of Japanese women; Japan's reaching highest net creditor position and thereby economic superpower status in 1985; the uniquely important role of female part-time workers in building the economy, working in boom times, and being let go in slowdowns; etc.

As we met with these organizations, I tried to ask probing questions about their structure, legal status, and financial situation, coming out of my entrepreneurial experience with nonprofits in the United States. Most of my questions turned out to be irrelevant, since there is little opportunity for innovation or entrepreneurship, as we know it, in the Japanese equivalent to our nonprofit sector. Social change is happening, yes, but without the support of a nonprofit organizational infrastructure.

Groups such as those we met are effective in spite of the legal, financial, and cultural constraints imposed on them. In Japan it is extremely difficult to achieve the equivalent of our nonprofit status, since it requires, among other things, a cash reserve of one million dollars and permission from all topically related government agencies. Even if this status is achieved, there is no incentive for the public or businesses to donate to such organizations because there is no tax deduction for charitable contributions, so there are in fact few contributors. The work of such voluntary groups, being outside the mainstream, mostly male, corporate structure of the society, is usually not recognized, valued, or even considered of any import. To support these groups and enable them to flourish in their important work of grassroots social transformation would require basic changes in the legal infrastructure relating to nonprofits. It would also require changes in the cultural infrastructure, acknowledging the importance of such work and thereby encouraging more participation in it. For instance, the Japanese government honors outstanding artists with the designation of "Living Cultural Treasure." A similar category of honor could be created for the life-long volunteer or the social innovator who have immeasurably enriched the lives of others.

In spite of the difficulties voluntary groups face, there are women throughout Japan giving their time, energy, and even money to causes they believe in. These are some of the examples I was told about where women are making a difference:

A volunteer told of the efforts of her woman's group to translate a non-sexist fairy tale featuring a strong, smart girl. Because they found that inequality is implanted in children, with very strong sex-role stereotypes, they wanted to publish at least one book telling a different story. Initially no publisher would take it, but with the help of a women's organization, they went ahead with printing and eventually sold 70,000 copies. They simplified the story, created fabric artwork to illustrate it, and published a second book for young children. Finally, they published the original English version as a supplementary textbook for use in high school English classes.

As an alternative to returning to the part-time work force, which offers low pay and little influence over one's own work, women are creating hundreds of worker's collectives. These small businesses, ranging in size from 8 to 50 or more workers, allow women to put their energy into things they believe in, to earn some money, and to self-organize and direct their own affairs. Collectives sell dozens of different services and products: they make videos; they run print shops; they make soap from waste kitchen oil; they open shops to sell recycled

products they have gathered or created; they make box lunches and open restaurants; they offer home nursing care for dependent elderly or brand new mothers, they are translators; they are bakers; they are marriage counselors. They typically charge less than the going rate for their products and services, as their aim is to improve their community rather than to maximize profit. What they offer for sale is often a superior product because of their values; for example, the food collectives typically make all their products from scratch, using natural ingredients.

The consumer co-op movement in Japan is an incredible success story. Here is the history of one of the best-known national coops: A housewife in Tokyo began a food-buying club in the mid-1960s, which, over time, spread to other parts of the country. This co-op became concerned about food quality and went on to buy directly from organic producers and then to construct their own organic dairy to supply milk to members. When they realized that detergents were polluting local rivers and eradicating fish, co-op members switched to natural soaps and collected 300,000 signatures on petitions to local governments asking them to ban harmful detergents. When the governments ignored the petitions, the co-op realized they had to get their own members in office. In 1987 in the greater Tokyo area, 31 of these women won election to local governments at one time. This co-op, with over 700 full-time staff, is the ninth largest of some 700 consumer coops located throughout Japan. One of its prefectural divisions is celebrating its 20th anniversary by building a special home for 50 to 100 low-income elderly persons who live alone—a socially innovative project in Japan. This group, representing about one-third of the total national membership, has capital assets of \$228 million; has built its own soap factory, which uses recycled kitchen oil to make natural soap; and now plans to start its own foundation to fund citizen-to-citizen international exchange and overseas aid, by asking co-op members to donate the equivalent of one meal a month.

## Questions

As I reflect on my experience in Japan, several questions come to mind. Were I to return to Japan, these are the issues I'd like to hear more about:

1. Given the tremendous underrepresentation of women in the corporate, educational, professional, and governmental spheres, who has the power in these spheres to change policies that keep women out? And, just as important, who has the behind-the-scenes influence needed to persuade these corporate and political decision-makers to move ahead? What kind of process—lobbying, arm-twisting, consensus-building, grassroots organizing—is required to bring about new policy and how can such a process of change be encouraged and supported?
2. Is there any way to enact legislation that legitimizes and supports the work of voluntary groups throughout Japan, which in effect would provide a legal

infrastructure (easier access to a nonprofit-equivalent status, tax law changes, etc.) to support and encourage the work of such groups?

3. I am impressed with the workers' collectives, often formed in conjunction with consumer co-ops, as a model of the flourishing of entrepreneurial spirit in Japan. Women are starting and running their own businesses, responding to real market needs. Many collectives focus on quality and fostering the social good, rather than maximizing profit, and in this regard are very similar to small nonprofits in the United States. How can Japanese institutions support and encourage this promising and innovative development?

For instance, government tax policy currently allows a second worker in any household to earn a small amount of wages that are tax-free. How about raising or entirely removing this cap, if the second worker is involved in a workers' collective? Or a business could establish a partner relationship with a workers' collective, exchanging information, skills, and even workers. The collective could benefit from the connections and some basic legal and financial assistance. The business could benefit by being exposed to the risk-taking, socially responsive nature of the collective. These suggestions may be the wrong answers to this question, so I ask those with more knowledge: How can Japanese institutions support and encourage the spread of workers' collectives?

4. To my mind, the success of the consumer co-op movement in Japan is phenomenal and represents a blending of entrepreneurial skills and social consciousness, with some co-ops doing everything from setting up national delivery systems and running organic farms to building soap factories and spawning political parties that get their members elected to office. Co-ops self-finance their own expansion into new areas through on-going monthly member investments coupled with small loans from banks or other sources. These co-ops represent not only innovation and entrepreneurship, but, with their self-financing mechanisms and political spin-offs, model a fairly self-contained mechanism for change in the society. My question, once more, is how can Japanese institutions support and encourage the flourishing of such co-ops? For instance, could the unusual low-income elderly project being built by one coop be studied and, as appropriate, promoted as a national model? Is anyone researching the access of these co-ops and documenting key aspects which could be copied in more traditional sectors of the society? Or if these suggestions are inappropriate, what are the ways that Japanese business, educational, and legal institutions could encourage and support the further expansion of consumer co-ops and their spin-offs?

## Closing

Besides the richness of women's lives shared with us and the wealth of information and useful models we received, I felt encompassed by a warm and welcoming acceptance by women throughout Japan. These things I will always treasure: late

at night, sitting scrunched inside a tiny, portable, sidewalk *ramen* stand, being treated to the famous local ramen by a feminist college professor and an environmentalist high school teacher; huddling off to the side with a professional woman, sharing seldom-told stories from both our pasts involved in the heady days of the student power movement; listening to a grandmother describe the significance of each piece of cloth in her fabric art for the new fairy tale ("this one is from my baby's first dress, this piece was part of my wedding outfit, this one came from my husband's *yukata*"). And I learned yet again: As women, we use the scraps and pieces of our lives to weave ever new, ever more beautiful works of art.

I do want to thank all the inspiring women in Japan who shared their stories with us. Although all our formal sessions were professionally interpreted, I apologize if, during our informal conversations, my elementary Japanese resulted in my misinterpreting what I was being told. I look forward to hearing about what these powerful, caring, and altogether savvy women continue to do as they work to create a new future in Japan.

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**Bernarda Wong**  
Executive Director, Chinese American  
Service League  
Chicago, Illinois

The 14-day study tour—my first visit to Japan—can be characterized as an educational, eye-opening, hectic, hard-working, friendly, cultural, fun, interesting, and scrumptious experience! Thanks to the Center for Global Partnership and the Japan Center for International Exchange, the entire trip was well-planned and organized. In all four cities we visited—Tokyo, Yokohama, Fukuoka, and Kanazawa—the Japanese people were most gracious and accommodating, the cities were clean and beautiful (especially Kanazawa in the snow), and the women were eager and ready for the Dialogue. The diverse backgrounds and interests of the participating Japanese women were impressive; the compatibility and comradery of the American delegation were a plus.

### **Some Observations**

The Dialogue covered a large range of issues. While the six American women delegates will report on each of their respective professional areas, the following observations focus on human services. Throughout the tour, we discovered many similarities as well as differences between the Japanese and American women and between the two cultures.

Tax-exempt nonprofit social service systems as we know them in the United States are virtually nonexistent in Japan. The number of tax-exempt institutions approved by the Ministry of Finance is insignificant. The contribution commonly received by tax-exempt nonprofits in the United States is not a known phenomenon in Japan. Individuals do not have checking accounts from which they can conveniently send donations. There are a limited number of foundations because they, too, rarely are approved for tax-exempt status. These factors have a major impact on the development and growth of human and social service providers and the survival of NGOs in Japan.

Volunteerism as part of a long tradition of public altruism and contribution does not seem to be as common in Japan as in the United States. In Tokyo, we heard of only a few examples. However, volunteers seem to work well in small locales within their own communities. I was especially impressed with *Zenrinkan* (good neighbor house), an intergenerational facility in Kanazawa. Except for one paid

staff member, the facility is run by *minsei-iin* (institutional volunteers), who receive a token allowance of about US \$450 per year.

As in the United States, there are many “unsung heroines” who often work around the clock to meet the needs of their clients. This was especially true at the HELP Center, a women’s shelter in Tokyo, and Michaera House, a similar shelter in Yokohama staffed by Catholic nuns. Both shelters serve Japanese women as well as abused or troubled women from other countries, especially Thailand, the Philippines, and China.

With the United Nations’ push for the promotion of women’s issues, many Japanese women have become more keenly aware of the many issues confronting them. These include poverty, migration, gender equality, and their interrelatedness to jobs and economic development. Factors such as the decrease of children per married couple (1.53), longer life expectancy for women (80.08 years), and the antimarriage sentiment (54 percent of unmarried women surveyed by the government expressed a desire to stay single), have also affected Japanese women’s outlook and their decision making. One woman, for example, felt that young Japanese men and women who are the only children in their families, and therefore feel obligated to take care of their aging parents, would prefer to marry someone who is not an only child who may have a sibling who can eventually take care of his or her parents.

In spite of the passage of the Equal Employment Opportunity Act in 1986, Japanese women are still experiencing inequality in the workplace. Many are hired “part-time” or choose to remain housewives. This has partially contributed to the phenomenon of “overmaternalism”—when women devote excessive time and attention to their children, especially their sons. Many women with whom we spoke were concerned that the new generation of young men would not know how to live independently and therefore will not be attractive to the new generation of women who are increasingly independent.

Throughout our trip, it was clear that the women’s movement in Japan is gaining momentum. Although they could probably learn from the more active national network model in the United States, there are a few strong local programs with dedicated volunteers. I was especially impressed with the Kanagawa Network Movement in Yokohama, where 2,500 registered members of a women’s political group promote candidates who, when elected, turn all salaries back to the group to further promote their cause.

One cannot speak of education in Japan without mentioning the “entrance examination,” a phenomenon that seems to have taken control over much of the daily energy and life of all children and parents alike. Obsession with the entrance examination has taken priority over family life, recreation, cultural activities, and family savings (tutors for the students are common.)

I feel that the Japanese are ahead of the United States in government-built and financed women’s centers. We were impressed by the Yokohama Women’s Forum

and the Fukuoka Women's Center (AMIKAS), where a range of women's and children's services and resources are provided for the residents of these communities. They also provide a forum for women's groups promoting the women's movement.

### **Recommendations**

- The Japanese government should formally recognize NGOs and acknowledge their contributions to society. Tax exemption might be offered for private contributions to NGOs and community groups.
- The problems of illegal (and legal) aliens must be openly addressed by the government, with input from the NGOs now serving these populations.
- The concept of volunteerism can be promoted nationally with a program to get younger Japanese to buy into the concept.
- Childcare and care for the elderly can be better supported by programs that blend government resources and cultural sensitivity, e.g., government-supported programs that would hire relatives suggested by the elderly themselves. Adult children will not have to leave their jobs and the elderly would feel that they are being taken care of by their families.

### **Final Comments**

This Dialogue has eliminated many of the myths we, the US women, held of the Japanese women and vice-versa. I felt a sense of closeness with the Japanese women, a feeling that grew as we met and talked to more and more women as we continued our tour. Being the only Asian woman on the US delegation and feeling so comfortable with the culture, I sometime forgot that I was from the "visiting delegation." This, of course, was reinforced when often I was mistaken for a local Japanese by participating Japanese women and people in the streets! I value this exchange and feel that in some small ways our delegation has helped bring the two countries closer together. I look forward to continuing this Dialogue when the Japanese delegation travels to the USA in June.

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**Hideko Katsumata**  
Executive Secretary, Japan Center for  
International Exchange  
Tokyo

### **Report of the Japanese Delegation**

The study tour of the United States by the Japanese delegation of women's leaders as the second half of the Japan-US Women Leaders Dialogue was conducted under the theme "The Role of Women in Community Development." The tour, held June 6-19, 1993, was cosponsored by the Institute of International Education (New York) and the Japan Center for International Exchange (Tokyo), and supported by the Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership. The delegation visited Los Angeles, Spokane, Chicago, and New York and met with women leaders representing private organizations, citizens groups, and volunteer movements, in order to exchange ideas and experiences and to observe various facilities.

Selection of the Japanese delegation began in February 1993, following completion of the visit to Japan by the US delegation. Recommendations were sought from women's centers, private organizations, citizens groups, opinion leaders, and others in different parts of the country. Following screening of the personal data concerning each candidate and individual interviews, and taking into account the advice of members of the US delegation, the following six delegates were chosen in mid-April:

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| Yoriko Imasato    | Editor-in-chief, Living Fukuoka, West Japan Living Newspaper Co., Fukuoka   |
| Yaeko Suzuki      | Chair, We Love Asia 21, Yokohama  |
| Haruko Numata     | Coordinator, Sugunami Association for Better Lives in an Aging Society, Association to Provide Friendship Lights, Tokyo |
| Yoshiko Hayakawa  | Editor-in-chief, <i>Ishikawa no Tamago</i> (Eggs in Ishikawa), Kanazawa   |
| Mitsuko Yamaguchi | Executive Director, Fusae Ichikawa Memorial Association/Women's Suffrage Institute, Tokyo                               |
| Kimie Yokoyama    | Director, Des Femmes Workers Collective, Yokohama   |

The delegation was accompanied by Japan-side coordinator Hideko Katsumata (Executive Secretary, Japan Center for International Exchange) and Mieko Iijima (Program Assistant, JCIE) and by US-side coordinator Shaun Martin (Asia/Pacific Program Manager, IIE).

The US study tour was arranged with the cooperation of host communities (from which the US delegation members had come), with attention given to the specific interests of each Japanese delegation member. We would like to express our sincere appreciation for the extremely full, tremendously beneficial program provided. Our hosts in each of the communities were: Irene Redondo-Churchward at Project Info Community Services in Los Angeles; Susan Virnig at Northwest Regional Facilitators in Spokane; Ronne Hartfield at the Art Institute of Chicago; Bernarda Wong at the Chinese-American Service League in Chicago; and Peggy Blumenthal and Shaun Martin at the Institute of International Education in New York.

The delegation met for the first time on the date of departure, June 6, at the Miyako Hotel Tokyo for a formal meeting launching the tour. The members introduced themselves and spoke about their previous activities as well as their anticipations of the study tour. There was some discussion of topics and themes to be pursued through the Dialogue with women leaders in the United States. A short briefing about the status and role of the nonprofit sector in US society was provided by the Japanese coordinator.

What is being done in US society to resolve or ameliorate the problems at the community level? What is the role of women in these endeavors? The delegation headed to Los Angeles with great anticipation of the many things to be learned through direct dialogue with US women and first-hand observation of US society.

### **Social Issues in the United States and the Activities of Nonprofit Organizations (NPOs)**

Peggy Blumenthal, Vice President of Educational Services at the Institute of International Education, referred to Alexis de Tocqueville's observation that "Americans of all ages, all conditions, and all dispositions constantly form associations," and told us that IIE was founded in 1919 on that same "American impulse" to build international understanding and to promote cooperative efforts to resolve international problems through exchange of people and ideas. This comment opening our briefing expressed an essential characteristic of US society. The multifarious social ills in the United States today are the result of numerous and interlocking factors, often causing them to grow into even larger problems. All the problems are part of an intricate web—racial discrimination, drug and alcohol abuse, AIDS, domestic violence, the ineffectiveness of public schools, homelessness, problems with the welfare system, damage to local environments, economic recession and unemployment, human and gender rights problems—as are government or civic solutions to these problems and citizen involvement in the political process. Former President George Bush spoke in his inaugural address of the "community organiza-

tions that are spread like stars throughout the nation" supporting the fabric of US society, and indeed there are just as many privately organized, NPOs in the United States as there are issues to be dealt with. This seems to be one of the most distinctive features, and strengths, of US society.

The study tour provided us with a chance to glimpse these complexities of US society over a period of two weeks. The density of the experience was far beyond our capacity to fully digest. It did, however, impart us with a renewed energy and many ideas to incorporate into our own work back in Japan.

### **Diversity in the United States: From "Melting Pot" to "Tossed Salad"**

The United States is well known as a country that is open to and accepting of peoples of all races. But an immense amount of conscious effort is required, both by the people themselves and in their legal and government institutions, before all these people of disparate ethnic backgrounds can live together as Americans. The amount of effort that has been poured into this process up until now is incalculable. Focusing on diversity issues in Los Angeles and Chicago, we visited a number of organizations and observed their activities.

Los Angeles is made up of a large number of ethnic groups and the managing this cultural diversity is a major issue of public concern. Our visit coincided with the mayoral elections to replace Mayor Bradley, an African-American. A Chinese-American candidate had received widespread support from the city's minorities, but ultimately lost to the white candidate. During our tour of the city on a Sunday afternoon, a demonstration was being held in a park demanding that Chicano studies be incorporated into the university's curriculum. Through visits to private groups working with issues of race or interethnic problems and discussion with the women leaders at these organizations, we obtained a vivid impression of the difficulties US society faces: the breakdown of the American family, the urgent need for better communication skills in order to relieve the tensions within and among ethnic groups, drug and alcohol abuse, and unemployment.

The people we met who were working with minority issues told us that their aim was to build a society in which people of all minority groups could coexist without having to give up their ethnic identity; to create, as it were, a "salad society" in which the dressing was applied lightly enough that the flavor of each ingredient would still stand out.

Project Info Community Services (PICS) is a private group established in 1972 that provides a broad array of social services for Los Angeles citizens of Latino descent. Drug and alcohol abuse, educational disadvantages, and other factors have long been the source of family break-up and other social ills affecting the quality of life of Latino citizens. Project Info offers many programs in Spanish and English aimed at helping individuals establish their own independence: how to resist the lure of drugs and liquor by knowing about their harmful effects, how to maintain good mental and physical health, and how to improve communication

within their families. Under the leadership of executive director Irene Redondo-Churchward, herself a third-generation Latina, the staff at PICS is like one big family, working together in an friendly, open, and warm atmosphere. As its activities are mainly directed at the Latino community, most of its volunteers are Latino, although we met one African-American, one Japanese-American, and several white persons as well. All showed a visible sense of pride and enthusiasm in what they are doing.

Chicago is another city into which many immigrant peoples have poured over the past century. The Chinese American Service League (CASL), founded in 1978, is a dynamic organization providing social services for the 70,000-strong population of Chinese-Americans and Chinese immigrants in the city. Its activities are diverse: programs for elderly citizens who have lived their entire lives within the confines of Chicago's Chinatown; legal services and counselling for persons who have entered the United States without proper visas; training in English-language and other skills; and a shelter for young people, among them.

CASL offices, located in a huge renovated warehouse, make do with an odd assortment of furniture and equipment. The atmosphere, however, remains truly dynamic. A young couple who had arrived the day before were getting advice on how to get along in the city. In one small room, a group including both elementary school children and older people were studying calligraphy. In another room a volunteer who was an intern at a university medical school was taking blood pressure readings and giving advice on health matters. The CASL daycare center looks after more than 60 children; half of them had gone on a walk when we arrived, but those remaining entertained us with charming songs in English and Chinese.

One of the League's job-training programs is designed to give young Chinese the skills to become English-speaking chefs in non-Chinese hotels and restaurants. While we were there, a chef was giving instructions on how to make chicken soup and some sort of meat dish. Later, while dining at a restaurant in the city, our hostess Bernarda Wong pointed out one chef who had graduated from CASL's training class. Apparently the program has launched many young Chinese into very successful careers in the restaurant business outside of Chinatown.

Efforts are also being made to improve communication among members of one ethnic group or between different groups through community newspapers. Most of the problems a community struggles with are shared by more than one ethnic group. Tensions among ethnic groups have recently risen, however, and solidarity within each ethnic group has weakened. In order to combat this situation, Eastern Group Publications in Los Angeles publishes a number of newspapers in English and Spanish for the Latino and for Asian (Chinese, Vietnamese, etc.) communities. These publications furnish information on programs for the elderly, education, small business affairs, cultural events, and the like. These newspapers play the role of advocate on behalf of their readers, calling on the city to give the problems of minorities due consideration in urban policy. The circulation of these papers in Los

Angeles alone stands at around 68,000, and they have earned a favorable reputation as publications that reflect the opinions of the once-silent minority community.

People of whatever racial background have many obstacles to surmount in settling into a new environment, as we saw vividly in Los Angeles and Chicago. Without a fair measure of independence, a certain amount of supportive human contact, a degree of wisdom and ingenuity in coping with a new environment, and the capacity to earn a living, a newcomer is easy prey to the temptations of drugs and alcohol. These problems obviously do not have any one, simple solution, but require multidimensional remedies involving all aspects of life. Here we found an organization taking on all these tasks that in Japan would be considered the job of the government. It is an impressive example of the strength and commitment of NPOs in the United States.

