

1978



OUR STRUGGLE FOR LOW INCOME HOUSING

BACKGROUND OF THE INTERNATIONAL HOTEL

The International Hotel was built in the late 1800's as a high class hotel. Carriages provided transportation to and from the hotel. Rent was \$50 a month, then considered an expensive sum. Just prior to eviction in 1977, a century later, the rent in the hotel was still \$50 a month.

In 1907 the International Hotel was rebuilt as it presently stands after the original hotel was destroyed by the 1906 earthquake. Situated in Manilatown, a ten block area for 10,000 Filipino immigrants, the hotel became the home base in the 1920's for hundreds of men who worked on a seasonal schedule as merchant seamen, Alaskan cannery workers, Central California farm workers, and as cooks and busboys in Chinatown. The hotel was the central switchboard for the Filipino community, as Filipinos were excluded from living in other areas of the city.

Immigration accelerated with the end of World War II. Filipino veterans were granted citizenship and the second wave of immigrants expanded Manilatown into the South of Market neighborhood.

The 1960's marked the decline and destruction of Manilatown. The financial district started expanding, evicting poor tenants and demolishing low income hotels which stood in its path. What was once a ten block area comprised of low rent hotels, pool halls, restaurants, barber shops, dance halls, and boxing halls, has crumbled under the wrecking ball to become a one block area. A building boom of high rent luxury apartments and office spaces now stand in its place, casting giant shadows on the International Hotel.

When the Milton Meyer Company bought the Hotel in 1968, the president of the board attempted to evict the tenants in order to build a multi-leveled parking lot. The tenants refused to move. Thus began a nine year struggle to preserve low income housing, a struggle which continues.

copyright © 1977 Kearny Street Workshop Publications.

All rights reserved to authors and artists.

This calendar was produced by members of the Kearny Street Workshop, the Asian American Writer's Workshop, and the Third World News Bureau.

Chronology courtesy of The San Francisco Journal and the Third World News Bureau.

Printed by G. Howard, Inc.

Cover — Mural by Jim Dong and Nancy Hom
Photo by Chris Huie and Chris Fujimoto

Design and layout by Nancy Hom

Special thanks to the tenants of the International Hotel, Jo Reynolds, Emiko Omori, Norman Jayo, What's Your Line Graphics.



Chris Hule

While over 6,000 families wait on the housing authority list alone, no low rent housing units have been built in the last five years. The fact is that everybody is affected by inflationary rent rises, and that even those who own their homes suffer punitive taxes they can ill afford.

In recent years, thousands of housing units have been replaced by concrete high rises and expensive condominiums. Yet, little of the taxes paid by these technical wonders go toward low rent housing. Without forethought people have been swept this way and that way in the name of material progress. The heart of the International Hotel issue is whether or not people have housing rights, and whether or not the rights of commerce should reign supreme over that of human beings.

Contrary to slanderous editorials, there are no code violations in the residential portion of the International Hotel. According to official reports, the building is structurally sound and safe; and under the tenants' management it was clean and orderly. Also, the Hotel is on the National Register of Historic Places, recognizing its cultural significance.

Purchase of the hotel or its site by the city is a step towards recognizing common housing needs of people in San Francisco. Economically, it is a

bargain, a good investment, adding 155 or more much needed low rent units for the city. Rents collected will return to the city most of the cost for its purchase and rehabilitation. The need for low rent housing will not go away by itself.

The brutal eviction of the elderly International Hotel tenants highlights the need for low rent housing, as well as the inability of our institutions to meet that need. After a nine year struggle, the displaced tenants of the International Hotel are still meeting and planning. One tenant says, "We should not worry about ourselves, we are old and we will die. The International Hotel is part of the overall struggle for low rent housing for the coming generations. We must build a broad unified housing movement."

The Keaney Street Workshop and the Third World News Bureau are part of the International Hotel struggle for low cost housing. We feel that the government should be responsive to the needs of the common people instead of the interests of big business. To the human spirit that perseveres and prevails, we dedicate this publication.



