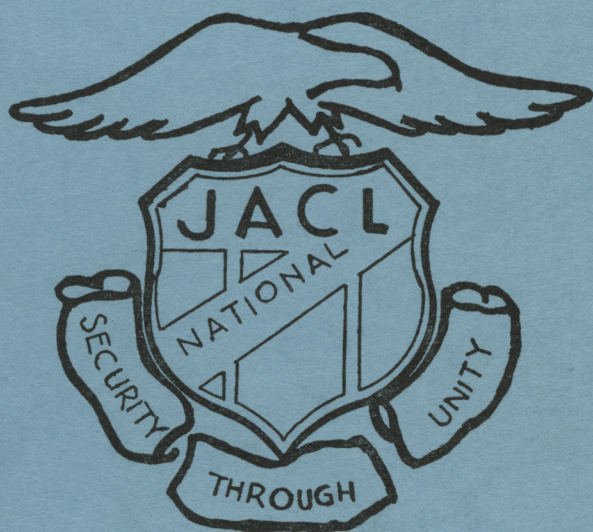


WHAT'S

IN
A
WORD
?



prepared by
Chicago Chapter
Japanese American Citizens League

INTRODUCTION

A noticeable reduction has occurred in the use of the term "Jap" in American publications during the past decade. This condition did not result from a spontaneous improvement in the standards of the publishing industry, but chiefly because of the strong and repeated protests made by certain individuals and by such organizations as the J.A.C.L. and the American Newspaper Guild.

This brochure illustrates how one determined group successfully campaigned against this often misused term.

In the Summer of 1952 the New York chapter of the J.A.C.L. launched a relentless campaign to eliminate the use of the word "Jap" from the Metropolitan dailies. They waged their struggle without the aid of dictionary definitions. The dictionaries of that day defined it merely as a colloquial abbreviation. As a result of the publicity from the 1952 campaign and as a result of a special campaign directed at certain dictionaries in 1958 by the J.A.C.L., almost all of the most widely used dictionaries now published in the United States state the offensive nature of the term. These dictionaries and their definitions follow:

DICTIONARY

DEFINITION

- | | |
|--|--|
| (1) "Funk & Wagnalls Standard Dictionary of the English Language-International Edition" printed 1958 by Funk & Wagnalls Co., New York. | Jap (jap) adj. & n. Slang Japanese; an approbrious usage |
|--|--|

- (2) "A Dictionary of Contemporary American Usage" by Bergen Evans and Cornelia Evans, printed in 1957 by Random House, New York
- Japanese, the shortened form Jap is derogatory and should not be used.
- (3) "A Dictionary of American-English Usage" by Margaret Nicholson, printed in 1957 by Oxford University Press.
- Jap, Japanese Nipponese. Jap is colloquial and understandably resented.
- (4) "Thorndike Barnhart High School Dictionary" printed 1957 by Doubleday & Co., Inc., Garden City, N.Y.
- Jap (jap), adj., n. Informal & contemptous. Japanese
- (5) "American College Dictionary" printed in 1957 by Random House, New York.
- Jap (jap), adj., n. colloq. & derogatory. Japanese.
- (6) "Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language" College Edition printed in 1957 by World Publishing Co.
- Jap (jap) n., adj. Japanese: a shortened form often expressing contempt, hostility, etc.
- (7) "Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language Unabridged" printed 1961 by G. & C. Merriam Co., Springfield, Mass.
- jap/'jap/ n - a usu cap, often attrib (by shortening): JAPANESE - often used disparagingly.

THE CASE OF THE NEW YORK WORLD-TELEGRAM
AND SUN

The NEW YORK WORLD-TELEGRAM AND THE SUN has long been and continues to be an excellent newspaper. The following account should not be construed as any reflection on the newspaper's quality nor on the fairness it has otherwise generally shown in its policies toward the Japanese and the Nisei both prior to and since the end of World War II. However, it has displayed a much greater propensity toward the use of the term "Jap" than most of the other newspapers in the area. This was partly due to the greater coverage it gave to news about Japan than other afternoon and evening papers printed in New York. The following series of letters are reproduced here to acquaint the public with the arguments and counter-arguments used in an actual campaign.

After keeping a close check on the numerical frequency of the appearance of the word "Jap" in the newspaper for several months, and after finding that protests by the New York Newspaper Guild were being completely ignored, certain members of the New York JACL decided to take action. The greatest frequency of the use of "Jap" was in a column devoted to a daily summary of world news edited by C.E. Fisher. He was selected as the target of the initial protest.

August 7, 1952

Mr. C.E. Fisher
New York World-Telegram and The Sun
125 Barclay Street
New York 15, New York

Dear Sir:

Perhaps you are not aware that a resolution opposing the use of the term "Jap" was passed unanimously by the American Newspaper Guild at its annual convention early last month in Portland, Oregon. A similar resolution was passed by the Newspaper Guild of New York on February 19, 1952.

For your information, I am enclosing a clipping from the New York Guild's paper "Frontpage" which contains the full text of the resolution which was adopted in July.

Very truly yours,
Signed: Shosuke Sasaki

The Resolution stated the offensive nature of the term "Jap" and should not be recognized as an accepted abbreviation and the Resolution urged newspapers in the States and Canada to discontinue the use of the word "Jap" or similar derogatory terms in stories, editorials and headlines.

Mr. Fisher's reply was prompt and curt.

August 8, 1952

Dear Mr. Sasaki:

Thanks for your letter of August 7. It gives me an opportunity to inform you that I am responsible only to the New York World-Telegram and Sun for my writings.

I cannot allow the American Newspaper Guild to edit my column on world events.

Respectfully yours,
Signed: C.E. Fisher

Mr. Fisher's argument was not permitted to stand unchallenged.