### **Sheltering Human Dignity: The Battle Against Drug Addiction, Alcohol Abuse, and Domestic Violence**

Of all the ills of US society, those that concern women community leaders the most are drug and alcohol abuse and violence in the home. During our visits to shelters in Los Angeles and Spokane, we had opportunities to talk not only with the staff but to speak directly with one young woman in particular and with others who had overcome their dependence on drugs or alcohol and had started working as volunteers themselves. The gravity of the problems, the tragedy of the circumstances that result, and the dedication of the people working with these problems were extremely moving.

In many cases, a male substance abuser reaches a point where his dependence impairs his daily activities, and often this causes him to lose his job. The first person to bear the brunt of his frustration and the financial burdens he bears is his wife. According to some statistics, violence breaks out in the home of one out of three couples in the United States, and violence by the husband is the most common cause of death among married women. It is said that 10 women in the United States die each day from physical abuse. Two or three decades ago, domestic violence was largely a phenomenon in poor immigrant families, but today it occurs not only in low-income families but even in the wealthiest households. Until very recently, wife-beating and child abuse were matters of close secrecy and were very difficult to bring out into the open.

The cruelty men turn on their wives often extends to children after these battered women turn to drugs or alcohol. Furthermore, there is a marked tendency among children whose parents beat them to later abuse their own children. The results of one survey state that 80 percent of the men serving time in prison were brought up in households where violence was a daily affair.

Joselyn Yap of the political advocacy group, National Women's Political Caucus of California, explained that nothing changes by just sitting and waiting. Having devoted the past 20 years to social services and working for the Child Protection

Service in Los Angeles, she and her colleagues know well that violence against family members can affect all kinds of people, and they work persistently and aggressively to combat it in any way they can. "Change won't come voluntarily . . . insistent advocacy is needed," she declared, and told us that "privacy ends when a report is made."

When women see their husbands' violence turned on their children, or when they become aware that they are abusing their own children and feel incapable of turning the situation around, they often leave home, taking their children and nothing but the clothes on their backs. Many become homeless. If they are lucky enough to learn about the existence of a shelter, they often turn up there in search of help. On the day we visited a shelter in Spokane, we found one woman sleeping with her children. They had arrived there in the middle of the night, and their faces still showed the vivid bruises of the violence they had suffered.

Generally, policy on child abuse has made more progress than that on abuse of wives and the elderly. According to Joselyn Yap, there are 2,000 social workers involved with this problem in Los Angeles County who deal with cases through a citizen's hot line. In incidents of infant abuse, social workers have "risk assessment" powers to enter homes and determine whether a child is in danger, even without specific evidence of violence. Child Protection Services operates on an annual budget of \$690 million and each year places about 33,000 children in foster care. Still, says Yap, "what is best for children is to live in a family setting . . . . This is our guiding hope." To make that possible, the problems of child abuse have to be confronted by the community as a whole. About 100 organizations in the County, she says, hold monthly meetings to discuss and consider what can be done. In dealing with individual cases, Child Protection Services works with service agencies in the community where the family lives and with the family in question in order to improve the situation.

Foley House is one of the shelters owned by Southern California Alcohol and Drug Programs, Inc., which provides California's only refuge program for female alcoholics and their children. A separate house shelters victims of drug abuse. According to SCADP Executive Director Lynne Appel, statistics show that 1 out of every 10 persons in the United States is subject to violent abuse of a fairly serious degree. She also says that among the 10 million women who are single mothers, the incidence of physical abuse is probably very high. Unfortunately, the urgency of programs aimed at both mothers and children is still not widely recognized, and most single mothers refuse to be separated from their children no matter how serious their plight, often throwing themselves into circumstances even worse than before.

Located in the suburbs of Los Angeles, Foley House is not a secluded institution cut off from the real world, but a cheerful dwelling in which a number of people live together. They live like members of one big, warm family, while each individual is searching for ways to return to an independent life. At the time we visited, there

were about 40 residents, including children. Having escaped from the threat of violence in their lives, they gathered in the living room to talk about their experiences, helping each other try to overcome dependence on drugs or alcohol, and encouraging and supporting each other. With professional counselling, they try to put their lives back together.

Meals are prepared in groups that plan their own menus and whose members take turns cooking, making free use of Foley House's supplies. We were told that many of the women who escape to these shelters have given up making even minor decisions for themselves after years of abuse. The children spend most of their time in the Foley House's daycare center, but those who have suffered severe psychological damage as a result of abuse stay in a separate playroom where counselors work with them and help them to express their fears and insecurities and to communicate with others. When they are ready, they are invited to join the other children.

Without a solid follow-up support system, even those who benefit from the kind of care this shelter provides can end up right where they began. Recognizing this, Foley House owns 25 separate dwellings in the vicinity that are available at very low cost to the women in order to help residents get started on their own. If they run into difficulties, they can come back to Foley House for advice.

The Spokane YWCA is known for operating the most comprehensive program for the prevention of domestic violence in the Northwest Pacific Coast region. Through coordination with the police and the courts, the YWCA is able to guarantee the legal safety of victims and operate programs for both victims and victimizers. Although its location is kept secret, a husband or other victimizer who comes within a certain distance of the YWCA Safe Shelter can be reported to the police and arrested. Safe Shelter provides the same level of care to its residents that we observed at Foley House by encouraging and helping them to resume normal, independent lives through individual and family counselling. Residents of the YWCA program receive care and support for 6 to 18 months to help them get back on their feet.

The shelter also helps victimizers through "anger management therapy" sessions, which are designed to help them learn to control their emotions while at the same time respecting their privacy. Another important area of activity features "volunteer advocates" who work on the 24-hour SOS telephone service, rescue victims, serve as liaisons with the courts, and help educate the general public about domestic violence problems.

One woman we met told us her boyfriend had tried to shoot her and said she was lucky to escape with her life. She commented candidly that she had been abused by either her father or some boyfriend ever since she was a child. Each time she found a new boyfriend, she hoped that he would be different, but the result was always the same. She said ruefully that she just didn't know how to judge men. She had managed to recover to a certain extent from her experiences and was

commuting to a skills training program that would help her establish a career of her own. The woman declared "I don't want to depend on a man any more."

The Spokane YWCA has a room fully stocked with clothing and daily necessities, which anyone can borrow at any time. When women who are homeless or living in a shelter attend job interviews, they need to look presentable and dress as smartly as possible. The supply room has no supervisor, no sign-out chart, and no one to keep track of who takes what. In spite of this, a staff person told us that no one abuses the privilege of access to the supply room. This system is based on the conviction that human beings have a certain pride that must be respected, no matter how dire the straits in which they may find themselves.

Another unique program at the YWCA is a school that accommodates homeless children from preschool age to the eighth grade. The program originated with the purpose of providing care and supervision for the children while their homeless mothers were searching for work or attending skills training classes. About 30 children were enrolled at the school. We spent about an hour with the children, teaching them *origami* and how to hold chopsticks, letting them sample the snacks Japanese children enjoy, and showing them how to write their names in Japanese characters. The children were all cheerful and fun, but there were a few who did seem very inhibited and uncommunicative. When we left, most of the children asked for a parting hug. Some of the children, however, still felt threatened by anyone who came too close, and the teachers asked us simply to give them a gentle handshake. The encounter with those children was unforgettable.

Both at Foley House and the Spokane YWCA, human dignity takes precedence; whether child or adult, an individual's right to happiness is respected, and both organizations are committed to doing all they can to achieve that goal. This idea is one we hope to help implant more firmly on Japanese soil, where the dignity of the individual is generally subordinated to the welfare of the group.

### **NPOs as Community Coordinators**

The study tour provided us the opportunity to observe the activities of an extremely broad range of private-sector groups, as mentioned above. We were also deeply impressed to find NPOs working not only to tackle specific community issues, but also playing a significant role as coordinators between citizens and the government and big businesses or among private organizations themselves.

Kaiser Permanente, its headquarters located in California, is a health insurance and medical service organization that operates 178 clinics in 16 states. The largest of its kind in the United States, Kaiser Permanente provides general medical services to 6.6 million citizens paying low-level insurance premiums. It not only provides health facilities, basic medical services, and AIDS education, but offers special programs of its own, funding to NPOs, and cooperation on various projects and government programs that help build healthy communities.

Many of its activities are unique: programs to help teenage mothers complete their diplomas; funding to promote and reward volunteer efforts to improve communities through programs such as "Adopt a Block;" conducting a recycling drive for second-hand eyeglasses and dispatching of ophthalmologists to towns where the eyesight of most of the children has been so impaired by malnutrition that they cannot attend school; building street-corner police boxes as a crime-prevention measure; wildlife protection and reforestation drives, and so on. While we were in Los Angeles we heard news reports about Kaiser Permanente activities almost daily, suggesting that it is one of the most well-established, proactive organizations of its kind.

Spokane's Northwest Regional Facilitators (NRF) was founded in 1974 by Susan Virnig and two colleagues and has since grown steadily to support a staff of about 50, occupy two buildings, and operate on a \$1 million annual budget. It organizes forums for discussion among citizens, government authorities, and corporations as needed to resolve disputes involving water pollution, air pollution, congested traffic, and other local issues. The NRF offers recommendations for alternative planning; housing improvement programs designed to provide more liveable environments beneficial to both tenants, especially low-income families, and landlords; acquisition of federal housing assistance (their housing rehabilitation record totals 3,000 dwellings in the past 15 years); childcare programs; seminars designed to promote understanding and cooperation among citizens regarding community problems; and much more.

One of the more distinctive NRF programs, and one that Japan has much to learn from, is the NRF's Lindaman Nonprofit Center. NRF has made one of its buildings available to 26 small nonprofit groups in Spokane for a very modest monthly rent. The smallest room, only 90 square feet in size, rents for \$100. The largest room is 1000 square feet. Members share common facilities and equipment, including the conference rooms, a fitness training room, office equipment, telephones, kitchen, storerooms, and parking lot, all free of charge. The Center also operates a used office furniture and equipment bank. We were told that computer, fax, secretarial services, accounting consulting, management consulting, training programs, and workshops were also available at low cost. If an organization does not have the funds to open an office of its own, it can rent space in this center and obtain access to its services. The Lindaman Nonprofit Center also operates a membership system through which members are eligible to receive services even if they are not renting offices in the building. Location there, however, promotes the exchange of information and spontaneous cooperation among different groups. At the Center we met with representatives of a number of tenant organizations concerned with forest protection, fair government appropriations, and housing problems for low-income individuals. This kind of center may be feasible in the United States and is possible because of low consumer prices and plentiful land, but we were struck with the fact that it is exactly the kind of facility needed in Japan, where the nonprofit sector is still not firmly established or adequately funded.

NRF obtains most of its financial resources in the form of contracted money from the federal, state, and municipal governments, but it remains an independent institution with a reputation for its pioneering, experimental programs. Its housing rehabilitation program has received an official commendation from the federal government. In the United States, an organization that enters into a contract with the government considers the arrangement an agreement between equals: the exchange of its professional expertise for a certain amount of money. Susan Varnig called to our attention the fact that government money is the taxpayer's money. Citizens have the right and the responsibility to use that money effectively, she said, and if creative projects are launched through private initiative and expanded, the government can carry them on or develop them as cooperative projects so that they will benefit the largest number of people possible. The important thing, she emphasized, is that the independence of the private organization not be infringed upon, but that it be strengthened and allowed to grow. This is extremely valuable advice for Japan, where in government-commissioned projects private organizations usually hold inferior status as subcontractors.

### **Diversity in the Arts and Education**

Our Chicago host, Ronne Hartfield, Director of Museum Education at The Art Institute of Chicago, provided us with an opportunity to observe community activities of a very different kind than those described above. Aboard the tour boat Chicago First Lady, we enjoyed 90 minutes of cruising on the Chicago River in the sun and breeze while a volunteer guide and specialist from the Chicago Architecture Foundation gave us a running commentary on the forest of postmodern architecture visible on both banks of the river. Japanese and third-generation Japanese-American volunteers from the Art Institute of Chicago interpreted the commentary into Japanese and later gave us a guided tour of the Art Institute itself.

An important part of the activities of American art museums consist of programs designed to familiarize citizens with culture and the arts. The Art Institute of Chicago, which houses a museum as well as educational facilities, is known not only for one of the finest art collections in the world, but also for its stress on arts education. The Institute's Department of Museum Education provides a wide array of programs: guided tours for K-12 students; family programs aimed at children and their parents and grandparents; teacher-training programs; a folk tale storyteller program, and sketching sessions among others. The museum believes that by becoming familiar with the arts, people learn how to express themselves freely and creatively.

During a panel discussion arranged by the Art Institute of Chicago, the members of our Japanese delegation had a chance to present an overall report on the Dialogue and the experiences of the previous nine days in Los Angeles and Spokane. It was quite a challenge to communicate all we had felt and learned to the audience of about 70 people who had gathered to hear our stories. Ronne, a

poet in her own right, told us that art plays a very important role in helping women to express themselves once they are freed from the constraints that have bound them. Indeed, the Art Institute offered us tremendous inspiration as we strolled through its halls, trying to decide how to present our observations on the tour.

## **Women and Leadership**

### *Women's Issues and Commissions on the Status of Women*

A wide variety of initiatives have been taken to enhance the status of American women. June Farnum Dunbar of the Los Angeles County Commission on Women (established under a Los Angeles County Assembly ordinance drafted in 1975) explained measures being taken by the federal and state governments and what specific activities were going on in Los Angeles County, giving many specific examples.

Currently, some 270 such government commissions have been set up at the federal, state, county, and municipal level. The Los Angeles County Commission consists of 15 members, with three members appointed by each of five county supervisors. Its main functions are: (1) to advise county departments and agencies on the needs of women and matters relating to discrimination on the basis of gender; (2) to make recommendations on programs and legislation aimed at promoting equal rights and opportunities for women; (3) to initiate programs, surveys, and studies of alleged discrimination against women or the infringement of their human rights; and (4) to act as coordinator for the County, community groups, and other organizations concerned with women's rights. Some of its recommendations touch on very immediate issues. For example, recommendations have included that at least half of the members appointed to county commissions be women; that studies be conducted on wage discrimination and women's advancement to managerial positions in business; that changes be made to ensure equal opportunity; and that women be accorded the right to choose whether or not they will bear children. Other activities range farther afield, such as protests aimed at the United Nations to bring attention to the cruelty to women that exists in developing countries. However, since the Commission holds no power to enforce the adoption of its recommendations, it must constantly monitor the status quo and resubmit its recommendations and advice again and again. Sometimes it turns to television or the newspapers in the endeavor to raise public awareness or to appeal to popular opinion. There is also an organization called Women's Appointment Collaboration, made up of some 40 female government commissioners, of which June Dunbar is a member. This body works aggressively for the advancement of women to higher posts in government as well as corporate management.

### *The Study of Men and Women: Toward a New Society*

In academia as well, efforts are being made to move away from the traditional approach to the study of women's issues toward a new perspective taking into account both men and women. The Program for the Study of Women and Men in

Society (SWMS) founded at the University of Southern California in 1986 is one example. The concept behind this program is that women's issues inherently involve men's issues as well, and that problems should be addressed by both men and women together. Both men and women, graduates and undergraduates, may elect this subject as their academic major or minor. The program consists of 10 core classes, including: Sex Similarities and Differences: A Multi-disciplinary Approach; Sex/Gender/Sexuality as an Issue in American Public Life; Feminist Theory, and about 15 other related courses. In 1993 most of the classes offered followed the traditional women's-studies approach, but the overall theme for the 1994 academic year will be "Men and Masculinity."

The number of foundations specializing in women's issues is rapidly growing. The L. A. Women's Foundation, founded seven years ago, works to help women, especially minority and low-income women, to attain greater independence. The Foundation's program manager, Savi Bismath, told us that some 60 women's foundations like this exist throughout North America.

Crystal Hayling of the California Wellness Foundation, whose activities are dedicated to the improvement of community health and medical care, shared with us the results of surveys on female health. Among the data she mentioned: African-American women are prone to develop uterine myoma and often give birth to children prematurely; Latino women are relatively unlikely to get cancer but the death rate after diagnosis is very high; and Asian women are slow to recover from childbirth. The Foundation uses this kind of basic research to plan proactive policies.

#### *Shared Strength of Women and "Advocacy"*

The people we met working in NPOs all emphasized that one of the most important parts of their work was "advocacy," or the endeavor to increase the influence and impact of NGOs on public policy. There are many ways to exert pressure on municipal and state governments, but the most common is to build a regional network of organizations of similar concerns and activities. In order to start a really large-scale movement, a national organization must be created to lobby Congress and the federal government. Contacts are thus cultivated with policy-makers everywhere possible.

All these organizations seem to have begun with the conviction that "though alone we may be weak, together we are strong." Concerned people gather together to talk and exchange opinions and information. Linda Crabtree of the Holy Family Hospital Women's Center, who attended our meeting at Northwest Regional Facilitators, told us there would be a breakfast meeting of Spokane women leaders at 6:45 am the next morning and invited us to attend. We determinedly wiped the sleep out of our eyes early the next day to attend the Action Women's Exchange Breakfast Meeting held at the Spokane Club. The attendance fee was only \$5 and about 100 women had assembled. Over breakfast, they busily used the opportunity to meet a wide variety of people, to communicate with other members, recruit participants for projects, search for jobs, make statements, distribute pamphlets

and information on the issues of their concern, and so on. It happened to be just after former diplomat Masako Owada had given up her career in the foreign service to marry Prince Naruhito, so as visitors from Japan, we were asked many questions about that and other issues. Informal and inexpensive breakfast meetings like this are by no means unusual in the United States, and many women actively participate in them. The women who hosted our study tour in the three cities we visited across the United States have the same kind of broad networks based on mutual respect and trust which help make possible the diverse programs we viewed on our tour.

### *Ordinary Women in Politics*

Starting out in this way, with exchange of ideas and information, forming ties with other persons of shared concern, becoming involved in lobbies seeking to have those concerns reflected in public policy or other activities, more and more women are actively seeking careers in politics. In the US Senate there are six women among the one hundred members; in the House of Representatives 47 of the 440 members are women. Among state assemblies, that of Washington state has a relatively large proportion of female legislators; 40 percent are women. Under the Clinton administration, a number of women have been appointed to cabinet-level and under secretarial posts, and thus their role in American politics has taken a large stride forward.

At a meeting with women politicians in the office of Spokane Mayor Sheri Bernard, we were impressed by the extent to which women have moved into politics. A former staff member of Northwest Regional Facilitators, Bernard served for six years as municipal council member, has served as mayor for four years, and is seeking re-election in the fall of 1993. Lois Stratton had served for five years in the Washington state House of Representatives, eight years in the state Senate, and was currently a Spokane city council member. She also intended to run for mayor in the autumn elections. Pat Mummey was head of the Spokane County Board of Commissioners. Former university professor Lisa Brown was a first-time member of the state House of Representatives. Jean Silver was a veteran legislator who had served 11 years in the state lower house. Janet Gilpatrick was the assistant to House Speaker Thomas Foley. Judith Gilmore was director of Governor Mike Lowry's Eastern Washington office. Jennifer Polek was the Eastern Washington regional representative in Senator Patty Murray's office. Ranging in age from their 20s to 60s, they were responsible for political activity at different levels for this city of about 180,000. They struck us not as belonging to some special breed, but as very ordinary, personable women.

Most of the women who have moved into the world of politics are those who realized the importance of political action in solving the problems faced by the community and society as a whole in the course of their work at NPOs or as volunteer activists. We saw that the eight women gathered that day in Mayor Bernard's office shared a strong mutual bond and cooperate with each other on a day-to-day basis. It was especially amazing to see two people, who were to be

rivals in the upcoming mayoral election, sitting there together without the least sense of antagonism, offering their opinions quite naturally and enthusiastically on the subject of women and politics.

In response to our question as to what they considered the differences between men and women in politics, the women pretty much agreed with one another. In terms of strong points, they pointed out that women respond immediately to things that are happening in society right now, work aggressively for peace, reject violence and war, strive for balance in whatever they do, and know clearly what citizens want, because they have entered politics from the front lines of activism in the community. It was pointed out that currently the power of women is limited and that they have to do much more in order to establish political acumen and strength. The important thing, they emphasized, is not to be tied down by the established patterns of political activity, but to be committed to politics, to deepen awareness of and knowledge about political problems, and effectively sway the electorate.

At the Chicago office of the Governor of Illinois, we met Arabel Rosales, Christine Takada, and the other able women who, as executive assistants to the Governor, are in charge of urban and community affairs, education, and Asian American affairs. The state government offices are located in an innovative donut-shaped building, with open-style offices surrounding a central atrium. The lower four floors are a shopping mall, with the fifth floor and above housing the open-hall style offices of the state government. Shoppers standing in the courtyard below can see the staff and officials bustling about their work high above. It is intended as a symbol of the openness between the state government and citizens. The air-conditioning and heating bills are apparently astronomical, but the message of the structure has apparently been worth the cost. This open environment helps to combat the tendency for vertical administration and encourage smooth horizontal communication among the different administrative sections. Problems in education, for example, are dealt with after researching race discrimination problems and other related issues through consultation with other sections of the government. We found these young women staff members put a great deal of energy into very responsible positions and learned that they have benefited from the encouragement and understanding of their superiors. Later that day, when we visited the office of Chicago Mayor Richard Daley, City Staff Director Barton Moy and Community Outreach Coordinator Gene Lee told us that they are in daily contact with the Governor's office regarding minority and other problems. The problems facing the third-largest city in the United States are tremendous, and many of them seemingly impossible to resolve. However, when we observed the close and friendly relationships among officials and politicians at a reception held in our honor or at other occasions, we clearly saw the important role that human relationships and networking play in the world of politics.

### *Jane Addams: Mentor of Women Leaders*

Hull House, a museum commemorating the life of Jane Addams (1860—1935), the first woman to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, is located on the University

of Illinois Chicago campus. Our visit to Hull House was proposed by delegation member Mitsuko Yamaguchi, who is Executive Director of the Fusae Ichikawa Memorial Association. The pioneer women's suffrage leader Ichikawa Fusae (1893—1981) had visited Hull House as a young woman, and her experience seeing democracy based on the principles of freedom and equality at work there, had been one of the factors that led her to launch the women's suffrage movement in Japan. In that sense, therefore, Hull House holds special meaning for Japanese women. The building, a settlement Addams built in 1889 at the age of 29 for immigrants from Europe, is now a memorial open to the public.