Jim Dong

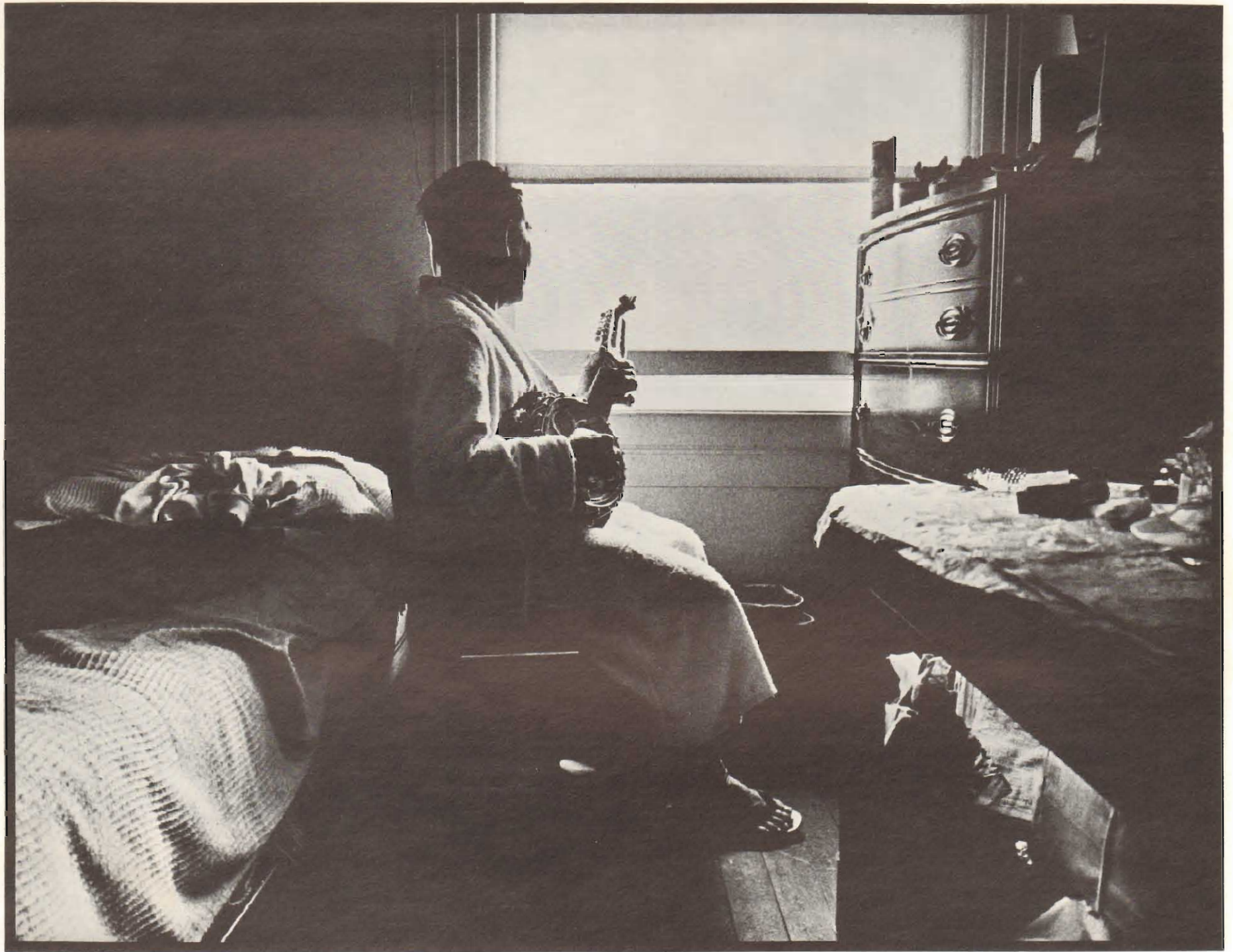
Somebody decided what was America.
Somebody discovered gold.
Quickly, someone
stole a state & decided it was united.
They came to the Hotel, to the hub of gold,
& they argued
The pro-slave state Supreme Court Justice
& the anti-slave US Senator from the new-stolen
State of Califas circa 1854.
They take ten steps & shoot it out.
Somebody decided who was America.
The landlord decided.
the Pinoys, they are no deposit no return.
Somebody else decided.
Somebody else decided wrong.
The Pinoys, they will decide where to live.
they built this place,
it's theirs & at a price they can afford.
It's simple.
The crowd circles the Hotel, hub of a great wheel.
We decide. We are the heart of history.

Hilton Obenziner
excerpt from "International Hotel:
A Way of Living Followed by Many
Men"

January

1978

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 <p>January 1969 Palm Hotel next to International Hotel is demolished. Replaced by a parking lot.</p>	2	3	4	5	6	7 <p>January 7, 1977 350 supporters form a human barricade and prevent sheriff's de- partment from posting 5-day notices on the Hotel.</p>
8	9	10 <p>January 10, 1977 Sheriff Hongisto is found in contempt of court for failing to carry out the eviction. Sheriff announces his intention to evict the tenants.</p>	11 <p>January 11, 1977 Sheriff's department successfully posts notices on the Hotel.</p>	12 <p>January 12, 1977 3,000 people from all over the Bay Area form a giant picket line in defense of Hotel. Sheriffs back down. No eviction.</p>	13	14
15	16 <p>January 16, 1977 5,000 people form a human barricade around the entire square block which the Hotel stands on.</p>	17 <p>January 17, 1977 Judge Brown orders a temporary stay of eviction because of "potential violence."</p>	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				



