



JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE

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JACL chides Spanish basketball team for its offensive advertisement pose

Washington, DC -- In a August 13 letter to Jacques Rogge, president of the International Olympic Committee, JACL national director Floyd Mori chided the Spanish men's basketball team for its racially offensive pose in an advertisement in a leading Spanish newspaper.

The advertisement, which shows members of the basketball team pulling back the corners of their eyes, was shot prior to the Olympics for Secur, a courier company that sponsors the team. Mori indicated that the Spanish basketball team performs in the international arena where they come into contact with fans and opposing players from around there world, so there is "an expectation that the Spanish team will regard their opponents and the people of other nations with dignity and respect, especially within a world of human diversity."

Although the basketball team has apologized for the incident, individuals connected to the team have not apologized, indicating that no harm was meant and that the pose was intended as a joke.

Mori pointed out that the behavior of the Spanish team defies a tenet of the Olympic movement that promotes peace and the preservation of human dignity. Mori went on to say that "it is a lesson that the organizers of the Spanish Olympic Committee need to be mindful of as they pursue their bid to serve as hosts in 2016." Madrid is one of four sites under consideration for the 2016 Olympics.

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