Addams dedicated her life to community development, human rights, and social justice. She campaigned for the rights of immigrants, juvenile justice, safe working conditions in industry, legal protection of women and children's rights, labor issues, public sanitation, social welfare legislation, political reform, better housing, education, public recreation facilities, cross-cultural understanding, community cultural activities, and international peace. She poured all her resources into her activities based at Hull House and 13 other facilities.

Branded as a communist for a time because of her battle to defend the rights of workers, she had to endure a period of exile from the United States. She nonetheless overcame all obstacles confronting her and contributed to US society as a true community leader. Her achievements in social reform were truly remarkable, given that she was active at a time when the status of women was still greatly inferior to that of men. With inspiring examples like Jane Addams, US society is sure to keep on producing many distinguished and stalwart women leaders. The Fusae Ichikawa Memorial Association is currently preparing a biography of Addams, and it was a memorable experience for us to be there at Hull House some 70 years later, retracing the footsteps of the pioneer of the Japanese women's movement.

### *Challenges for Women and the Role of Nonprofit, Nongovernmental Groups: Leadership Training*

The speech given before US–Japan Women Leaders Dialogue participants at the concluding seminar in New York by Susan Berresford, Vice President of the Ford Foundation, one of the United States' most important NPOs (and the largest grant-giving foundation in the world), was full of valuable advice and encouragement. In US society, she said, nonprofit NGOs are viewed as: (1) groups where innovative, pioneering people gather; (2) a political testing ground for new ideas; and (3) manifestations of the pluralism and individualism of the United States. NPOs stand relatively close to the ordinary people and therefore represent a more human approach than that of government; they “are the social part of business.” These organizations are an integral part of American life, and at a time of increasing distrust in government they have an even more important role to play than in the past. Ms. Berresford observed that many women previously active in NPOs and NGOs have been recruited by the Clinton administration, and it is certain that their

past experiences will be reflected in government policy and that their work in the federal government will help them to accomplish even more when they return to careers in the private sector. [See pages 115–121 for full text of Ms. Berresford's speech].

The facts behind Ms. Berresford's observations can be outlined as follows. The total amount of grants and donations to the private sector in the United States in 1991 was \$124.8 billion, an increase of 6.2 percent over the previous year despite the prolonged recession. This accounts for 2.2 percent of the GDP. Of that amount, 82.7 percent consists of individual donations, 6.2 percent bequests, 6.2 percent foundation grants, and 4.9 percent corporate donations. Of this, 54.2 percent goes for religious-related purposes, 10.6 percent for education, 8.5 percent for human services, 7.8 percent for medical and health care, and 7.1 percent for cultural activities and the arts. The recipients of these donations and grants include, of course, the private organizations involved in community action. About \$5 billion goes to citizen activism for community development and human rights causes, about \$3.1 billion goes to environmental protection groups, and about \$1.7 billion to international relations.

According to the IRS (Internal Revenue Service) figures, NPOs' operations account for \$133.0 billion, or 3.5 percent of the GDP. They employ 7.4 million people (5.7 percent of the workforce), and benefit from the volunteered services is estimated to be the equivalent of 5 million full-time employees. Other statistics show that 54 percent of persons aged 18 and over are engaged in volunteer work of some kind, contributing an average of four hours per week. These figures testify to the considerable size of the nonprofit sector in the United States and the high status it holds.

One of the highest priorities of the nonprofit sector is in human resource training. According to Susan Berresford, 12.4 percent of the workforce of New York is in the nongovernmental sector and 67 percent of the NGO workforce is female. All the people we met shared the view that the advancement of the nonprofit sector depends heavily on the cultivation of female talent, as testified by the words we heard constantly, "empowerment" and "mentoring."

Taking up the challenges of the demand for human resources is the Women's International Leadership Program based at International House in New York. A carefully screened group of women from around the world between the ages of 20 and 60 take a nine-month regimen of courses designed to help them exercise effective leadership. They learn about organizational planning, conflict resolution, strategies to increase female participation in decision-making, cross-communications, and many other topics in seminars and workshops. They also study the work of mentors in their fields, engage in field work in communities struggling with problems in their field of interest, and experiment with development of new projects in small groups. Irene Redondo-Churchward, our host in Los Angeles, who had gone back to college after her children were grown and then moved into nonprofit

sector work, told us that she had received her real training as a professional at the National Hispana Leadership Institute. In Japan, too, older women leaders must not only help “empower” their juniors using their own experience, but also work to create strategic mechanisms to cultivate effective women leaders.

## Lessons From US Society

### *Voluntarism and Professionalism*

As outlined above, a great number of private NPOs in the United States are tackling the issues faced by society, each from their particular standpoint. Women play the central role in the management and activities of a very large proportion of these organizations. These women take pride in their role as the driving forces of social change, and at the same time strive constantly to enhance and improve their professional expertise. The magnitude of the problems facing the United States is perhaps far greater than those confronting Japan. Most of these problems are rooted in social inequities and are reflected in human rights and women's issues as well as racial and gender discrimination. This explains why many American women are so seriously committed. Voluntary spirit alone is insufficient to cope with the gravity of the problems. Professional expertise is a prerequisite in the private voluntary sector, just as it is in politics or business.

Members of the US delegation who participated in the Japan study tour and other Americans who have observed private voluntary activities in Japan have said that while US nonprofit-sector activities are now highly professionalized, partly out of necessity, a prototype of the American spirit of voluntarism can be found in Japan in the uncompensated work of volunteers. An important challenge for Japan in particular is to achieve a balance between this spirit of uncompensated endeavor and the promotion and advancement of the nonprofit-sector.

The voluntary spirit is still very much alive and well in the United States, as shown by the statistics quoted above. Indeed, volunteer work is an integral part of the educational and institutional systems, a fact to which many statistics attest. It is to be hoped that in Japan, too, where the word “volunteer” has only recently become widely recognized, efforts will be made to learn from American experience in promoting a nonprofit sector and a spirit of voluntarism adapted to the Japanese environment.

We visited the United States in June, which is the last month of the fiscal year for many organizations, so our hosts were in the frantic process of preparing applications and documentation for projects to be submitted to foundations, corporations, and government agencies. NPOs draw their funds in the form of contributions from individuals and corporations through the United Way, as well as grants from foundations and government contracts. Roughly 30 percent of their funds are derived from membership fees and earnings from profit-making activity, 22 percent from donations and private-sector grants, 21 percent from government subsidies, 21 percent from volunteer support, and 6 percent from other sources. Unlike in

Japan, the nonprofit sector is firmly established in the United States, and fund raising mechanisms receive far better treatment under the legal and tax systems.

There is a very respectable profession known as "grantsmanship" in the United States. Grant writers and development staff try to acquire funds by formulating convincing project plans and by winning approval from foundations and other grant-giving agencies for the aims of the projects, the means of achieving them, and the competence and capability of those who are to carry them out. The most highly reputed private organizations in the United States are led by people with well-honed skills in grantsmanship. For this reason, the competition to obtain funds is intense (although the overall pie is far larger than it is in Japan), and, with the recession, all organizations are suffering severe difficulties. In addition to their routine money raising activities, they launch large-scale fund-raising campaigns annually or once every few years. Demonstrating the indefatigable American frontier spirit, they throw themselves heart-and-soul into their activities, their sights set constructively and optimistically on the future.

Citizens' and women's groups in Japan can hardly hope for the same level of success in their endeavors as that enjoyed by private NPOs in the United States. The nature of our society, the structure of our tax system and other institutions, and the level of public awareness vis-a-vis nonprofit activities differ from the situation in the US. Today, however, we can see that social problems of unprecedented severity and complexity are ready to emerge in Japan, given the rapidly aging citizenry, the deadlocked educational system, the increasing number of women working outside the home, and the rising numbers of illegal foreign laborers, etc. Because these problems come very close to home for Japanese women, it is extremely likely that they will increasingly seek to confront them using the flexible, horizontally organized groups they instinctively know how to form. A very important, if long-term challenge, lies in helping these groups to further "empower" themselves in order that they do not end up as mere "hobbies," but rather are enabled to show their full potential and play a significant social role.

### *Strengthening of Organizations*

American women are working to strengthen and expand their organizations in various ways, and their endeavors offer much from which we in Japan can learn. Specific areas of effort are:

1. Discerning what problems society and the community is facing and objectively analyzing what needs to be done to solve these problems;
2. Judging what activities will be the best and most appropriate, given the capacity of the group;
3. Working out medium- and long-term strategies to: hire personnel; secure sources of funding (i.e., increasing fund-raising capacity, which implies a required ability to present project plans in such a way as to convince others of their necessity); explore the possibilities of cooperation with other groups, including public entities (this cooperation is necessary in order to both minimize

the overlap of activities and merge small strengths to form a powerful force); and cultivate information exchange and public impact (including preparation of summary reports of group activities for promotional use);

4. Mobilizing individuals and organizations through networks to unify them and empower them to carry out more effective activities and, when necessary, exerting political pressure; and
5. Systemizing the training of younger persons to carry on nonprofit activities.

In Japan, where institutions do not exist that facilitate such social-oriented work and where the infrastructure for volunteer activity is not well developed, these fields of endeavor involve enormous effort. Furthermore, they are all so closely interrelated that it would be ineffective to implement them only one or two at a time. But the problems already confronting Japanese society and local communities in Japan will not wait. Efforts by individuals committed to nonprofit-sector work are much needed, it is true, but even more crucial is that a broader awareness grow throughout Japanese society—Japanese leaders and citizens alike—of the importance of the nonprofit sector and an environment that supports its activities.

## Conclusion

From the US study tour, the Japanese delegation brought back with it a bountiful harvest of experience and a much refreshed awareness of challenges to be pursued. Although only six women took part in the study tour, their experiences in the United States are too valuable to keep to themselves. They have already begun to tell others in Japan about the tour whenever and wherever the opportunity arises. With the publication of these reports, JCIE and IIE, sponsors of the Japan and US study tours, hope that readers will be encouraged to discuss issues of common concern and launch activities in the nonprofit sector. It is also hoped that this Dialogue program can be continued through the cooperation of foundations in the United States and Japan.

It would be impossible in this brief report to describe in adequate detail all the extremely valuable experiences the delegation members enjoyed in the United States. In Spokane, a homestay program was provided in accordance with each delegation member's personal interests. The host families were all exceedingly warm and hospitable, giving us a precious opportunity to experience American family life first-hand. For half of one day we engaged in "shadowing," following one particular woman around as she pursued her daily routine, in order to observe her life close at hand. In New York, one member visited the Boys Choir of Harlem; another met with women of the Workers' Collective; others exchanged opinions with editors of a community newspaper and visited UNIFEM and other women's affairs departments at the United Nations. Each of us reaped a harvest of our very own from the tour. We would like to express our sincere gratitude to our hosts at IIE and everyone we met in the United States.

The best way we can think of to return the kindness as well as material and spiritual support we received for this project is to commit ourselves wholeheartedly to firmly establishing the nonprofit sector in Japan. If that can be accomplished, our hope that private organizations in the United States and Japan can work together effectively for the benefit of the Earth and the international community may some day be realized.

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I departed Japan on June 6 for the Japan-US Women Leaders Dialogue study tour of the United States. This tour was planned with consideration given to the importance of face-to-face communication. The program was made possible with the help of the US-based Institute of International Education (IIE) and the Japan Center for International Exchange (JCIE). In the first phase of the program, six women from various parts of the United States visited Japan and met with women from around the country. Six women from Tokyo, Yokohama, Kanazawa and Fukuoka participated in the second phase of the program. Over a two-week period, we visited Los Angeles, Spokane, Chicago, and New York and were hosted in each location by the US women leaders who had visited Japan.

### **The Importance of Communication**

In California our host was Irene, who welcomed us with a big heart and a warm hug. She is the Executive Director of Project Info Community Services (PICS), a social service organization. Since 1976, PICS has worked to eradicate alcohol and drug abuse. In order to help people overcome alcohol and drug addiction, it is essential to strengthen family bonds, and PICS has various programs to achieve this.

We visited PICS, where one of the staffmembers, Dolores, was in charge of a program to enhance family communication. She staged a skit for us depicting the relationship between a mother and her child. "Hurry! Hurry! What are you doing! Why are you so slow!" Rather than scolding children in this manner, Dolores explained it was better to praise them. Another staffmember spoke of the effectiveness of hugging children, explaining that expressing one's feelings through physical action was a better means of communicating than by words alone. Dolores explained that she presented the skits in order to make the lessons more interesting for the parents and children who come to PICS after work and school and who may otherwise fall asleep. These skits are aimed at Latinos and are conducted in Spanish for first generation immigrants, and in English for their children who learn English at school and from friends. The program was established to cope with the barriers that arise between the two languages.

### **The Strength of Lynn Appel**

What does one do when she becomes an alcoholic? We visited a shelter for female alcoholics called Foley House. The appearance of the shelter was a pleasant surprise—the lawn, the little fountain, the antique sofa with the floral pattern, the white table cloth. The tasteful decor made us feel as if we had been invited into the home of a family. We were told that this was the only shelter in California where residents could bring their children. They showed us one of the rooms, which was full of dolls and toys. The nail polish bottles lined up on the television drew my eye. Seeing this, I realized that Foley House was different from similar facilities in Japan. Beautiful and enjoyable items were not taken away from the women at Foley House. The Executive Director of the shelter, Lynne Appel, explained to us that making people feel as if they were part of the family was what made the program effective. By no means would the walls and floors be painted white.

Lynne was tall and slim and looked young. Though she smiled when she talked, we could sense from listening to her that she was a very strong woman. I asked her whether these people would not return to their former environment soon after leaving the shelter. She answered that she had bought 25 houses near the shelter, using housing loans from the California state government. From her reply I saw her great strength and her determination to do whatever it takes. After leaving the shelter, if the women were able to live in nearby houses for a year with their children, then they would truly be on the road to independence.

### **The Role of the Nonprofit Sector**

The places we visited on this trip were mostly organizations in the private, nonprofit sector. When I visited Lynne Appel's project, I thought that, if the Japanese were to build a shelter, it would probably be a much larger, uninteresting, white building. As long as the government was building the facility, and as long as decisions were made solely by men, efficiency would be given priority. There would be no soft carpets, comforting pictures, or nail polish bottles on the TV, though these things are indispensable in helping to soothe the soul.

The role of women in the private, nonprofit sector is vital. Although this is true in Japan as well, the biggest difference between the United States and Japan with respect to the nonprofit sector is the scale of their respective budgets. The combined budget of US nonprofit organizations (NPOs) is some 300 billion yen. The sector employs five to seven percent of the US workforce. The scale of the US nonprofit sector is truly greater than that of Japan. This scale makes it possible for an organization to build a shelter on an acre of land and to purchase nurseries and 25 houses.

One reason why these funds are available is the tax-exempt status of some 500,000 organizations. (Donations to these organizations are tax-exempt.) It is surprising that there are only 700 equivalent organizations in Japan. I would like to see

changes in the tax laws in Japan. At the same time, greater efforts are also required from the private voluntary sector itself. I visited a number of organizations in the United States and found that their financial figures were clearly and openly presented along with a variety of pamphlets and videos which describe organizational activities. This allows donors to see how their money has been spent. I believe that, together with government and for-profit organizations, these active private voluntary organizations have become a pillar of American society.

## Politics and Women

### *Forty Percent of State Legislators Are Women*

I would like to mention here what I thought about politics in Spokane, Washington, our next stop after Los Angeles. Until very recently, the building housing the city hall in Spokane had been a department store. City Hall was moved to its current location when the old building had grown too small. The first thing I noticed at City Hall was a bright red *uchikake* (Japanese wedding garment) which had been donated by Spokane's sister city of Nishinomiya. Perhaps this relationship was the reason why so many people in Spokane seemed knowledgeable about Japan. When we stepped into the conference room, a smiling, amiable woman welcomed us with opened arms. She was the Mayor of Spokane, Sheri Barnard. State legislators, city council members, and the County Commissioner were waiting to meet us in her office. I was astonished to hear that 40 percent of Washington state legislators are women. We realized how different the situation is in Japan when we considered that the percentage of women in local government assemblies in Japan is 3.6 percent. Incidentally, Ms. Barnard is the second of two consecutive women mayors in Spokane.

### *To the State Assembly With Children*

Lisa Brown's story as a new member of the state assembly was interesting. A professor of economics, Ms. Brown had lectured on the injustices of society. As she lectured, others began encouraging her to enter politics. She was elected to the state legislature this year. On one occasion, the assembly continued until late at night, and because she had not been able to get a babysitter, she brought her 15-month old boy to the assembly room. The male legislators complained despite the fact that the child neither cried nor caused any trouble. The incident was written up in the newspapers the next day, making Lisa the most famous state legislator in Washington. In any case, thanks to Lisa, the need for daycare has become more widely recognized.

I asked her what she thought about women becoming mayors and state legislators. She answered that because women dislike violence and war, women should be able to practice more peaceful politics, and hence should have the power to make decisions concerning education, children, living, housing, and everything. I agreed with her. I was very impressed by the means which candidates raise funds for their election campaigns. For instance, anyone who wanted to see Lisa elected

to the state assembly would send her one hundred dollars. In Japan, the candidates would send money to the voters. Of course this is illegal, but it is the exact opposite of what happens in Spokane. I think it is obvious what a difference this makes. I feel that Japanese women should try much harder. It is not enough to just complain that the political system is corrupt. Women in Japan must become more active, like the women on the other side of the Pacific, in Spokane. There they have already gained decision-making authority.

### *The Joy of Being Able to Start Over*

I was very pleased to see Susan again in Spokane. When Susan visited Japan, she had been anxious about leaving behind her six-year-old daughter in the same way I was concerned about leaving my seven-year-old daughter. Susan's daughter, Annie, was a lovely child and soon became everyone's favorite. Her husband, Bob, raises funds for Northwest Regional Facilitators (NRF), while Susan makes sure those funds are put to good use. They appeared to be good partners both in public and private. During the briefing by NRF staff, I was surprised to learn that there are hungry children in a country as wealthy as the United States.

On our second day in Spokane, we visited the YWCA. On the second floor there was an open room filled with clothes and necessities for needy people. Though they were secondhand, the white pumps had been polished, and the clothes had been newly washed. There were clothes that could be worn for job interviews. The person in charge was pleased that recently a person had worn one of the suits and succeeded in getting a job. What impressed me most was that the door was always kept open so that borrowers would not feel embarrassed; I think this is done out of respect for their dignity as human beings.

We also joined a class held for homeless children. Although the children were very cheerful and I enjoyed being with them, by the time I had to leave, I became sad and hoped that these children would find a home to settle in as soon as possible.

This day was also the day we stayed in the homes of American families. Although I was worried about my ability to communicate, Theresa and Chris spoke to me in simple English. Theresa obtained her university degree after turning 30, which is apparently common in the United States. It seemed to have been quite difficult for her because she entered school immediately after her second child was born. The United States seems to be a very progressive society because one is able to give birth to a child and then get another start in life. I was impressed that Chris helped make dinner for us. We got along so well that I was sad when the time came to leave Spokane.

### *Women Should Help Other Women*

Chicago was much more beautiful than I anticipated. I was surprised by the openness of the Illinois State Building. The first floor was a shopping area while the basement housed numerous restaurants. The middle of the building was open and there were no partitions on any of the floors. And that wasn't the only thing remarkable about our visit to the State Building. Christine, our guide in the building,

was only 29 years old but was already an executive in the state government. When asked how she had reached her present rank, she replied that her female boss had supported her. I have learned from numerous examples that those who have led the way should support those who are following in their footsteps—a dot becomes a line and a line becomes a surface. At City Hall we met with Mayor Richard Daley.

We visited one of our Chicago hosts, Bernie, who is the Executive Director of the Chinese American Service League (CASL). One thing I found interesting was CASL's chef training program. A vital program for Chinese immigrants, it teaches them necessary English terms and cooking skills so that they will be able to make a living. We also visited Jane Addams' Hull House. My colleague Ms. Yamaguchi reports on this in great detail.

The next day we finally visited the Art Institute of Chicago. I had been looking forward to the day even before I came to the United States because Ronne, one of our hosts, worked at the museum. As we were short of time, we were unable to see the main attraction, the Asian art exhibits, but I was completely fascinated by the paintings of van de Weigen, Botticelli, and Pablo Picasso's *Mother and Child*. I enjoyed speaking before an audience of 50 of Chicago's leaders including the President of the Art Institute and Marshall Field V, the Director.

I must add that the early morning briefing by the members of the media was also interesting. I was able to sympathize with the editor of the women's newspaper at the *Chicago Tribune*, because we shared many common experiences and situations.

### *Susan Was as Refreshing as the Wind*

And finally to our last destination—New York. Here we saw our host, Peggy, for the first time since Los Angeles. With Peggy and Mr. Yamamoto presiding, the IIE workshop proceeded smoothly. At lunch, we listened to a presentation given by the Vice President of the Ford Foundation, Susan Berresford. I was first struck by her features. She is slender and of small build and her lucid eyes seemed to reflect her intelligence. She seemed as refreshing as the wind. I was impressed when she told us that under the present Clinton administration, many of the women who currently hold positions of authority had been involved with NGOs. This was because NGOs allow one to gain experience in various activities—finances, leading people, etc. This kind of experience can be put to immediate use in government. Listening to Susan, I realized that only women can blow a fresh wind though the confused Japan of today. However, only women with experience have the ability to do so. Therefore, if Japanese NGOs were able to educate people, then capable people would be easy to find. I believe that NGOs should form a network and collaborate to gain the power with which to influence government policies. The discussions at the workshop continued in the afternoon, and we had the opportunity to talk with Ruth from New York and Beth from Vermont.

The next day I visited Phyllis of the weekly newspaper *The New York Press*. We discussed common women's problems such as those related to menopause and childbirth and were surprised by how differently each country tackled these issues. We agreed that each country should refrain from extremes and that women should be given more freedom of choice.

### **Thank You For All the Enjoyable Experiences**

While on this study tour we were able to come in contact with many aspects of American culture. In Los Angeles, Irene took us to see a mariachi band and a western dinner performance; in Chicago, Ronne took us to see a Chicago blues band; and in New York we saw the Broadway musical *Miss Saigon*. Each of these productions reflect American culture, and they all touched me. I cannot explain how much they moved me. I would like to thank all those who welcomed me to this wonderful program.

First of all, Ms. Katsumata. Her perfection and kind heart were impressive. I also express my gratitude to Ms. Iijima, Mr. Yamamoto, President of JCIE, Peggy and Shaun of IIE, and also Mr. Wada of CGP.