August 11, 1952

Dear Mr. Fisher:

Thank you for your letter of August 8th. It is difficult to understand how a person of your position and knowledge of English could have misunderstood the resolution of the American Newspaper Guild so completely as to believe that it is an attempt to "edit" your column. The wording of the resolution is sufficiently careful and precise to make your accusation utterly groundless. Moreover, if you meant exactly what you said in the second sentence of your letter, your sense of responsibility impresses me as being sorely in need of development. Surely you did not intend to deny your responsibility to God and to your country.

The term "Jap" is the exact equivalent of such terms as "Kike", "Nigger", "Chink", and "Wop". The Guild's resolution has received the concurrence and approval of sympathetic editors whose pride in their rights and prerogatives is no less strong than yours. Your letter is the first which refuses to recognize the validity of the Guild's stand, and your column is the only one in New York which still continues to call the Japanese "Japs".

World War II was ended seven years ago, and there is no valid reason why the Japanese alone should continue to be singled out for this particular kind of humiliation which in net outcome has often proved more harmful to those who inflict it than to its intended victims. Perhaps the seriousness of the problem can best be illustrated by the widely publicized fact that in the first year of the Korean conflict the United States Army suffered innumerable needless casualties as a result of Korean resentment against being called "Gooks" by American troops.

In view of the fact that the American Government is spending billions of dollars abroad in a desperate effort to gain friends, it is high time that the fostering of anti-American animosity among the Japanese by means of gratuitous insults in the American press be recognized as a disservice to the nation. I doubt whether you would deliberately insert pro-Communist propaganda in your column even if your employers permitted or ordered you to do so. By deliberately continuing to call the Japanese "Japs", however, you are no less effectively helping the Communists to swell the ranks of those who hate us.

The problem deserves the thoughtful concern of any true American interested in the eventual attainment of a lasting peace and in the future of his country. It is far too serious for you to evade by specious arguments about your "responsibility".

Very truly yours,
Signed: Shosuke Sasaki

The following was the final letter received from Mr. Fisher.

August 13, 1952

Dear Mr. Sasaki:

This will acknowledge your reply of the 11th of August, 1952.

I have read it with interest.

Cordially yours,
Signed: C.E. Fisher

On August 26, 1952 another member of the N.Y. chapter sent a letter to Miss Patricia Brown, the Women's Editor of the World Telegram and Sun. In it he wrote how the word is bitterly and rightfully resented by Americans of Japanese ancestry as well as the Japanese nationals. He went on to cite how other leading writers, commentators and public officials have endorsed the American Newspaper Guild's stand and refrain from the usage of such a term equivalent to such un-American terms as "nigger", "kike", "wop",

"dago", "heine".

The reply he received from Miss Brown simply stated that she has no part in writing the head lines which appear over the stories on her page. She felt certain that no offense was intended in the use of the word "Jap" and that the letter had been turned over to the staff responsible for the headlines. She went on to say that all newspapers abbreviate wherever possible in order to write a headline that is also a complete sentence and that there is constant use of words such as "Yank", "Aussi", "Ike", even "Dem bums".

It was apparent that further letters of protest would have to be directed to higher officials of the newspaper. The following editorial which appeared on July 30, 1952 provided a good point of departure.

WHY ARE WE HATED?

The ouster of all Americans from Iran has been demanded from the floor of the Iranian Parliament by Deputy Shams Ghanat-Abadi.

Ghanat-Abadi is not a Communist.

He is known as the right-hand man of Iran's leading religious figure, who in turn is a close supporter of Premier Mossadegh.

Anti-American feeling has been building up in Iran since the beginning of the oil dispute between Iran and Britain in which the United States figured as an ineffectual mediator.

Contracts for the American military missions now in Iran expire in October and American officials there are worried, it is reported, that these contracts will not be extended if the current wave of anti-American feeling retains its strength.

Might it not be better for us to cancel these contracts of our own volition and get out of the country before being kicked out -- and then not go back until we are invited?

The U.S. has given Iran loans and Point Four money, and has attempted to be helpful that country in many other ways. But we appear on the streets of Tehran.

It is time we were asking ourselves why so many people hate us. While Iran is an extreme case, anti-American feeling is gaining ground in most parts of the world. It is finding increasing expression in Britain and Western Europe as well as in the so-called backward countries.

This poses a serious problem which demands a careful examination of our operations abroad.

Soviet propaganda can claim credit for some of the misunderstanding, but surely not for all of it. The Russians aren't that good.

Some of the fault must be in ourselves. We should find out what it is and how to correct it.

A foreign policy which makes enemies where it should be making friends obviously is unsound and dangerous, whatever its pretensions. This problem has been ignored too

long, and the anti-American demonstrations in Iran are a clear warning of serious trouble ahead if the present trend isn't arrested and reversed.

Using the above editorial as an introductory topic of discussion the following letter was written and sent to the executive editor of the newspaper.

September 10, 1952

Mr. Lee B. Wood, Executive Editor
New York World-Telegram and The Sun
125 Barclay Street,
New York 15, New York

Dear Mr. Wood:

This is a belated reply to your editorial entitled "Why Are We Hated?" of July 30, 1952. You are correct in your belief that this hatred is not entirely the result of Soviet propoganda. Much of it is caused by our own stupidity. Had your editorial included a reference to the Communist-led anti-American riots in Japan, you might, for the sake of accuracy, have mentioned the seeds of anti-American hatred still being sown by your and other Scripps-Howard newspapers by their proclivity for the use of the derisive epithet "Jap". That term is the exact equivalent of such words as "Kike", "Wop", and "Chink".

