

**Francis J. Tsai**  
**Narrator**

**Sarah Mason**  
**Interviewer**

**January 4, 1979**  
**Saint Paul, Minnesota**

Sarah Mason            **-SM**  
Francis J. Tasi        **-FT**

**SM:** I'm talking to Frank Tsai in Saint Paul, Minnesota, January 4, 1978.

**FT:** 1979, right?

**SM:** This is an interview in 1979, excuse me. This is an interview under the auspices of the Minnesota Historical Society and the interviewer is Sarah Mason. Frank, could we begin with your parents in China, and where they came from and occupation, etcetera?

**FT:** Okay. My folks . . . my father and mother are both from Shanghai. And my father [unclear – name?] was born in Yokohama, Japan.

**SM:** Oh. How did that happen?

**FT:** My grandfather was a tailor and had a business in Yokohama. And so I guess my . . . there's only one member of the family that was born in China.

**SM:** Oh.

**FT:** But my father grew up in Japan and then . . . until he came to school here.

**SM:** Oh, well, did he meet your mother in China?

**FT:** Yes. So my father came and went to school here and I think graduated in 1937. And then worked until the war, and then he . . .

**SM:** Worked here?

**FT:** Yes, he worked for the Studebaker Company.

**SM:** Hmm.

**FT:** And then he went into the Marines and then . . . see, just at the end of the war he was stationed in . . . he was going to be stationed in China, and so he was attached to the Marine liaison offices in China, in Shanghai.

**SM:** Oh.

**FT:** And so I think . . . I believe he met my mother at that time.

**SM:** Oh, I see. Well, was he an American? Or . . .

**FT:** He . . . I don't think he got his citizenship until after he served in the Marines.

**SM:** Oh, yes. That was a route for a little bit faster . . . [unclear].

**FT:** Yes. Right.

**SM:** I see. So he came to the university with her?

**FT:** He came to Purdue. He went to Purdue.

**SM:** Oh, to Purdue.

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** I see.

**FT:** Oh, and then so my mother grew up in Shanghai. And then apparently my grandparents were . . . knew each other. The two sets of different grandparents knew each other.

**SM:** Oh. Was it arranged? [Chuckles]

**FT:** I don't believe so. [Chuckles]

**SM:** I see. So then he went back to Shanghai?

**FT:** Right. So he went . . .

**SM:** When he was in the Marines?

**FT:** Right, when he was in the Marines, he was stationed there. And then after he got out then he returned to Shanghai and they got married in 1947. And then they came back here late that year. And he was going to . . . he was still going to work for Studebaker and they were going to set up a plant in China and he was going to go over and help them set it up, set the plant up. And then the 1949 Liberation occurred and they . . . so they stayed over here in the United States.

**SM:** I see. So they came here just to make the arrangements for his work over there.

**FT:** Yes. Right.

**SM:** I see. And they came to Indiana then.

**FT:** Right.

**SM:** Hmmm. So when they came back, they came back to Indiana?

**FT:** Right. Yes. So I was born in South Bend, Indiana.

**SM:** I see. And you spent your childhood there?

**FT:** I spent, I think, the first two or three years there, and then we moved to Michigan until I was nine, and then moved here in 1957.

**SM:** How did they happen to come here?

**FT:** Oh, he had been offered a job here with Honeywell.

**SM:** With Honeywell?

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** Oh, I see. Were you the first child then?

**FT:** Right.

**SM:** Yes. So you grew up . . . you're a Minnesotan now, almost.

**FT:** Yes, well, right. [Chuckles]

**SM:** Yes. [Chuckles] But anyway, you grew up mainly here.

**FT:** Right.

**SM:** I see.

**FT:** Yes. This the . . . yes, I would say mainly here.

**SM:** Were you and your family pretty much a part of the Chinese community always?

**FT:** Hmm . . . kind of, in the sense that a lot of the Northerners here related to each other and formed kind of a little clique. And we had nothing to do . . . I guess my folks really had nothing to do with any of the Southern Chinese families that were here.

**SM:** Was there pretty much of a real gap there?

**FT:** Yes, there is.

**SM:** Language gap, if nothing else. [Chuckles]

**FT:** Language and . . . right.

**SM:** [Chuckles] Yes, and culture, too, I suppose, to some extent.

**FT:** Right. Right.

**SM:** I see. Well, did you go to Chinese school or [unclear]?

**FT:** No, we didn't do any of those things.

**SM:** You didn't. [Chuckles]

**FT:** No [unclear] which is real strange.

**SM:** Well, what about, you know, the things your parents wanted of their children or taught their children? If you can put your finger on it. [Chuckles]

**FT:** About . . . what, Chinese culture or . . .?

**SM:** Chinese values or . . . you know, what they wanted you to do when you grew up or how they wanted you to behave. [Chuckles]

**FT:** I think most of it was pretty much unspoken.

**SM:** Yes.

**FT:** And they were Catholic, so I attended a Catholic school. And I think some values in terms of the way they dealt with senior citizens kind of rubbed off.

**SM:** Were any of your older relatives here?

**FT:** No, my folks . . . let's see, other than two cousins here are the only members of the family that were here. So they had good relationships with some of the local senior citizens living in and around that neighborhood.

**SM:** You mean they helped to care for them?

**FT:** In a matter of bringing them back and forth to church and, you know, invite them over and we would just . . .

**SM:** They were Chinese?

**FT:** No, they were . . .

**SM:** Oh, they were just elderly.

**FT:** Yes, just elderly. Yes.

**SM:** Yes.

**FT:** And I think the family was real tight, a very tight-knit family.

**SM:** How many children are there?

**FT:** You know, there are five. My . . . the youngest is twelve years old, so he was born when I was graduating from high school.

**SM:** I see. Yes. Well, what were some of the ways it was really close? I mean was there a feeling of we should help each other or . . .?

**FT:** I guess it was . . . yes, that. And my parents spent a lot of time with the kids in terms of school.

**SM:** Oh yes, with your homework and such?

**FT:** Homework and . . . I mean, there was a real interest there. They gave me, in terms of opportunity, gave me the most in terms of . . . they sent me to a parochial high school in addition to the grade school and I think I'm the only one in the family that did that, and the rest have gone to public school.

**SM:** What school is that?

**FT:** That was Benilde.

**SM:** Benilde?

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** How do you spell that?

**FT:** B-E-N-I-L-D-E.

**SM:** I see. Hmmm. And they thought that was a better education or [unclear]?

**FT:** Yes. They wanted me to go to college and I guess that's where that came from. The next two oldest are girls and they both went to public school.

**SM:** Did they want them to go to college, too?

**FT:** I think so, yes.

**SM:** And then there were boys after that?

**FT:** Right. Right. My next oldest was a boy.

**SM:** Yes. Were they pretty protective of their children? Compared to the American friends you had.

**FT:** Hmmm . . .

**SM:** [Unclear] [Chuckles]

**FT:** I don't know. I think to some degree they might have been, although I don't know what I'm basing that on.

**SM:** You didn't react to it though in any fashion?

**FT:** No. I think there are some differences. I can remember thinking that the way we behaved with our family was a lot more formal or not . . . we treated our parents a lot differently than the American kids.

