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SUCCESS STORY OF ONE MINORITY GROUP IN U.S.

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At a time when Americans are awash in worry over the plight of racial minorities--

One such minority, the nation's 300,000 Chinese-Americans, is winning wealth and respect by dint of its own hard work.

In any Chinatown from San Francisco to New York, you discover youngsters at grips with their studies. Crime and delinquency are found to be rather minor in scope.

Still being taught in Chinatown is the old idea that people should depend on their own efforts--not a welfare check--in order to reach America's "promised land."

Visit "Chinatown U.S.A." and you find an important racial minority pulling itself up from hardship and discrimination to become a model of self-respect and achievement in today's America.

At a time when it is being proposed that hundreds of billions be spent to uplift Negroes and other minorities, the nation's 300,000 Chinese-Americans are moving ahead on their own--with no help from anyone else.

Low rate of crime. In crime-ridden cities, Chinese districts turn up as islands of peace and stability.

Of 4.7 million arrests reported to the Federal Bureau of Investigation in 1965, only 1,293 involved persons of Chinese ancestry. A Protestant pastor in New York City's Chinatown said:

"This is the safest place in the city."

Few Chinese-Americans are getting welfare handouts--or even want them. Within a tight network of family and clan loyalties, relatives continue to help each other. Mrs. Jean Ma, publisher of a Chinese-language newspaper in Los Angeles, explained:

"We're a big family. If someone has trouble, usually it can be solved within the family. There is no need to bother someone else. And nobody will respect any member of the family who does not work and who just plays around."

Today, Chinese-American parents are worrying somewhat about their young people. Yet, in every city, delinquency in Chinatown is minor compared with what goes on around it.

Strict discipline. Even in the age of television and fast automobiles, Chinese-American children are expected to attend school faithfully, work hard at their studies--and stay out of trouble. Spanking is seldom used, but supervision and verbal discipline are strict.

A study of San Francisco's Chinatown noted that "if school performance is poor and the parents are told, there is an immediate improvement." And, in New York City, schoolteachers reportedly are competing for posts in schools with large numbers of Chinese-American children.

Recently Dr. Richard T. Sollenberger, professor of psychology at Mount Holyoke College, made a study of New York City's Chinatown and concluded:

"There's a strong incentive for young people to behave. As one informant said, 'When you walk around the streets of Chinatown, you have a hundred cousins watching you.'"

What you find, back of this remarkable group of Americans, is a story of adversity and prejudice that would shock those now complaining about the hardships endured by today's Negroes.

It was during California's gold rush that large numbers of Chinese began coming to America.

On the developing frontier, they worked in mines, on railroads and in other hard labor. Moving into cities, where the best occupations were closed to them, large numbers became laundrymen and cooks because of the shortage of women in the West.

Past handicaps. High value was placed on Chinese willingness to work long hours for low pay. Yet Congress, in 1882, passed an Exclusion Act denying naturalization to Chinese immigrants and forbidding further influx of laborers. A similar act in 1924, aimed primarily at the Japanese, pro-

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hibited laborers from bringing in wives.

In California, the first legislature slapped foreign miners with a tax aimed at getting Chinese out of the gold-mining business. That State's highest court ruled Chinese could not testify against whites in court.

Chinese-Americans could not own land in California, and no corporation or public agency could employ them.

These curbs, in general, applied also to Japanese-Americans, another Oriental minority that has survived discrimination to win a solid place in the nation.

The curbs, themselves, have been discarded in the last quarter century. And, in recent years, immigration quotas have been enlarged, with 8,800 Chinese allowed to enter the country this year.

As a result, the number of persons of Chinese ancestry living in the United States is believed to have almost doubled since 1950.

Today, as in the past, most Chinese are to be found in Hawaii, California and New York. Because of ancient emphasis on family and village, most of those on the U.S. mainland trace their ancestry to communities southwest of Canton.

How Chinese get ahead. Not all Chinese-Americans are rich. Many, especially recent arrivals from Hong Kong, are poor and cannot speak English. But the large majority are moving ahead by applying the traditional virtues of hard work, thrift and morality.

Success stories have been recorded in business, science, architecture, politics and other professions. Dr. Sollenberger said of New York's Chinatown:

"The Chinese people here will work at anything. I know of some who were scholars in China and are now working as waiters in restaurants. That's a stopgap for them, of course, but the point is that they're willing to do something--they don't sit around moaning."

The biggest and most publicized of all Chinatowns is in San Francisco.

Since 1960, the inflow of immigrants has raised the Chinese share of San Francisco's population from 4.9 per cent to 5.7 per cent. Altogether 42,600 residents of Chinese ancestry were reported in San Francisco last year.

Shift to suburbs. As Chinese-Americans gain in affluence, many move to the suburbs. But about 30,000 persons live in the 25 blocks of San Francisco's Chinatown. Sixty-three per cent of these are foreign-born, including many who are being indoctrinated by relatives in the American way of life.

Irvin Lum, an official of the San Francisco Federal Savings and Loan Community House, said:

"We follow the custom of being good to our relatives. There is not a very serious problem with our immigrants. We're a people of ability, adaptable and easy to satisfy in material wants. I know of a man coming here from China who was looked after by his sister's family, worked in Chinatown for two years, then opened a small restaurant of his own."