Of all the forms of racial discrimination, few are as galling to its victims as being called insulting epithets, and few are as damaging to the reputation and popularity of those who practice it. The American press prides itself on being free and desires the world to recognize it as the voice of a free people. When such a press persists in calling any racial group by a viciously contemptuous term, the world is likely to regard it far more gravely than the rantings of propaganda organs such as "Pravda". Such a practice can be interpreted by others as nothing less than a reflection of American contempt for the right to human dignity of other peoples and as evidence of the unworthiness of America to exercise world leadership.

You may offer the excuse of claiming that your use of the term "Jap" is not intended to be derogatory and that you use it merely to save space. I would like to point out that your use of a derogatory term in order to save space does not in any way alter the derogatory nature of the term. Neither does such a reason reduce the resentment of the Japanese and persons of Japanese ancestry against the practice.

Sincerely yours,
Signed: Shosuke Sasaki

The following letter, obviously intended as a brush-off, was received without delay.

September 11, 1952

Dear Mr. Sasaki:

Thank you for your letter of the 10th. Your views are interesting.

I have not claimed any space-saving motive as you state.

Cordially yours,
Signed: Lee B. Wood

Mr. Wood was not permitted to drop consideration of the subject so easily. Within a few days he received the following letter.

September 15, 1952

Mr. Lee B. Wood, Executive Editor
New York World-Telegram and The Sun

Dear Mr. Wood:

Thank you for your letter of September 11th. The objections which I have raised against the use of the term "Jap" are not merely my own personal views. They are shared by practically all Japanese.

It is interesting to learn that the use by your paper of the term "Jap" is not due to any space-saving motive. As a regular reader of your paper and as a person of Japanese ancestry, I would like very much to know the exact reason or reasons which apparently serve to justify in your mind the

continued use of that term.

Sincerely yours,

Signed: Shosuke Sasaki

All of the preceding letters of protest were sent as personal communications. A letter of protest using JACL Chapter letterhead paper which was to have been sent to the newspaper around this time was not written because of certain misunderstandings. The late Akira Hayashi, thereupon, stepped in and sent a letter in his official capacity.

Mr. Wood's reply to Mr. Hayashi indicated no change in the attitude of the newspaper.

Several Caucasian friends, who were not members of the JACL helped in the campaign. Among them were Edward K. Hassett and Paul W. Proctor. The following reply was received by Dr. Proctor.

September 17, 1952

Dear Mr. Proctor:

Re: Newspaper use of word "Jap".

I have your letter of September 12th relative to the above subject.

I don't think I need to tell you the Japanese people have no stronger friend in American journalism than Mr. Roy W. Howard, Editor and President of this newspaper.

The use of the word "Jap" has been thoroughly discussed with him and aside from the utilitarian value in headlines, which is very real but certainly is not the main reason for our use, the abbreviated word does not connote anything derogatory in the minds of the American people. There is nothing unfriendly about the use of the word "Jap", except perhaps, as you say, in the minds of the Japanese.

I must point out to you that we are printing newspapers in America for Americans who see nothing unfriendly or derogatory in the word.

I really feel that you are making a mountain out of a molehill.

Sincerely yours,
Signed: Lee B. Wood

On the same day, Mr. Wood wrote the following letter of reply to Shosuke Sasaki's letter of September 15, 1952.

September 17, 1952

Dear Mr. Sasaki:

Please let this acknowledge your letter of Sept. 15th.

The term "Jap" in the minds of American newspaper readers does no connote anything derogatory.

While you say it is **offensive** to you and other Japanese, may I point out that we are publishing newspapers in America where Americans do not regard the word as unfriendly.

Sincerely yours,
Signed: Lee B. Wood

The mistaken line of **reasoning** used by Mr. Wood to defend the use of "Jap" could not be permitted to stand. After a careful analysis of Mr. Wood's **letter**, the following rebuttal was sent.

September 23, 1952

Dear Mr. Wood:

Your attention is called to certain errors in assumptions and logic contained in your letter to me of September 17th.

The second sentence of your letter is in flat contradiction of fact. Most of the older residents of the Pacific Coast states know that the term "Jap" is derogatory. It frequently was used by certain newspapers there in connection with the sporadic anti-Japanese hate campaigns from around 1900 to around 1930. The term was invariably found in headlines and stories designed to create and inflame anti-Japanese prejudice. It was not used by those who understood and defended the Japanese who had settled on the West Coast. The term became a symbol of racial contempt through prolonged usage by unscrupulous

pulous promoters of racial misunderstanding and hatred. It is not a simple abbreviation such as "Swiss" which was never subjected to the unfortunate use which the term "Jap" was.

The concluding sentence of your letter implies the following:

1. That Americans of Japanese descent are not Americans.
2. That so long as Americans are unaware of the derogatory connotation of a word, you are justified in using it regardless of how the victims of the insult may feel.
3. That your estimate of the ignorance of your readers is the standard which guides you in the extent to which you feel justified in violating good taste and in using derisive epithets.
4. That your paper is intended strictly for domestic use and is not read or should not be read by non-Americans.

I shall not go into a detailed refutation of each of these four points. The mere statement of them should be sufficient to make apparent the unsoundness of your contentions.

Whether an epithet is offensive or not is a matter which depends on the reaction of the person to whom the epithet is applied, and not on the opinion of the user or the ignorance of third parties. Not even a moron would persist in calling a person by name which that person resented, when at the same time the goodwill and friendship of that person were desired.

I would also like to point out that America is not a hermit nation. Your papers are bought and read by visitors and students from almost every corner of the world. The United States Government is encouraging the bringing of students to America from abroad in the hope of having them learn of American democracy through first hand observation. The students, visitors, and diplomats from Japan will not be able to avoid noticing your use of the term "Jap" and resenting it just as keenly as Americans of Japanese ancestry do now.