**SM:** More respectful?

**FT:** More respectful, yes. [Chuckles]

**SM:** Yes. Did they usually take the children along when they went for social occasions?

**FT:** Yes. Generally, at least when I was little, the social occasions were with other Chinese families.

**SM:** Yes.

**FT:** So then all the Chinese kids, you know, got together.

**SM:** Oh, yes.

**FT:** Played cards or mah jongg or whatever.

**SM:** So you did have a lot of contact with other second generation [unclear]?

**FT:** Second generation in social situations. Not so much in day to day activity.

**SM:** Oh, I see. At school there weren't . . .

**FT:** Right.

**SM:** Any particular . . .?

**FT:** Right.

**SM:** Well, did you speak Chinese at home then?

**FT:** I spoke until I was three years old.

**SM:** Only until three?

**FT:** And then they . . . they stopped speaking when I started playing with the kids outside and they figured I would maybe . . . I was mixing the Chinese and English.

**SM:** [Chuckles]

**FT:** So they didn't keep it up long enough for me to maintain it.

**SM:** Oh. Do they speak English to each other now?

**FT:** Hmmm . . . half and half.

**SM:** [Chuckles] They mixed it up.

**FT:** Yes, right. [Laughter]

**SM:** Also your brothers and sisters don't speak it.

**FT:** They didn't speak . . . my sister and brother and I have both gone to Taiwan and studied Chinese.

**SM:** Oh, I see.

**FT:** So my sister, the youngest sister, is probably better, more conversant, more fluent. And I can get by and my brother can get by.

**SM:** I see. So you studied Mandarin then?

**FT:** Right.

**SM:** Yes. Oh, and do you read and write, too?

**FT:** Oh, very little.

**SM:** That's interesting. You went there just particularly for that purpose or do you have relatives there or anything?

**FT:** No relatives. I went there to study that and I always wanted to go to China. Well, to learn Mandarin, for one thing. And then I wanted to study the Kung Fu.

**SM:** Oh, yes.

**FT:** So that was another reason for going to Taiwan.

**SM:** To study the classic or . . . ?

**FT:** No, there was a master, a grand master of the style I had been studying here in Minneapolis lived in Taiwan.

**SM:** Oh.

**FT:** And so that's why I went and then I trained with him.

**SM:** Oh, I see. When was that?

**FT:** That was . . . oh, 1976. Spring and summer.

**SM:** Just recently.

**FT:** Yes. Well, fairly recently.

[Brief recording interruption]

**SM:** Could you describe what you were studying in Taiwan?

**FT:** Okay. The Kung Fu is a Chinese martial art. And I had been taking a few classes here for a couple years in Minneapolis. And so I knew that the grand master was in Taiwan and I wanted to study under him.

**SM:** I see.



**FT:** And . . . so he was really good. [Chuckles]

**SM:** Ah ha. Well, that's interesting.

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** One thing I'm interested in is how you, yourself, and then others of your generation, how you identify yourself. Whether you identify mainly with the Chinese community or as an American or both? [Chuckles]

**FT:** Okay. I guess I mainly just . . . would identify myself as an American.

**SM:** Yes. It stands to reason, you've always lived here.

**FT:** Yes. Right. Although there are times, you know, especially like during the antiwar days, I . . . I had considered leaving the country rather than being drafted and I was not in agreement with the war.

**SM:** Did you oppose the draft?

**FT:** Yes, I participated in some of the antiwar marches and that sort of thing. I decided that I couldn't be a CO [conscientious objector] I couldn't . . . wasn't disagreeing with it on those grounds, but basically our philosophical disagreement was being involved in that kind of a war.

**SM:** So did you go in, finally, or . . . ?

**FT:** No, I got deferred until they switched to a lottery and then I had a high number, so . . .

**SM:** Oh. That was good luck.

**FT:** Yes, I really lucked out. [Laughter]

**SM:** You actually did.

**FT:** But then other times I do identify as Chinese. I think maybe more so than other groups that I meet here. I think more so than some of the Chinese that I've met, particularly those in Taiwan.

**SM:** What was that, more than . . . ?

**FT:** More than those Chinese-Americans I met in Taiwan.

**SM:** Oh.

**FT:** Some were there and really didn't see themselves as being Chinese and were not willing to kind of examine their whole cultural heritage as a Chinese.

**SM:** These were second generation that had grown up here and then they went to Taiwan?

**FT:** Right. Right.

**SM:** Well, what about the identity of Asian American or Chinese American? Do you see that as something separate or . . . I mean as a third possibility? [Chuckles] Or do you see it as being either Chinese or American [unclear]?

**FT:** I think that's probably a more better description . . . or it's a better description of the way I see myself. Because I don't totally identify with being an American, I don't totally identify as being Chinese either.

**SM:** Yes. Has it ever been troublesome for you? Or it's just something you think about. [Chuckles]

**FT:** Hmm. I guess not troublesome so much as that I've run into situations in which I've been discriminated against because I was Chinese and . . . that's about . . .

**SM:** What were some of them? If you care to [unclear] them.

**FT:** Basically, they were all kind of dating situations where I would ask a woman out, a girl out, and the parents would not care for their daughter to go out with me.

**SM:** And they'd actually forbid, if you asked?

**FT:** Well, they would not outright forbid, but they would just really . . . you know, kind of talk down about it.

**SM:** Is that characteristic of other people's experience, too?

**FT:** I don't know, I haven't ever asked too many people about that.

**SM:** How do you think that compares in Minnesota with say the West Coast or New York?

**FT:** Hmm. I . . . I don't know. I hesitate . . .

**SM:** You haven't heard of people there . . .?

**FT:** No. The people I've met over on the West Coast were all kind of in the whole Chinatown community.

**SM:** Yes.

**FT:** And so as a result, I think, the peer pressure from their own community kind of forced them to just date Chinese, and so you really didn't have that much interaction, or interracial dating, I mean.

**SM:** Hmm. Minnesota, you know, prides itself on being a sort of open social climate and so on, but . . .

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** I guess there's some exceptions.

**FT:** [Chuckles]

**SM:** Well, what about the woman herself though? The younger generation. She apparently didn't have the same views as her parents.

**FT:** Right. Right.

**SM:** Well, that's a hopeful sign, I think.

**FT:** [Laughter] Yes, really. It's the other situations then like . . . oh, when I was little, just some kids kind of thing. When I was playing baseball, they would make fun . . .

**SM:** At school or just in the neighborhood?

**FT:** This was in a little league, yes. In a little league kind of a situation. Somebody didn't like me and I couldn't understand why. And he came up and said, "Because you're Japanese," or something or other. And I just couldn't . . . then, you know . . .

**SM:** Was this wartime? [Chuckles]

**FT:** [Chuckles] No, it was...this was . . .

**SM:** [Unclear] any other time.

**FT:** No, this was like 1960s . . . no, 1950s, late 1950s.

**SM:** Oh.

**FT:** I was, I think, about twelve or thirteen, I think.

**SM:** Hmm. Well, did your parents try to tell you how to cope with this kind of thing?

**FT:** No, no.

**SM:** Oh, so it was all up to you.

**FT:** Yes, right.

**SM:** What to do. [Laughter]

**FT:** Well, you know, I was . . . and usually because I didn't perceive myself as being different.

**SM:** Oh, yes, so it was sort of a shock in that way.

**FT:** Yes. Right. And so I couldn't understand it. And I think only . . . well, not recently . . . well, in the last six to ten years it's been kind of becoming more . . . I'm becoming more and more aware of identity that way.