Problems among newcomers stir worries, however. A minister said: "Many are in debt when they arrive. They have a language problem. They are used to a rural culture, and they have a false kind of expectation."

A youth gang of foreign-born Chinese, known as "the Bugs" or "Tong San Tsai," clashes occasionally with a gang of Chinese-American youngsters. And one group of Chinese-American teen-agers was broken up after stealing as much as $5,800 a week in burglaries this year.

Yet San Francisco has seen no revival of the "tong wars" or opium dens that led to the organizing of a "Chinese squad" of policemen in 1875. The last trouble between Chinese clans or "tongs" was before World War II. The special squad was abolished in 1956.

"Streets are safer." A University of California team making a three-year study of Chinatown in San Francisco reported its impression "that Chinatown streets are safer than most other parts of the city" despite the fact that it is one of the most densely populated neighborhoods in the United States.

In 1965, not one San Francisco Chinese--young or old--was charged with murder, manslaughter, rape or an offense against wife or children. Chinese accounted for only two adult cases out of 252 of assault with a deadly weapon.

Only one of San Francisco's Chinese youths, who comprise 17 per cent of the city's high-school enrollment, was among 118 juveniles arrested last year for assault with a deadly weapon. Meantime, 25 per cent of the city's semifinalists in the California State scholarship competition were Chinese.

Most Chinese-Americans continue to send their youngsters to Chinese schools for one or two hours a day so they can learn Chinese history, culture and--in some cases --language. A businessman said: "I feel my kids are Americans, which is a tremendous asset. But they're also Chinese, which is another great asset. I want them to have and keep the best of both cultures."

Much the same picture is found in mainland America's other big Chinatowns--Los Angeles and New York.

Riots of 1871. Los Angeles has a memory of riots in 1871 when white mobs raged through the Chinese section. Twenty-three Chinese were hanged, beaten, shot or stabbed to death.

Today, 25,000 persons of Chinese ancestry live in Los Angeles County--20,000 in the city itself. About 5,000 alien Chinese from Hong Kong and Formosa are believed to be in southern California.

In Los Angeles, as elsewhere, Chinese-Americans are worrying about their children. Superior Judge Delbert E. Wong said: "Traditionally, the family patriarch ruled the household, and the other members of the family obeyed and followed without questioning his authority.

"As the Chinese become more Westernized, women leave the home to work and the younger generation finds greater mobility in seeking employment, we see greater problems within the family unit--and a corresponding increase in crime and divorce."

A Chinese-American clergyman complained that "the second and third-generation Chinese feel more at home with Caucasians. They don't know how to act around the older Chinese any more because they don't understand them."

The family unit. On the other hand, Victor Wong, president of the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association in Los Angeles said:

"Basically, the Chinese are good citizens. The parents always watch out for the children, train them, send them to school and make them stay home after school to study. When they go visiting, it is as a family group. A young Chinese doesn't have much chance to go out on his own and get into trouble."

A high-ranking police official in Los Angeles found little evidence of growing trouble among Chinese. He reported:

"Our problems with the Chinese are at a minimum. This probably is due to strict parental supervision. There is still a tradition of respect for parents."

New York City, in 1960, had a population of 32,831 persons of Chinese ancestry. Estimates today run considerably higher, with immigrants coming in at the rate of 200 or 300 a month.

Many Chinese have moved to various parts of the city and to the suburbs. But newcomers tend to settle in Chinatown, and families of eight and 10 have been found living in two-room apartments.

"The housing shortage here is worse than in Harlem," one Chinese-American said. Altogether, about 20,000 persons are believed living in the eight-block area of New York's Chinatown at present.

The head of the Chinatown Planning Council said recently that, while most Chinese are still reluctant to accept public welfare, somewhat more are applying for it than in the past. "We are trying to let Chinese know that accepting public welfare is not necessarily the worst thing in the world," he said.

However, a Chinese-American banker in New York took this view:

"There are at least 60 associations here whose main purpose is to help our own people. We believe welfare should be used only as a last resort."

A sizable number of Chinese-Americans who could move out if they wanted to are staying in New York's Chinatown--not because of fears of discrimination on the outside, but because they prefer their own people and culture. And Chinatown, despite its proximity to the Bowery, remains a haven of law and order. Dr. Sollenberger said:

"If I had a daughter, I'd rather have her live in Chinatown than any place else in New York City."

A police lieutenant said:

"You don't find any Chinese locked up for robbery, rape or vagrancy."

There has been some rise in Chinese-American delinquency in recent years. In part, this is attributed to the fact that the ratio of children in Chinatown's total population is going up as more women arrive and more families are started.

Even so, the proportion of Chinese-American youngsters getting into difficulty remains low. School buildings used by large numbers of Chinese are described as the cleanest in New York. Public recreational facilities amount to only one small park, but few complaints are heard.

Efforts at progress. Over all, what observers are finding in America's Chinatowns are a thrifty, law-abiding and industrious people--ambitious to make progress on their own.

In Los Angeles, a social worker said:
"If you had several hundred thousand Chinese-Americans subjected to the same economic and social pressures that confront Negroes in major cities, you would have a good deal of unrest among them.

"At the same time, it must be recognized that the Chinese and other Orientals in California were faced with even more prejudice than faces the Negro today. We haven't stuck Negroes in concentration camps, for instance, as we did the Japanese in World War II.

"The Orientals came back, and today they have established themselves as strong contributors to the health of the whole community."