Nikki Arai

manong
the rice harvest is ready
come out of your room
let the ifugao women cook bangkodo
over little fires, balancing pots
sunk in a bed of tribal ashes

Al Robles



February

1978

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

February, 1977 Four Seas pushes for a hearing challenging the legality of eminent domain procedures to pur- chase the Hotel.			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28				

this hotel
every brick, every nail
every light bulb
creaking door
sound of midnight footsteps
early morn'in risers
smell of garlic
it's getting late
nagluto ba kayo ng kanin
eat you must be hungry
t.v. sounds from the office
walls painted with memories
tears shed by young men
off to Alaska
before their feet are dry
from the ocean they crossed
Hawaii still a tangle
in their pomade scented hair
there's a different kind a cane
in the canneries
from beneath icebergs and volcanos
emerge the manong
whose hands are calloused
from feeding the world

this hotel will never be enough
but it is where we have come to fight
as the night comes and our feet grow tired
we must leave a strong footprint
for those who will follow

Norman Jayo



March

1978

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Spring, 1969 United Filipino Association pressures Shorenstein to negotiate for new lease including financing for reconstruction of fire damage.	March 1968 Milton Meyer Company buys the International Hotel. Walter Shorenstein is new landlord.	March 1974 Sale of Hotel becomes public record. Four Seas successfully applies for a demolition permit.	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10 March 10, 1969 Human Rights Commission formally joins fight to defend the International Hotel.	11
12	13	14	15 March 15, 1969 United Filipino Association (UFA) and Shorenstein reach new lease agreement. Agreement is unsigned.	16 March 16, 1969 Fire sweeps the North wing, second floor, killing three tenants. Arson investigation called insufficient by coroners jury report. Shorenstein cancels lease.	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	



Chris Huie

TRIBUTE TO THE L.H.T.A.

Who are these people?
who dare to challenge corporate rights
who braved sanctimonious judges
who braved all courts
fighting for their homes,

Who are these people?
who fought eviction for nine years
suffering slanderous editorials
lying politicians
suffering police hatred
fighting for their homes,

They're people who labored
to help build America
They're people whose blood
flowed to defend America
They're much like your aunts and uncles
They're much like your brothers and sisters
They're plain ordinary people
like you and I

Nelson Yee

April

1978

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

<p>April, 1976 Eviction trial with Judge Ira Brown presiding. Retaliatory eviction case unsuccessfully presented by tenants' lawyers. After 3 days of deadlocked jury, Judge Brown issues verdict in favor of Four Seas. Judge Brown orders eviction.</p>						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						<p>April 29, 1977 Sheriff Hongisto begins jail sentence for failure to evict the tenants.</p>



Jim Dong

CLAUDIO DOMINGO, FIGHTER WITH THE INTERNATIONAL HOTEL SINCE THE BEGINNING — LEFT US HIS FINAL WISH — KEEP ON FIGHTING!

May

1978

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 <small>May 2, 1969 Building Inspection Department condemns the Hotel and orders tenants to vacate.</small>	3	4	5	6 <small>May 6, 1969 Mayor Alioto pro- poses three-part plan: relocation of tenants, demolition of Hotel, and redevelopment of hotel as a Filipino Cultural Center. Ten- ants refuse.</small>
7	8	9	10	11	12	13 <small>May 13, 1977 1,000 supporters picket City Hall. They call for the City to use its power of eminent domain to acquire the Hotel.</small>
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27 <small>May 27, 1977 Judge Charles Peery rules that the City may not use its power of eminent domain to buy the Hotel and sell it back to the tenants for \$1.3 million.</small>
28	29	30	31			

CRIME OF EVICTION

August 4, 1977
International Hotel
San Francisco

Convicted by the rich
Of being poor
Branded by liars
For speaking truth
I-Hotel tenants
Pilipino and Chinese
Many 70-80 years old
Resist the savage stone
Of injustice
Thrown against their heart

I-Hotel tenants
Gouged out from their homes
By violent courts
Violent laws
Violent politicians
Violent businessmen and
Tac Squad cyclops
Of the 'Free World'

Night of eviction

A 'Free World'
Trainwrecked on their shoulders
Tenants stand tall
With dignity

Night of eviction
When the heart of the tenants
Beats one with hearts of
People around the world
No evictions! We won't move!