**SM:** Oh, yes.

**FT:** Yes. I think there are some things that I do know, I don't know if it's . . . if I'm just being overly sensitive or not, but like walking in . . .

**SM:** That's always a problem, you don't know . . . yes.

**FT:** Yes. Like walking into a bar or any kind of social situation where if I'm with a non-Asian woman, I really . . . you know, I . . . well, you get second glances or we get stared at and that kind of thing. So I don't know . . .

**SM:** That's right now then?

**FT:** Yes. Yes.

**SM:** Hmm. Well, did other people in your family talk about this at all?

**FT:** Hmm . . .

**SM:** Or did everyone keep it to themselves? [Chuckles]

**FT:** Kind of flippantly, yes, I think we were . . . yes, over dinner we'd make jokes about it.

**SM:** So your parents never really offered a way of responding or maybe they didn't know themselves . . .?

**FT:** I mean, I think mainly it was just kind of . . . just accepting it and not really . . .

**SM:** Oh, I see.

**FT:** There's nothing we can do about it kind of a thing.

**SM:** Yes. Well, did they try to sort of counter with a way of reinforcing your self-image?

**FT:** I don't recall ever getting into it that deeply.

**SM:** Oh, it maybe wasn't that serious a problem?

**FT:** Yes, right.

**SM:** Did it happen with your parents? I mean did they get remarks like this when they . . . ?

**FT:** They never spoke of it, although I know there were some other people that . . . and my folks that were . . . came to Minnesota before my folks did, they ran into some discrimination there regarding housing and that kind of thing.

**SM:** Oh, yes. Quite a few people have mentioned that.

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** That's still going on then.

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** In certain areas it's still tough to buy a house.

**FT:** But I that that is probably the extent of what . . . you know, what my folks and I have discussed about that.

**SM:** Well, it was largely in interracial situations that you got these . . .

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** Or well, no, when you were playing baseball it wasn't.

**FT:** Right.

**SM:** Yes. [Unclear] I'm interested in how the second generation relates to the first generation. I'm sure that there are always tensions whether they're immigrants or natives. [Chuckles] But I assume that they're probably exacerbated in that situation where your parents are of another culture and you're partly of that and partly . . .

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** Did it . . . I'm curious whether the first generation are still sort of the . . . more powerful group or whether the second generation are now becoming the decision makers in the . . .

**FT:** You mean in Minneapolis?

**SM:** Yes, in Minneapolis.

**FT:** For the Chinese?

**SM:** Yes.

**FT:** I think there are still a lot of first generation here that are still in fairly good control of some of the economy and . . .

**SM:** Of the businesses?

**FT:** Some of the businesses and that sort of thing. Although I think the second . . . it's interesting. I think the second generation tends to select safer jobs.

**SM:** What . . . what kind? Like . . .

**FT:** More professionals. So you get into lawyer, and doctor, dentist kind of situations or they become computer programmers or whatever. And that . . . I think you have very few risk takers in the second generation of Chinese. And I think that's kind of been ingrained into them by the first generation because there's so many failures in the first generation, you know, people opening restaurants and then going out of business and all that. And so, as a whole . . .

**SM:** Well, quite a few succeeded, too, didn't they? Or is that a smaller percentage?

**FT:** Yes. I think there's a few that have succeeded. I wouldn't say that quite a few have succeeded.

**SM:** Oh.

**FT:** And the ones that have succeeded have . . . are trying to get their kids not to do . . .

**SM:** Not to do it.

**FT:** Work in restaurants, you know, or . . . unless their restaurant happens to be a real big concern.

**SM:** Hmm. Well, when you mean safer, you mean in terms of always having a job or in terms of discrimination?

**FT:** I think in terms of having a job.

**SM:** Oh, yes.

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** Well, you mean most of these restaurants are not really long term [unclear]?

**FT:** I think a lot of the chow mein shops you see, those small . . .

**SM:** Yes, they must come and go.

**FT:** Yes, yes. They're the family-owned and . . . or even in the medium sized restaurants. The restaurant work is just real hard and it's real . . . not real rewarding.

**SM:** Yes, the work is really hard. Yes.

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** For sure.

**FT:** Long hours and everything like that.

**SM:** So some of them really fail economically though?

**FT:** Yes, or they're just . . . they're just constantly struggling to keep themselves above water and they don't want their kids to be like that, to have to struggle like that. So they try and get them to be a doctor or be a lawyer, engineer. You know

**SM:** Yes.

**FT:** Or an engineer. You know, it's the safe jobs. You can always get jobs, you don't have to worry about your family.

**SM:** Well, how much of that also is that whole cultural thing that I guess comes from Confucianism of education as a real draw?

**FT:** Yes. Oh, I think yes . . .

**SM:** Yes, and professionals seem to sort of . . . I mean it would seem that being a professional would follow from that.

**FT:** Yes. Yes. I think that's real true.

**SM:** Yes. Well, as I understand it, many of the Chinese began restaurants, or first laundries and restaurants because then they weren't competing with the mainstream.

**FT:** Yes. Right.

**SM:** Not because they simply loved to cook or wash clothes. [Laughter]

**FT:** Right. Really. [Laughter] Yes.

**SM:** So would you say most of the second generation is going into professions or . . . ?

**FT:** I would say that they're mostly in professions. I'm trying to think of anybody . . . anyone that I know that is not . . . that's kind of taking a risk in terms of going out and striking out on their own and developing something brand new.

**SM:** Oh, yes.

**FT:** Or doing something out of the ordinary.

**SM:** What about carrying on a family business? Are some still doing that? Are the bigger restaurants?

**FT:** Yes, the bigger restaurants, I think, are doing that.

**SM:** Oh, yes. What are the restaurants that have really been here since say the turn of the century?

**FT:** For a long time? I think Nankin has been here a long time.

**SM:** Yes, that's certainly one of the . . .

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** John's Place, is that one of them?

**FT:** John's Place, yes. I can remember eating there at John's Place.

**SM:** What about Wong's? That's one of the bigger ones.

**FT:** Howard Wong's? Yes.

**SM:** Is it Howard Wong?

**FT:** There's Howard Wong's and David Fong's.

**SM:** Oh . . . oh, okay.



**FT:** And Howard's been around a long time, so has David. They started out as real small operations and just built it.

**SM:** How long ago? Twenty years or . . . ?

**FT:** How long is it . . . I think David Fong's probably been building it for about twenty years, yes.

**SM:** Oh, yes. And he has a son taking it over.

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** And the same with Howard Wong then?

**FT:** Yes, Howard has one son that's working with the restaurant a lot and he's got, I think, one or two other sons that are not even connected at all with the business.

**SM:** Oh, I see. Well, what about people that came . . . oh, see your father came first as a student, then he was in business.

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** And did he continue in that then?

**FT:** In the engineering? Yes.

**SM:** Oh, he was an engineer for Studebaker.

**FT:** He's an engineer, right.

**SM:** Oh, I see. Okay. So he was a professional.

**FT:** Right.

**SM:** Yes. So I suppose all of that group of students, professionals, they all encouraged their children to be . . . [chuckles] everyone's encouraging their children to be professionals I guess is what it amounts to.