On my table is a merry-go-round horse I bought in Spokane. It is as if I rode around and around on a merry-go-round for those two weeks. Now the music has ended and I have returned to my everyday life. I am now quietly contemplating how to put to use what I saw and experienced during those two weeks.

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**Yaeko Suzuki**  
**Chair, We Love Asia 21**  
**Yokohama**

My two-week study tour of the United States gave me much hope and courage. I would like to again thank the Institute of International Education and the Japan Center for International Exchange for offering me this opportunity, and our hosts in Los Angeles, Spokane, Chicago and New York for their heartwarming welcome and for allowing us to see their magnificent projects.

We landed safely in Los Angeles nine and a half hours out of Narita Airport. It was a long flight fraught with anxiety and apprehension for me. This was my first visit to the United States. The moment I set foot on foreign soil, I briefly felt the bewilderment people must experience when they travel from other parts of Asia to Japan for the first time. I was both overwhelmed and refreshed by the vast land stretching as far as the eye can see, the clear blue skies and the towering skyscrapers of Los Angeles.

Representatives from a number of private organizations in different fields participated in this visit to the United States. I represented the field of international exchange. On this trip I was able to observe facilities and programs related to my current activities. I would like to present my viewpoints on what I experienced.

### **My Organization, We Love Asia 21, and My Objectives on the Study Tour**

We Love Asia 21 is a volunteer organization established six years ago. Currently, there are 100 members and 25 executive committee members, most of whom are housewives. Through annual performances of ethnic music and dance, we have deepened our relationships with foreign residents in Japan from 10 Asian countries (India, Indonesia, North and South Korea, Cambodia, China, Bangladesh, the Philippines, Vietnam, and Laos). In addition, we have held discussions with other Asians living in Japan on a wide variety of topics including human rights, education, and welfare and have been active in working to solve some of the problems confronting these groups.

On this visit to the United States, I wanted to learn about issues currently facing the United States and its diverse population and to see the kinds of activities

women leaders are undertaking to cope with various problems and the impact these activities had on community development.

In addition to We Love Asia 21, I am also involved in a community effort to create a better life for retired people. Currently our group of twenty persons pool their resources to lease 1300 *tsubo* of farmland to grow organic vegetables. I hope that my visit to the organic farm in Spokane will become a foundation for opening up the future of our Mahoroba Farm.

### **My Impressions of the Communities We Visited**

Our first stop was Los Angeles, a diverse city of 3.5 million people of African, Asian, Latino, and European descent. Here we visited Irene Redondo-Churchward's Project Info Community Services (PICS) and observed how people are taught family communication skills in order to prevent domestic violence. Most of the educational materials are made by the staff, with great attention given to small details. I was moved by the warm guidance the staff gave to their clients.

Our next visit was to Foley House, a shelter for women operated by Lynn Appel. Here we saw young women struggling to overcome problems with drugs and alcohol. I talked to some twenty women of various ages. When I asked them when the most difficult period was, they told me the most painful time was about thirty days after they stopped using drugs and alcohol. While I was not able to look deeply into the troubled souls of these people, I could sense the unbearable suffering they must have gone through before coming to this facility. I was deeply moved by the devoted staff who helped these women and shared in their suffering.

I was shocked by the dismal condition of the children born to these patients. When I saw the expressionless faces of these children, a chill ran down my spine at the thought of the terror of drugs. The staff provided the children with kind, individual instruction. The ignorance of the parents has deprived the little children of their future. How does one atone for this crime? I felt anger grow inside me and tears came to my eyes.

Spokane is a beautiful, scenic city of about 180,000 people, surrounded by 12 national parks, 15 national forests, and some 70 lakes. Our host in Spokane was Susan Virnig of Northwest Regional Facilitators. In Spokane, we visited the YWCA and its school for homeless children. We spent the afternoon with the children in a friendly atmosphere, using our broken English. We split up into small groups, showing the children how to make origami paper helmets, how to use chopsticks, and how to write their names in Japanese. The expressions of longing on the faces of the children as we said goodbye is still vividly etched in my mind.

We also visited the YWCA's Safe Shelter. This facility is similar to the Buddhist temples of feudal Japan that took in runaway housewives. The shelter is open 24 hours a day. Legal measures have been taken to protect residents by preventing abusive partners from approaching within a certain distance. At Safe Shelter I saw

two mothers seeking refuge late at night with their children and nothing more than the clothes on their backs. The women cradled their children and slept in a bed in the corner of a dimly-lit room. I could feel the fatigue and dismay of these women after a desperate escape from their violent husbands. As a mother I can empathize with their plight. I also met a young woman who sought refuge from her lover who had threatened her with a gun.

These kinds of problems also occur in Japan every day. There are tragic cases of women who marry to obtain visas. There are women who are deceived into coming to Japan with offers of work, only to have their hopes dashed when they are forced to live in deplorable conditions and eventually are led into prostitution. I have seen many very tragic cases of brides brought to Japan from Asian countries to marry farmers in rural areas.

### **A Brief Moment of Joy**

There was a brief moment of respite in our otherwise hard schedule. A barbecue party was held at the home of Julie Goltz, Ms. Yokoyama's host family. Since leaving Japan on June 6, I had been feeling very lonely, sitting alone in the window seat of the plane and staying in single hotel rooms. Moreover, it had been a while since I had had Japanese rice. Thus, this party with our host families was a happy occasion. I was relieved when Ms. Yokoyama told me that we would have sushi and *yakiniku*. Ms. Yokoyama is from the Seikatsu Club Cooperative, and using the resourcefulness typical of her organization, she had managed to find a supermarket that sold California rice. It was an emotional moment, like finding an oasis in the desert. I will never forget the taste of the sushi we made that day.

### **The Long-Awaited Farm Visit**

At this party I was introduced to my host family, Jane and Dave Swett, owners of the Yesterday's Farm. One of the main objectives of my trip was to learn about organic farming and the state of farming communities in the United States. I was looking forward to this visit, hoping that it would give me an opportunity to review and reconsider our activities at the Mahoroba Farm.

My host family's home was about an hour's ride from where the party was held. We drove across a seemingly endless prairie to get there. Ms. Iijima of JCIE was also in the car. The only saving grace amidst the anxiety of traveling in a strange foreign land was that I was with a person who understood both Japanese and English. I felt calm even as we sped through the darkness. It was June but it felt as cold as winter. The clock had already passed 10:30 pm.

We got up at 5:30 am. Mr. Swett had been awake since 4:30 am, and was already doing the farm chores. The morning work began with picking vegetables to be shipped to market. There were many vegetables, including beets, spinach, asparagus, and others which I had never seen before. Mr. Swett expertly washed and stacked the fresh vegetables before taking them to the market.

From nine in the morning to five in the evening, I sold vegetables at the market. I was fatigued from the cold and from doing something I was unaccustomed to. However, I was able to see the trusting relationship between the producer and consumer. The vegetables were sold out before 5:00 pm.

To till one hectare of soil alone is no easy task. Yet, Mr. Swett would never do shoddy work. I was truly impressed by the work ethic at Yesterday's Farm. Through my direct observation of this farm and the methods used in a country with customs and a history completely different from my own country, I gained something useful in developing new directions for the Mahoroba Farm.

### **Chicago and New York**

Chicago, with a population of 2.8 million people, is the third largest city in the United States. "The Windy City" is noted for its modern architecture, and there are riverboat tours that allow visitors to see the famous architectural landmarks. The world's tallest building, the Sears Tower (110 floors, 443 meters), is just one such famous landmark.

In Chicago we visited the Chinese American Service League (CASL). Our host was Bernarda Wong. Vocational training, language education for children, and senior citizen daycare were some of the programs operated by CASL. With so many Chinese immigrants there, it was like seeing a China within America. English language education is one of the most important activities, as more than half of the people living in Chinatown do not have adequate English abilities. The facility was energetically tackling a wide range of problems associated with employment, livelihood, and retired citizens. In particular, Bernarda Wong's efforts were outstanding. Through her many years of experience, she has numerous professional contacts, and through the trust she enjoys from within the community, support continues to grow. The activities in this community were in contrast to the rather sedate lifestyle of the Japanese in Little Tokyo in Los Angeles. One can see the sharp difference in the characteristics of the Japanese and Chinese.

Our last stop in the United States was New York, a diverse city with a population of over seven million. Each year some 17 million people visit America's largest city, which boasts 150 museums, 400 galleries, and 38 Broadway theaters. It is also the center for global business, the arts, and fashion. Our host here was Peggy Blumenthal, Vice President of Educational Services at IIE. After having visited Los Angeles, Spokane, and Chicago, what surprised me most about New York was the continuous sound of sirens from morning to night. I felt threatened by the crime-filled city.

I expressed a desire to visit Harlem during our free afternoon in New York. Unfortunately, we had to cancel this trip as we were unable to contact the district manager of the organization I wanted to visit. Instead, we were given an unexpected treat through efforts of Shaun Martin, Manager of Asia/Pacific programs at IIE, who arranged for us to attend a practice session of the Boys Choir of Harlem. It was

an emotional experience to meet Dr. Walter J. Turnbull, the founder and executive director of the choir.

A little about Dr. Turnbull's background and profile of the Harlem Boys Choir: Dr. Turnbull earned his M.A. in music and Ph.D. in musical arts from the Manhattan School of Music. He also graduated from the Columbia University School of Business Institute for Nonprofit Management and has received numerous honorary doctorates. He is active as a tenor soloist for the New York Philharmonic Orchestra and the Philadelphia Orchestra. The Harlem Boys Choir, begun in 1968, offers a positive and creative alternative for children residing in inner-city New York. It is an artistic as well as a humanitarian organization.

I found Dr. Turnbull, with his charming smile, to be very gentle. He is very strict in his daily lessons. On the day of our visit, he sternly reprimanded a student for being tardy. Although the choir sings only parts of songs during regular practice sessions, on this day, through the courtesy of Dr. Turnbull, the choir sang an entire selection for us. Because the lyrics were in English I did not understand what they were singing, but I felt the enthusiasm of the boys through their voices. The song was a hymnal of peace; a harmony of the hearts of the boys who proudly live their lives earnestly through song.

### **What I Learned From My Visit**

My two-week study tour of the United States was indeed a fruitful one. In this multi-racial society, each person is constantly aware of the problems that exist and defends his own way of life. It was on this point that I saw the wisdom, the unity, and the resilient networking among women leaders. The status of the nonprofit organization (NPO) was not secured in a day. To me, this was a monument built on the efforts and activities of organizations that looked at community issues and underwent tremendous hardships to ensure that everyone is able to live a decent life.

I believe personal donations to NGOs like the United Way are made in gratitude and encouragement, as a way of saying that these organizations are necessary for people's livelihoods. We have still not reached this stage in Japan. Buried in affluence and content with living happily for the moment, it is no wonder that there is no developing awareness of the problems that exist. Foundations in Japan tend to work independently with very little linkage between them. Therefore, it is difficult for the private, independent sector to expand its activities without this financial base. These are the cold facts of Japan, the economic superpower.

During my trip to the United States I was often asked about the direction of independent sector activities and how to gain access to foundations. Through the valuable experience gained in the United States, each of us who participated in this trip shall work hard to solve the problems before us.

## **In Conclusion**

This study tour was my first trip to the United States. At first I was nervous at the word "study," but the women leaders we met proved to be kind and gentle. The Americans did not understand my Japanese and, naturally, I did not understand English. It never occurred to me before that the language barriers and the differences between countries could be so great. But in a span of only 15 days, I felt a connection between our hearts. I believe that this was made possible by the thoughtfulness common to all people throughout the world.

International exchange means interaction between nations. It means that we should work together, while recognizing national differences, and believing that we can all live the one life we are given as humans beings. This is what I had learned from the hearts and the actions of the women leaders in the United States.

Next year is "The Year of the International Family." So that all of us can be members of this global community, We Love Asia 21 intends to link our 10-nation ethnic music and dance program in Japan to the rest of the world, so that we may realize a broader dream of peace and friendship.

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**Haruko Numata**

**Coordinator, Suginami Association  
for Better Lives in an Aging Society,  
Association to Provide  
Friendship Lights  
Tokyo**

I was unexpectedly given the valuable opportunity to be a member of the Japanese delegation to the United States on the Japan-US Women Leaders Dialogue program. I learned a great deal during the very busy two weeks in the United States. The fulfilling experiences I had were made possible by the Institute of International Education and the Japan Center for International Exchange, which carefully arranged the study tour. I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to the Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership for its consideration and support. I cannot find words to properly express my appreciation for the warm hospitality we received from each of our hosts in the United States, including Ms. Peggy Blumenthal, Vice President of Educational Services at the Institute of International Education.

Our learning process began in the bright sunshine of Los Angeles, our first stop of the tour. The streets were lined with palm trees and jacaranda trees with purple flowers. With its favorable climate, it is no wonder the aerospace and film industries chose to locate here earlier this century.

In peaceful Spokane, a city dotted with forests and lakes, our minds and bodies were refreshed by the embracing clean air we felt immediately upon landing at the airport. Gulls that came by the Columbia River rested their wings in the park. The ducks swimming in the river beneath the Expo pavilions composed a tranquil scene. In the beautiful breezes and sunshine of Spokane, the people had expressions of relaxation on their faces. Like the birds, we too enjoyed our short rest here.

Chicago, with Lake Michigan to one side and a vast plain extending on the other, is the world's largest lakeside city. It is a beautiful, modern city surrounded by only the horizon and the skyline. The city blocks as seen from the top of the Sears Tower were clearly marked by blinking lights below. The bands of light radiating across the city were breathtaking. Picasso and Calder sculptures and Chagall paintings were placed, as if casually, here and there, giving the illusion that the whole city was a modern art museum.

In New York, America's economic and cultural center, tall skyscrapers stood as monuments to civilization, and the rapidly walking pedestrians produced a vibrating

rhythm that caused this immense city to seem as if it were breathing. Everything was vibrant and stimulating in this cosmopolitan city. The streets were filled with people representing a diverse multitude of races and ethnic groups.

### **The Community Activities of Women Leaders**

Each city had a different atmosphere and appearance, and each greeted us with its own unique character. What these cities had in common, however, were the enthusiastic activities of the influential women leaders who were devoted to the betterment of their communities.

While the Japanese tend to look to the government for solutions to social issues, Americans take the initiative in social improvements and reform without relying on others. This attitude, and the expectations Americans have of their government, differ from the situation in Japan. This is apparently due to the autonomous life Americans had before the formation of the federal government. The activity of the women we met gives testament to this.

The staff engaged in the daily administration and operation of the organizations we visited—Project Info Community Service in Los Angeles, Northwest Regional Facilities in Spokane, the Chinese American Service League of Chicago, and the Art Institute of Chicago—were mostly women. The majority of the women leaders we met defined problems for themselves and took the initiative in working to solve those problems and to better society. We were deeply impressed by the energy and activity of these women leaders.

A well-organized, broad-based information exchange network that both satisfies the needs of the community and that functions effectively in a coordinated fashion, is of extreme importance, not only for the betterment of a single organization and the improvement of its staff, but also for the development of an entire community. When such a network is available, all involved receive many benefits.

### **The Role of the Government, Corporations, and the Public in the Community**

I am currently engaged in community welfare activities for senior citizens. I work with the slogan, "to lead a decent life in a familiar community." One of my objectives on this trip was to discover the roles that the government, corporations, and the public play in welfare activities. I soon realized that private organizations and individuals play a large role in US society, with nonprofit private organizations, not the government, often taking a leading role in dealing with various social problems. While nonprofit organizations (NPOs) are still limited in number and are often not officially recognized in Japan, the reverse is true in the United States, with nonprofits making valuable contributions to American society.

The success of an organization depends on a combination of human and financial resources. For Japanese NPOs, beset by financial difficulties, American NPOs are

in the enviable situation of receiving contributions from individuals and corporations. Although Japanese private NPOs make various fundraising efforts, such as bazaars and demonstrations by group members, these efforts alone are not sufficient to raise adequate funds.

I was surprised to learn that in the United States \$124.7 billion (approximately 15 trillion yen) is donated to nonprofits each year—a figure larger than the entire welfare budget of Japan. I was further surprised by the fact that, in 1991, 88.9 percent of the total was from private donations, 6.2 percent from foundations, and the remaining 4.9 percent were corporate contributions. On learning that more than 70 percent of all households made an average yearly charitable contribution of \$978, I became aware of the difference in attitudes toward donation to charitable causes in the United States and Japan.

The important factor in the United States is the tax deduction received for donations to NPOs. Tax deductions are allowed when a corporate or individual contribution is made to a government-recognized NPO. However, similar benefits are not available for donations in Japan, and regrettably as a result, there is no incentive for people to make donations. While there are more than 900,000 tax-exempt organizations in the United States, there are only 15,000 in Japan. Moreover, in Japan it is difficult to qualify as a NPO.

On several occasions during the trip I heard about the United Way, a prominent nationwide joint fund-raising organization which initiated a matching fund scheme whereby a company's employee contributions are matched by a donation from the company itself. This money is then used towards solving a community problem of concern to the donor. I believe that this is an effective system. A similar system called "Matching Gift" was started by the *Keidanren* (Federation of Economic Organizations) in Japan, but as of 1991 only ten companies had joined the scheme. This number needs to be increased in the future.

The idea that companies have a social responsibility to the community or should make philanthropic contributions as a member of the community is almost unknown in Japan. This may be because it is generally understood that Japanese corporations contribute to society by taking care of the welfare of their employees and their families, by providing quality products and services at low prices, and by paying taxes.

In the United States, companies are strongly expected to make social contributions, and accordingly, Japanese companies in the United States are also expected to make similar contributions to the local community, which in turn has led to philanthropy becoming "fashionable" among Japanese companies. As a result, companies in Japan have recently begun to make social contributions by supporting the arts and cultural events. In the process of internationalization, Japanese companies are the subject of worldwide attention which I believe is beneficial for both Japanese companies and society.

## **The Activities of Nonprofit Private Organizations**

In each city we visited I observed examples of NPOs working to further the public interest. Described below are some of the organizations we visited and their activities.

### *Los Angeles*

Project Info Community Services (PICS) in Los Angeles showed us the importance of smooth communication between family members. The Executive Director of PICS, Ms. Irene Redondo-Churchward, and the female staff members and volunteers of the organization explained that serious problems such as drug and alcohol abuse, child abuse, teenage pregnancy, and family violence can be effectively dealt with by establishing strong family ties, by treating each person as an irreplaceable individual, and by communicating with words and body language (such as encouragement through hugging). I could see their enthusiasm in the way they spoke about their daily activities and the ways in which they were making valuable contributions to the organization. With drug abuse on the rise, child abuse is also increasing. My heart sank when I thought of child abuse victims abusing their children when they themselves become parents and that the cycle will continue in successive generations. The respect in the United States for one's freedom to do as one pleases may be a cause of the spread of these problems.

At Foley House, a shelter for female substance abusers, I met many women—juvenile girls, young mothers, pregnant women—fighting to overcome their addiction to drugs and alcohol. The women are allowed to live there with up to two children, and when they leave they are provided with housing for a year to help make them self-reliant. Similarly, to help recovering substance abusers readjust to society, Foley House hires women who have left these shelters. These plans were conceived and implemented by Ms. Lynne Appel, the activist running Foley House. I was impressed by her outstanding performance and her leadership and equally impressed by the attention given to small details which could only have been done by a woman.

### *Spokane*

Northwest Regional Facilitators (NRF) in Spokane mobilizes the public to get involved in the public policy process and operates many programs for improving the quality of people's lives, including housing projects to improve the living environment; programs which help relieve serious food shortages when food stamps alone are insufficient; and programs where employers bear a portion of an employee's child rearing costs.

Ms. Susan Paula Virnig, a senior consultant at NRF, and the staff, the majority of whom are women, were actively involved in many of these community activities. The operation of the Lindaman Nonprofit Center taught me much about the importance of networking between NPOs to strengthen the structure of individual organi-

zations. I identified with their relentless pursuit of change and reform through their activities to improve the community, as I have always believed that maintaining the status quo leads to backward progress.

When we visited the Spokane YWCA, I witnessed firsthand the results of poverty, homelessness, child abuse, and family violence. I was very concerned for the homeless children we met. In desperate need of a family, these children were overwhelmed by a sense of denial, filled with worries about life, suffering from low self-esteem, and in danger of self-destruction. Seeing the mental suffering of these homeless children, I realized the importance of a safe environment for children, and the responsibilities of parents with small children.

At Safe Shelter, tears came to my eyes when I saw a mother who had run away from her abusive husband with her baby that morning. They were asleep on the bed, both exhausted and relieved. Another young woman told me she was almost shot and killed by her lover. It was painful to see the vivid reality of a country where people carry guns.

The Shelter is open 24 hours a day, and to protect the women, men are prohibited by law from entering certain areas. It is difficult to fully understand the pain of those who seek refuge in the shelter. The women are provided with donated clothes, shoes, and handbags available in a variety of sizes and colors, which they are free to wear when looking for a job or attending a job interview. As a mother with a daughter of the same age as these women, this was a rather difficult visit for me.

### *Chicago*

There was much to learn from the Chinese American Service League (CASL) in Chicago, which operates large-scale activities for the 70,000 Chinese-Americans of the community. I was impressed by the energy of both Ms. Bernarda Wong, Executive Director of the organization, and the more than 70 professional multi-lingual staff members. The staff have experience operating in different cultures and in administering a wide variety of programs that help others become self-sufficient. Programs include care services for children and senior citizens, counseling, vocational training and job placement, and youth programs.

It is noteworthy that this group was able to identify the problems of unemployment and poverty faced by immigrants and refugees, and set up programs which offer a diverse variety of services in just 14 years. It also showed me the importance of overcoming the problems of living in a different culture. The chef training program in particular was an innovative and effective example of a program for those who do not have the opportunity to receive proper job training, and thus do not possess the skills necessary to lead productive and independent lives. It is no wonder why CASL received the "Chicago Spirit Award," which is given to outstanding organizations.

## **Female Participation in Politics and Government**

I learned from briefings by government officials in Washington state and Illinois that women in the United States play an active role in politics and government. They stressed the point that the balance of male and female members of Congress affects policy-making. It was refreshing to learn that the mayor of Spokane and 40 percent of the members of the state legislature in Washington are women. After attending breakfast meetings and civic gatherings, I saw that women consider politics a personal issue, an attitude reflected in their lively discussions. Japan could learn much from their example. Breakfast meetings of the Spokane Club are open to anyone for five dollars, and are used by women engaged in political and business activities as a means of exchanging information.

