

President's message

International Examiner slur

'Closed—but not forgotten'

by Janice Yee

"Jap."

When is it okay to use the word? Is it okay to use it in art and literature, to make a point about how words and stereotypes can hurt people? Is it okay in a context to educate people about past wrongs? I say yes and yes.

It is not okay, however, to describe a person, a colleague, an employee. When that word appeared in the *International Examiner* (IE) this summer, I was shocked. Then I got some calls from people who were also shocked and wanted JACL to do something. When I thought about it, although I was shocked (and angry), I was willing to give Eric Hsu, the article's author and editor of the IE a break.

But then I thought, what if a seasoned white writer had done the same? What if the word had appeared in the *Seattle Times* or *Post-Intelligencer*. Why was I willing to go the distance for a national boycott on ObaChine, yet was willing to cut this writer slack for using the term "Jap?"

I was torn. After all, the *International Examiner* regularly covers stories about JACL activities. They recently honored Jeffrey Hattori, our past president with a Community Voice Award. The paper has been an International District institution for over

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20 years, and I had even served on its board of directors.

So a group of us met with Eric Hsu and Doug Chin, the *Examiner's* publisher. As expected, Eric claimed at this meeting that he was indeed using the term to make a point—about which I am still unclear. Needless to say, we were still offended and didn't understand the point he was trying to make. A weak, qualified apology appeared in the following issue and the matter is now closed—but not forgotten.

A newspaper that claims to be the "Asian American Journal of the Northwest" has a great responsibility in representing the community. If stood unchecked, their poor judgement in matters concerning Asian Americans would very easily be imitated (and justified) in mainstream media. We should not excuse or condone the the use of slurs. It is unfortunate that with all the work we have to do to educate the greater community about racism and discrimination, about stereotypes and racial slurs, we must still educate spokespersons in our own community.

Professor Ron Takaki critical of UC Berkeley selection criteria

by Janice Yee

On Saturday, September 5, Dr. Ronald Takaki visited Seattle as part of the National Asian American Association of Professionals Conference. In "A Lesson of Proposition 209: Toward a Theory of Affirmative Action," Dr. Takaki reported the impact Proposition 209 is having at University of California at Berkeley, where he teaches. He said that the enrollment of African Americans and Latinos had dropped from 22 percent before the passage of Proposition 209, to ten percent now.

The Chancellor convened a press conference to explain the drop and the University's selection criteria. Dr. Takaki pointed out that a striking statistic reported at the press conference: last year, 800 African American and Latino students with 4.0 grade point averages were turned away from UC Berkeley because they were "not competitive."

The reason these students weren't competitive was due to lower SAT scores and extra points given to other students that

had taken advanced placement and honors courses. While this may, on the surface, sound like a fair and equitable process, Dr. Takaki went on to explain that SAT scores are correlated to income level, and advanced placement and honors courses are not available in all high schools.

Obviously, those African American and Latino students worked hard throughout high school, studied, and succeeded in maintaining a 4.0 grade point average. Yet because they may not have had the resources to pay for an SAT study course, or went to a high school that did not offer advanced placement and honors courses, they did not get into UC Berkeley.

Proponents of initiative 200, the anti-affirmative action initiative, say affirmative action is not needed and for women and people of color to get ahead, they must work hard and study. Dr. Takaki asked, "Isn't that what those 800 African American and Latino students did?"

Chapter seeks nominations for board, officers

by Vicki Toyohara

The Seattle Chapter JACL Nominations Committee is accepting nominations of persons for its 1999 officer and board positions. Persons who are interested in serving as an officer or board member or who wish to submit the name of someone to serve must submit your name or those of others to either the:

(1) Nominations Committee chairperson, Vicki J. Toyohara, who can be reached at (425) 339-1848 (days) or (425) 865-0272 (evenings); or

(2) Board at its October 1998 meeting, which will take place on Wednesday, October 21, from 7:00 – 8:30 p.m. at the Seattle JACL office located at 316 Maynard Avenue South, Room 111, Seattle, Washington.

No additional nominations for officer or board positions will be accepted after the adjournment of the October 21, 1998, board meeting. Serving on the Seattle JACL Board provides Nikkeis with a meaningful opportunity to be involved in our Nikkei community. If you have any questions or require information, please contact committee chairperson Vicki Toyohara.

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Aki Kurose Scholarship Fund gets boost from 'Testimony'

On August 29 and 30, JACL sponsored two nearly sold-out and very successful productions of "Testimony," written, directed and produced by Michael Ishii and Mary Leslie Ishii. Thanks to the Ishiis, the actors who donated their talent and time, Seattle Kokon Taiko, Ray Ishii, KazzieKatayama, Cal and Naoko Takagi, and many many volunteers, we raised over \$2,000 that will go towards the Seattle Chapter's newly created Aki Kurose Scholarship Fund. "Testimony" re-enacts the testimony given by real people, (some from the Seattle area), before the Commission on Wartime Relocation, as well as other real life experiences from the war.

Thank You!!!

The Seattle Chapter JACL Newsletter is sponsored, in part, by generous donations from:

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Welcome new and renewing JACL members!

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J. & Mrs. Donald	Fred M. Kaneko	Joan Ota
Akira	David L. Koyama	Miyoko Sasakura
Carmen Tsuboi Chan	Mary Minato	Hideko Tachibana
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Membership Categories

Individual	\$50
Couple	\$85
1000 Club/Century	\$70-\$140
Spouse	\$40
Lifetime	\$1,000-\$2,000
Student/Youth (up to 25 years of age)	\$20
Boosters (Seattle JACL only)	
Regular	\$20
Seniors	\$15

Questions should be directed to May Namba,
2324 NW 94th St., Seattle, WA 98117 (206-
784-3824)

Seattle Chapter JACL Membership application

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chapter events

October 16, 1998: Join JACL, Organization of Chinese Americans(OCA) and other Asian Pacific American organizations in a dinner at Loong Foong Restaurant to raise money for the fight to save affirmative action. Guest speakers: Herb Yamanishi, Executive Director of National JACL and Daphne Kwok, Executive Director of National OCA. Cost and time to be determined. Call Janice Yee at 763-1986 for more information.

October 21, 1998: Join us for a board meeting. Bring your rolodex or address book, and stamps and write to your friends and family members about the need to preserve affirmative action. Meeting starts at 7:00 p.m. at the Chapter Office, 316 Maynard Avenue S.

The Seattle Chapter JACL Newsletter

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