



JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE

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PRESS RELEASE

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PARAMOUNT APOLOGISES TO THE JACL

Los Angeles -- The Japanese American Citizens League (JACL), the nation's largest and oldest Asian American civil rights and community advocacy organization, welcomed Paramount Pictures' apology for "racially demeaning language" in its recently released film, *The Goods: Live Hard, Sell Hard*.

Adam Goodman, President and CEO of Paramount, emailed the apology to National Executive Director and CEO of the JACL, Floyd Mori, on the afternoon of August 21, just prior to a protest that was planned by Guy Aoki, head and co-founder of Media Action Network for Asian Americans (MANAA). Mori and Craig Ishii, JACL Regional Director, and other JACL members and staff participated in the protest. The JACL had expressed its disapproval of the film and the widespread marketing effort in trailers that used an objectionable scene with racial slurs and a feeble attempt to depict a hate crime as comical. The JACL had requested the apology.

Goodman stated in his email: "On behalf of the studio, I want to extend our sincerest apologies to the Japanese American Citizens League and the greater Asian American community for the racially demeaning language used in the scenes depicted in the film." He further explained that the marketing tools in question had been pulled, and he went on to invite the JACL and other leaders in the Asian American community to a continuing dialog on the issue.

Mori welcomed the apology and stated: "We are encouraged that Paramount recognized its error in using a racial slur and violence against Asian Americans as comedy. We find nothing funny about racial slurs nor do we see the comedy in using a well known hate crime as so called satire. We are heartened by Mr. Goodman's invitation to meet with Asian American leaders to discuss the use of racial slurs against Asian Americans, which perpetuates a dangerous message to the younger generation in this country. This movie indicates that there is an ongoing need for groups such as the JACL to be vigilant in the fight against discrimination. We look forward to this discussion with the movie industry."

The scene to which the JACL had objected has a sales manager cheering, "Don't get me started on Pearl Harbor-the J___ flying in low and fast. We are the Americans, and they are the enemy! Never again!" This is followed by the group of sales personnel mobbing and beating up the lone Asian American salesman. There is recognition that a "hate crime" has been committed and then a following attempt to cover up the crime. Many would recognize the similarity of this incident to an actual hate crime against Vincent Chin, who was killed 20 years ago in Detroit by out of work autoworkers who blamed Japanese auto companies for their troubles and took it out on an innocent man whom they mistakenly thought was of Japanese descent.

Some of the other groups that issued statements joining the JACL in their objection to the racial depictions in the movie are The Anti Defamation League (ADL), the American Jewish Committee (AJC), and the OCA.

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