The New York Times and the New York Herald-Tribune have, as a matter of policy, wisely avoided the use of the term "Jap". Many newspapers now use the word "Japan" as an adjective in place of "Japanese". "Jap." with a period at the end is also an accepted abbreviation.

Sincerely yours,
Signed: Shosuke Sasaki

Although the following reply from Mr. Wood disclosed no change in his position, it lacked the self-righteous and indignant tone of his preceding replies.

September 25, 1952

Dear Mr. Sasaki:

This will acknowledge your letter of the 23rd. There is nothing that I care to add to my previous letters to you.

The New York JACL meeting for September, 1952, was devoted almost entirely to a discussion of the letters to and from the editors of the NEW YORK WORLD-TELEGRAM AND THE SUN. A resolution was passed and sent to the highest executive echelon of the New York World-Telegram and The Sun stating that the chapter request that the paper make a "careful and thoughtful" reappraisal through which a new policy could be adopted to prohibit the use of the word "Jap" since the "careless and inappropriate" use of the word in all communication media such as radio, TV, movies and press is offensive and derogative to all Japanese.

Copies of the resolution together with letters were sent to Roy W. Howard, President and Editor of the newspaper; N. S. MacNeish, Business Manager of the newspaper; V.W. Hawkins, chairman of the Board of E.W. Scripps Co.; and Charles E. Scripps, Director of E.W. Scripps Co.

Although the resolution and the letter signed by the chapter president did not produce immediate agreement with our request, they were treated with much more than the courtesy usually shown to protests from individuals. The following reply from the controlling management of the newspaper came from none other than Mr. Roy W. Howard, himself.

November 15, 1952

My dear Mr. Asai:

This is in reply to yours of November 7th and to duplicate copy sent to Mr. V.W.

Hawkins, who is not presently active in the editorial conduct of the World-Telegram and Sun.

With complete respect for your right to a dissenting opinion, I feel that the issue you have raised is a misdirected effort likely to hinder, rather than promote, Japanese-American good-will.

It should be obvious to you that no offense is intended, and that no evil purpose of ours will be served, if on occasion the term "Jap" appears in our papers. However, both your correspondence and that of Mr. Sasaki evidence a lack of familiarity with Scripps-Howard editorial policy, both before and since the war, and of our sustained efforts in the interest of Japanese-American friendship.

If, as would seem to be the case, you and your organization are unfamiliar with that record, such Japanese as Premier Shigeru Yoshida, Hitoshi Ashide, Count Ayake Kabayama, Admiral Nomura, Minister Mamoru Shigemitsu, former Consul General to New York Kensuke Horinouchi, such outstanding journalists as Shingoro Takaishi, Motosaburo Takata, Chikao Honda, of the Mainichi (Tokyo), and a host of other highly placed men in Japanese journalism and public life, all personal and long-time friends of the writer will, I am sure, be glad to furnish you with the record.

It is our conviction that to the American newspaper reader, the term "Jap" is not a term either of disrespect for a Japanese than does the term "Yank" imply disrespect for an American citizen. In our opinion,

The New York JAGL meeting for September.

it will never do so, unless and until agitation and propaganda give to the term a meaning and significance it does not now have. As of today, I am sure that as in the case of the word "Yank"; "Gob," "Leatherneck," or "Canuck," the term is one of familiarity and camaraderie.

In the case of the complaint in question, I am sorry to say that I cannot share your views. Despite my conviction that it will serve no good purpose of the interests you are presumably seeking to further -- Japanese-American good-will -- we are quite willing to make it a part of our editorial style to spell out the word "Japanese" whenever it appears in text.

We are unwilling, however, to reduce the proposition to an absurdity by prohibiting the use of the word "Jap" in a headline, under any and all conditions, though we are entirely willing to spell the word out in full, even in the headlines, when conditions make this practical.

In closing, may I repeat that it is my sincere hope that upon re-examination of the facts, you may come to realize what I sincerely believe, namely, that, if continued, your propaganda campaign, as outlined in the correspondence now before me, will in the end serve to create friction and misunderstanding where none now exists.

Very sincerely yours,
Signed: Roy W. Howard

The following reply to Mr. Howard was drafted by Ina Sugihara.

December 8, 1952

Dear Mr. Howard:

Thank you for your letter of November 15 in response to our request of November 7.

In your letter you state that "no offense is intended" and "no evil purpose.... will be served" by your use of the term "Jap" in your newspaper. On behalf of 10,000 members of 80 chapters in the Japanese American Citizens League in 32 states, we would like to state that the vast majority of Americans of Japanese descent in this country, and the Japanese people in Japan, do object to the word "Jap" as a derogatory and contemptuous epithet. We do not seek a person's friendship by calling him a name which he considers objectionable.

We appreciate your statement that you would be willing to have the word "Japanese" spelled out in the texts of your stories, and will look forward to seeing the policy put into effect as we read your paper.

Insofar as headlines are concerned, your opinion that prohibiting the use of the word "Jap" in headlines would "reduce the proposition to an absurdity" is not shared by any other newspaper editor who has been approached on this problem. The New York Times and Herald Tribune have long avoided using this word; the Wall Street Journal, the Journal of Commerce, and Editor & Publisher have all agreed to stop using the term.

We strongly urge you to adopt a similar policy and make it a part of your editorial rules to avoid this derogatory term, not only in your news stories, but also in headlines, editorials, columns and all other matter appearing in your newspaper. This would certainly help to promote the friendship which we know you hold toward the Japanese and Americans of Japanese ancestry.

