

# KOREA TIMES

Weekly English Edition

**Polemic against 'leftist' rhetoric**

## The second looting of Koreatown

By **Shawn Steel**

With hundreds of stores burned and looted, Korean American immigrants suffered the most vicious racist rioting in California in over 100 years—since the Chinatown riots of San Francisco. The black community has never been attacked by mobs of white people in California the way Koreatown was deliberately ransacked. Block after block of smoldering charred buildings stand as a constant reminder that gangs rule the streets of Los Angeles.

The outpouring of support from the mainstream American community of the Koreans suffering was overwhelming. Citizens who long ago left the dangers of the inner city felt great sympathy for the Koreans who had the courage to build a business where safety was never guaranteed.

What a great paradox that a bright second-generation Korean American attorney attacked Republicans and the American dream on ABC's Nightline. Without provocation from Ted Koppel she attacked President Bush "for his policies" in the inner city which she claimed caused the looters to riot. No blame for the looters, only presidents.

In what should have been a precious opportunity for Koreans to reach the American middle class on national TV, the Korean American attorney strongly identified with the certain racist politicians and their rhetoric by blaming lack of government handouts and not the looters themselves.

Another young radical Korean American



**Shawn Steel** with his wife **Michelle Eun Joo** and their two children, **Cheyenne Park**, right, and **Siobhan Cheong**.

attorney personally attacked President Bush during his visit in Koreatown by claiming Bush failed to deal with the social problems adequately—read more welfare. Despite the fact that Bush administration increased spending to poor people to \$70 billion—or 80 percent—higher next year than when he took office, according to the Congressional Budget Office.

What's going on? Why the strident leftist ideology during this time of great Korean American suffering? Why blame the American culture and not those who did the damage?

Still another Korean American professor from Berkeley complained of her father's life in America and declared that the American dream is "only an empty promise."

What's going on? Why the strident leftist ideology during this time of great Korean American suffering? Why blame the American culture and not those who did the damage? Why identify with the

black leftist thinking to call the looting a "rebellion" and to praise the vicious thugs who beat innocents?

It gets worse. The so called hastily passed Los Angeles Emergency Recovery Ordinance targets the demise of Korean American owned businesses in black neighborhoods. The law orchestrated by black city councilpersons Mark Ridley-Thomas and Rita Walters cleverly defers to the Planning Department all liquor markets and swap meets. Meaning that over 90 percent of the victims of L.A.'s worst rioting are Korean American merchants who will lose their businesses forever.

Where are the second generation Korean American leftists? Their allies are purposely legally looting thousands of Korean American families. The savings and hard work of those families are threatened with bankruptcy and years of hard work wiped out.

Not only do the inner city politicians excuse the behavior of the "rebels," now they legally require expensive and lengthy public hearings for the Korean American owners to rebuild. Where is the justice?

Congressman Dana Rohrabacher called for an FBI investigation into the looting of the Korean American merchants due to massive civil rights violations. How about an investigation of the second looting against Korean Americans?

**Shawn Steel** is an attorney practicing in Koreatown.