**FT:** Right. [Unclear] Right. You don't have people going into arts. I think in the Chinese particularly, you don't have a lot of artisans and craftspeople.

**SM:** Oh. Gee, and they're such artistic people. [Chuckles]

**FT:** Right, right.

**SM:** But I guess there are a lot of theories about that, too. That it's really hard for an artisan in another culture or if he's kind of split between them to really express . . . I don't know whether you agree with that or . . .

**FT:** Yes. Yes, well I think part . . .

**SM:** I mean, how do you explain that?

**FT:** I think part of it is just that it's so insecure economically to be an artist.

**SM:** Oh, yes. That must be the main reason.

**FT:** That the parents really make it hard.

**SM:** [Chuckles] Don't encourage.

**FT:** Right. Where like Mike Wong is a photographer.

**SM:** Yes.

**FT:** And I think, you know, I'm surprised that he's been able to do that.

**SM:** Is his father a photographer?

**FT:** No, his father is a restaurant owner, small café in Rochester.

**SM:** Oh. Because somebody told me they knew a Wong that was a photographer, and I wondered . . .

**FT:** There's another Wong.

**SM:** But it's not related . . .

**FT:** There's a Bing Wong.

**SM:** Oh yes, Bing Wong is what they said.

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** That's not related to Mike Wong?

**FT:** No, no. Nothing.

**SM:** Oh, so Mike's father was a restaurant . . .

**FT:** Right.

**SM:** How does he like the idea of him being a photographer?

**FT:** Oh, I think that he likes it more than having any one of them take over the restaurant.  
[Chuckles]

**SM:** [Unclear] he doesn't encourage that.

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** Well, a photographer is a little more secure than [chuckles] painting oil paintings.

**FT:** Right, right. [Chuckles] That's true.

**SM:** I mean it could be used commercially more easily.

**FT:** Yes. Yes, and he's teaching and so it's a little more [unclear].

**SM:** Oh, where does he teach?

**FT:** He's teaching at a place called Minnetonka Arts Center.

**SM:** Oh, I see. And then does he do his own photography?

**FT:** His own . . . right.

**SM:** So he makes out pretty well?

**FT:** Well, it's decent.

**SM:** Well, he's just a young guy.

**FT:** Yes. And his wife's working, too, so . . .

**SM:** Oh, that always helps. [Chuckles]

**FT:** Right. And she's a nutritionist, So I think, for the most part, I think Joyce Yu is probably one person I'd say who did not fall into that mold of going in the professions.

**SM:** Oh, yes.

**FT:** She's a little more entrepreneurial.

**SM:** But she certainly has the same kind of a [unclear] sense, well . . .

**FT:** Yes. In the sense she's a...

**SM:** You think she's more entrepreneurial?

**FT:** Yes, in that she's not . . . she's willing to take a few more risks than other people.

**SM:** Oh.

**FT:** I think [unclear – name?] also is another person that's real sharp business-wise. I don't . . .

**SM:** Is she a second generation?

**FT:** I think she's first.

**SM:** First.

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** Oh, she's real sharp in business.

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** Hmm. Well, I don't know how Joyce got into that work exactly. I mean it's sort of a . . .

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** It's not like a whole big field or something. [Chuckles]

**FT:** Right.

**SM:** Well, I suppose it is working in the foundation, but . . .

**FT:** It's . . . I think there's only two Asians in the whole foundation field.

**SM:** Oh. Oh, so that's really unusual.

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** Hmm. Well, I guess we got a little off the track. But you did talk about who's holding the power. [Chuckles]

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** That's what I . . . I remember, if we can just get back to it briefly.

**FT:** Yes. I think right now it would be safe to say that the first generation still holds much of the power.

**SM:** I guess you did say that.

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** Is there a third generation or are they really young?

**FT:** There's third generation Japanese. I don't know that many third generation Chinese.

**SM:** Ah. Well, that's not really a significant group yet then.

**FT:** Yes. Right.

**SM:** Well, what about second generation? Are they marrying Asians, largely, or mixed or . . . ?

**FT:** The Southerners are marrying Asians.

**SM:** The South China [unclear]?

**FT:** Right, the Cantonese people.

**SM:** Oh. Hmm.

**FT:** And then the Northerners are there marrying . . . that's a real gross generalization . . .

**SM:** Yes. But it's [unclear].

**FT:** But you know what, the Northerners I think are not confining themselves to marrying just Chinese.

**SM:** Well, the South China people come more from the business group, right? Is that true or not?

**FT:** From both. They come from both.

**SM:** They come from both.

**FT:** Yes. The Canton . . . the South Chinese run their businesses, their restaurants, and then they have the Northerners getting into other businesses more like . . .

**SM:** Oh, they're in business . . . .

**FT:** Joe Ling is in 3M and May is involved with insurance and . . .

**SM:** Well, he came as a professional, didn't he, Joe Ling?

**FT:** Yes. Yes.

**SM:** Well, most of the people that came in the restaurant and laundry businesses were from South China, is that right?

**FT:** I would say so, yes.

**SM:** But there are Northern Chinese restaurants, I guess.

**FT:** Right. They've been a little more recent like that.

**SM:** Oh, those are more recent.

**FT:** Yes. The North Chinese that I'm talking about are generally second generation Northerners anyway. [Unclear].

**SM:** Oh. Tend to marry . . .

**FT:** Non-Chinese.

**SM:** Is that because they're in professions and have become more integrated into the society?

**FT:** I think so here. And plus there are not that many Chinese women.

**SM:** Right, that's a problem. I don't know if it's a problem, but it's a reality. [Chuckles]

**FT:** Right. [Laughter]

**SM:** Well, that's kind of interesting.

**FT:** Yes. There really is a real distinction and I . . . and you can see it real clearly, I think.

**SM:** Hmmm. Among the second generation.

**FT:** Yes, second generation Cantonese are all either dating or married to second generation Cantonese.

**SM:** Hmmm. Regardless of whether their parents were businesspeople . . . .

[Recording interruption]

**FT:** . . . going on to college have been great as you go on to college.

**SM:** Yes. How about their interest in Chinese culture?

**FT:** Oh, yes. It varies. I think in the Chinese there are some that are very interested in participating in like our organization the Chinese American Association [CAAM].

**SM:** CAAM.

**FT:** Yes, CAAM or the Chinese Chamber [of Commerce]. But most of them, I think, they relate to each other socially.

**SM:** They do?

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** Oh. Quite a bit?

**FT:** Particularly the Southern Chinese, the Cantonese. The Northerners, because . . . I think are more acculturated in mixing with them a lot.

**SM:** That is interesting [unclear].

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** The earliest to come were the Southerners, right?

**FT:** Yes. Right.

**SM:** Would it be just in the 1940s that these Northerners started coming or . . .?

**FT:** Hmmm, I guess so. That would probably be . . .

**SM:** Or some must have come as students way before then.

**FT:** Right.

**SM:** Yes.

[Background noise – recording interruption?]

**SM:** Should we try to . . .?

**FT:** I'm trying to think of some other characteristics. I think there are . . .

**SM:** What about politically? Are their views different from their parents say on mainland China, or are they pretty . . . I don't even know what the parents' views are. [Chuckles] But I suppose it varies.

