

We, the Asian and Pacific Islander Americans



**U.S. Department of Commerce
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS**

We, the Asian and Pacific Islander Americans

We, the Asians and Pacific Islanders are as diverse as the lands of our ancestors. Although we have been coming to the United States for more than a century, our numbers and diversity have grown more rapidly in recent years. We numbered more than 3.7 million in 1980, a considerable increase over the 1970 figure of 1.5 million. Our proportion of the total population doubled from 0.8 percent to 1.6 percent during this 10-year period. Immigration was one major factor accounting for this increase as large numbers of us came to the United States from China, India, Korea, the Philippines, and other Asian and Pacific Island areas following the adoption of the Immigration Act of 1965. Also, more than 400,000 Southeast Asian refugees came to America between 1975 and 1980 under the Refugee Resettlement Program.

In addition to immigration and natural increase, part of the growth of our numbers during the 1970's occurred because of changes in the census race definition to include more groups. More than 20 Asian and Pacific Islander population groups were identified in the 1980 census, compared with only five in the 1970 census.