Beneath TV glare
Tenants lonesome walk
So much pain
Hearts of the world's peoples
Walking with them
Ask anyone

After eviction march
Rally in St. Mary's Square
Tenants and supporters
Tears flowed
Soft crying on benches
Embraces
Shocked
In the early morning mist

Whose lawn stuffed
With dollars
Have they broken
Punished with eviction?

And when you become old
Torn out from roots
Like a shove to the grave?

But the will of the tenants
Runs true as blood
Never give up
Not today in a sky
Crowded with doves and smoke
Not tomorrow
Crying with our love

Doug Yamamoto



Chris Huie



Robert Hsiang

June

1978

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

<p>Summer 1970 Tenants' goals achieved. Restoration completed. Community organiza- tions move into com- mercial spaces.</p>	<p>June 1972 Lease expires. Inter- national Hotel Ten- ants' Association re- places UFA.</p>	<p>June, 1973 Shorenstein secretly sells Hotel to Four Seas Investment Corporation.</p>		1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
				<p>June 15, 1977 Housing Authority appeals to 1st District Court of Appeals. Court temporarily stays the pending eviction.</p>	<p>June 16, 1977 Department of Inter- ior places the Hotel on their National Register of Historic Places.</p>	
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	
			<p>June 28, 1977 State Court of Ap- peals lifts the stay of eviction.</p>			



Robert Hsiang

WHEN IT CAME DOWN TO A CHOICE
BETWEEN BUYING HOUSING OR BUYING
COPS, THE "CITY THAT KNOWS HOW"
BOUGHT COPS.

S. F. Journal Aug. 10, 1977

July

1978

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

<p>July, 1969 Shorenstein and UFA sign 3 year lease. Tenants responsible for all repairs and to bring building up to code within one year. Rent jumps 200%.</p>	<p>July 1969-June 1970 Mass community support to bring building up to code.</p>					1
2	3	4 <p>July 4, 1974 City and County of San Francisco files judgment against Four Seas for failure to repair or demolish the Hotel.</p>	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14 <p>July 14, 1977 Legal options at the Appeals Court were exhausted with the rejection of any fur- ther stays. Housing Authority appeals to the Supreme Court.</p>	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28 <p>July 28, 1977 The Supreme Court lifts the stay and thus exhausts the legal process upon which the Mayor has based his support of the Hotel.</p>	29
30	31					

I went to talk to Moscone. I said, "Because I'm brown, because I'm old, because I'm ugly, because I'm Asian, is this why you do these things?" He just bowed his head.

I asked him every question inch by inch. I said to him, "In the hotel it's not only yellow skin, but red skin and black skin, and there's white skin too. So why do you do this?" He just bowed his head.

He does this because we are poor. He doesn't care about poor people. What kind of father is he, this father of the city?

"No power," he said. "I have no power."

I said, "You'd better think it over. What can you do? You and Hongisto can go to jail together. Then the people will love you. They won't care if you went to jail. They'll love you because you stand for poor people."

Moscone went to Hawaii. And Hongisto hammered the doors of the International Hotel.

Wahat Tampao



Calvin Roberts



Jim Dong

August

1978

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
August-November, 1976 Sheriff Hongisto delays execution of eviction, claiming shortage of manpower and resources.		1	2	3	4 August 4, 1977 Over 2,000 International Hotel supporters form a human barricade to resist the eviction. 400 police arrive at 3:00 AM to evict the tenants.	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		



Chris Huie

The eviction is terrible, but it is only a temporary defeat. We will continue to fight for our place in society. This system which oppresses us all has the courts, laws, and police. But our weapons are much stronger — the people and their righteousness.

Felix Ayson

September

1978

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>Fall, 1974 Demonstrators organize a mass march on Four Seas to demand negotiations for a new lease. Four Seas refuses any offer to negotiate and refuses to accept any new rent. Eviction does not happen.</p>	<p>September, 1976 Mayor Moscone proposes "buy back plan" to City Housing Authority. Plan calls for Housing Authority to use City money to buy Hotel from Four Seas, using power of eminent domain. Housing Authority agrees.</p>				1	2
3	4	<p>5 September 5, 1977 Board of Supervisors put Proposition U on the ballot, which calls for the City to buy the International Hotel and fix it up so that it can be used for low-rent housing.</p>	6	7	<p>8 September 8, 1977 First unsuccessful demolition attempt by Four Seas.</p>	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	<p>18 <i>FELIX 0165</i></p>	<p>19 September 19, 1977 Second demolition attempt. Back of International Hotel illegally bulldozed. Several Hotel supporters arrested for defending Hotel.</p>	20	21	22	23
<p>24 September 24, 1974 Four Seas delivers eviction notices to tenants.</p>	25	26	27	28	<p>29 September 29, 1974 City-wide support rally to defend the Hotel is called. IHTA joins forces with other organized tenants.</p>	30



Jim Dong

"Whom you want to stay
and whom you want to get out?"