**FT:** Yes. I think the first generation, generally, if they are not . . . were not Northerners . . .

**SM:** Yes.

**FT:** Are very interested or more apt to be pro-PRC [People's Republic of China] than . . .

**SM:** Oh, the Southerners. They see it from . . . as business opportunity?

**FT:** I think they see it . . . relate to it more as China as it being really China than . . . politically.

**SM:** Oh, I see. Yes.

**FT:** And then the Northerners are still . . . I think a lot of them were aligned with the [unclear] while they were there, and so still retain that political perspective.

**SM:** I see. And so are they disturbed now about the normalization or . . .?

**FT:** I think so, more so than the Cantonese. I think the ones that are disturbed now by it are the more recent immigrants from Taiwan.

**SM:** Oh. Oh, yes.

**FT:** They're the professionals and they still have family over there.

**SM:** Oh, yes. Well, now how do they relate to the Chinese community here? Would this be students you're talking about?

**FT:** These are more professionals.

**SM:** Professionals, yes.

**FT:** These would be people that probably have studied here and then stayed on with jobs.

**SM:** Oh, yes. And they came from Taiwan to start with.

**FT:** Yes. And they, I think, are . . . they're . . . well, because they're Northerners, they don't affiliate as easily with the Southern, the Cantonese.

**SM:** Oh, yes.

**FT:** And they tend to . . .



**SM:** Are they all [unclear] from Taiwan? [Chuckles]

**FT:** A lot of them, lot of them.

**SM:** Oh, yes.

**FT:** I think that the Southerners that are coming in are more low income and not coming in as students.

**SM:** Right.

**FT:** There are some but there's not as many, I think, as in Taiwan.

**SM:** Hmm. Well, then there are the Taiwanese themselves. Do they relate to the Chinese community?

**FT:** Here?

**SM:** Yes.

**FT:** I don't know if there are that many pure Taiwanese here.

**SM:** Oh.

**FT:** I think most of them are Chinese.

**SM:** Most of the students would be Chinese then . . .

**FT:** Yes, or a mixture.

**SM:** Although I guess they have expressed some kinds of dissent. [Chuckles]

**FT:** Yes. Yes, for sure.

**SM:** Well, that's interesting.

**FT:** Okay, so in second generation . . .

**SM:** [Unclear] on that.

**FT:** Right, second generation then, I think, are more what would affiliate more easily with the PRC. And probably don't understand as much the . . . with the political differences. One thing about the first generation, there are . . . there are the family associations from the Southern, from

the Cantonese are very much anti-PRC, and because a lot of their headquarters and their ties are now in Taiwan. And so you've got . . .

**SM:** Oh, yes.

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** And you say Cantonese.

**FT:** Right. Like the [unclear] and [unclear] family associations I'm sure are all anti-PRC. But it was interesting, you'd see they would verbalize that sentiment but then when the performing arts troupe came, and a lot of them came to that . . . because they were . . .

**SM:** [Chuckles] Oh, did they?

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** Yes. It's still Chinese. [Chuckles]

**FT:** Yes, it's still Chinese, right. [Laughter]

**SM:** Oh, yes. That's interesting. Well, this first generation are the ones that lived through the big civil war and so on.

**FT:** Right. Right.

**SM:** Or at least they were maybe here, but their relatives.

**FT:** Yes. I think they were . . . yes. Right.

**SM:** So the second generation don't feel as deeply about the conflict, I guess.

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** Well, and then times have changed a lot.

**FT:** Sure. Right. [Chuckles]

**SM:** Right. Hmm. Can you think of anything else that distinguishes the second generation?

**FT:** Hmm, probably . . . I think the second generation is probably, as a group, not politically active, as you would find in other minorities.

**SM:** Hmm.

**FT:** I don't know why that is. That's a real gross generalization also, but Joyce and I . . . I think Joyce Yu and I, I think, are probably the only ones that I know of that are involved with politics.

**SM:** Oh, really?

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** And you two are actively involved in politics?

**FT:** More or less, though Joyce probably more so than I.

**SM:** Hmmm. I hear she's pretty active with DFL.

**FT:** DFL, yes. And I was at one point and then I thought I was going to be leaving here and so I kind of withdrew.

**SM:** Oh, yes. Oh, yes. But you're interested in . . .

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** Well, is that . . . when you that most of the others aren't very active, is it sort of a defensive measure or just a reaction to . . .? I don't know.

**FT:** I don't know either.

**SM:** Well, how do you explain it? [Chuckles]

**FT:** I . . . it might just be part of the whole apathy of the . . . [unclear] community.

**SM:** Oh, you think it is more apathy?

**FT:** Yes, it might be. Because I know in the San Francisco Chinatown and New York Chinatown there, you've got a big political contingent.

**SM:** Oh, really. In American politics?

**FT:** Yes. Right.

**SM:** Well, are they actually Democratic?

**FT:** I think that there is . . . they are split. It depends on . . .

**SM:** Oh, I see. They're split then.

**FT:** Yes. Like I ran into a woman in Washington, D.C. who was a political appointee because she was coordinating the Asians for Carter in D.C.

**SM:** I didn't know he had a group of Asians . . .

**FT:** I didn't either. [Laughter] That was brand new to me.

**SM:** [Chuckles] I didn't know he even knew they existed. until suddenly normalization came.

**FT:** Right. [Chuckles]

**SM:** Oh. So there was a group of Asians for Carter.

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** And she was coordinating it.

**FT:** Yes, in the D.C. area. And so I'm sure that we've got a high concentration of Asian [unclear]. They probably have similar groups. And I remember in San Francisco they had . . . DFL was real strong there.

**SM:** Oh.

**FT:** Or DFL, you know, Democratic Party.

**SM:** Yes. Yes. Well, it seems unless . . . and [unclear] groups . . . well, maybe that's not correct, I don't know.

**FT:** Yes. I know that in Chinatown there were a fair number of Republicans also.

**SM:** Oh, were there?

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** Well, on what basis is that, I wonder?

**FT:** I think it depended on your socioeconomic status. [Laughter]

**SM:** [Unclear] population, etcetera.

**FT:** Right. [Laughter]

**SM:** I see. Well, are most of the second generation here fairly affluent? Or are they too young to be really affluent?

**FT:** I think yes, probably too young to be affluent.

**SM:** Are they sort of on the road [chuckles] into it or not? I mean that's kind of . . .

**FT:** On the road to being affluent?

**SM:** Yes, I mean will they eventually be fairly affluent professionals?

**FT:** Oh. Oh, yes. I think they will not have any trouble making it, surviving. Yes.

**SM:** Surviving. [Chuckles] [Unclear] surviving.

**FT:** Right, yes. [Laughter] I know, you don't know if you can be affluent now anymore. [Laughter]

**SM:** Maybe that's what I'm saying. [Laughter]

**FT:** Right.

**SM:** Funny. [Chuckles]

**FT:** Really. [Chuckles]

**SM:** Well, let's see. Maybe you could just talk some about . . . did you go to the U [University of Minnesota]?

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** Yes, your college days and what kind of, you know, goals you have for your own life. Whether they come from your background or they're just individual or both. [Chuckles]

**FT:** Let's see. I just went to college right after high school and my folks wanted me to be a doctor. And I guess I adopted those same goals. And I got turned down from medical school so I went into graduate school in public health.

**SM:** Oh. Oh, I see.

**FT:** Because I felt I wanted to stay in the helping profession.

**SM:** Oh, yes. And that's what you . . .

**FT:** Right. And I got politically active . . . well, I was in my last year of college and have stayed fairly active ever since.