Women offer constructive criticism in the Illinois government, which has produced programs focusing on the family, women, and children. In Illinois, female executive staff are responsible for investigating problems in the state to be addressed by the Governor. When I saw these young women holding managerial positions in government, hired on the basis of their ability and working with men as their equals, I saw a society which has achieved sexual equality. Unfortunately, due to the lack of time, I was unable to ask these women about problems the government faces with welfare and housing for the elderly, or about how NPOs influence the government.

## **Volunteer Activities**

I saw many examples in the United States where the community was supported by the activities of volunteers, and where even children learned about the social structure and communication with the community through volunteer work. Through educational volunteer groups such as Big Brother and Big Sister, students teach and play with young children every day. I met volunteer gardeners, beauticians, and cooks at the senior citizen's home. The driver for the physically handicapped, the medical student at the daycare center monitoring blood pressure, the guide at the museum, and the attendants at the voting booth were all volunteers.

While most volunteer work in Japan is done by middle-aged women, in the United States I saw senior citizens and men doing volunteer work as well. I was especially interested in "peer counseling," where senior citizens assist others of the same age. It was explained to me that this benefits both parties: By talking to someone of the same generation with the same life experiences, the emotional needs of the care receivers are satisfied, and at the same time elderly volunteers are given an opportunity to be involved in the community.

In the United States, over 20 percent of the total population is involved in volunteer activities. Japan, on the other hand, is still a developing country in this respect, with only 3.2 percent of the Japanese similarly involved. The concept and practice of volunteer work has yet to take root in the general population in Japan, making it difficult to engage in volunteer activities. However, according to Ms. Ruth J. Hinerfeld, former president of the League of Women Voters of the United States,

volunteer activity among women is on the decline as they enter the workforce and insist on compensation. Ms. Ronne Hartfield, Director of Museum Education at the Chicago Art Institute, insisted that volunteer activities in the United States are not as vigorous as the Japanese think, but are probably still much greater than in Japan.

### **Activities of the Elderly**

Because I am concerned with community welfare activities for senior citizens, it was instructive to talk to Charlie and Ann Wood, a retired Anglican priest and his wife with whom I spent the weekend in Spokane. They introduced me to other elderly Americans as well, enabling me to learn about their different lifestyles.

By sleeping and eating at the home of the Woods, I was able to see firsthand how American senior citizens live their daily lives. I will never forget their smiles and warm personalities. I was greeted by a welcome sign in the entrance hall of the retirement community, and Japanese hanging scrolls, dolls and paper cranes inside their home. I was touched by their hospitality.

Father and Mrs. Wood, who celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary a few years ago, live in a comfortable retirement community complete with swimming pool, gym, 24-hour medical facilities, and a restaurant. The couple introduced me to other members of the retirement home with whom they meet frequently. As is often the case in Japan, the men of this community represent only 8 out of 100 occupants. A good friend of the Woods' said that, since he is able to enjoy the company of and share experiences with others his own age, his happiness is doubled and his sorrow is halved. I sensed that relations among members of this retirement community are very intimate.

There are over 2,000 adult daycare centers in the United States, visited by over 50,000 senior citizens in any given week. The Holy Family Adult Day Health Center is one such daycare center. The Director of the center, Ms. Marie E. Raschko, described to me the programs including bus services, health checks, lunch services, recreational activities, counseling for families with seniors at home, educational seminars, and other programs. The programs she described resemble those found in Japan. The Center plans to expand the programs to allow seniors to receive assistance at home.

I was impressed by the system called "Gatekeeper," proposed by Ms. Raschko's husband. So-called "gatekeepers"—postmen, electric company meter checkers, supermarket clerks, etc.—receive special training, make regular rounds, and report cases of illness to the appropriate authorities. The success of this program has been recognized, and the program has received a \$100,000 grant from the Ford Foundation. There is also a system in various Japanese communities where "friendship helpers" check on seniors when they deliver food to their homes, but most of these helpers are untrained housewife volunteers.

Mr. Hugh L. Burleson, our interpreter, and Ms. Noriko Takada, a professor at Northwestern University, kindly provided me with the opportunity to see how the elderly live in various environments such as housing communities for senior citizens, life-care and continuous nursing-care retirement communities, assisted-care facilities, and nursing homes. These facilities also revealed a difference in living standards according to economic and health status. In spite of my unannounced visit, most of the elderly people kindly invited me into their rooms when they learned of my work with senior citizens. Each of the eight homes I visited was very neat and decorated with family photos.

Even though I was able to see only very limited aspects of the lifestyles of US senior citizens, I would nonetheless like to give the impressions I had. After meeting with senior citizens in the United States, what was clear to me was that all of them naturally accepted life as their own responsibility. It appeared that the "spirit of independence" was an important factor in determining their plans and living environment after retirement. I also saw a large gap between the rich and poor after viewing the various facilities I visited. There was the old lady with wrinkles etched in her face, living alone and dependent on the food provided at the daycare center for her only meal, and then there were those living comfortably and worry-free in deluxe apartments like The Watertord which could easily be mistaken for a five-star hotel.

When I asked a number of senior citizens about their present living conditions, most replied that they are satisfied, but they voiced their concern about increases in living expenses, declining health, rising medical costs, anxiety over long-term care, private medical insurance, and swindlers. Medical fees under the national insurance system in Japan are minimal. This system is one the Japanese can be proud of. However, I feel that the American situation is a serious problem because medical insurance is handled by private insurance companies with no government guarantees of universal coverage or price controls.

I learned about Medicare (medical insurance for the elderly) and Medicaid (medical assistance for low-income families) but feel that these programs are not adequate as medical insurance, since there are restrictions on the conditions and areas covered by the insurance. Medicare covers medical expenses only for those being treated at home, while Medicaid mostly covers expenses for nursing homes. A large-scale reform is expected under the Clinton administration.

I spoke to a woman who had come to visit her elderly mother at a nursing home. After taking a year of unpaid leave from work to look after her mother, she had to return to work for financial reasons, and was feeling guilty for leaving her mother at the nursing home while the mother wished to be taken home. Seeing this woman worry about work and the care of her mother, I realized that in the United States, as in Japan, the burden of taking care of the elderly rests with women.

A nurse at the Extended Care Center spoke of her experiences with seniors at another home for the aged. She told me of a lonely elderly women whose family

never came to visit, and of another who pleaded to be taken back to her house some 50 miles away. I realized that there are many elderly people who want to receive care in their own homes.

There are many types of nursing homes in the United States similar to the special nursing homes found in Japan. Although these facilities are designated as medical institutions and not welfare institutions, the inadequacies of the medical service are of concern to the staff.

I realized that the elderly in both Japan and the United States wish to live in well-equipped facilities and in a familiar environment. My group in Japan has been working hard to create a special nursing home and I am convinced that we are heading in the right direction.

### **Epilogue**

As a participant in this program, I met active women leaders in the various cities we visited. I was greatly stimulated and encouraged after witnessing their activities firsthand.

I learned of the similarities and differences between Japanese and US societies through various briefings, visits, and conversations, and as a result I was able to develop specific ideas to extend and develop future activities of my group in Japan. From the broad perspective I gained on this trip, I have renewed my resolve to do my utmost for the development of the community.

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## **Yoshiko Hayakawa**

Editor-in Chief, *Ishikawa no Tamago*  
(Eggs in Ishikawa)

Fukuoka

### **Prologue—The Face of a Nation**

I am filled with memories of the warm Los Angeles sunshine, of Irene's shiny blond hair, and the warm hug she gave each of us. I also remember the nights we drank margaritas and listened to mariachi and country-western music. I'll never forget the peace and quiet of Spokane, the clean air, and the Spokane River. I enjoyed the activities there in part because Spokane is such a small city but also because Susan and her family were such wonderful hosts, carefully preparing each of our activities. After a homestay and surprise breakfast party, it was difficult for me to leave.

Chicago was totally different from the "gangster" image I once had of the city. I recall the wind blowing in from Lake Michigan; the skyscrapers along the Chicago River; the dynamic night view; the jazz blues clubs; the activity of Chinatown where our host Bernie took us; and the solitude of the Art Institute of Chicago where our host Ronne took us. In New York, "the city that never sleeps," we exchanged ideas with two other leaders from the Dialogue, Ruth and Beth. From these exchanges, I got some ideas about the direction this Dialogue should take in the future. In New York we were reunited with all six of the women leaders from the United States. It was difficult to part that night.

Some of these places I had visited before, while it was my first to visit others. In each of the cities, however, I was left with a strong impression thanks to all the wonderful people I met. Each of our hosts was very resourceful in arranging a wide variety of activities. I am very grateful for that.

The best thing about this trip was getting to talk with such wonderful women active in different fields. Rather than just visiting scenic spots, we were able to converse with real people. This is the true meaning of a "dialogue." My image of the United States took on a human aspect. For this report, I have divided my thoughts and feelings into five sections.

### **Gender Balance and the Glass Ceiling**

Through my work I have friends of many nationalities. My American, Canadian and British friends have often said, "The help-wanted ads in *The Japan Times* are

strange. The ads say 'female secretary wanted' or 'male manager wanted.' In my country, it is against the law to recruit on the basis of sex." These complaints have been around for more than ten years. Yet help-wanted ads in Japan have not changed. This is obviously sexual discrimination. I had believed that working women in the United States were blessed with more favorable conditions and were promoted on the job on an equal basis with their male colleagues. But in talking to working women on this trip to the United States, I discovered that conditions were not that wonderful. I feel that problems are also deeply-rooted in the United States.

I spent several hours in Spokane with Sergeant Judy Carl, a police sergeant in charge of ten police officers. It had been her dream since childhood to become a police officer. But when she graduated from university, the Washington State Police Academy was not open to women. Reluctantly, she returned to university studies and received a master's degree in psychology. She then became the first woman to enter the police academy, which in the interim had finally opened its doors to women. It is rare to find a police sergeant with an M.A. degree. Ms. Carl is remarried and living with her son and her husband's daughter from a previous marriage.

"It's all routine," Judy told me. I told her about Japanese policewomen; that their work is mainly limited to directing traffic in tight baby-blue skirts. "We only have one uniform. There is no male or female in police work. I wouldn't want to be a police officer in such a country," Judy said. Even in the United States with its greater sexual equality, the police force continues to be a male-dominated institution. When I asked whether there was discrimination in promotions, she said that promotions were decided on the basis of written tests and interviews. Judy is respected by her male colleagues. Judy was quite attractive; a gallant figure in her dark blue uniform.

Lisa Brown is a young representative of Spokane in the Washington state legislature. She has a 15-month-old son. Ms. Sheri Barnard, the Mayor of Spokane, introduced her as "the politician who became a national figure overnight." One day, the state legislature continued until late at night and Lisa's baby-sitter, who had to go home, brought Lisa's baby to her in the state chambers. The male representatives shouted at Lisa even though her baby had not been crying and asked her to leave. The newspapers reported widely on this the next day. Why are women forced to bear the burden of childcare? Perhaps things are not so different in the United States after all.

Judith gave me an election campaign card. The election appeared to be an inexpensive one. Voters choose from the policy measures printed on the card and mark their choices. Then they submit the cards to candidates together with contributions to their election campaign fund. Money flows from individual voters to the candidates. The flow funds is in the opposite direction in Ishikawa Prefecture. This way the voters in Japan are sure to vote. We observed a public debate held by the Governor of Washington to directly answer various questions from Spokane citizens. This would be unthinkable in Japan.

I had several interesting conversations with female journalists at a breakfast meeting held at NBC in Chicago. It was only recently that female journalists have begun to be hired in Japan. They complain, "We think men and women are the same, but our bosses are the traditional types. They approach things from an outdated perspective, telling us what we can and can't report from the female perspective. That makes us angry." When I asked American female journalists about their situation I was surprised by their answer. "What's wrong with the female perspective? We became journalists because we wanted to write articles from the woman's point of view. For example, during the invasion of Panama, newspapers reported solely about the soldiers daily. Women would perhaps write about the family members left behind." So instead of being so unyielding, I want Japanese female journalists to take pride openly in writing articles from a female perspective.

The following day *Womanews* was delivered to the hotel in the Sunday edition of *The Chicago Tribune*. There were articles on Japanese women. One story went, "The wedding of the Crown Prince and Miss Masako was conducted in the traditional Japanese style. However, these days young ladies follow Western customs, holding their weddings in Christian churches."

At the Illinois State Government Building in Chicago, I talked with the assistants to the Governor who were in charge of education and Asian-American affairs. They were the eyes and ears of the Governor in determining the wishes and concerns of state residents. I was envious that such an occupation exists and that young women hold these positions. The design of the State Government Building itself symbolizes "open government." One of the objectives of the state government is gender balance. The ratio of men to women is still far from reaching parity. It presents a big challenge for me, coming from Ishikawa Prefecture where there is gender imbalance.

Another surprise were the stringent measures taken to prevent sexual harassment. A new bill was passed by the Governor that punishes companies found guilty of sexual harassment. My eyes were opened to many things such as basic human rights and dignity.

When I asked one of the Governor's assistants if it was still easy to work while married with children, she replied that she was not yet married. Apparently local governments in the United States do not provide daycare facilities. If public facilities are not available, the people create their own daycare centers. Where does this effort for self-help in the United States come from? The difference between Japan, long governed by a centralized authority, and the United States, created by the combined efforts of pioneers, may explain the difference in attitudes toward self-help among groups of citizens. Indeed, when Japanese are inconvenienced they complain, "The government doesn't do this. The government should be doing that."

The women first make an effort themselves without relying on the government. They do not give up their dreams and hopes. They have practiced speaking in

public, and they can state logically what they want to say in a given amount of time. And they were all beautiful people!

In the United States the term "glass ceiling" is used to describe the situation where women are prevented from reaching top positions of authority. In Japan, the situation may perhaps be properly termed the "frosted glass syndrome." Female graduates in Japan of four-year universities are the foremost victims of the tight employment market this year. The Japanese Equal Employment Opportunity Law seems to be little more than decoration. According to the September issue of *Marco Polo*, a monthly magazine published by Bungei Shunju, women in senior positions are also facing hardships. I hope one day that this frosted glass becomes transparent glass.

In Japan there are sites that are still off-limits to women: tunnel construction sites, the sumo *dohyo* ring, baseball dugouts, Okinoshima Island, the inner court of Nigatsudo Temple, etc. I would like to further pursue the question of why, and what the present situation is.

### **Japanese Americans and Ethnic Groups**

I met Anne Akiko Kusumoto at Project Info in Los Angeles. She was born in 1947, the same year as me. She is a second-generation Japanese American but cannot speak Japanese at all. Usually the second generation is bilingual, using the language of their parents and of the country they immigrated to. Why wasn't she bilingual? She said, "As a Japanese American I have had very interesting experiences that differed as the situation changed in Japan over the past 45 years or so."

Akiko was born right after Japan's defeat in World War II. Her parents wanted to hide the fact that they were Japanese. Since they could not do anything about their Asian appearance, they hoped to be seen as Chinese or Korean. As a result, they spoke only English, even at home. When Akiko was in elementary school, the school used to conduct air raid drills, and the teacher told the students to crawl under the desks. Some students threw crumpled paper at Akiko, saying, "Jap! Here's a bomb for you." In time the teasing became, "toys from your country break so easily." That was when cheap and poor quality Japanese products were being sold in the United States.

Today Akiko is a management consultant. In no time at all, Japan has become the richest country in the world and a country of high technology. This fact again serves as a source of resentment. There are hardships faced by Japanese Americans that cannot be seen in Japan.

There was an international diving contest held in Ishikawa Prefecture this summer. The coach of the Taiwan team greeted everyone in Chinese, English, and Japanese. "You speak such fine Japanese," he was told. "Yes, I was obliged to receive Japanese language education from the second grade through the sixth grade." I

discovered that a person's ability to speak foreign languages is often related to previous wars and invasions.

Little Tokyo in Los Angeles was filled with mostly older people. I wondered if the younger generations had been completely assimilated into American society. In contrast, Chicago's Chinatown was filled with vitality. Young people are continuously immigrating to the United States from Hong Kong, Singapore, and China. Bernie, our host, is the Executive Director of an NPO that provides English language education, vocational training, daycare centers, health management centers, etc. for the Chinese community of Chicago. I was impressed with her ability to collect both in-kind donations and secure financial support. I wondered if cultural differences between the Japanese and Chinese are reflected in their American descendants.

Ethnic diversity varies from region to region in the United States. In Los Angeles, I spoke with the leader of a group that is working to end discrimination against African-American women in the workplace. I wondered how the second and third generations of ethnic groups maintain the culture of their parents and grandparents, and how they deal with discrimination. At a breakfast meeting in Chicago, a female Chinese-American journalist, said, "White people dominate the world of journalism. There are very few minority journalists. I am one of the very fortunate ones."

### **Problems in the United States and NPOs**

Homelessness, hunger related to homelessness, domestic violence (husband-wife, father-children, and/or mother-children), alcoholism, and drugs are all problems that can occur independently or combined with other problems, and have resulted in social upheaval in the United States. These problems are like chains, with links being added by each successive generation. It is said that violent fathers and mothers were either victims or witnesses to violence in their childhood. I had the opportunity to see some NPO activities that help to break this cycle of violent behavior. Irene's Project Info in Los Angeles teach the dangers of alcohol and the importance of communication at home.

In Los Angeles I visited a shelter for alcoholics and substance abusers managed by Lynn Appel. When I heard the word "shelter," I expected a square, concrete, hospital-like building. I was surprised when I entered a comfortable, English-style house. Everything was clean and shiny and well-organized. The living room contained elegant pieces of furniture, cushions, and cupboards. We even had a cup of tea and relaxed there. The address and telephone number of the shelter is kept secret. The same is true of the YWCA Safe Shelter for domestic violence in Spokane. I met with some people and their children staying in these shelters. Both shelters have seen many successful cases of women integrating back into society after their stay. Still, some go back to their previous life with abusive husbands, alcohol, or drugs.

Some women were working as volunteers after leaving the wonderful Los Angeles shelter. Many women are on the waiting list to get into the shelter. Thinking of these women, I decided to study the situation in Japan and plan to continue this research in the future.

### **Education and Art**

A stone with the engraved name of Ronne Hartfield was placed, as if casually, in front of the Art Institute of Chicago. At the museum, I saw volunteers preparing for the "World Art Exhibition for Children." There were displays for each country which you could touch, walk through, and be a part of. Pressing an Egyptian jug spins it around to display an historic explanation on the back. The image of volunteer activities in Japan seems to consist solely of activities like visits to old people's homes. I wondered how to communicate to the Japanese people that there are other ways of helping out.

People from many countries told me that Japan's educational system needs to be changed. After seeing Ronne's activities and after visiting the La Salle Language School, I strongly believe that the Japanese average of 40 students per classroom is not desirable. Even though the number of children has decreased and there are many extra classrooms, the situation still persists. What is the Ministry of Education doing?

Ronne made a suggestion concerning education in Ishikawa prefecture. Her idea was to not limit traditional arts and performances to art classes, but to incorporate them into other classes, so that regional traditions will become part of the overall education of the students. I have thought about what can be done in Kanazawa concerning this:

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| English        | Prepare simple English explanations for Kenrokuen Park, and memorize them. |
| Math           | How many layers of gold leaf can be created from one gold ingot?           |
| Science        | A field trip to Tatsumi Canal to see the principle of siphoning.           |
| Social studies | Why are roads winding? Why is the Kanaishi Highway straight?               |

The Chicago program included a five-minute presentation by each Japanese participant at the Art Institute of Chicago. The audience listened attentively and was quite responsive. I will always remember that the audience was delighted with the red jacket I was wearing, saying that it was the color of the Chicago Bulls. Understanding the difference between Japan and the United States in the way we respond and laugh at things is another subject for education. The time I spent meditating in the Japanese art exhibition room designed by Tadao Ando was most precious.

### **Donations and Fund-Raising, NGOs and NPOs**

It is common practice in the United States for individuals to make charitable donations. Companies often match individual donations and contribute it to charities

like the United Way. These donations are tax-deductible. In Japan, people do not make contributions unless they feel sympathetic for a cause. The trigger for these activities are different, which may be related to the way the countries were formed. The horizontal ties between NGOs and NPOs in the United States are strong. In Susan's office in Spokane, NPOs from different fields share the same space, not competing, but coexisting. Will we be able to learn from what is being practiced in the United States? I hope to not only link NPOs in Ishikawa Prefecture, but also with groups in other regions and with the Japanese leaders on this trip. I would also like to establish greater bonds between US and Japanese organizations.

## **Epilogue**

In Los Angeles, Spokane, Chicago, and New York, I experienced dialogue with a human aspect. We understood each other, experienced goodwill and meaningful exchange—something that goes beyond the trade frictions and economic problems that politicians speak of.

When I close my eyes I can see a particular town, a particular person. They are living, moving images. We communicated each other's breathing, sighs, sparkling eyes; we felt the warmth of each other's hands. These experiences will be a long-lasting memory, one of substance and significance. I believe in the importance of maintaining a bilateral dialogue like this between Japan and the United States. Something precious and lasting was engraved in my heart. I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to JCIE and IIE for giving me an opportunity to take such a wonderful trip. Thank you very much.

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## **Mitsuko Yamaguchi**

**Executive Director, Fusae Ichikawa  
Memorial Association/Women's  
Suffrage Institute  
Tokyo**

### **My Second Visit to the United States**

I visited the United States for the first time in 1988. The purpose of that one-month trip, during which I traveled alone, was to observe the presidential elections and to learn about the activities of various women's groups. Now, five years later, I found myself granted the unexpected opportunity of participating in a dialogue on women's issues between Japan and the United States. I had initially recommended other community activists in Japan participate in the program but was then asked to attend to represent my organization.

Looking back over the past five years, I see that the United States has faced major problems in the midst of a dramatically changing international society, and the country has undergone significant changes. My first trip involved gathering information to provide a rough sketch of women's activities in the United States. This study tour may be considered a continuation of that first trip. My second visit to the United States increased my desire to learn more about American communities. This is because of my relatively wide involvement in the women's movement in Japan. I believe that the various societal changes taking place in Japan can be helped by increasing community activities, which in turn depends upon the state of women's activities.

In addition to myself, there were five other members of the delegation who visited the United States, all strong and energetic individuals, deeply committed to a variety of activities in their respective communities. We met for the first time on June 6, 1993, and in spite of the differences in our activities and interests, we were able to create a synergy, working together to deepen our knowledge during our two weeks in the United States.