Wahat Tompao
Dec. 23rd 1976

It is time now, at last, for you to go into the land of the homeless. There are those who need to speak to you. They are angry, restless, and becoming stable in a fury of resentment. It is their waking hour, yet they appear asleep or invisible to the speculative eye of the opulent. Make no mistake, they are there! Like the grinding sound of bearings beyond the point of friction. Anoint your spirit with oil and they will move you. Hurry! There is not much time. Take heed of the barren blocks condemned in your name, waiting for the developer who promises to give you your world, but instead gives you a place of a long list. Ignore these ornamental gateways to freedom. Away from the garden of tools, who avail themselves of your life. When in season, they sip cocktails and select human rights commissioners. Those who have bellies overextended yet insatiable; whose tongues omit truth for an oppressive sap which drains from their flowery mouths, smothering the stumps of uprooted communities with oozing black

asphalt and tar. Go quickly from there! Until you begin to see the hungry faces, displaced and weary, looking with a distant gaze in the direction from which you came. There you will find the highrise shadows meet the buildings which support one another, reflecting the character of those who live within. You will see laundry slapping the wind. Sidewalks worn and cracking, as though the earth wanted something back and was reachin' for it. You will need a place to stay. This has been arranged for you. Stop the first person you see. Say to him "you know of the International, that you heard of the low-rent." Return the smile then follow past the barricade through the small rooms where you will meet thousands just like you; thousands who have been working and waiting for the day when all things will change; who have been working, waiting for you; who want to know from you, who have been there, whom you want to stay and whom you want to get out!

Norman Jayo

October

1978

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

October 21, 1976
City Housing Authority
designates the
Hotel as an
acceptable site for
low-rent housing.



Jerry Jew

"I would like to know whom you like to stay and whom you like to get out? I am a veteran of World War II, and would like to know from you who have been there; and I would like to know if I am entitled to maintain the house or the place where I live.

I don't want to be pushed. The previous owner of that hotel, he tried to do anything for the tenants to get out, but since he don't know that he can't do what he wants in the interests of a foreign country; now I would like to know if you obey the other country who tell you to evict the tenants, especially the senior citizens who been living there since the building was standing."

"I am not afraid to say this, because I am one who have been living there. It is not right for you to say . . . it is not right for you to live there. What are they going to put up after the International?"

"That is why I want to ask the Four Seas, where are you going to put us? In the street?

You got a house for us?

Look behind you.

Look at them.

one by one,

how old they are!

I am sorry to say this, because that eviction should not be effected.

We don't want that hotel to be lost.

That is only our memory. That is our only chance to maintain the International, because the people who come here to San Francisco want to know — who are those people living in that International Hotel?"

Wahat Tampao
 . . . two days before Christmas
 December 23, 1976 before the
 S.F. Housing Authority
 Commission

November

1978

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

<p>November 1968 Shorenstein receives demolition permit. Eviction notices to tenants. Through United Filipino As- sociation (UFA), ten- ants resist.</p>	<p>November, 1974 Tenant Relocation Ordinance intro- duced. Prohibits demolition of housing without relocation into comparable housing. Ordinance fails.</p>		1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8 <p>November 8, 1977 Proposition U to be voted on.</p>	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24 <p>November 24, 1976 Tenants and 300 sup- porters stage mass rally at City Hall to demand Supervisors to purchase Hotel as low-income housing.</p>	25
26	27	28	29	30 <p>November 30, 1976 In an 11th hour de- cision, the Board of Supervisors allocate \$1.3 million to pur- chase the Interna- tional Hotel.</p>		



Chris Fujimoto

We are in tune
with poetry
We feel life
as poets do
No abstract laws
can crush our spirit
No master plan
can break our pride

We are in tune
with people
Ours is the anger
blazing in our eyes
as we see
our homes destroyed
by the sheriff's ax
the scream in our throats
as we fill the sky
with thunderous rage

We are in tune
with poetry
No slogans can express
how we feel
Ours is a hundred emotions
forming one huge fist
We cannot be moved
and forgotten
We are in tune
with life

Nancy Hom

December

1978

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

December 31, 1973 Hotel ownership transferred to middlemen, Transamerica Title Insurance Company. New owners still unknown.					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
						December 23, 1976 Housing Authority unanimously agrees to file eminent domain proceedings to acquire the Hotel.
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						