**SM:** Hmm. Well, did you find the public health courses pretty interesting?

**FT:** I thought they were interesting. I kind of . . . I was using it more as a . . . kind of a key to get into certain jobs and I wasn't really interested in the major I had, which was health education.

**SM:** Oh. Hmmm.

**FT:** I was more interested in administration.

**SM:** Oh, you *weren't* interested in health education.

**FT:** Right. I wasn't.

**SM:** Oh, but it was your major. [Chuckles]

**FT:** It was my major.

**SM:** Oh, that sounds unfortunate. [Laughter]

**FT:** I know. It was. [Laughter]

**SM:** I see. You were interested in administration.

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** And that's what you're in now? Or is it . . .?

**FT:** Kind of . . . it's more administrative than anything else.

**SM:** Yes.

**FT:** I'm a bureaucrat. [Chuckles]

**SM:** Why don't you describe your work, since we haven't really made that clear, I guess.

**FT:** What I do is regulate health maintenance organizations.

**SM:** Oh, you regulate.

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** I see.

**FT:** And we're responsible for also developing and promoting them. And so we view contracts, provider contracts, and monitor financial status and provide some technical assistance to groups that want to organize HMOs.

**SM:** So the state really controls these organizations.

**FT:** Yes, we license them and then they operate under our authority.

**SM:** I see.

[Recording interruption]

**SM:** ...either. [Chuckles]

**FT:** No, I . . .

**SM:** Other people are . . .

**FT:** I mainly hung around with my old college friends and then people that I met over at the Y.

**SM:** Oh, you mean now you do.

**FT:** No, no. When I was in college.

**SM:** Oh, okay.

**FT:** And . . . let's see. So I was always intent on going into medical school during college.

**SM:** I see.

**FT:** And then I got out and then when I started working in the community I changed my views in terms of what I wanted to do. And that's when I got into doing some community organizing and becoming more politically active.

**SM:** I see.

**FT:** And liking administrative type work. And so as a result of the community kind of activities, I've now since come . . . I'm down on social services as my goal. What I'd like to do is work in economic development.

**SM:** Oh. Do you see making a change?

**FT:** Yes. I guess one of the things that I didn't like about social services was that you build a dependency on the social service and you don't really enable a person to become self-reliant, and that's why I figured why I'd like to get into economic development because hopefully they would then be self-reliant and be able to choose what kinds of things they wanted to get into, services they needed.

**SM:** I see. Well, do you see these health maintenance organizations as social service? I mean or are we talking about like . . .

**FT:** Well, I see it kind of as social services. I don't see HMOs as making a real dent on providing services for the poor.

**SM:** Oh, I see.

**FT:** Yes. Yes.

**SM:** Then they aren't really effective in the social services, is that what you're saying?

**FT:** Well, in social services insofar as it provides that service for employer . . .

**SM:** Yes, it provides it for middle class [unclear].

**FT:** Yes. And it provides it to some marginal income people, but almost none. It provides . . . The people with that terribly low income have the Medicaid.

**SM:** Oh, yes. Yes.

**FT:** So there's no reason . . . they're going with the service. They have service.

**SM:** Yes.

**FT:** So the marginal income people don't have anything. And so the system doesn't really address that need.

**SM:** Yes. So you see community organization as a way to get at economic development?

**FT:** Yes. And I would like to stimulate economic development so that people do have jobs have income and then can control their own destiny [unclear].

**SM:** But do you think it could ever be generally possible with the costs of medical care now for a person with an average income to really pay all their medical costs?

**FT:** Oh . . .

**SM:** That seems to be another component of [unclear].

**FT:** Right. I think if the costs are controlled, they . . .

**SM:** Yes.



**FT:** As soon as you get a job, you know, your fringe benefits will provide you some kind of [unclear].

**SM:** Oh, then through the job they'd have medical benefits.

**FT:** Right.

**SM:** I see. So you're not against medical benefits.

**FT:** No, no, no. [Chuckles]

**SM:** I see.

**FT:** [Laughter]

**SM:** In addition, [unclear] economic . . .

**FT:** Right. Right.

**SM:** Oh, so do you really foresee making a change in your work?

**FT:** Yes. That's what I hope to do in the next year.

**SM:** Oh, I see. How would you go about that then?

**FT:** Well, if this project goes through then I'll be working on the project.

**SM:** Oh, I see. Through that . . .

**FT:** [Unclear].

**SM:** Why don't you talk about that a little?

**FT:** Okay. It's . . . we're trying to develop a cultural and commercial setting in Minneapolis that will house restaurants, office space, retail shops, grocery stores, and also provide a focus for the Asian community, and having classrooms and social services, offices for incoming residents, new residents, and then . . .

**SM:** Did you say social services?

**FT:** Yes, community services, or provide an outlet for those people to get in touch with agencies that are providing those services.

**SM:** I see. So the community itself would organize the social services.

**FT:** Right. Right. And then hopefully use that so any revenue generated from that operation could then either be put into community activities or it could be used . . . be lent out and used to help people develop economically or develop a business or provide a loan program or venture capital for people establishing businesses or whatever. So that money would then be plowed back into the community.

**SM:** How did you get into this? This is from your political involvement you got interested in this?

**FT:** Well, mainly from working with the Minnesota Asian American Project, contacting the people, and they all wanted a cultural center and they all wanted their own cultural centers, you know, and it's just not possible. So we presented the idea of having a joint center and then financing at least part of it with the revenue from commercial operations. Otherwise you have to go through the annual grant writing maze.

**SM:** [Chuckles]

**FT:** And I . . . you know, I just couldn't see giving [unclear].

**SM:** Yes. Oh, so there was a real demand for something like this.

**FT:** Oh, yes. There was a demand for a cultural center.

**SM:** I see.

**FT:** What we tied through in there was the commercial portion of the [unclear] idea.

**SM:** I see. And also the idea of having a joint one.

**FT:** Joint one.

**SM:** Yes. That wasn't commonly thought of.

**FT:** No. No.

**SM:** I assume that it's probably the second generation that are more interested in combining forces, or is that wrong?

**FT:** They're doing a lot of the work although it's about fifty-fifty.

**SM:** Is it?

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** Hmmm.

**FT:** There's a number of older Chinese and . . . well, I shouldn't just say Chinese, it can be older Asians that I think see their second generation losing some of the culture.

**SM:** Oh. Yes, there are some older people in that, I know.

**FT:** Yes. And they don't want that to happen. I think this is kind of a way of doing that, preventing that.

**SM:** Is that a pretty strong fear among the first generation? That the second generation will forget about being Chinese or . . .

**FT:** I think they're not so worried about the second generation; they're worried about the third. [Laughter]

**SM:** Well, you know, there's a theory that the second generation aren't interested and then the third . . .

**FT:** The third become very interested, yes.

**SM:** Didn't that seem to happen with the Japanese? Or is it just a theory? [Chuckles]

**FT:** The Japanese are not . . . both . . . well, the second generation, I think, are more active than the third generation of Japanese here.