Sincerely yours,
Signed: Woodrow W. Asai
President, N.Y. JACL

The following letter was sent in order to emphasize certain points and to cover other points not included in the letter of December 8, 1952, signed by Mr. Asai.

December 11, 1952

Dear Mr. Howard:

A copy of your letter of November 15th to Mr. Asai has been sent to me by the officers of the New York Chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League. Although Mr. Asai has by now undoubtedly sent you his reply, I am taking the liberty of calling to your attention a few points which he might not have mentioned and which may help us to arrive at a mutually satisfactory solution of the problem.

Please be assured that your efforts in the interests of Japanese-American friendship as reflected in the editorial columns

of your newspapers are well known and appreciated by practically all persons of Japanese descent in America. Your willingness to avoid the use of the term "Jap" in newspaper text and to reduce its use in headlines, despite your belief that the term is inoffensive, is further evidence of your good-will and friendship for the people of the Japanese race.

Fortunately, our difference in convictions concerning the use of the term "Jap" appears to lie in our interpretations of a matter of fact. In all honesty, I wish that your opinion of that term were correct. Unfortunately, the term has been given a meaning of derision and contempt by its frequent use in the vicious agitation and propaganda formerly conducted against Japanese residents of the Pacific Coast states by certain newspapers and other interests over several decades. The term was also used by many Americans during and prior to World War II as a term of hatred and loathing of all things Japanese. To my knowledge, you are the first person who ever claimed that the term "Jap" is one of familiarity and camaraderie."

I am sure that the primary reason why similar terms, such as "Nigger", "Wop," "Kike", and "Chink", are not used is because they are highly offensive to the persons and groups to whom they are applied. These words are not used because the victims of the epithets resent them and not because "the American newspaper reader" does. There is no valid reason why the Japanese alone should continue to be singled out for this kind of humiliation and insult. When the closest kind of understanding and cooperation between Ameri-

cans and the Japanese is necessary in the present struggle against Communism, it would appear to be essential that sources of friction be eliminated wherever possible.

Other than the Nisei, perhaps the Americans most familiar with the feelings of the Japanese are the Christian ministers and missionaries who have worked among them. No priest or minister, at all experiences in teaching the Gospel of Christ among the Japanese, would risk degrading his calling and offending the Japanese by referring to them as "Japs". As one expression of this attitude, a photostat of a letter by the Rev. Mr. McKee which appeared in the New York Times in February 1942 is enclosed.

Both the New York Times and the New York Herald-Tribune have, as a matter of policy, avoided the use of the term "Jap" before, during, and after World War II. It should be apparent that neither I nor the Japanese American Citizens League had anything to do with influencing these papers with our "propaganda", and that both newspapers must have valid reasons for refraining from the use of that term. The editors of these papers would undoubtedly be surprised if they were to be told that their not using the term "Jap" in their headlines was "an absurdity".

I am aware, however, that in tabloid newspapers the saving of space is a more important consideration than in others. If "conditions" do not make "practical" the spelling out of "Japanese" in full in all headlines, the shortened form using the first three letters should always be clearly in-

icated as an abbreviation by a period at the end. The abbreviation "Jpn.", which was recently adopted by the United Nations as its official abbreviation for Japan or Japanese, is completely inoffensive and acceptable.

Very sincerely yours,
Signed: Shosuke Sasaki

The following is the text of the letter by The Rev. Elmore M. McKee which appeared in the New York Times in February 1942 and which was enclosed with the preceding letter in the form of a photostat of a newspaper clipping.

WOULD BAN "JAP"

To the Editor of the New York Times:

Let us ban the word "Jap" in referring to the Japanese people. It is becoming the vogue to say "Jap" for Japanese on the air and sometimes in print, though happily I have not seen the term used in The Times. This abbreviation is, in my judgment, highly to be deplored.

We claim to be fighting for civilization, but such terms reveal none of that gracious respect for personality and for every nation and race which is the mark of civilization. We have been getting rid of similar titles for Chinese, Mexicans, Greeks and Germans. We must keep sane regarding all Orientals, too, and we prefer that other nations should have not similar abbreviations

for Americans.

The root causes of war are psychological. They are stronger than economic or political causes. Feeding our sense of superiority toward oriental peoples is a good way to lose the next peace as we did the last one.

(The Rev.) Elmore M. McKee,
Rector, St. George's Church
New York, Feb. 6, 1942

No further letters were received from the management of the NEW YORK WORLD-TELEGRAM AND THE SUN. Starting late in December, 1952, however, the newspaper stopped using the word "Jap" in the text of its articles and sharply curtailed its use in headings. Even this use gradually became less and less frequent and after a year or two was completely eliminated. Today, the NEW YORK WORLD-TELEGRAM AND THE SUN continues to be 100% free from the use of any racially derogatory epithet.

CONCLUSION

Lest some people get the impression that all newspaper executives are as difficult to convince as those of the WORLD-TELEGRAM, the following letter is included here. The letter by Shosuke Sasaki to the JOURNAL OF COMMERCE is omitted because the arguments in his letter are well illustrated in his other letters contained in this brochure.

The Journal of Commerce
New York

June 24, 1952

Dear Mr. Sasaki:

As you must know from your acquaintanceship with American journalism, some queer surgery is performed on good names in the art and science of writing a compact, meaningful head for a news story. And, while certainly ignorance is no defense, I hasten to assure you that no offense was meant in the use of the word "Jap" in our story heads -- it merely was conformity with what, from your viewpoint, is the unfortunate practice of news copy desks to seek out and use the most compact descriptive term.

Because we feel that your request is not only proper and reasonable, but in our own interests of accurate reporting in good taste, I have this day requested our staff to cease using the offensive term.

I wish to thank you personally and on behalf of our staff for your kind and informative letter.