This is the fruit of our journey, the source of which were the American and Japanese organizers, and all the friends we made along the way who worked so hard to prepare us for the ideas they planted and nurtured. I wish I could express my gratitude by listing all their names in this report. I am tempted to record all my impressions of the things we heard and were shown by the people we met, but it will suffice to simply describe our trip from the perspective of my own daily activities.

## NGOs and NPOs

While the term "NPO" (nonprofit organization) has yet to become common in Japan, the term "NGO" (nongovernmental organization) has become widespread a result of Japan's rapid internationalization, and from the various United Nations social, humanitarian, cultural, and human rights campaigns.

While some 500,000 groups are recognized by the US government as tax-exempt organizations, there are a mere 700 such organizations in Japan, and thus the impact of NPOs on Japanese society is accordingly small. This is due to the historically strong bureaucracy in Japan. This does not mean that NGOs do not exist in Japan. There exists a wide range of groups which undertake activities such as hobby meetings, social welfare initiatives, educational instruction, environmental protection, assistance to foreigners, and election campaigns. These NGOs, however, do not have independent offices or full-time employees, and many are funded by membership dues and donations from individuals. In the past there was almost no exchange of information or other networking activities among NGOs. However, information exchanges have grown in the past few years due to increased attention being given to problems of development. Most women involved in NGOs rather than NPOs, but those who are working seriously in this field, are reviewing their activities. They share a dissatisfaction with the little recognition they receive for their contributions to society in spite of the time, effort, and money they expend in their activities.

Amidst these circumstances, the focus of our recent visit to the United States was on NPO activities, providing us with important ideas for ways to improve Japanese NGO activities. To explain the activities of Project Info Community Services, which provides programs for the Latino community in Los Angeles, Ms. Irene Redondo-Churchward assembled a group of activists involved in drug and alcohol abuse programs, family shelters, community newspapers, and United Way fund-raising activities. We learned about the activities of these groups through panel discussions, short skits, and the abundant research materials they provided us. On the panel was a representative of the Los Angeles Women's Foundation, which was founded seven years ago through the initiative of women's groups, and which gives priority to the protection of women from violence in the home, improving the economic status of women, and health care and insurance coverage for women. I found it interesting that this group worked independently of other existing male-dominated foundations, focusing on problems of sexual discrimination from the perspective of low-income women. I was particularly interested in this organization since I have been closely following the activities of two such women's foundations recently established in Japan with funds allocated from local municipal organizations.

Northwest Regional Facilitators (NRF), founded by Susan and her colleagues in 1974, is active in areas that are essential for community-building, including housing, transportation, environment, education, and the problems of the elderly. Executive

Director Bob Stilger told us that NRF strives to allow the community to become actively involved in the projects. I was amazed by their ability to draw upon the limitless potential and ideas of the community and then put them to use.

Susan and Bob told us that Spokane, with a population of 180,000, is a city of manageable size in which NPOs can be effective. As a resident of metropolitan Tokyo, I am convinced this is true. Also, the fact that there were fewer social problems in Spokane than in large cities such as Chicago and Los Angeles has also helped NRF achieve their goals more readily. Nevertheless, even NPOs in Spokane face difficulties. As we were later told by Ms. Susan Berresford, Vice President of the Ford Foundation, American society is composed of the government, corporate and the independent sectors, and it is not easy to achieve an optimum balance of the three. We were told how some of NRF's talented staff working on housing problems had been laid off due to the municipal government's taking over of the programs NRF had been administering, and how the government and corporations are much stronger than NPOs when it comes to money, authority, and other aspects of power. In the independent sector, successful activities require a fairly strong civic consciousness and solidarity, and I sensed that NRF had the strong grassroots support as well as the vitality necessary to overcome its difficulties and realize its dream of building a better community.

We saw the same sort of vitality in Ms. Bernarda Wong of the Chinese American Service League (CASL). CASL is based in Chicago's Chinatown, and works to provide job training and placement, medical consultation, nursery schools, and care for the elderly to the Chinese-American community. Bernie is very adept at organizing events to raise money for these activities. NPOs play a major role in easing tensions caused by differences in language and customs that exist in the ethnic and racial communities in the United States. In Los Angeles when we visited the Japanese Pioneer Center in Little Tokyo and Project Info, which provides services to the Latino community, we realized that settling in and becoming accustomed to life in a new country is no easy task. Even though there are Korean communities in Japan, I did not realize until I came to the United States the difficulties that arise when many different ethnic groups live together.

Mrs. Emi Yamaki, director of the Japanese Pioneer Center, is also engaged in NPO activities. The fact that second and third generation Japanese-Americans have been able to assimilate into American society to the degree they have is in part due to the efforts her predecessors, for which she has shown her gratitude by becoming involved in welfare activities aimed at elderly Japanese-Americans. There is a Japanese-style garden at the Center and a housing complex for senior citizens known as "Tokyo Tower." The Center provides meals, nutritional advice, and daycare for the elderly. Here, healthy seniors help those who are in poor health.

A voting station was set up on the first floor of a housing complex for the Los Angeles mayoral elections on June 8. Senior citizen volunteers supervised the

voting. Sample ballots were available in Japanese, English, Chinese, Korean and Spanish, offering a reminder of the diversity in the United States.

I must also mention our visit to the Art Institute of Chicago, which was arranged by Ms. Ronne Hartfield. We were overwhelmed with the rich variety of paintings, pottery and other valuable art objects created by artists of various ethnic groups. The Institute includes not only galleries for the display of these works, but also auditoriums and children's rooms. The Institute was open to the public free of charge on the day we visited. Throngs of people were gathered before the famous paintings in each gallery, and without the strict surveillance one often sees in such places. I was reminded of a scene I had witnessed in an art museum in Boston where elementary school children drew dragons while lying stretched out on the floor in front of a Japanese painted screen. This would have been criticized as bad manners in Japan, but I have come to believe it is important for children to become familiar with real art and to bring them in contact with valuable objects while they are still young, so as to raise their appreciation for cultural things. Standing in front of the Japanese collection at the Art Institute, it crossed my mind that the affluence of Japan may be nothing more than a facade.

### **Moving Toward Equality Between the Sexes**

Equality between men and women in Japan is guaranteed by law, but the question of how to eliminate the disparity which exists in reality has become a major issue of the women's movement. In concrete terms, this means going from simple political participation to actual involvement in planning and to the establishment of governmental mechanisms which foster solutions to women's issues.

Ms. June Farnum Dunbar told us about the functions and activities of the Los Angeles County Commission on the Status of Women, which she chairs. Similar committees have been established within the Japanese national government and in virtually all municipal governments and are active in submitting opinions and summaries. Ms. Arabel Rosales, Special Assistant to the Governor of Illinois on Hispanic and Women's Affairs, works in conjunction with 46 state government departments in Illinois, and advises the Governor on legislation. She believes that the ratio of men and women who take part in policymaking is important, and she has been instrumental in the establishment of legislation toward this end. I learned that provisions have been made whereby the Governor of Illinois has the power to cancel all state contracts with companies where sexual harassment has occurred.

Upon listening to the recommendations made by the Los Angeles County Commission on the Status of Women, one could sense the competence of the members of that committee. But, as is the case in Japan, the fact that their recommendations carry little legal authority is a source of dissatisfaction shared by the members of such committees. The job of supervising government agencies, such as performed by Ms. Rosales in Illinois, is important. It requires the formulation of various measures, including the enactment of legislation, which in turn must include a compre-

hensive perspective on women's problems. In Japan, discussions are now being held between the government and women's groups on strengthening the national mechanisms for dealing with women's issues. I believe the important thing is to continue to create organizations through legislation which have both sound financial backing and strong authority. Illinois is doing good work in this direction, but I question why the Equal Rights Amendment was not passed in the United States.

### **Women and Participation in Politics**

While there are only two female mayors in Japan, there are a fairly large number in the United States. Ms. Sheri Barnard is the current mayor of Spokane. We visited her at her office along with Washington state representatives, city council members, and state government officials. All were from Spokane and had come to discuss with us their respective activities. That same night, we sat in on a town meeting led by Washington Governor Lowry and were impressed by the fact that there were more women than men waiting in line to voice their opinions and ask questions of the Governor.

Incidentally, I read in a newspaper that the number of Congresswomen increased after the US Congressional elections last autumn. Jennifer Polleck, a representative of the Spokane office of Senator Patty Murray who was elected last year, was also present in the Mayor's office when we visited. We called on her again later at her office in the Farm Credit Building.

Ms. Polleck's mother, who played a vital role in Senator Murray's campaign, was at the office when we visited, and also took the time to speak with us. When I visited Washington, D.C. in 1988, there were only two women among the hundred members of the Senate. This number has now grown to six. Ms. Polleck explained that the United States is looking for change and has placed its hopes in new people. The Cold War has ended, and the political focus has shifted to the problems facing women and children and the issues of health care. These factors helped make 1992 the "Year of the Woman." Murray's rival candidate was a born politician with the support of many lobbyists. Ms. Murray had been a member of the Board of Education, but had no special qualifications for political office. This led to her rival labeling her as an "amateur." She made the issue of the federal deficit easier for the general public to understand by comparing it to household finances. She told us that the AFL-CIO contributed to her campaign. The trend for so-called "amateurs" to take on and defeat professional politicians may be a worldwide phenomenon. In any case, campaigns require huge amounts of funds.

As a result of the experiences of women in a variety of fields, politics has come to be a natural sphere of activity for women. It seems the experiences that members of Congress and public officials gained through their activities with NPOs have become an important part of this process.

In Japan, the proportion of female members in the Diet is relatively high, while the percentage of women in local assemblies nationwide is a mere 3.2 percent.

Because I was interested in learning about local assemblies in the United States, I was given the opportunity to stay at the home Spokane City Council member Lois Stratton. The cozy interior was filled with photographs that showed the closeness of her family. On Saturday morning Lois' daughter and husband and Ms. Hideko Katsumata joined us for breakfast. In May Ms. Stratton had announced her candidacy in the Spokane mayoral elections to be held in the fall. Lois had been a Democratic member of the Washington state Senate for eight years, a member of the Washington House of Representatives for five years, and became a member of the Spokane City Council this past February. Before embarking on her political career she had been an ordinary citizen, a housewife, and an office worker.

In her political career, she has been active in such areas as family problems, drug abuse, child abuse, recycling, and the problems of the elderly. She regularly attends meetings of an exchange group composed of women politicians with Mayor Barnard. The two will be competing in the mayoral elections this autumn. Ms. Stratton says she hopes to use her experience in the legislature to supplement what the current administration is lacking, to address problems involving the police and city employees, and to become a bridge between the government and the people of the city.

Her daughter Karen is her campaign manager. Karen knows her mother's strengths better than anyone else. They expect to have about 200 volunteers and to hold campaign expenses to about \$100,000. They said the citizens must put a stop to politicians spending money on expensive campaigns. In talking to Lois, I learned that candidates in regional elections are not required to support the entire platform of their respective political parties. Through the media Stratton plans to appeal to the public to choose whether they want candidates who are indistinguishable from each other or one with strong leadership abilities. I was impressed by her press release stating that, if elected, she will name women to the positions of City Council Chair, City Treasurer, and Council Treasurer.

After breakfast at the Strattons, we toured the Spokane Market which had been built upon a suggestion from Bob Stfiger at NRF. Lois then took us on a 50-minute drive to her summer house on Lake Loon. There, with Ms. Katsumata interpreting, we had a frank discussion on the organization of the City Council. She told us that council members receive \$12,000 per year, and in order to prevent corruption members must disclose their finances to a special committee.

Lois laughed as she cooked some fried chicken and beans, explaining that she had skipped breakfast. A lightly chilled bottle of California wine was a heartwarming touch. With the mayoral election only five months away, I was extremely grateful that she had set aside some of her precious time to entertain me, a foreigner. But she told me that she always goes away on weekends to water the plants and to refresh herself. I thought of the way Japanese council members rush about all the time as though taking time off were a sin, leaving themselves with little time to study issues in depth or to refine their ideas. I realized that this was something

which both the council members and the public should strive to change. I am eagerly awaiting the results of the Spokane mayoral election.

### Jane Addams' Hull House

I have been interested in the activities of Councilor Fusae Ichikawa for more than 20 years, so when we visited Chicago I wanted to visit Hull House, where Ms. Ichikawa had spent time in her youth. Hull House was established as a residence for immigrants in 1889 by Jane Addams, who devoted her entire life to promoting peace and welfare. There were once facilities like this throughout Chicago, but now the only remaining example has been relocated as a memorial on the grounds of the Chicago campus of the University of Illinois. Hull House was the first facility established in the United States to provide welfare for immigrants. The link between Hull House and the idea for the Women's Suffrage Institute where I work may be found in Ms. Ichikawa's autobiography.

In 1921, when Ms. Ichikawa was 28 years old, she went to the United States, traveling for three days on the Great Northern Railroad from Seattle before finally arriving in Chicago. Having little money, she placed an advertisement in *The Chicago Tribune*: "Situation Wanted/Young Japanese School Girl." She often visited Hull House to use the cafeteria and to attend lectures. She attended lectures by Jeannette Rankin, the first female member of the House of Representatives, and this may have had an influence on the Japanese women's suffrage movement after 1924 when Ichikawa returned to Japan. I was pleased to see with my own eyes this place once frequented by Fusae Ichikawa, who devoted her whole life to the suffrage movement. When I left the Hull House Memorial, I presented to the director, Mary Anne Johnson, a souvenir book entitled *A Pictorial Record of Fusae Ichikawa and the Women's Suffrage Movement*.

### Epilogue

As we drove through Los Angeles and Chicago, we saw groups of homeless people everywhere. At Foley House in Los Angeles and at the YWCA's Safe Shelter, we met women who had suffered the from effects of drugs and violence. Homelessness, drugs, and violence are viewed by the Japanese as evidence of an ailing America. If one were to speak of the light and darkness of the United States, the land of freedom, then these aspects would naturally constitute the darkness.

The NPO and NGO activities which for many years have extended a helping hand to those less fortunate have provided not only comfort and the means to achieve greater independence but also a valuable experience for all. Frankly speaking, many of the NGO activities in Japan are mostly "cosmetic." NGO activities in the United States, where kind and compassionate people are dealing with matters of life and death are probably closer to what NGOs should be. This is a matter of national character, according to Ms. Berresford. With internationalization, an aging population, and the progression towards an information-oriented society cited as

the three main challenges currently facing Japan, I feel that we who are planning NGO activities must make sure that we are doing something which makes a viable social contribution, and that we must strive to introduce the management that is apt to be lacking in women's associations. An improvement in the general public's perceptions of NGOs would force the government to extend the guidelines for tax exemption. Furthermore, I believe the United States and Japan should aim for the equal participation by women and men in planning and implementing the activities of NGOs.

Finally, I would like to express my deepest gratitude and appreciation to IIE Vice President Peggy Blumenthal, Mr. Shaun Martin, and each and every one of those involved in the program who welcomed us so warmly during our two-week study tour.

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**Kimie Yokoyama**  
Director, Des Femmes Workers  
Collective  
Yokohama

When I was asked to participate in this program, I was immediately excited by the prospects of seeing the "real America," seeing more than I would have as a mere tourist, and observing the source of America's immeasurable power. And during the trip, I believe I was able to see American democracy at work. I was both moved and surprised by the extent to which nonprofit organizations (NPOs) play an important role in that country and by their power to influence government. What we call democracy in Japan seems so shallow compared to what I witnessed in the United States. An encouraging fact is that, as it is Japan, the majority of NPOs in the United States are run by women. These women have had a long history of addressing the problems of discrimination and other issues facing women since they began entering professional careers. (I was told that the status of women in Japan today is comparable to American women 50 years ago.) The fact that women in the United States now enjoy many rights because they fought long and hard for them is encouraging. I believe the same scenario is possible for Japanese women if we continue in our efforts.

## **Los Angeles**

### *Project Info Community Services*

Project Info Community Services (PICS) has been active in addressing problems in the Latino-American community for over 20 years. They believe that strong family relationships are the best way to combat the recent problems facing this group such as drug abuse, alcoholism, and child abuse. In response to these issues, PICS has designed specific programs aimed at improving communication among family members. One such program, using a small stuffed bear, seemed appropriate for solving the type of communication problems which are now beginning to threaten Japanese families as well. It will be a long time, however, before people in Japan can open up to new ideas and solutions helping to solve family problems. The programs which PICS operates are all quite entertaining and do not impose ideas on the participants as similar programs might in Japan. In this regard, I was able to see a good example of an effective educational program.

### *Foley House Shelter for Women*

Foley House is designed to help women who are fighting alcohol and drug abuse and/or who have been abused by their husbands or other men (shockingly, half the women in America claim to have experienced such abuse). Before visiting the facility, I had expected Foley House to be quite dismal, but what I saw was nothing like what I had imagined. A big modern building provides facilities to accommodate women and their children. Coming from Japan where the housing situation is far from ideal, I envied the size of the accommodations. The women live at Foley House in a very home-like atmosphere, while trying to recover to the point where they are able to live in the outside world again. I met a girl who, although she appeared to be only in her teens, already had several children and was trying to overcome her problems with alcohol abuse. I sincerely wish her the best.

Although there must be similar stories in Japan, they are not always heard. In contrast, people in the United States recognize their problems and try to find solutions. I believe there is a strong need to do the same in Japan. I was also reminded of the few shelters which were built in Japan recently, and their inadequate facilities made me realize that for NPOs to operate effective programs sufficient funds are required in addition to the spirit of volunteerism.

NPOs are involved in addressing all kinds of problems in the United States. In a country where women's rights appear to be well established, many groups continue to work on improving the status of women in business, government, and society in general. I was overwhelmed by the strong motivation shown by these women who are many steps ahead of Japanese women. In talking to professors at the University of Southern California, I learned about problems which result from American-style individualism, where the government does not interfere in the affairs of an individual. One example is that there are hardly any public day-care centers, and what few that do exist are mostly run by NPOs. On the other hand, this same individualism and lack of government interference has also created a society where 40 percent of Americans spend more than five hours a week in the volunteer activities of some seven million NPOs. The role of NPOs in the United States is much greater than we expected.

## **Spokane**

### *Northwest Regional Facilitators*

For me, visiting Northwest Regional Facilitators (NRF) in Spokane was the most interesting part of our trip. Spokane is a beautiful, small city of 180,000 people. I was encouraged by, and envious of, the fact that the mayor of the city is a woman who once was affiliated with an NPO, and that 40 percent of the state assembly is comprised of women. One reason I found NRF to be so wonderful was that it is a people-oriented organization, and it serves as a mechanism for citizens to become involved in the community. Because we citizens do not have a well-established relationship with the government in Japan, I found it wonderful that

there is a great deal of collaboration between NPOs and the state and municipal governments in the United States. Moreover, I was surprised to hear that most of the NPOs' operational funds come from public sources, something which is almost unheard of in Japan. I also visited the Lindaman Nonprofit Center, a building operated by NRF where various NPOs maintain small offices and share other facilities in the building, cooperating and collaborating with each other.

In Spokane, I also experienced a homestay and fulfilled another objective of my trip: to learn about the lifestyle of working women in the United States. By witnessing the role that men play in the home, I understood how women are able continue working after marriage and childbirth. The husbands help in the kitchen and look after the children, seemingly spending more time than the wives in doing household chores. I jokingly said that I wanted to take an American husband home as a souvenir. Japanese men, by comparison, seem incapable of performing household duties, perhaps because they are taught a gender-based division of labor at an early age, and because they tend to work very long hours on the job. Recently, however, male and female roles are beginning to change among the younger generation in Japan. I am awaiting the day when, as in the United States, husband and wife will both be able to enjoy family life.

## Chicago

### *Chinese-American Service League*

I saw the potential of the Chinese-American community at work when I observed various programs at the Chinese-American Service League, which helps Chinese immigrants adjust to life in the United States. Job training and placement, counseling, care centers for children and senior citizens, English language training, and regular health check-ups are only a few of the many services they provide to the community. This is made possible by their many volunteers, capable professional staff, and sufficient funding. I learned here, as I did from Project Info in Los Angeles and NRF in Spokane, that NPOs are not able to grow unless they are staffed by professionals, nor are they operate effectively without adequate funding. Japanese NPOs do not have the experience necessary to raise funds, and thus their activities are limited. With more funds it would be possible to do more, and therefore Japanese NPOs need to experiment with different fund-raising techniques.

At the Art Institute of Chicago, I spent an amazingly relaxing time looking at wonderful works of art. These works made me realize how short life is but also how important it is to live it one step at a time, and at the same time, without hesitation.

I have mentioned only a few of the places we visited. Returning from the trip, I have been relating to others what I experienced. In July, three colleagues from the Kanagawa Network Movement unsuccessfully ran for election to the House of Representatives. I had spoken on the relationship between the government and NPOs in support of these candidates. I was disappointed by the outcome of the election and this made me realize the lack of influence held by our organizations.

However, this is only the beginning. We will continue with our efforts and work to build a stronger NPO network and contribute in any way possible to the creation of a better society in Japan.

Finally, I would like to express my deep gratitude to the American NPOs, IIE, JCIE, and the Center for Global Partnership for letting me take part in this wonderful program.

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**Susan Berresford**  
Vice President, Program Division  
Ford Foundation  
New York City

**The Role of NGOs and Women in Meeting the Challenges of a New Era**

*Speech given at the Concluding Workshop of the Japan-US Women Leaders Dialogue in New York on June 17, 1993*

**Introduction**

I was asked to speak about "The Role of NGOs and Women in Meeting the Challenges of a New Era." You have been visiting American NGOs, including visits to women's organizations, and so I imagine you already know a lot about these topics. I would like to add to that knowledge, if I can. As I know the US NGO world better than Japanese NGOs, I will focus on that. I hope in informal discussions later, we will explore parallels and differences between NGOs in the United States and in Japan.

My comments today will elaborate on three basic themes. They are:

1. NGOs have deep historical roots in the United States. They are part of American culture and character. I will try to explain why they are so treasured.
2. NGOs face challenges of two sorts:
  - challenges of social problem-solving such as addressing the problems in the economy, problems of crime, and problems in education, etc.
  - challenges to NGOs' status and way of operating freely.
3. Women in the United States have often begun their professional problem-solving experience in NGOs, and as they move in greater numbers from NGOs to political life, they will bring to government some valuable perspectives and values they developed in NGOs.