**SM:** Oh, are they?

**FT:** I don't know why that is.

**SM:** Oh, yes. Hmm. Well, that would stand to reason they could get farther . . .

**FT:** From far away from . . .

**SM:** Farther away from the originals. [Chuckles]

**FT:** The roots. Right. [Chuckles]

**SM:** Yes, from them. So the [unclear], they aren't very interested.

**FT:** As a group, I would say they're not that interested. Yes. They're more oriented to social activities. And there's a lot of interracial dating in the Japanese.

**SM:** Oh, so they want organizations that promote social activities or . . .?

**FT:** Yes, or they create them themselves. You know, just their interaction with the outside community.

**SM:** I see. I mean, do they want these social activities among their own group? Or . . .

**FT:** No, not necessarily.

**SM:** They want assimilated . . .

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** I see. What about your student days? Oh, I guess that we talked about that a little bit.

**FT:** A little bit, yes. I . . . they were more or less uneventful. [Unclear] was . . .

**SM:** [Chuckles]

**FT:** I was just a regular . . .

**SM:** Did you live at home?

**FT:** No, I moved out when I was eighteen.

**SM:** Oh, okay.

**FT:** And I lived with some friends of mine and worked my way through school. worked part time.

**SM:** Oh. Wasn't that pretty difficult?

**FT:** I had a nice job. I worked in a hospital.

**SM:** Oh, did you?

**FT:** That I could study at while I . . .

**SM:** The university hospital?

**FT:** No, Methodist Hospital.

**SM:** Oh, Methodist.

**FT:** Yes. So it was real convenient. I could study at least two or three hours of the time that I was on duty.

**SM:** Oh. Well, that is nice.

**FT:** Yes, really. [Laughter] I mean . . .

**SM:** Was it the night clerk or something? [Chuckles]

**FT:** Oh, I worked in the recovery room.

**SM:** Oh.

**FT:** And then the . . . mostly cases would come in and be out of there by eight, nine o'clock and I would work until eleven-thirty and then unless there was an emergency, there wouldn't be anything to do.

**SM:** You just had to be there in case something happened?

**FT:** If something happened.

**SM:** You'd call somebody or . . .

**FT:** Yes. And so we . . . well, I'd say about forty percent of the time we were busy all through the whole night.

**SM:** Oh.

**FT:** But the other time we could study.

**SM:** I see.

**FT:** The rest of the days we could study pretty much two or three hours.

**SM:** Hmmm. Well, could you go full time to school and do that, too?

**FT:** Yes. Yes.

**SM:** And you supported your living expenses?

**FT:** Right. Right.

**SM:** Oh, that's quite an achievement.

**FT:** Yes, I look back on it, and I think I probably shouldn't have done it that way.

**SM:** [Chuckles] Was it pretty hard?

**FT:** Well, I think I missed out on a lot of things that I would have taken advantage of.

**SM:** Oh, [unclear] too.

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** Yes, that's true.

**FT:** Yes. Right.

**SM:** Well, is there something else we should say about your own experience? I mean I realize your life is just beginning.

**FT:** [Laughter] Right.

**SM:** But . . . or about MAAP . . . or . . . how'd you . . . how did you get to be president of that? [Chuckles]

**FT:** Nobody else wanted it. [Laughter]

**SM:** Who got the idea for center?

**FT:** Well, it was kind of the incorporated word. Three people that kind of just tangentially affiliated with the group now.

**SM:** Oh.

**FT:** And Joyce and I got involved with it kind of at the tail end, just as they were being organized. And the original intent of MAAP was to have a small clique of people.

**SM:** [Chuckles] Really?

**FT:** Yes, to be radical, so to speak, I guess.

**SM:** I see. Radical in what way? Politically or . . . ?

**FT:** Yes, I think politically.

**SM:** Well, I guess it would have to be politically, but . . .

**FT:** Yes. They wanted to provide . . . deal with some concerns like affirmative action . . .

**SM:** Oh.

**FT:** Civil rights kinds of things.

**SM:** I see. Was that in the 1960s?

**FT:** No, that was . . . well, MAAP is only three years old.

**SM:** Pretty recent then.

**FT:** Yes. So this is in 1976.

**SM:** Oh.

**FT:** No, 1977 we got organized.

**SM:** Oh, it's just a couple years old.

**FT:** Yes. And so Joyce and I got in on the tail end. I've been affiliated with community organizations for . . . how long now? By that time, about six years. And I saw that that was not the way to build any strength or accountability or credibility or power at all and so Joyce and I originally tried to change the organization so it would be only a group of organizations and in order to join you had to . . . you bring an organization in to join.

**SM:** Oh, I see.

**FT:** Well, that didn't go over. And so it was a hybrid for the first year—well, it still is a hybrid. And it's working out fairly . . .

**SM:** It seems to be developing its own sort of character.

**FT:** Yes, well, I'm trying to get it so it's more organizationally based than individuals.

**SM:** Oh.

**FT:** Because I think it has more strength that way, political strength.

**SM:** Yes. That is a good idea. Since most of the Asians are pretty organized, aren't they?

**FT:** Right. There are organizing groups and you have the traditional apathy, I think, in these communities as well as in the non-Asian ones, so you're dealing with a group of . . . a small group of active people.

**SM:** Yes.

**FT:** But instead of saying that we're a group of sixty members, we can say we're a group representing seven organizations, but maybe only sixty are active.

**SM:** Oh, yes. Are you accountable to these other organizations though? Or are you pretty independent as a . . .

**FT:** Fairly . . . the MAAP is fairly independent.

**SM:** Seems to be. [Chuckles]

**FT:** Yes. The membership on the board is structured so that you have . . . there's a formula, so many people from each ethnic group and all that.

**SM:** Yes.

**FT:** So we have structured balance in the organization and the board more or less makes the decisions for the organization. And I think this should be a real test. We've gotten seven organizations in now. And it will be a real test to see if they can work together.

**SM:** Seven?

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** Who were those original people and what happened to them? [Chuckles]

**FT:** Let's see, [unclear – name?], you know, you must know who that is.

**SM:** Oh, he was . . . well, he's still active, isn't he, or still out there?

**FT:** Kind of active. He's more over at the University and hasn't really been active with MAAP at all.

**SM:** Oh.

**FT:** Dave Matsumoto[sp?], who was active until about nine months ago and his energies have been [unclear]. He got married and then his job also takes up a lot of time. So he's not as active anymore either. And then Gloria Kumagai[sp?], who is active, but . . .

**SM:** Oh, yes. She's still there isn't she?

**FT:** Yes, she's still there, fairly active.

**SM:** Who got started with the Japanese and now it's with the Chinese. [Chuckles]

**FT:** Yes, that seems more [unclear] okay, right. [Laughter] It is interesting though, you know.

**SM:** And as the leadership [unclear] I suppose like [unclear] or not really.



**FT:** To what, to be Chinese?

**SM:** That it shifted that way. [Chuckles]

**FT:** Oh, I don't know why it . . . I wonder...

**SM:** I wonder, too, on that one. [Laughter]

**FT:** It's funny, because none of the Japanese in the group wanted to do that, to be the president.

**SM:** Oh.

**FT:** And I was willing but I didn't . . . you know, I wanted to see it run my way. [Laughter]

**SM:** [Unclear].

**FT:** I think it would have been different if then somebody else had taken it.

**SM:** Oh.

**FT:** But I think it's really a . . . it's two years old and it's probably the only group that . . . Asian group in the Twin Cities that's survived this long and still has a fairly good track record.

