

APHAFIC annual meeting on May 17, 2014

APHAFIC held its twelfth annual meeting at China Max restaurant on May 17th, 2014. A total of 50 people attended. Nancy Lo gave a brief report of the activities of APHFIC from June 2013 – May 2014 (see aphafic.org), followed by a speech on "My experiences with limited Chinese American participation in U. S. Politics" by Ms. Betty Tom Chu (趙譚美生), former Monterey Park mayor and council member. Ms. Chu was happy to be back to her birth town and acknowledged our organization for participating and preserving the WWII history. She reminds us that May is Pacific Asian Islander Heritage month. She hoped our family and friends in San Diego to survive the horrible experience with the recent fire, which she saw driving down the highway.

Before her talk, she wished Happy birthday to Colonel Frank Mason at age of 93, and invited us to come up to Monterey park to meet veterans.

This talk covers the processes and the importance of the issues related to the World War II Memorial Monument honoring the American and Chinese participation, the Comfort Women statute, SCA 5 (California senator constitution amendment 5: 2013-2014), California Senate Joint Resolution 23, (SJR 23):congressional apology for exclusion of Chinese immigration, e.g. UC Davis - first Chinese lawyer who was denied naturalization in California court, and others like gambling issues.

SCA 5 (California senator constitution amendment 5: 2013-2014) is a third attempt for a race based legislation. Most of our Chinese elected officials voted for the 1st bill. Senate Hernandez had 2nd bill passed the state assembly. SCA 5 would repeal provisions of Prop 209 and allow the State of California to deny an individual or group's rights to public education on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin, which may adversely affect Asian students. Sophie Wang and Betty Chu decided to do something about it.

SJR 23, identical to ACR (Assembly concurrent resolution) 42 passed by the Assembly and the Senate in 2009 except that SJR 23 is a formal apology and calls for a Congressional apology. ACR 42 expresses regret for legislation that specifically targeted the Chinese Americans solely based upon their race. SJR 23 was on the May 27, senate floor hearing agenda. SJR 23 was later revised and asks for Congressional Apologies and the portions related to the California Legislative Apology was transferred to SCR (Senate Concurrent Resolution) 122. Both bills were passed unanimously by the California State Senate on June 5, 2014.

She did asked the support for SJR 23. Taiwanese community would not vote for that, because Taiwanese think that the bill is apology to Chinese. But to Betty Chu when others look at us, can they tell we are Taiwanese or Chinese? Everyone speaks mandarin

Two other examples which seem to be prejudiced against Chinese are a ban on catch of Shark fin (why Shark steak is ok?) and rice noodles which now need to be refrigerated within 2 hours without any scientific test by the California health department. We're being discriminated against. Why is there no Chinese empathy about discrimination?

Looking back at history, Ms Betty asked "Do you realize how many Chinese lost their lives trying to protect the Flying Tigers? How many Chinese lives were lost fighting over the Marco-Polo bridge? Did people realize what would have happened if Chinese did not fight since 1930s and if China had been conquered by the Japanese?"

WWII monument: As the Monterey Park mayor, she could not find a war memorial for Chinese, she had the first monument set in front of the City Hall in Monterey Park. During proposing process, Ms. Betty Chu had to be very careful due to a diverse community including Japanese Americans, which they had a good relation with. We remember our heritage, but also remember: we are minority in America, and we are also Americans.

Comfort women issue: Japan tried to have Comfort women statue in Glendale, California, removed. Mayor of Glendale who is an acquaintance of her husband, voted against removal of the statue. We filled 1/3 of the seats at the protest.

Diaoyu Island issue : The vice president and secretary of state seem to speak on the Japanese side. Have they read the Cairo treaty declaration in 1943? While Donald Trump thinks how horrible Chinese products are, a pair of sandals bought by Ms. Betty Chu from Norstrum with Ivanka Trump brand was "made in China".

Chinese need to speak up much about our achievement and our suffering. We're busy sending our kids to various after school programs to get a good education, but are we making sure they will not hit the bamboo ceiling when they grow up? This bamboo ceiling is much harder to break than the glass ceiling that women (used to) face.

Gambling in Monterey: Citizens voted to keep it out. Then Indians tried to buy the property and open Casino. Our congresswoman worked to help Indians to declare sovereign nation – how about our own Asian right? We don't participate in the political process, we need to pay attention when our elected officials do not represent our interest. Ms. Betty Chu does not know how to change that.

Illegal immigration from China in 1950s: When they crossed the border from Mexico, they were thrown in jail immediately. We were treated as asylum minority. Ms. Chu wanted to be a lawyer because she saw these abuses, and practice in immigration. For many years her husband could not get a replicate of his document – they conveniently lost these Chinese documents unless they need them for

deportation. They don't do that towards Mexicans. When we're the silent minority, we are also the forgotten minority.



Ms. Betty Tom Chu presented her talk



Ms. Betty Chu with APHAFIC current and former board members:
from left to right: Lily Xu, Pao-chin Chu, Nancy Lo, Ms. Betty Chu,
Mary Yan-Lee and Howard Chang



Ms. Betty Chu wished Colonel Frank Mason happy birthday for his 93rd birthday.



Ms. Betty Chu with some attendees: from left to right: Zhiming and Youj Wang, Jennifer Lu, Lily Xu, Ms. Betty Chu, Sam Shen, Jen-shih and Lian-pin Lee.