Sincerely yours,
Signed: M.L. Van Slyck
Managing Editor

The work of eliminating the newspaper use of "Jap" should be much easier today than it was in 1952. The definitions in the new dictionaries are weapons which no intelligent edi-

tor can easily brush aside. Had such definitions been available in 1952, the series of letters exchanged with stubborn newspaper editors would in all probability have been unnecessary.

APPENDIX

The following two letters are included to show how a stockholder took advantage of his position as part owner of a corporation to eliminate its use of the word "Jap".

September 22, 1952

Mr. Spyros P. Skouras, President
Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation
444 West 56th Street,
New York 19, New York

Dear Mr. Skouras:

As a stockholder of your corporation, I am calling your attention to the urgent need for stopping the use of the term "Jap" by Movietone News when referring to the Japanese. It recently was used by Movietone News in speaking of Japanese swimmers.

The term "Jap" is resented by the Japanese as an epithet of derision and as the exact equivalent of such words as "Kike", "Wop", and "Chink". It is not an accepted abbreviation. It has never been used by the New York Times and the New York Herald-Tribune, and its use has been discontinued by

such New York newspapers as the Daily News, Mirror, Journal American, Wall Street Journal, and the Journal of Commerce. The objectionable nature of that term has been recognized in official resolutions passed this year by both the American Newspaper Guild and the Newspaper Guild of New York.

The use of the term "Jap" is regarded by many Japanese as evidence of the callous insincerity of American declarations of the virtues of democracy. Its continued use will help the Communists to incite bigger and more serious anti-American riots in Japan and will hinder American efforts to build an Asiatic defense against Communism.

From a strictly business standpoint, the use of the term "Jap" by our corporation in its productions cannot do other than harm its earning power. It certainly will not enhance the company's prestige among the Japanese and in the long run is sure to result in lower net earnings than would otherwise have been possible.

I ask that immediate steps be taken to stop Movietone News from using that contemptuous term and to make certain that the term be avoided hereafter by Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation as carefully as the equivalent terms for the Jewish, Chinese and Italian peoples are avoided today.

Very truly yours,
Signed: Shosuke Sasaki

September 23, 1952

Dear Mr. Sasaki:

I am glad to receive a letter from a stockholder which makes an intelligent point about the conduct of our business and I am grateful to you for your communication of Sept. 22nd.

Of course, I agree with you that the term "Jap" should not be used by Movietone News or any part of our operations any more than the other words you mention.

In this instance, I honestly feel that our people in Movietone News did not willfully or deliberately use the term in any derogatory sense or in a derisive way but simply as a shortening of the word Japanese. They did not intend to give it the same connotation that the other words you mention have with regard to other groups of people but, as you say, it is not an accepted abbreviation and I have requested our people in all departments hereafter to abstain from using the shortened term.

I do hope that you will assure your friends that as long as I am head of this Corporation no carelessness in dealing with any group of people will be tolerated. Your point regarding the fight against Communism was well taken.

Both as an individual and as President of your Company, I have always tried to do as much as possible to help promote brotherhood in the world and as a matter of fact

in order to bring about a deeper understanding of this problem and a better spirit of inter-racial and inter-religious tolerance I accepted the Chairmanship of the Extension Committee of the World Brotherhood movement some time ago. This movement was inaugurated by the National Conference of Christians and Jews.

I am shortly starting on a business trip that will take me to the Far East, including Japan, as well as Australia and New Zealand, and while there I intend to make every effort to participate as actively as possible in spreading the World Brotherhood movement.

Once again let me express my sincere thanks to you for your letter and to reiterate my assurances that the utmost care will be used in all departments to avoid the use of the abbreviated term of the word Japanese.

With kindest regards, I remain,

Sincerely,

Signed: S.P. Skouras

* * * * *

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE

1634 Post Street • San Francisco 15, California • Telephone WEst 1-6644

Masao W. Satow, National Director

REGIONAL OFFICES

- WASHINGTON D. C.
- CHICAGO
- SAN FRANCISCO
- LOS ANGELES

December 14, 1961

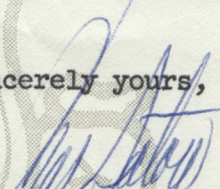
Mr. Shosuke Sasaki
62-07 84th Street
Middle Village 79, New York

Dear Shosuke:

I am sorry to hear that your health has not been up to par. Ulcers require taking it easy, so do not push yourself unnecessarily, especially on the Anti-"Jap" campaign material until you feel better.

The enclosed copy of a letter to George Kyotow expresses my latest thinking.

Sincerely yours,



Masao W. Satow
National Director

MWS:yks

Enc.

JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE
National Headquarters
1634 Post St.
San Francisco 15, California

December 14, 1961

Mr. George Kyotow
Canon Camera Co., Inc.
404 Park Avenue South
New York 16, New York

Dear George:

Thank you for your letter. I am sorry to hear that Shosuke has been having ulcer trouble.

In thinking over the entire program against the use of the term "Jap", as long as the first draft of the mimeographed material has been prepared, it would be easier on you in New York if you sent us the draft, then we could reproduce and send out the material from Headquarters.

On the other hand, if the Committee in New York feels that it would rather go ahead to send out this material, we would authorize the Committee to do so and pay the costs, but I would like to have at least an estimate of what the cost might be, as well as to whom this material would be sent in addition to our Chapters.

I believe the original idea was to send the mimeographed material to the Chapters. Since that time I feel we ought to make up a printed leaflet summarizing our views on the matter and distribute this leaflet rather widely. JACL will never be able to eliminate the derogatory term in written and spoken language if we merely wait for someone to use the term and then call it to his attention. This has to be a job of educating people, so I would like to see a printed leaflet distributed to various human relations organizations, to newspapers and other periodicals, and to the professional teachers' groups.