**SM:** Yes. It seems to really come out with some good materials and . . .

**FT:** So far, yes. I think we've got some good people and hopefully we'll be able to maintain that by establishing these committees, because I think the problem is that we may get overextended. We've got a lot of ideas that people want to do and . . .

**SM:** Oh, you have a lot of different projects.

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** But still that's kind of good.

**FT:** Yes. We just need the people.

**SM:** Well, what's the relationship between MAAP and the cultural center? Is MAAP sponsoring it?

**FT:** Sponsoring it.

**SM:** Yes.

**FT:** And they have structured the steering committee to research and conduct all the activities of planning it.

**SM:** So the steering committee is made up of MAAP people?

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** Oh, yes. Okay. So it is a child of MAAP, really.

**FT:** Right. Right.

**SM:** Okay.

**FT:** It's still a subcommittee of MAAP right now.

**SM:** A subcommittee. [Chuckles]

**FT:** Yes. What will probably happen is that the . . . if it comes into existence, a corporation will . . . a new corporation will be set up, organized. That will be a combination of MAAP and this other agency that we're getting some money from. They will share the [unclear] . . .

**SM:** Oh, [unclear] Pacific . . .?

**FT:** No, it's called the Southside Community Enterprises. It's the local CDC.

**SM:** Oh. Southside Community Enterprises.

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** [Unclear.]

**FT:** So then that will be a profit-making group that will be spun off and run separately from MAAP.

**SM:** Oh, I see. It will be spun off.

**FT:** From MAAP, yes.

**SM:** I see. Hmmm. Well, it seems to be moving pretty well.

**FT:** Yes, I'm real surprised.

**SM:** Yes.

**FT:** It's had no major barriers so far.

**SM:** Well, it's had its good leadership.

**FT:** [Laughter] Yes, right.

**SM:** But do you think part of its success is that it was really initiated by the second generation?

**FT:** It might be.

**SM:** Because if you have the younger people interested, it's easier to get the older ones, isn't it?

**FT:** Yes. Yes, I think so.

**SM:** I mean they are interested inherently.

**FT:** Right. I think also it is . . . I, personally, have real good relationships with almost all of the groups.

**SM:** Yes.

**FT:** And that really helps. And I think . . . I'm not sure what would happen at the point where I leave. And so what I'm hoping to do is that we build in the kind of identity thing.

**SM:** Oh, yes.

**FT:** To the organization.

**SM:** Are you just a one year president or does that [unclear]?

**FT:** See, this is . . . well, I could be a president again but I don't want to be. What I like to do is . . .

**SM:** Are you the first one?

**FT:** The first and second one.

**SM:** First and second.

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** So yes, for its two year. Oh, so you're the only president it's had.

**FT:** [Laughter] Right.

**SM:** Well, I think that's great. I mean I think you've done a really good job. That's really interesting. Are there things like that in other cities that have . . . ?

**FT:** Not . . . not as . . .

**SM:** Because it seems really different.

**FT:** Yes. It's real unusual. You won't find . . . the Asians cannot get along with each other in larger communities, or they feel that they don't need the other groups, so they don't relate to each other.

**SM:** Yes. That's probably why the younger ones could do it better.

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** They don't have the same [chuckles] animosities maybe going on.

**FT:** Right. Right, exactly. I think that's real true.

**SM:** That's real interesting.

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** That it happened and is happening.

**FT:** Yes, I think it will be a real . . . unique situation if we can pull this off. Yes.

**SM:** It really will. When you mentioned you had good relations with all these other groups and so on, isn't that something that it maybe was fostered in your childhood, this idea of harmonious relations?

**FT:** I suppose.

**SM:** Is that a Chinese value [unclear]?

**FT:** I think yes, that's probably . . .

**SM:** Although I know there are conflicts within the Chinese community.

**FT:** Right. I think that's probably true.

**SM:** Except it seems to be unusually true with you, I mean, you seem to have this way about you that's very genial sort of.

**FT:** [Chuckles]

**SM:** And I should think that would make you very good for that job.

**FT:** Hmmm. Yes. I don't know. Because a lot of the other people that I've tried to pass the leadership on to didn't want to do that and they just felt uncomfortable with it.

**SM:** They didn't want to be genial? [Chuckles]

**FT:** Oh. They didn't want to . . .

**SM:** Or they didn't want to be president? [Laughter]

**FT:** They didn't want to be president because they didn't want to go out and talk to all these other groups. [Laughter]

**SM:** They just didn't want to be bothered or it's too time-consuming.

**FT:** Yes, it's too time-consuming. And I did that as a community organizer for two years so it didn't bother me. I'm kind of used to it.

**SM:** Oh. Do you really enjoy that kind of activity?

**FT:** I don't know if I enjoy it but I'm used to it. [Laughter] It's a lot of work. [Laughter]

**SM:** [Unclear] Well, what about . . . well, we could go on to the Chinese community unless there's something else you wanted to say?

**FT:** No, I think that's . . .

**SM:** Anything that's left out we can always come back to it, I guess.

**FT:** No, I think, yes, I think that's . . .

**SM:** [Unclear]. Well, I thought maybe I could pump you for some information [chuckles] about the Chinese community itself.

**FT:** Okay.

**SM:** First of all, the numbers. You know, what do you estimate . . .?

**FT:** Okay . . . I think we're estimating a little low, but I think there's three to four thousand.

**SM:** Do you?

**FT:** Yes. From CAAM estimates and from the Chinese Chamber of Commerce estimates.

**SM:** And is this counting the students then?

**FT:** No. No.

**SM:** It's not counting students.

**FT:** I think there's been a real increase in professionals from China, from Taiwan.

**SM:** Oh, mainly from Taiwan.

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** What about like Southeast Asia and other countries?

**FT:** Oh yes, for sure, there's been a real . . .

**SM:** I mean of Chinese. [Chuckles] [Unclear.]

**FT:** They still . . . I think . . . yes, I don't classify them as being Chinese.

**SM:** Oh, you don't.

**FT:** In the Chinese [unclear] they are, but I don't classify them . . . There's a lot of Chinese in the Vietnamese refugees that are here.

**SM:** Yes, well I don't mean like ethnically Chinese Vietnamese.

**FT:** Oh, okay.

**SM:** Of course, this really gets hairy. [Chuckles]

**FT:** Yes.

**SM:** But I mean like Chinese living in Singapore. Oh, I guess you could say [unclear] between those and the Vietnamese.

**FT:** Right.

**SM:** Okay. Let's drop that.

**FT:** [Laughter] Right.

**SM:** Let's drop that one. [Laughter] Okay, so you estimate three to four thousand.

**FT:** At least, yes.

**SM:** Yes. Do you have any estimates of the other Asian groups that the [unclear] like the Japanese and the South Koreans?

**FT:** Japanese, I think, are a little smaller. Probably not more than fifteen hundred.

**SM:** Oh, really?

**FT:** There are some national . . . Japanese nationals that have been moving in. I think there's probably . . . that group's a hundred and fifty to two hundred. But they're not related to any of . . .

**SM:** How many are there? Oh, real . . . real Japanese.

**FT:** Real Japanese. [Laughter] Right.

**SM:** Oh. Oh, I see.

**FT:** Then the Koreans, I think there is . . . well, there are three thousand at least.

**SM:** [Unclear.]

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