

# Pioneer in effort to eliminate use of 'Jap' now boosted for top post in FCC

NEW YORK — The name of Shosuke Sasaki, 61, now a Seattle resident, has been recommended by various Asian American organizations to a vacancy which will occur soon with the Federal Communications Commission.

The hope is that with an Asian sitting on the commission, the stereotypes which continue to appear on television, particularly Asian stereotypes, will be eliminated, according to Asian Americans for Fair Media, which has mounted a grass-roots campaign to urged the President and Senate to favorably consider the one-time New Yorker, who got the American Newspaper Guild in 1952 to have "Jap" banned from the printed media as a matter of policy.

Sasaki, then with the publishing house of Standard and Poor's, was a New York local member of the American Newspaper Guild. In 1949 he was aware of Guild policy against use of derogatory terms by newspapers when writing of other races and nationalities.

None of the papers in New York were using such terms as "Nigger", "wop", "Chink", he recalled, but the term "Jap" was freely used. He saw no reason why the Japanese alone should be subjected to such humiliation.

## Action by 1952

The matter was not taken up by the Guild's executive committee until Sasaki's friend, Edward K. Hassett, became a member of that body in 1951, and had the question placed on the committee agenda in January, 1952.

At the February meeting, the resolution, based upon Sasaki's letter, was passed and sent to all New York publishers.

The Guild's action was fully covered by the Pacific Citizen and many JACL chapters applauded the Guild for its stand. The local 442nd Association also gave Sasaki full support.

But the resolution was not as effective as Sasaki has hope as newspapers continued to use the epithet as freely as ever. Sasaki mounted a letter-writing campaign to the offending papers and to the worst offenders, protests were sent by the New York JACL with all board members signing the letter.

In July, at the national American Newspaper Guild convention in Portland, Arthur Rosenstock, New York local's delegate and first vice-president, presented the Sasaki resolution, steering it through committee and onto the convention floor where it was passed.

## Personal Letters Continue

Sasaki recalled the passage of the resolution at Portland did not bring immediate and conclusive results. Though its appearance began to dwindle, it was by no means completely stopped and Sasaki continued to write his personal letters of protest.

Much of his time at home in 1952 was spent in going over the newspapers, clipping out offending sections and writing letters to editors and publishers. Replies varied all the way from immediate agreement to stop use of the term, "Jap", to angry accusations that he was a trouble maker. To some, he had written repeatedly.

By the end of 1952, Sasaki felt the American Newspaper Guild had done all that it could reasonably be expected and the matter became a responsibility of such Nisei groups as JACL.

## Tough Line

Sasaki also said there was from the start some opposition from certain Issei and Nisei against his strong anti-Communist line of reasoning in his approach to editors and publishers. They said he was being "too tough".

The concluding paragraph of his letter to Guild executive committee read:

The cooperation of the United States and Japan is urgently needed if they are to preserve their independence against Soviet encroachments and propaganda. Since most publishers seem determined to continue an unnecessary source of ill will which the Communists are effectively using against America, I ask that the Newspaper Guild take action to stop this giving aid and comfort to the Soviet Union.

But Sasaki refused the "soft" or pleading type as suggested for, he said, such a method would be futile and unsuited to his dignity and self-respect as a person who hailed from Yamaguchi, Japan.

Timidity of some New York JACLers to push hard in this campaign resulted in Sasaki resigning from the chapter in disgust. He subsequently re-

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joined the chapter, moved to Denver in 1969 and then to Seattle in 1972.

### U.W. Alumnus

Sasaki, a magna cum laude graduate in economics and business from the Univ. of Washington in 1939, was also successful in having leading American dictionaries drop the three-letter epithet or to have it labeled as "derogatory" or "offensive".

New York JACL has joined in the effort here to recommend its former member to the FCC post—which runs for seven years, the President appointing, the Senate confirming.

Letters should be directed to the President at the White House, Washington, DC, 20500; Sen. Howard Baker and Sen. John Pastore, both on the subcommittee on communications, New Senate Office Bldg., Washington, DC, 20510; as well as to senators of the home state of persons or chapters writing.