So let me begin with the first part—why we have so many NGOs and why we treasure them.

NGOs sprang from early Americans' conviction that the society could and should rely on citizen initiative as the first force for community problem-solving. These early Americans had experienced oppression from a monarchical government and distrusted concentrations of governmental power. Also, the colonies and then the

early new states of America had few resources to create powerful governmental bodies. We sometimes forget that the United States was at first a poor country. Thus a habit of forming associations of volunteers and informal groups emerged in the early colonial and post-colonial days. These groups were created for a range of purposes—civic, cultural, and social.

This habit of forming NGOs, as they are now called, became part of our national culture and character. That in itself is interesting because a number of “early habits” died out over time and this one did not. It is interesting to speculate as to why this is so. I believe it is because over time Americans began to recognize and like the role NGOs were playing. For example:

- NGOs were and are the place where innovative people whose primary interest is other than profit test new ideas that could serve the public.
- NGOs developed and gained public support for ideas that would ultimately be subjected to political decisions but were not yet ready.
- US NGOs represented the many cultures that made up the United States and they helped people maintain and promote their own cultural traditions. They were a part of the pluralism we value so highly here.
- We are a country of immigrants, and NGOs’ support to immigrants was very important.
- NGOs were and are major employers. They help keep our economy vibrant. They are often organizations of opportunity.
- NGOs are often closer to “the people” than government, as they are distributed block by block, neighborhood by neighborhood. As a result, the government asks them to do a lot of its service work and pays them to do it.
- NGOs are a product of our kind of capitalism in a mixed economy. They are in the social purpose business.

Our society would have great difficulty functioning and meeting new challenges without NGOs. Since you are in New York City, it is worth making this point in the New York City context. A recent study of NGOs in New York City found that:

- There are 61 nonprofits per square mile in New York City.
- They account for 12.5 percent of total employment in New York City.
- Some are very large—60 NGOs account for 43 percent of NGO employment in the city. Over 20 percent of these have budgets over \$1.0 million.
- Some are very small—37 percent of New York City NGOs have no full-time staff. Forty percent have budgets under \$125,000.
- Operating expenses for New York City NGOs in 1989 were \$32 billion.
- Some are heavily reliant on government for their budgets—health, social services and housing NGOs derive close to 70 percent of their income from government—doing the health, housing and social business of government.
- Over three quarters of all New York City NGOs use volunteers.
- Two-thirds of employees are women.
- New York City nonprofits are a mix of old and new. Some date from New York City’s earliest days and others (a large number) were built in the 1960s and 1970s when there was a surge of NGO creation.

NGOs are a crucial part of New York's economy, community-level support system, and part of life for large numbers of paid and volunteer participants.

They are important to both well-off and poor people. It is important to remember that low-income people volunteer in and give money to NGOs as often as those who are better off. So voluntary NGO participation is not a function of leisure time or surplus money.

Let me now shift to the challenges nonprofits or NGOs face. One of the topics the US public seems to be most concerned about is jobs and employment. Let me describe how I see nonprofits contributing to the efforts to address these problem area:

### **Jobs and Employment**

National economic policy is one factor influencing the United States's capacity to generate jobs.

- The President and his advisors continually frame and reframe economic policy initiatives. Their ideas are shaped, in part, by analytic work done in policy institutes that are NGOs, universities that are NGOs, and by governmental officers and advisors who move between jobs in the government and jobs in NGOs.
- National economic policy is also shaped by actions of CEOs and directors of major US companies. They also make decisions based in part on work done by policy research NGOs, universities that are NGOs, and other nonprofit based advisors.

Job training and educational policy are another influence on the United States's ability to compete economically and generate jobs. Here again the NGO world is key:

- Some of the best pathbreaking work testing new training and educational methods is done by NGOs (often with partial financing by the government.)
- CEOs concerned about federal policy and federal spending for training and education often express their views clearly through a variety of channels including NGOs like the Business-Education Forum, the Council for Economic Development, and the Business Roundtable.

I could easily make a similar set of comments about our next crucial issue in the public mind—personal safety—where NGOs will also have a major role. In other societies such as in Japan, public safety is considered solely a governmental responsibility. In our country, government is responsible for public safety, but NGOs are important partners in crime prevention and public safety. We can talk about NGOs in this field later, if you want.

### **Hospitable Environment for NGOs**

As I noted at the start, the second category of challenges for NGOs involves threats to their operation as tax-exempt, free organizations. Six worrisome developments suggest to me that NGOs may be in for a rough time in the next few years.

First, we live in a period when confidence in government is low. And many of our key institutions, some of them NGOs, seem to be similarly unpopular. Whether it is schools, universities, or hospitals, the public too often believes it sees lackluster performance, rising costs and often undeserved privilege. This may be an unfair judgement of NGOs but it is widely expressed.

Second, we know that the gap between the well-off and others in the United States is widening. For example, an increasing percent of the net worth of American families is being held by a small number of wealthy people. At the same time, the purchasing power of low-income groups has eroded and essential budget items such as housing are increasingly expensive. These developments can intensify the anger that less well-off people feel and express when they see what they *believe* are abuses of public trust in the NGO field. In general, people may be less forgiving or generous-spirited when their own circumstances are uncomfortable.

Third, we seem to be only midstream in rethinking the organization of American government. From 1930s to the 1970s, we saw an increasing federal government role in active problem-solving. First, new federal programs of social security, unemployment and cash assistance were created. Later, cost-of-living adjustments on social security, Medicare, Medicaid, community action, Headstart, broadened employment and training, and low-income housing were also provided. Then around 1980, the emphasis shifted to leadership at the state and local level. The federal role declined. We saw cut-backs in many federal initiatives, particularly those focused on non-aged low-income people. This shift was accompanied by talk about the private sector including NGOs "taking up the slack." So we have been in period of shifting government responsibility.

But in truth, as a nation we have had very little careful analysis and persuasive argument from any side about what social responsibilities should be taken up by the various governmental or nongovernmental sectors and by individuals. No one has made a powerful comprehensive case for assigning particular sectors to the federal level, others to state and still others to local government. In addition, few people involved in the debates about governance have clearly defined where the nonprofit sector fits and what it takes to make it work. Little comprehensive discussion of this kind in a public forum has occurred. This leaves us with a fair degree of confusion about what we should expect from government, from business, from NGOs and from individual initiative.

The fourth concern is that many government employees believe they are significantly underpaid. Federal workers' pay has lagged behind inflation over the last 20 years and at the state level many governments have ended annual increases and have frozen or reduced benefits. In 1991, six states did not have across-the-board pay increases; in 1992 it was 22 and in 1993, 24. It is possible that government workers will look critically and perhaps resentfully at what they believe is the better pay of some parts of the NGO sector, and the apparent privilege this represents.

In the last year, press coverage of a few high NGO salaries may have exacerbated this problem.

Fifth, we have a clear need for a strong tax base and legislators are looking hungrily around for new sources of governmental revenue—some see the nonprofit sector as promising.

Sixth, and finally, many of the problems we now must address seem particularly difficult to solve. Either they are exceedingly complex, such as reducing the federal deficit; or they are driven in part by forces beyond our borders and difficult to control—such as immigration to the United States or environmental problems like acid rain or ozone depletion, or the loss of low-skilled high-wage manufacturing jobs in our economy. Such problems do not lend themselves to easy solutions and this recognition sometimes pushes people away from personal engagement in problem-solving, toward a more intense focus on the shortcomings of their own situations.

What can all of this add up to? It can produce:

- an increasing anger and frustration directed toward some of the institutions designed for the common good—such as NGOs;
- intolerance of what are perceived as special privileges in NGOs and abuses;
- an unrealistic expectation about the capacity of NGOs;
- an increased likelihood that people will accept simplistic and sometimes faulty answers to difficult problems.

As a result, NGOs are somewhat at risk.

Given these possibilities, nonprofit organizations (NPOs) cannot afford to leave it entirely to others to explain the roles they see for themselves in the 90s and early decades of the 21st century. The challenge to NGOs is to play a major role in explaining where they think they fit, why they deserve the special supports and accommodations they enjoy, and what they believe is essential for their sustenance and success.

Our field has precious few well-informed analysts. Political scientists will write about governmental change and reform. Historians will focus on leadership and redirection of government. Sociologists will focus on public attitudes and behavior. Journalists will record and comment on public events. Few such people really know or understand the NGO sector. So for a while at least, nonprofits will have to do much of the job of educating the public about nonprofits.

NGOs need a public relations campaign. NGOs themselves could develop it first within their organization to make sure their staffs really understand why NGOs developed, why they are key now, and what the future issues are. We take this knowledge for granted. We believe everyone in the United States shares our understanding and appreciation of NGOs. We should not do so. The challenge is to make this knowledge explicit and to thereby help protect our NGO sector.

I believe we can do this. We know that much of the hard work addressing challenges to NGOs will be done by women, who are a disproportionate share of NGO staffs and boards.

This brings me to my final point. NGOs are the places where many women in the United States first gain experience in social and community problem-solving.

Women begin such community involvement:

- by working in religious organizations, daycare systems and elderly care services;
- in school volunteer networks, homework help systems, and tutoring or school safety work;
- by helping hospital patients cope with stress and depression;
- by patrolling streets to reduce crime after school hours.

This is far more commonly the experience of women than of men. It is direct, personal and "hands on." Now, as larger numbers of women are moving into elected and appointed government jobs, they are bringing these same interests and attitudes toward problem-solving with them.

This is a good development. One of the primary challenges for government today (in the United States and elsewhere) is to avoid being bureaucratic, remote, inflexible, and out of date. Citizens and residents of each country want government to be:

- responsive, *not* remote and passive
- caring, *not* bureaucratic
- flexible, *not* tradition-bound

But our governments are not always what we want. However, women seem to be bringing some of these qualities to government and displaying them more than men. This can be refreshing, catalytic and inspiring.

So far, not too many studies have been done that examine the impact that women's increasing presence in high-level government is bringing. But there are interesting clues from the few studies we have. Let me note just a few that were summarized recently in publication from Rutgers University's Center for the Study of Women in Politics. Studies of women who have recently entered federal, state and municipal-level government point out that:

- Women office-holders who have close ties to NGOs and women's organizations are more active in reshaping the policy agenda than those who have no NGO links.
- Women in office are more likely than men to give high priority to government programs for children, women and families, health, welfare, human services.
- Women in office seem to give more attention and support for spending on direct services than men do.

These and other findings are very new, based on small research samples. But they ring true to me. I believe they have parallels in my own experience at the Ford Foundation. Changes like those noted above which women brought to govern-

ment are similar to the changes women have brought to the Ford Foundation over the last 20 years. When I started at the Foundation in the early 1970s, there were few women in the professional ranks. As the numbers rose, new questions emerged, often on the urging of women staff members. They included concerns about:

- how relationships between women and grantees work
- how the Foundation's own behavior as an employer needed to be rethought in terms of family support
- how our agenda needed to address both service innovation and policy analysis

So my final point is that I believe the NGO experience that many women have has a profound influence on their approach to work—in the private sector and the public sector, such as government. The increasing participation of women in government will help correct some of the bad characteristics of government that all societies struggle with. You know this yourselves as many of you are seeing these same developments in Japan.

So I see a very important professional and value-oriented role for women and for NGOs as we move to the 21st century. I am pleased I have been part of that process in the last few years and hope we can continue to discuss its implications in our two countries.

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## **Profiles of Delegation Members**

### **US Delegation**

#### **Peggy Blumenthal**

Vice President for Educational Services  
Institute of International Education, New York

Peggy Blumenthal has degrees in modern Chinese history (Harvard) and American studies (University of Hawaii). Her early work was on employment and community development issues at the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America), the New York City Mayor's Urban Action Task Force, and the John D. Rockefeller 3rd Youth Task Force. In 1973 she joined the National Committee on US-China Relations, developing educational programs on China for US schools and community groups. Since then, she has continued to work on international education exchange issues for various NGOs and academic institutions: the Asia Society, Stanford University's Overseas Studies Program, the University of Hawaii's Center for Asian and Pacific Studies, and the Institute of International Education (IIE), where she currently serves as Vice President for Educational Services.

#### **Ronne Hartfield**

Executive Director for Museum Education  
Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago

Ronne Hartfield holds degrees from the University of Chicago in history, theology, and literature, and has been a leader in education through the arts in her 20-year career. She has been a Dean and Professor of Comparative Literature at the School of The Art Institute of Chicago, and served as the Executive Director of Urban Gateways, the largest private arts and education organization in the United States, which designs model programs to integrate the arts into basic education. Currently she is Executive Director for Museum Education at the Art Institute of Chicago, where she has initiated projects involving inner-city education, programs for the elderly, and programs focussed on multicultural education using the museum's collection of Asian, Latin American, and African art.

**Ruth Hinerfeld**

Former President

League of Women Voters of the United States, Larchmont, NY

Ruth Hinerfeld was president of the League of Women Voters of the United States from 1978 to 1982. Prior to that time, she was the League's National Action Chair, its International Relations Chair, and its United Nations Observer. She was elected to the League's national Board of Directors after having served in a number of positions on the Los Angeles and California League boards. She is currently a Vice Chair of the United Nations Association of the USA, and is also a Vice Chair of the Overseas Development Council. She has served on the boards of a number of other NGOs, including the US Committee for UNICEF. Ms. Hinerfeld received Presidential appointments to the White House Advisory Committee for Trade Negotiations and to the US delegation to the 1980 World Conference on the Decade for Women. She is a graduate of Vassar College and the Harvard-Radcliffe Program in Business Administration.

**Elizabeth Humstone**

Director for Community Stewardship

The Countryside Institute, Burlington, VT

Elizabeth Humstone has been involved in town, city, and regional planning for over 20 years. She is a graduate of Wheaton College in Norton, Massachusetts and has a master's degree in city planning from the Harvard Graduate School of Design. She has served as a consultant for rural Vermont and New York communities, regional planning commissions, state agencies, and NPOs on land use, community development, and land conservation. She is the former director of the Mad River Growth Management Program and the Champlain Valley Project, a joint program of the Vermont Land Trust and the Lake Champlain Islands Trust. As the Director of the Countryside Institute's Community Stewardship and Integrated Rural Development Fund Programs, Ms. Humstone is involved with innovative approaches to conserving the rural countryside.

**Irene Redondo-Churchward**

Executive Director

Project Info Community Services, Los Angeles

Irene Redondo-Churchward holds a degree in human services from California State University, Fullerton. Ms. Redondo Churchward has been affiliated with Project Info Community Services (PICS) since 1976, where she is currently Executive Director. Through her work at PICS, she has overseen many programs including those for family communication skills, alcohol and drug abuse prevention, child abuse prevention, job training, and a senior citizens nutrition program. She has also overseen a media campaign to educate Latinas about alcohol related issues. She has served as a site visitor for the US Department of Education's "Excellence

in Schools Program" for schools in Arizona, Idaho, and Utah. In 1991 she was one of 26 Latinas chosen to participate in the National Hispana Leadership Institute.

### **Susan Virnig**

Founder and Senior Consultant

Northwest Regional Facilitators, Spokane, WA

Susan Virnig holds a degree in Japanese language and culture from Macalester College, and spent one year at Waseda University in the early 1970s. In 1974, Susan and three of her colleagues created Northwest Regional Facilitators (NRF), a NPO which assists citizens in working cooperatively on a wide range of community development issues. Susan served as Director of the organization until 1990, and currently serves as Senior Consultant. Through her work at NRF, she has facilitated over 800 meetings ranging from ten-member planning committees to regional conferences of several hundred participants. In 1989, as President of the local YWCA, she helped establish a school for homeless children in Spokane, and still volunteers as a swimming instructor for homeless children.

### **Bernarda Wong**

Executive Director

Chinese American Service League, Chicago

Bernarda Wong received her master's degree in social work from Washington University in St. Louis. She is founder and Executive Director of the Chinese American Service League, a nonprofit agency which provides social services, employment and vocational training, day care, and a wide range of support services to Chicago's nearly 70,000 Chinese Americans. She is also the first Asian American to be appointed to the Chicago Public Library Board, and was the first Asian American board member of the United Way of Chicago. She was also previously President of the National Pacific Asian Center on Aging.

## **Japanese Delegation**

### **Hideko Katsumata**

Executive Secretary

Japan Center for International Exchange, Tokyo

After graduating from the University of the Sacred Heart in Tokyo, Hideko Katsumata trained at the Interpreter Training Center and worked for several international conferences including the US-Japan Kyoto Conference, the Lions Club World Convention, the World Conference of Genetics, etc. In 1969 she joined the Japan Center for International Exchange (JCIE) where she began her career as a professional for the NPO. In 1985 she became Executive Secretary and coordinates overall program activities. In addition to her duties as Executive Secretary, Ms. Katsumata is responsible for administering major conferences which JCIE organizes, including the Trilateral Commission, the Shimoda Conferences, etc. She is

also in charge of promotion of corporate philanthropy in Japan and has conducted research on corporate philanthropy in the United States. She is a member of the Screening Committee of the Tokyo Women's Foundation for its grantmaking activities.

**Yoshiko Hayakawa**

Editor-in-Chief

*Ishikawa no Tamago (Eggs in Ishikawa)*, Kanazawa

In 1988, Yoshiko Hayakawa started publishing *Ishikawa no Tamago*, a local community newspaper for foreign residents. This local newspaper is published with the help of Chinese, Malaysian, German, and American friends. To bridge the gap between the people of Ishikawa and foreign residents and to promote mutual understanding, the newspaper is bilingual and includes various topics and questions which are of interest to both foreigners and Japanese. Topics range from basic questions concerning the daily lives of Japanese to environmental issues. The circulation is 2,250. This number is far too small to form a viable commercial base, yet the paper is sustained by her and her colleagues' voluntary efforts. Mrs. Hayakawa is a graduate of Keio University and works as an interpreter/translator. She is also active as chair of the Hokuriku US-Japan Cultural Society, essayist, and commentator at a local television station.

**Yoriko Imasato**

Editor-in-Chief

*Living Fukuoka*, Nishi Nihon Shimbun, Fukuoka

After graduating from Seinan Gakuin University, Yoriko Imasato joined Planning Shukosha Co. and later became the editor-in-chief of its publication, *Campus Fukuoka*. She later joined the Public Relations Department of Seibu Gas Corporation and worked as an editor of its PR magazine *AND*. Currently, as editor-in-chief of *Living Fukuoka*, a local information newspaper (circulation 280,000) for citizens published by the Nishi Nihon Newspaper Co., she is involved in raising awareness among citizens, particularly women, on various social issues. She publishes compilations of her writings in her column "*Aka-enpitsu*" (Red Pencil) which brings up problems in society.

**Haruko Numata**

Coordinator, Suginami Association for Better Lives in an Aging Society  
Association to Provide Friendship Light, Tokyo

The Suginami Association for Better Lives in an Aging Society was established in 1972 by housewives who found themselves overwhelmed by the responsibility of taking care of their bed-ridden parents. These housewives made a collective call for action by both the public and private sectors. This movement has succeeded in establishing meal services, short-hour day care, consciousness raising on volunteerism, and even raising an endowment. The organization has continued its

development by expanding its activities to establish other organizations. *Yu-Ai no Kyokai* (Association to Provide Friendship Light) was established in 1977 and aims to extend services to senior citizens. In 1984 they founded the Association to Establish New Homes, which provides shelter, telephone services, apartments, and counseling services for senior citizens. Ms. Numata devotes her time to improving her community through her efforts as a coordinator of these organizations.

### **Yaeko Suzuki**

Chair

We Love Asia 21, Yokohama

"To create a better community for social welfare through music" has been the guiding principle for Yaeko Suzuki's efforts as a volunteer since 1965. She started a charity concert in 1979 as a means to bring people together to think about improvements to the community, such as establishing day care centers and workshops for the disabled, etc. Her activities have expanded to involve Vietnamese refugees and other Asians to encourage residents to be more sensitive to and understanding of other cultures. The group has donated libraries and scholarships to self-help efforts in Asian countries. Another major accomplishment was a concert to unite the hearts of mothers and children of North and South Korea on one stage. "We Love Asia 21" in addition to promoting such activities, is currently making efforts to encourage senior citizens to take up organic farming.

### **Mitsuko Yamaguchi**

Executive Director, Political Education Department

The Fusae Ichikawa Memorial Association/Women's Suffrage Institute, Tokyo

Mitsuko Yamaguchi is currently Executive Director of the Political Education Department of the Fusae Ichikawa Memorial Association/Women's Suffrage Institute. From 1959-68 she was Executive Assistant to the late Fusae Ichikawa, member of the House of Councilors who dedicated half a century of her life to the advancement of women's rights and participation in politics. Ms. Yamaguchi is also Director of the Liaison Group for the Implementation of Resolution for the International Women's Committee of the Nongovernmental Organizations of the United Nations, and a permanent member of the Japan Women's Voters Association. Her publications included *Politics and Women* (1984) and *Women's Participation in the Political Process and Political Education* (1987).

### **Kimie Yokoyama**

President, Restaurant De Femme

Representative, Association of Workers Collectives, Yokohama

The Association of Workers Collectives is a network of 60 "workers collectives" in the Kanagawa area engaged in a wide variety of activities including restaurant management, care for the elderly, the manufacturing of soap from recycled cooking oil, and publishing newsletters, etc. Members of the collectives are volunteers,

and Kimie Yokoyama, while serving as a representative of the Association, started the restaurant "Des Femmes" with eight of her friends. The restaurant serves homemade food using fresh and natural ingredients produced by the cooperatives. Ms. Yokoyama travels throughout Japan, speaking to groups who wish to establish their own collectives.

