Backlash From a Nuclear Espionage Case

Management was not aware of these matters. We needed to make it known."

So Ng joined with Joel Wong, an industrial hygienist at Lawrence Livermore Labora-
tory near San Francisco, to give Energy Secretary Richardson a short list of incidents of ethnic insensitivity reported by coworkers who wished to remain unnamed. Richardson, who oversees the labs, said that he considers the reports to be generally true, even if some particulars remain unverified.

In one account, snickering and hushed laughter broke out in a roomful of computer users as a Chinese American lab employee was introduced to lead a session on computer security. In another, a lab manager told an Asian American employee that “personal characteristics” would determine a person’s career opportunities in the wake of recent disclosures of security breaches, implying that ethnicity was one such characteristic.

Then there was the teasing. Someone won-dered aloud whether an Asian American em-
ployee got “rich” by selling classified infor-
mation, according to Ng and Wong. Someone else asked the offspring of sharing information with a colleague of Asian descent who might be a “spy.”

Two Chinese American lab employees who insisted on recounted similar in-
cidents in separate interviews with a Times reporter. One said he had been asked at work whether he had “dual loyalties.”

Worries at the Labs and Elsewhere

Whether an ethnic backlash actually is occur-
ing to any significant degree is hard to
determine. But concerns about possible eth-
nict stereotyping are rising and not just among national lab employees. The subject comes up in government circles, in the sci-
cient community, in the ethnic Asian media, in high-tech business groups and among Asian American civic leaders who fear a replay of the uproar directed at Asian American political donors after revelations of attempts by foreign interests to influence the 1996 elections.

Prominent Asian Americans have met with Richardson four times and once with White House Chief of Staff John Podesta to seek as-
surances that sensitive materials and employees in U.S. labs would not be subject to discrimina-
tion.

“Asian Pacific Americans are concerned that their loyalty and their patriotism are being challenged,” Richardson acknowledged in a speech April 30. “And that’s because of racism.”

The Energy secretary vowed to protect the
rights of all laboratory workers and to visit the
labs in person to drive the point home.

In Congress, Reps. Tom Campbell (R-San Jose) and David Wu (D-Ore.), who is the first Chinese American member of the House, are drafting a resolution expressing support for Chinese Americans.

Wu said there is “widespread concern in the Chinese American community and par-
ticularly the Chinese American scientific community. These are folks who work very,
very hard. They are Americans. By all ac-
counts that I know of, they work hard and
play by the rules.”

Campbell said that some scientists and en-
gineers in Silicon Valley now worry about traveling to professional conferences in
mainland China for fear that they will be suspected of leaking technological secrets to China and other coun-
tries seeking to develop nuclear weapons.

Their campaign is likely to gain consider-
able momentum when the House Science Committee’s investigative panel’s report citing evidence of widespread leakage of sensitive military technology to China. The committee’s bipartisan findings are expected to be made public next week by the chair, Rep. Christopher Cox (R-Newport Beach).

Asian American scientists, engineers and civil libertarians have offered some reservation on espionage, but they content that some Republican lead-
ers in Congress, aided by unbalanced media reports, have cast a cloud over Chinese Americans — doing im-
itigate scientific work in the weapons labs and elsewhere.

**Senator Refers to ‘Very Crafty People’**

A spokesperson for the senator, Andrea Ando, later said he was referring to Chinese spies, not to Chinese Americans in general. But other read more into his state-
ment. Charles Sie, vice chairman of the Committee of 100, an influential Chinese American group whose founders include the architect I.M. Pei and the cellist Yo-Yo Ma, called Shelby’s words a “ridiculous” example of ethnic stereotyping.

Also “ridiculous,” said Jeff Gaborson, spokesman for Lawrence Livermore, was the request he recently received from a national newsmagazine for a generic photo of an Asian American employee at work “to illus-
trate a story on espionage.” The request was refused.

Leading science periodicals are closely monitoring the espionage issue, especially the possible fallout for foreign-born sci-

Many of the top scientists in America in this century have been foreign-born, includ-
ing some from mainland China or Taiwan. Many more, including several Nobel Prize winners, are of Asian heritage.

Asian American engineers also have been deeply involved in the U.S. defense industry. According to the National Science Founda-
tion, more than 300,000 people of Asian de-

cent were working in the United States as

scientists and engineers in 1995, the latest year for which figures are available. That’s about 10% of all scientists and engineers and for roughly 1% of the Asian American population.

Many Chinese American scientists said that they are most concerned about lasting dam-
age the espionage allegations could have on the diverse prospects of promising graduate students in engineering or the physical sciences, a significant number of whom are foreign-born or Asian American.

“Anything else that leads to possible future actions with regard to employment pro-
motion, retention of top Chinese American scientists,” said Cheuk-Yin Wong, who is
chairman of the Overseas Chinese Physics Assn., which has about 400 members nation-
wide. He is no relation to Joel Wong.

Lab administrators said that they want to prevent such consequences. But Richard-
son, head of Sandia National Laboratories, recently told Chinese American employees that they should not be judged responsible for a particular espionage case so long as white Americans, like himself, were not held equally responsible for the disastrous Al-
drich Ames spycase.

“Don’t all please think extra hard about that?” Richardson implied in an electronic newsletter. “Our work is important; we need all the good brainpower that we can bring to bear in our work and we certainly must not mistreat loyal Americans.”

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, but certainly all Members are invited to submit statements for the RECORD in terms of the experiences of their own individual districts and the participa-
tion in these social, economic, edu-
cational and political life of Asian Pac-
ific Americans in their districts.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of ab-
sence was granted to:

**Mr. UNDERWOOD** (at the request of Mr. GER-
HARDT), for today and Tuesday, May 25, on account of official business in the district.

Mrs. CANBY (at the request of Mr. GER-
HARDT), for today, on account of offici-
al business in the district.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to
address the House, following the legis-
late program and any special orders heretofo-
here entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the re-
quest of Mr. McNulty) to revise and ex-
tend their remarks and include extra-
nensive material):

Ms. NORTON, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. CUMMINGS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GONZALEZ of California, for 60
minutes, today.

Mr. UNDERWOOD, for 60 minutes,
today.

(The following Members (at the re-
quest of Mr. LARGENT) to revise and ex-
tend their remarks and include extra-
nensive material):

Mr. SCHAFFER, for 5 minutes, on May
25.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM, for 5 minutes, today.

A BILL PRESENTED TO THE

**Mr. THOMAS,** from the Committee on
House Administration, reported that that committee did on the fol-
lowing date present to the President, for his approval, a bill of the House of the following title:

On May 21, 1999:

H.R. 1141. Making emergency supplemental
appropriate for the fiscal year ending
September 30, 1999, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.