

# OBAMA GIVES EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

## Praises Asian Traditional Family Values Talks about Growing Up in Indonesia and Hawaii Likes to Eat Garlic Prawns and Steamed Stuffed Buns

### THE WORLD JOURNAL

March 1, 2008, Page A-1  
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**"When I sign photos for children, I write the inscription "Dream Big Dreams." The fact that the child of a Kenyan father and white mother from Kansas who grew up in Hawaii could be on the verge of winning the Democratic nomination is a testament to the power of the American Dream. If my story means anything, it means that you don't have to come from privilege or wealth to succeed in this country."**

The exceedingly popular new star on the U.S. political stage, Barack Obama, has won 11 Democratic primaries in a row. If he is able to win decisive victories in the primaries in Texas, Ohio, Rhode Island and Vermont on the other Super-Tuesday next week, then he can look forward to becoming the Democratic Party's nominee for President.

Senator Obama of Illinois, who has gained high visibility recently, is still somewhat unfamiliar to many Asian Americans, as compared to Senator Hillary Clinton. The *World Journal* has won the opportunity to have an exclusive interview with Senator Obama. This is the first time that he has ever given an exclusive interview to the Chinese-language media.

The Democratic Presidential candidate, whose renown has surged, has answered in detail the 12 questions posed by this newspaper in writing. Especially because he had grown up in a multi-ethnic culture, Obama feels a special connection to Asian-Americans. He said that once in the White House, he "is committed to appointing Asian Americans to high-level positions in my administration and the federal judiciary." He also said: "I'm also heartened that the number of Asian Americans voting in the early primaries has been high. That's exciting to me."

Obama's brother-in-law is Konrad Ng, who is an overseas-Chinese and a professor at the University of Hawaii. Obama is especially fond of Chinese food. He said: "I consider myself lucky to have Chinese Americans as part of my family and to have many fine Chinese restaurants in my hometown of Chicago." His favorite Chinese dishes are steamed fish with soy sauce, green onions and ginger, garlic prawns, roast pig and steamed stuffed buns.

Obama, who spent his childhood in Indonesia and Hawaii, said that he feels a deep connection to Asia and to Asians. He said: "I have very fond memories of the years I spent in Indonesia." He said that he can still remember some Indonesian phrases. He said: "One of the lessons I learned while living in Indonesia is the importance of maintaining strong family ties, which is a core value in Asian cultures. The commitment that my wife Michelle and I have to our family and to providing positive role models for our daughters reflects the values of many Asian families in the United States."

Obama's father had come to the United States from Kenya years ago for graduate studies, while his mother, who was white, was born in Kansas and grew up in Hawaii. His parents met at the University of Hawaii and married. When Obama was two years old, his parents became separated and divorced. When he was six years old, he moved with his mother and Indonesian stepfather to Indonesia. When he was 10 years old, he moved back to Hawaii to live with his maternal grandparents and to attend school. After graduating from high school in Hawaii, he went to college at Occidental College in Los Angeles. In his junior year, he transferred to Columbia University in New York City, and majored in political science and international relations. After graduating from Columbia University, Obama worked for several years at a community grassroots organization that served low-income families in Chicago. Afterwards, he studied for his Juris Doctor (J.D.) degree at Harvard Law School.

Compared to the many politicians who were born with silver spoons in their mouths and from prominent families, Obama came from very modest backgrounds. It was only through indefatigable hard work, his innate abilities of oratory and leadership and the experience that he gained in service to society that Obama was able to progress step by step and rise rapidly to his current position.

In 1990, while attending Harvard Law School, Obama was elected President of the Harvard Law Review, which is the most authoritative law review in the United States. To be selected for this preeminent honor from among the gifted student body of 1600 students at Harvard Law School is indicative of extraordinary intelligence and uncommon leadership abilities. Obama is also the first black person to win this position in the 104-year history of the Harvard Law Review. T.K. Chang, a Chinese-American fellow-graduate from Harvard Law School, has extolled Obama's intelligence and talents, and his leadership qualities and strengths. In his opinion, once in the White House, Obama will make one of the very best Presidents.

Recounting his experiences growing up in the multicultural society of Hawaii, Obama said: "Growing up in a multicultural society as diverse as Hawaii instilled in me strong beliefs that differences in race, ideology and background do not have to keep us apart, but rather can strengthen our society and all of its members."