We do not have any letterheads listing all the Chapters, and I know of no chapter which has. Printing up such a letterhead would depend upon on how many you will need, and whether this number would be sufficient to warrant a printing. However, since you ask for such a listing I am enclosing same.

Sincerely yours,

Masao W. Satow
National Director

MWS:yks

cc: ✓ Mr. Shosuke Sasaki, Mr. Patrick Okura, Mr. Frank Chuman

62-07 84th Street, Apt. E-40
Middle Village 79
Long Island, New York
January 14, 1962

Mr. Masao W. Satow, National Director
Japanese American Citizens League
1634 Post Street
San Francisco 15, California

Dear Masao:

Thank you for your kind letter of December 14th. I hope that this year will bring you the best of good fortune, health and happiness. My stomach has been much better for the past few weeks.

Enclosed is a copy of the brochure I said I would write. It took more time than I expected. If it meets with your approval, I would like to see it reproduced without any omissions or changes introduced by editing, except corrections of spelling, grammar, or other obvious mistakes which I may have failed to correct. The title page, however, is only a tentative one and you are free to change it to suit your needs.

I have purposely left my name off the title page because I wrote the brochure as a J.A.C.L. publication and referred to myself in it in the third person. It was written in consultation with George Kyotow and Dick Akagi. They feel that the brochure should be reproduced without material changes.

The copy of the resolution by the New York Chapter which I have included in the brochure was copied from a draft in my possession. I do not have a copy of the resolution as it was actually sent, but I am sure that any changes it might have contained were minor. For the purposes of this brochure, I feel that the copy I have used is sufficient.

Although the sample letter of protest might seem a bit too strong to many J.A.C.L. members, I deliberately wrote it that way to include most of the arguments I have found effective in actual use. It would be impossible to include sample letters to cover all the varieties of situations in all parts of the country. As explained in the brochure, the members can use whatever portions of the sample letter they choose.

I would appreciate it if you would go over the enclosed brochure carefully and let me know of any changes which you feel are necessary. I am holding the original copy of the brochure pending a reply from you. I will re-type those sections where any errors found by you require correction, and airmail the original to you for use as a master copy from which reproductions or stencils can be cut. I think that my original is clean enough for reproducing by multilith if necessary.

George Kyotow has been very busy in recent weeks because of certain changes being made within his company. I do not have the time to attend to the reproduction and distribution of the brochure. We would be glad to have your office take care of that work. If you decide to go ahead with the printing or mimeographing, I would like to have 12 copies sent directly to me to distribute to my friends and relatives.

I am in full agreement with you concerning the advisability of making a printed leaflet concerning the term "Jap" and giving it wide distribution as an educational campaign. Such a leaflet should use the dictionary definitions as the principal feature. Incidentally, I have deliberately placed the definition given in Webster's Third New International Dictionary at the bottom of the list in the enclosed brochure because that position reflects my honest opinion of the quality of the new dictionary.

Sincerely yours,

Shosuke Sasaki

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE

1759 Sutter Street

• San Francisco 15, California

• Telephone WEst 1-6644

1634 Post Street

Masao W. Satow, National Director

REGIONAL OFFICES

- WASHINGTON D. C.
- CHICAGO
- SAN FRANCISCO
- LOS ANGELES

April 23, 1962

AIR MAIL

Mr. Shosuke Sasaki
62-07 84th Street
Middle Village, New York

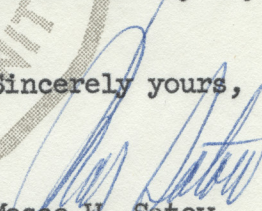
Dear Shosuke:

At long last we have been able to get out your excellent material against derogation. My apologies for being so late on this. It should have been out in February at least, but we simply had to give priority to a number of other matters.

Under separate cover I am sending you a half dozen copies.

We have not altered your text. However, in the supplement portion I have taken the liberty of deleting the various letterheads in order to save about five pages from your original 28 pages, but I am sure this does not in any way affect the contents.

Sincerely yours,


Masao W. Satow
National Director

MWS:yks

cc: Mr. K. Patrick Okura
Mr. Frank Chuman

62-07 84th St., Apt. E-40
Middle Village 79
Long Island, New York
June 4, 1962

Mr. Masao W. Satow, National Director
Japanese American Citizens League
1634 Post Street
San Francisco 15, California

Dear Masao:

Thank you for the copy of the letter from and your reply to Mr. Sagami. It is pleasant to know that my writings are appreciated by some.

I have no objection to the elimination of the letterheads from the letters in my article. I agree that their elimination did not harm the article in any way. Unfortunately, however, the mimeographed copies of ^{the} article are full of omissions and mis-spellings caused by careless typing when the stencils were cut. Thus far, I have found 18 errors introduced by the typist who cut the stencil. Most of the errors are not too serious, but some tend to obscure the original meaning. It would have been much better for you to have waited until your typist was less busy and able to give the job the necessary care.

In order to avoid disgracing the J.A.C.L. among other organizations, I wrote to Mr. Sagami and asked him to refrain from making photo-copies directly from most of the mimeographed sheets. I sent him my personal copy of the mimeographed sheets on which I had marked the errors and suggested that if he intended to send copies to other organizations, he should have the pages retyped first.