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**Japan-US Women Leaders  
Dialogue  
Japan Study Tour Itinerary for US  
Delegation**

**January 23–February 5, 1993**

**TOKYO**

**Saturday, January 23** Departure from the United States

**Sunday, January 24** Arrival in Tokyo

**Monday, January 25**

- 8:00 am Changing Dynamics of Japanese Society: In Search of a New Identity  
*Tadashi Yamamoto, President, Japan Center for International Exchange*
- 10:00 am Challenges of Global Issues—Role of Women  
*Minoru Kusuda, Director, Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership*  
*Yoriko Meguro, Professor of Sociology, Sophia University*  
*Akira Kojima, Senior Editor and International Editor, Japan Economic Journal*
- 12:30 pm Future of Japanese Politics and the Role of Women  
*Akiko Domoto, Member, House of Councillors, Social Democratic Party of Japan*  
*Wakako Hironaka, Member, House of Councillors, Clean Government Party*  
*Mituko Yamaguchi, Executive Assistant and Director, Political Education Department, Fusae Ichikawa Memorial Association/Women's Suffrage Institute*
- 2:30 pm Japanese Women: Traditional Image and Changing Reality  
*Sumiko Iwao, Professor of Sociology, Institute of Communications Research, Keio University*
- 4:30 pm Women in the Independent Sector  
*Annette Clear, Senior Program Officer, The Asia Foundation*

*Mariko Fujiwara, Director, English Publications and Overseas Research, Hakuhodo Institute of Life and Living*  
*Nagayo Sawa, Information Officer, UNICEF Japan*  
*Yoshiko Wakayama, Chief Program Officer, International Program, Toyota Foundation*

**Tuesday, January 26**

- 8:00 am Government Policies on Women's Issues  
*Mitsuko Horiuchi, Cabinet Councillor and Director, Officer for Women's Affairs, Office of the Prime Minister*
- 10:00 am Visit to HELP shelter (the House in Emergency of Love and Peace)  
*Mizuho Matsuda, Director*
- 12:30 pm Evolution of Japanese Society: the Place and Role of Japanese Professional Women  
*Takako Aoki, Program Manager, Opinion Leaders and Social Relations Program, IBM Japan, Ltd.*  
*Yoriko Kawaguchi, Deputy Director for Global Environmental Affairs, Minister's Secretariat, Ministry of International Trade and Industry*
- Evening Reception at Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership

**YOKOHAMA**

- Host Organization** Yokohama Women's Forum for Communication and Networking  
*Tomoko Ohtuska, Coordinator*  
*Yoko Sakurai, Coordinator*  
*Emiko Nohmai, Assistant*

**Wednesday, January 27**

- 10:30 am Development of Local Communities and the Role of Women's Centers in Japan  
*Makako Arima, Director, Yokohama Women's Forum for Communication and Networking*
- 1:30 pm Challenges and Prospects of Community Development and the Role of Women: Case Studies in the Yokohama Area  
*Yoshiko Kumamaru, Women's Place*  
*Masako Shimada, Naka Ward Women's Forum*  
*Junko Fukazawa, Artnet*  
*Teruko Maeda, Michaera House*

6:30 pm Dinner with Yokohama Women's Forum staff  
*Tomoko Ohtuska, Coordinator*  
*Yoko Sakurai, Coordinator*  
*Emiko Nohmai, Assistant*

#### Thursday, January 28

10:30 am Visit to Alternative Lives Opportunity Center  
*Ryoko Onitsuka, Director*

11:00 am Discussion with community leaders  
*Kimie Yokoyama, Association of Workers' Collectives*  
*Sumiko Yokoyama, Kanagawa Network Movement, Seikatsu Club Consumers Cooperative*  
*Aya Kawasaki, Alice Center*

#### FUKUOKA

**Host Organization** Fukuoka Women's Center (AMIKAS)  
*Hiromi Haruguchi, General Manager, Administrative Office*  
*Noriko Shirakawa, Assistant Chief, Programs and Activities, Administrative Office*

#### Friday, January 29

10:00 am Sightseeing in the city of Fukuoka

2:00 pm Challenges and Prospects of Community Development and the Role of Women—Case Studies in Fukuoka  
*Yasuko Fukui, Senior Researcher, Research Institute for City Economy*  
*Yuriko Hisadome, Advisory Specialist for Consumer Affairs, Nishi-Nippon Bank, Ltd.*  
*Miyo Imamura, Film Critic*  
*Yoriko Imasato, Editor-in-Chief, Living Fukuoka, West Japan Living Newspaper*  
*Keiko Kano, Professor of Modern Japanese Literature, Kurume University*  
*Junko Katayama, Representative, Worker's Study Group on Garbage*  
*Kazuko Kawaguchi, Deputy Director, Hakata Yume Matsubara no Kai*  
*Naoko Takahashi, Member, Executive Committee, Island Summit*  
*Ikuko Tsujimoto, Lawyer, Fukuoka Group on Children's Rights and Education*

4:30 pm Reception  
*Atsuko Kato, Deputy Mayor, City of Fukuoka*

**Saturday, January 30**

10:00 am Roundtable discussion  
*Hiroko Hayashi, Professor of Law, Fukuoka University*  
*Mieko Ishibashi, Professor, Chikushi Women's Junior College*  
*Atsuko Kato, Deputy Mayor, City of Fukuoka*  
*Masako, Commentator, RKB Mainichi Broadcasting Corporation*  
*Sekiko Ogata, Counselor, Nishi-Nihon Bank International Foundation*  
*Sadako Tokumoto, Lawyer and Director, Fukuoka International Ms. Association*  
*Tomiko Ueki, Director, Women's Affairs Department of the City of Fukuoka*  
*Margaret Yamamoto, US Consulate in Fukuoka*  
*Michiko Yanai, Head Administrator, Fukuoka Women's Center*

**KANAZAWA**

**Host Organization** City of Kanazawa  
*Tamotsu Yamade, Mayor*  
*Kiyoshi Oku, Deputy Mayor*  
*Takako Ishihara, Superintendent, Board of Education*  
*Mamoru Tada, Director, City Policy Department*  
*Yoshikazu Kakuta, Chief, Planning and Coordination Section, City Policy Department*  
*Kazuyuki Jinda, Planning and Coordination Section, City Policy Department (coordinator for delegation's visit)*

**Sunday, January 31**

10:00 am Sightseeing in Kenrokuen Garden  
10:40 am Visit to Prefectural Museum of Art  
1:00 pm Visit to Kanazawa Utatsuyama Crafts Workshop Center  
*Hiroshi Nakamura, Director*

**Monday, February 1**

8:45 am Briefing by City of Kanazawa Officials  
*Tamotsu Yamade, Mayor, City of Kanazawa*

*Takako Ishihara, Superintendent, Board of Education, Kanazawa City*

- 10:25 am Visit to Shijima Elementary School  
*Yasuko Shinbo, Principal*
- 1:10 pm Discussion with women activists in Kanazawa City  
*Ms. Yoshiko Hayakawa, Editor-in-Chief, Ishikawa on Tamago*  
*Ms. Su Mizuno, Essayist*  
*Ms. Shigeko Mikuni, Ishikawa Environmental Network*  
*Ms. Teruyo Nagae, Director, Izumi Kyoka Translation Association*
- 3:30 pm Visit to Ohi pottery workshop  
*Chozemon Ohi, National Living Treasure of Japan*  
*Toshio Ohi*
- 5:00 pm Dinner hosted by Mr. Tamotsu Yamade, Mayor, City of Kanazawa

## **Tuesday, February 2**

- 10:00 am Visit to Zenrinkan Senior Citizens Daycare Center  
*Shunryo Shimada, Secretary General, The Third Zenrinkan, Social Welfare Corporation*  
*Minoru Kanoh, President, Misogura District Social Welfare Council*  
*Kojun Sunahase, Kanazawa Misogura-machi District Social Welfare Volunteer Council*
- 1:30 pm Visit to Ohi Museum of Art

## **TOKYO**

## **Wednesday, February 3**

- 10:00 am Concluding Workshop: Challenges of Our Society, US-Japan Shared Interests and Prospects of Cooperation
1. Role of Women
    - Participation in politics
    - Family-related concerns: education, aging society, etc.
    - Internationalization of communities
    - Responses to global and environmental issues
    - Others

- 2. US-Japan Cooperation
  - Network building
  - Future program planning

**Thursday, February 4**

Morning                      Individual appointments

Evening                      Farewell Dinner

**Friday, February 5**              Departure from Japan

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**Japan-US Women Leaders  
Dialogue  
US Study Tour Itinerary for the  
Japanese Delegation  
June 6-20, 1993**

**LOS ANGELES**

**Sunday, June 6**

- |                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| 11:00 am                 | Group meeting and lunch at Miyako Hotel Tokyo   |
| 5:20 pm                  | Depart Narita Airport aboard ANA flight #006  |
| 11:05 am                 | Arrive Los Angeles  |
| <b>Host organization</b> | Project Info Community Services<br>Irene Redondo-Churchward, Executive Director         |
| 2:00 pm                  | Lunch and Program Orientation<br><i>Shaun Martin, Asia/Pacific Program Manager, IIE</i> |
| 3:00 pm                  | Bus tour of Los Angeles or free afternoon.  |
| 7:00 pm                  | Welcome Dinner  |

**Monday, June 7**

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| 8:00 am    | Breakfast briefing<br><i>Peggy Blumenthal, Vice President for Educational Services, IIE</i><br><i>June Farnum Dunbar, Los Angeles County Commission on the Status of Women</i> |
| 10:30 am   | University of Southern California<br>Tour of campus and visit to the office of the Program for the Study of Women and Men in Society   |
| 11:00 am   | Status of Women in the United States and the Role of Nongovernmental Organizations   |
| 12:00 noon | Lunch on campus with USC faculty   |
| 2:00 pm    | Building Bridges among the Ethnic Communities in Los Angeles   |

*Joycelyn Geaga Yap, Delegate, National Women's Political Caucus*

*Crystal Hayling, Program Officer, California Wellness Foundation*

*Dolores Sanchez, Publisher and Editor-in-Chief, Eastern Group Publications*

**Tuesday, June 8**

- 10:00 am      Project Info Community Services (PICS)  
*Irene Redondo-Churchward, Executive Director*  
*Gloria Moreno-Wycoff, Director, AASUL (alcohol prevention media campaign)*  
*Betty Felton, Program Manager, WINDOWS/VENTANAS (family communication skills program)*  
*Dolores Ruiz, Program Manager, WINDOWS/VENTANAS*  
*Jan Bouris, Program Manager, WINDOWS/VENTANAS*  
*Maria Chaves, Program Manager, WINDOWS/VENTANAS*  
*Reiko Gothard, Counselor, CARÍÑO (child abuse prevention program)*  
*Ruby Bert, community volunteer and member, Board of Directors*  
*Ruby Valesteros, member, Board of Directors*
- 11:00 am      Meeting with community leaders, NGO representatives, and volunteers  
*Connie Aguilar, Senior Campaigner, United Way*  
*Anne Kusumoto, Global Consortium*  
*Terry Muse, Area Director of Public Affairs, Kaiser Permanente*  
*Savi Bismath, Program Director, L.A. Women's Foundation*
- 12:00 noon      Lunch with PICS staff and NGO leaders
- 1:30 pm      Foley House Shelter for Women  
*Lynne Appel, Executive Director, Southern California Council on Alcohol and Drugs*

**Wednesday, June 9**

- 9:30 am      Tour of Little Tokyo
- 10:00 am      Japanese Community Pioneer Social Services Center  
*Emi Yamaki, Nutrition Director*
- 11:30 am      Lunch with seniors and volunteers

2:30 pm Depart Los Angeles  
 8:30 pm Arrive in Spokane, Washington

**SPOKANE**

**Host organization** Northwest Regional Facilitators  
*Susan Virnig, Founder and Senior Consultant*

**Thursday, June 10**

11:00 am Meeting with state and local government officials  
*Sheri Barnard, Mayor of Spokane*  
*Lisa Brown, State Representative*  
*Judith Gilmore, Coordinator, Spokane Office, Office of the Governor,*  
*Janet Gilpatrick, District Assistant, Office of Representative Thomas Foley*  
*Pat Mummey, Spokane County Board of Commissioners*  
*Jennifer Polleck, Regional Representative, Office of Senator Patricia Murray*  
*Jean Silver, State Representative*  
*Lois Stratton, Council Member*

12:00 noon Lunch with state and local government officials

2:00 pm Northwest Regional Facilitators (NRF)  
*Susan Virnig, Co-founder and Senior Consultant*  
*Sandy Gill, Administrator of Spokane Programs*  
*Linda Hugo, Administrator, Housing Programs*  
*Bob Stilger, Executive Director*  
*Linda Stone, Administrator, Washington Food Action Policy Committee*

3:00 pm Meeting with local NGO representatives  
*Liz Burroughs, community volunteer*  
*Linda Crabtree, Holy Family Hospital Women's Center*  
*Joyce Harbison, Chair, Hilliard Neighborhood Steering Committee*  
*Sister Judith Niles, O.P., Prioress, Dominican Sisters of Spokane*  
*Vivian Winston, community volunteer*

6:00 pm Picnic in Riverside State Park

7:30 pm Town Meeting with Governor Mike Lowry

**Friday, June 11**

- 9:00 am                      Spokane YWCA  
*Joanne Shiosaki, Community Relations Director*  
*Marie Valez-Hendricks, Multicultural Coordinator*
- 12:00 noon                  Potluck lunch with YWCA Committee on Racial Justice  
*Vicky Countryman, Executive Director, Spokane YWCA*
- 1:30 pm                      Lindaman Nonprofit Center (LNPC)  
*Sandy Gill, Administrator of Spokane Programs, NRF*  
*Morton Alexander, Project Coordinator, Fair Action Budget Committee*  
*Karen Boone, staff member, Fair Action Budget Committee*  
*Sarah Folger, Administrative Assistant, Inland Empire Public Lands Council*  
*Andy Reid, Executive Director, Spokane Low Income Housing Consortium*  
*Tammy Waritz, PAVE*
- 2:30 pm                      At work with women leaders  
*Ms. Imasato hosted by Marianne Mishima, TV anchor-woman at KXLY*  
*Ms. Suzuki hosted by Linda Wadell, staffmember at the Express Program, and Molly Bozo, Garden kindergarten teacher*  
*Ms. Numata hosted by Marie Raschko of the Holy Family Adult Day Health, a senior citizen daycare center*  
*Ms. Hayakawa hosted by police Sergeant Judy Carl, and Dianne Dennis, Acting Vice President of COPS West*  
*Ms. Yamaguchi hosted by Jenny Polleck who directs the Eastern Washington office of Senator Patty Murray*  
*Ms. Yokoyama hosted by Jeanie Carlier of the Cedar Street Market, a cooperative store*
- 6:30 pm                      Backyard Barbecue and Ice Cream Social with host families at the home of Julie Goltz
- 8:30 pm                      Return home with host families  
*Ms. Imasato hosted by Teresa Venn, a personnel manager at a local computer firm, and Chirs Venn, a video journalist and entrepreneur*  
*Ms. Suzuki hosted by Jane and Dace Sweat, operators of Yesterday's Farm*  
*Ms. Numata hosted by Ann Wood, a retired librarian, and Charlie Wood, an Episcopal priest*

*Ms. Hayakawa hosted by Susan Virnig and Bob Stilger of Northwest Regional Facilitators*

*Ms. Yamaguchi hosted by Lois Stratton, City Council member and mayoral candidate*

*Ms. Yokoyama will be hosted by Julie Goltz, an active member of parent cooperative, and Kent Larson*

### **Saturday, June 12**

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| Morning   | Activities with host families          |
| Afternoon | Visit to the Spokane market            |
| 7:00 pm   | Debriefing with women of host families |

### **CHICAGO**

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| <b>Host organizations</b> | Art Institute of Chicago<br><i>Ronne Hartfield, Director, Museum Education</i><br><i>Bernarda Wong, Executive Director, Chinese American Service League</i> |
|---------------------------|---|

### **Sunday, June 13**

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| 7:35 am  | Depart Spokane  |
| 12:50 pm | Arrive Chicago  |
| 2:30 pm  | Sightseeing in Chicago  |
| 7:00 pm  | Dinner at a micro-brewery in Lincoln Park to watch the Chicago Bulls game |
| 8:30 pm  | Sears Tower   |
| 9:00 pm  | Blues Chicago jazz club   |

### **Monday, June 14**

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| 9:00 am  | Meeting with state government officials<br><i>Arabel Rosales, Assistant to the Governor for Hispanic and Women's Affairs</i><br><i>Christine Takada, Assistant to the Governor for Asian-American Affairs</i> |
| 10:00 am | Meeting with Mayor and City of Chicago Staff<br><i>Mayor Richard Daley</i>  |
| 10:45 am | Visit to Chinese American Service League (CASL)<br><i>Bernarda Wong, Executive Director</i>   |

1:00 pm Visit Jane Addams's Hull House Museum  
*Mary Ann Johnson, Director*

2:30 pm Visit Museum of Science and Industry

5:30 pm Reception at AT&T

**Tuesday, June 15**

8:15 am Breakfast meeting with media representatives  
*Deloris McBain, Manager, Community Affairs, WMAQ-TV (NBC)*  
*Elizabeth Ritcher, Vice President, WTTW Chicago*  
*Marjorie David, Editor, Womanews, Chicago Tribune*  
*Mei Mei Chan, Assistant Metropolitan Editor, Chicago Sun Times*

9:45 am Visit LaSalle Language Academy  
*Dr. Amy Narea, Principal*

11:30 am Architectural tour of Chicago aboard the steamship,  
"First Lady"

2:00 pm Visit Art Institute of Chicago  
*Ronne Hartfield, Director of Museum Education*

4:30 pm Presentation by delegation to local leaders in the arts  
and education

5:30 pm Reception—Art Institute of Chicago  
*Marshall Field V, Chairman, Board of Trustees, The Art  
Institute of Chicago*

**NEW YORK**

**Wednesday, June 16**

9:00 am Depart Chicago

12:00 noon Arrive in New York

3:00 pm Walking tour of New York

6:00 pm Reception at the Japan Foundation Center for Global  
Partnership  
*Mr. Jun Wada, Director*

**Thursday, June 17**

9:30 am Concluding Workshop with members of the US and Japa-  
nese delegations

- 12:15 pm Lunch with delegation members  
Keynote speaker: *Susan Berresford, Vice President, Ford Foundation*
- 2:15 pm Concluding Workshop (continued)
- 5:00 pm Reception at the Institute of International Education  
*Richard Krasno, President and Chief Executive Officer*

**Friday, June 18**

- 10:00 am Women's International Leadership (WIL) Program at International House  
*Barbara Johnson, Coordinator, WIL Program*  
*Barbara Evans, International House of New York*  
*Doris Erdman, architect*  
*Caroline Haddad, Administrative Assistant, WIL Program*  
*Mary Refiner, Director of Volunteers, Rogosin Institute*  
*Mary Anne Schwalbe, Staff Director, Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children*
- 12:00 noon Lunch with WIL Program representatives
- 1:30 pm Individual appointments  
*Ms. Imasato hosted by Ms. Phyllis Orrick, Associate Editor, New York Press*  
*Ms. Suzuki hosted by Hilda Cabrera, Boys Choir of Harlem*  
*Ms. Numata and Ms. Yokoyama hosted by Ms. Diana McCourt of Womanshare*  
*Ms. Hayakawa hosted by Ms. Ruri Kawashima, Director of US-Japan Programs, and Ms. Donna Keyser, Assistant Director of US-Japan Programs, at the Japan Society*  
*Ms. Yamaguchi hosted by representatives at UNIFEM*
- 7:00 pm Farewell dinner at the Hudson River Club

**Saturday, June 19**

- 12:20 pm Depart New York for Tokyo aboard ANA flight #009

**Sunday, June 20**

- 2:55 pm Arrive Narita International Airport

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## **The Institute of International Education**

The Institute of International Education (IIE) was founded 75 years ago to build international understanding and to promote cooperative efforts to resolve international problems through the exchange of people and ideas. It is currently the oldest and largest US nongovernmental organization in the field of educational exchange. Headquartered in New York, IIE has 375 employees around the world and offices in Washington, DC, San Francisco, Denver, Chicago, Houston, Hong Kong, Bangkok, Jakarta, Budapest, Moscow, and Mexico City. IIE administers 250 programs annually in which almost 10,000 participants from over 150 nations take part.

IIE is an independent, nonprofit agency. The Institute organizes international projects under contract to numerous sponsors and provides educational advising services and publications reaching hundreds of thousands of individuals in the United States and the international higher education community. IIE receives funding from governments, international organizations, corporations, foundations, and individuals.

IIE has a long history of cooperation with Japan, beginning in 1946 with the Ryukyu Islands Scholarship Program, administered by IIE until 1972 for the US Army. This program was succeeded in 1982 by a US-based training program IIE administers for the Okinawa Prefectural Government Human Resource Development Foundation. Since the beginning of the Fulbright Program in Japan in 1952, IIE has assisted over 4,000 Japanese Fulbright Graduate Students with their US study programs and sent more than 800 US students to Japan—working in close cooperation with the Japan–United States Educational Commission and USIA, the program's sponsor. IIE also arranges short-term US study tours for about 25 Japanese leaders and specialists annually, nominated by the US Embassy and brought to the United States through USIA's International Visitor Program. More recently, IIE has begun working with Japan's Ministry of Home Affairs Local Autonomy College and Japan Municipal Development Corporation's Japan Intercultural Academy of Municipalities to provide US study tours for prefectural and municipal government personnel. In collaboration with JCIE and support from the Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership, IIE developed and implemented the Japan–US Women Leaders' Dialogue, which will be extended in a second phase to the Women Leaders' Network.

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## **Japan Center for International Exchange**

Founded in 1970, the Japan Center for International Exchange (JCIE) is an independent, nonprofit, and nonpartisan organization dedicated to strengthening Japan's role in international affairs. JCIE believes that Japan faces a major challenge in augmenting its positive contributions to the international community, in keeping with its position as one of the world's largest industrial democracies. Operating in a country where policy-making has traditionally been dominated by the government bureaucracy, JCIE has played an important role in broadening debate on Japan's international responsibilities by conducting international and cross-sectional programs of exchange, research, and discussion.

JCIE creates opportunities for informed policy discussion; it does not take policy positions. JCIE programs are carried out with the collaboration and cosponsorship of many organizations. The contacts developed through these working relationships are crucial to JCIE's efforts to increase the number of Japanese from the private sector engaged in meaningful policy research and dialogue with overseas counterparts. JCIE receives no government subsidies; rather, funding comes from private foundation grants, corporate contributions, and contracts.

JCIE's programs consist of:

- policy research and dialogue programs that provide a substantive basis for informed policy discussion;
- exchange programs to facilitate mutual understanding among policymakers and study programs for foreign institutions seeking to promote greater understanding of Japanese policy-making processes;
- support services for public affairs groups such as the Trilateral Commission, including serving as the Japanese secretariat for private bilateral forums established by agreement of bilateral summit meetings between heads of state; and
- encouragement of private philanthropy in Japan and the developing countries of Asia.