

JACL

Midwest Office

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July 10, 2009

Mr. Pat Fitzmaurice
Assistant Editor
Tribune Media Services
435 North Michigan Avenue, Suite 1400
Chicago, IL 60611

Dear Mr. Fitzmaurice:

As the oldest and largest Asian American civil rights organization in the United States, the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) is troubled by a Tribune Media Services crossword puzzle that appeared in the July 8, 2009 edition of the Bakersfield Californian newspaper. The puzzle used the term "Jap" as an abbreviation for Japan. We are concerned because the term is a racial slur that has been used to vilify and defame Japanese Americans.

Our concern for the inappropriate use of this slur as an abbreviation was so great that we asked Congress (see enclosure) in 1986 to recognize the appropriate abbreviation – Jpn – so the slur would not mistakenly and inappropriately be used in government documents and in general use.

We urge Tribune Media Services to use the proper abbreviation so the public does not unwittingly come to think the use of a racial slur is acceptable in an abbreviation or in any situation. I would appreciate it if you would inform the Puzzle Editor and others who would benefit from this information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Bill Yoshino'.

Bill Yoshino
Midwest Director
Japanese American Citizens League