Frankly, I do not think that my article is suitable for distribution outside of the J.A.C.L. The only portion of it which could be incorporated in the leaflet which you seem to have in mind is the list of dictionary definitions. That entire article was intended solely to encourage other J.A.C.L. chapter members to take action against offending newspapers in their areas. The only people who will use that brochure in the way I hoped are those having something of the fighter in their make-up. Such persons are not likely to be chapter presidents who generally are chosen for their amiability. To limit the distribution of that brochure ^{to} chapter presidents is almost certain to ensure that very little if any action will result from it. If and when you find time to have correct copies of it made, I hope that you will send enough copies to each J.A.C.L. chapter so that any member who intends to make use of it can have his own copy.

I realize that you and your staff are extremely busy, and that as far as this "Jap" matter is concerned, the majority of the J.A.C.L. considers it a somewhat embarrassing peripheral activity which they would prefer to ignore. My fight against it has continued intermittently over a period of ten years. Much of the time I fought alone and most of the help and encouragement I received was

from whites. From the Nisei I received almost as much indifference and even actual obstruction as I did help. I have come to the conclusion that I have done all I could reasonably expect myself to do in this matter, and I ask to be relieved of the chairmanship of a non-existent sub-committee. George Kyoctow is now in Japan.

If and when you are able to start your educational campaign against the use of "Jap", I wish you the best of luck and success. Judging from my experience, however, such a campaign alone will not stop the newspapers from using that word. I have yet to meet a newspaperman who really did not know that "Jap" is derogatory. Their pleas of ignorance in reply to protests are nothing more than mere excuses. Although I am 100% in favor of the type of campaign you mentioned, I am certain that direct hard-hitting campaigns such as I used in New York are also indispensable in attaining our goal.

Sincerely yours,

Shosuke Sasaki

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE

1634 Post Street • San Francisco 15, California • Telephone WEst 1-6644

Masao W. Satow, National Director

REGIONAL OFFICES

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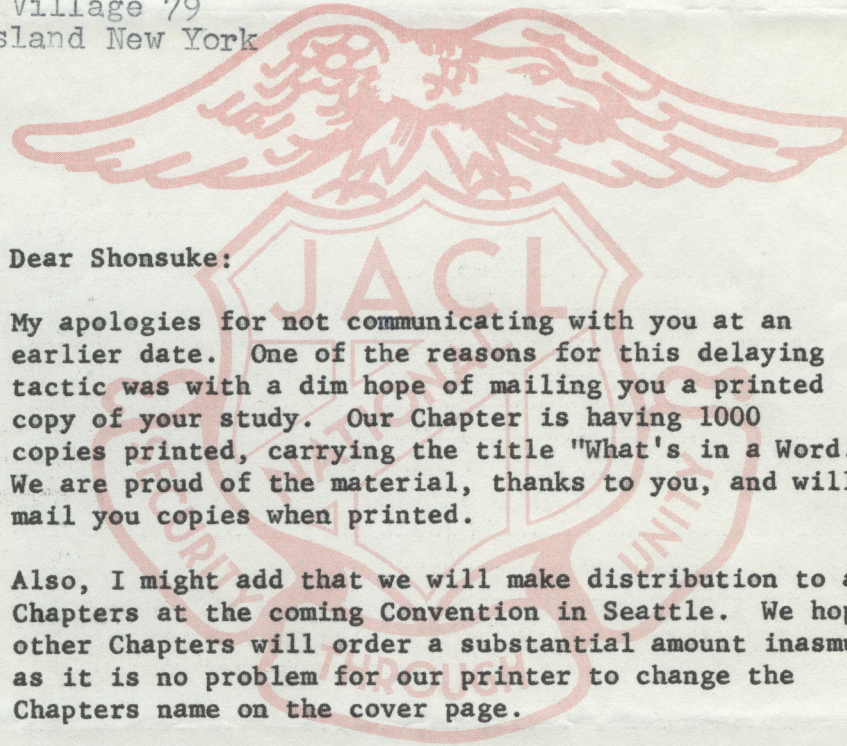
Refer to: J. A. C. L.

Midwest Regional Office

21 West Elm Street
Chicago 10, Illinois
MOhawk 4-4382

July 13, 1962

Mr. Shosuke Sasaki
62-07 84th St., Apt. E-40
Middle Village 79
Long Island New York



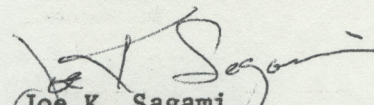
Dear Shonsuke:

My apologies for not communicating with you at an earlier date. One of the reasons for this delaying tactic was with a dim hope of mailing you a printed copy of your study. Our Chapter is having 1000 copies printed, carrying the title "What's in a Word." We are proud of the material, thanks to you, and will mail you copies when printed.

Also, I might add that we will make distribution to all Chapters at the coming Convention in Seattle. We hope other Chapters will order a substantial amount inasmuch as it is no problem for our printer to change the Chapters name on the cover page.

Enclosed is your copy of the study. Thanks again, Shonsuke, for your foresight and determination in this matter. I hope an opportunity will arise for me to meet you in the near future.

Sincerely,


Joe K. Sagami
Chairman of the Board
Chicago JACL

JKS:tk

LAW OFFICES
ZALK & HAYASHI

JOSEPH ZALK
THOMAS T. HAYASHI

200 WEST 57TH STREET
NEW YORK 19, N. Y.
JUDSON 6-3590

May 4, 1962

Mr. Shosuke Sasaki
62-07 84th Street
Middle Village 79, New York

Dear Shosuke:-

I just received the papers which you prepared and which are now part of "JACL President's Notebook" from the National Headquarters. From past experience I know of your tireless devotion to this campaign. I feel that JACL as a whole appreciates your talents and the sacrifices you made in drafting these documents on the campaign against the usage of "Jap".

I personally wish to take this opportunity to thank you for adding your wisdom on behalf of JACL.

Sincerely,

Thomas T. Hayashi

Thomas T. Hayashi

TTH:CF

cc: Masao Satow