

JACL

Midwest Office

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Ms. Cassie Hewlings
Editor-in-chief
Campus Press
University of Colorado, Boulder

Dear Ms. Hewlings:

The Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) is deeply disturbed by student columnist Max Karson's February 18, 2008 column, "If it's war the Asians want... it's war they'll get." More recently, you characterize Mr. Karson's column as "satire...a commentary on racism." In candor, it is difficult to find the humor and commentary in what appears to be nothing more than an attention-seeking stunt carelessly laced with hate speech.

If satire was the intent, it fell abysmally short in its display of judgment and sensitivity. Satire is a difficult literary form, and even the best writer occasionally finds his or her readers misguidedly accepting ironic or sarcastic statements as hard fact. Yet while satire often provides the reader with insightful social commentary or thought-provoking questions, Mr. Karson's column is hardly tongue-in-cheek. It is just offensive.

We see little reason for the column to have been published, particularly when there is no underlying message. Instead, the column runs the risk of reinforcing stereotypes and plays dangerously with myths about Asian Americans.

Sincerely,

William Yoshino
Midwest Director
Japanese American Citizens League

The Japanese American Citizens League, established in 1929, is the oldest Asian American civil rights organization in the United States. Our mission is to secure and maintain the human and civil rights of Americans of Japanese ancestry and others victimized by injustice.