



JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE

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February 20, 2008

Mr. David Doss
Executive Producer
Anderson Cooper 360
1 Time Warner Center
New York, NY 10019

Dear Mr. Doss:

The Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) is perturbed by a segment that recently aired on Anderson Cooper 360 which portrayed Asian Americans as racist and ignorant. The February 8 segment, headlined "Asian American Vote," implies that voters from this community are uninformed and racially prejudiced.

Half a minute into the segment reporter Gary Tuchman pokes fun at an Asian American who speaks with an accent and seems to say "Lincoln," instead of "Clinton." Two and a half minutes into the clip, he points out a woman who refers to the presidential candidate as "Clinton white lady." The majority of those interviewed appear to have been plucked from an Asian grocery store and spoke broken English.

This is hardly a fair representation of the Asian American population. While there is certainly a large first-generation immigrant populace, there are just as many second, third, and fourth generation Asian Americans (especially in a city like Seattle) who could have been interviewed. The sound bite from the fourth-generation Japanese American gave little more than a passing glimpse into the vast demographic of Asian Americans who, indeed, do not speak with thick accents or vote based on fear of change.

Whether Asian Americans vote for Clinton or Obama or McCain, CNN could have at least afforded to assume these decisions were made based on informed opinions that were the result of keeping up with the issues and politics of the day. CNN instead opted to frame the story in a certain light, insinuating that many Asian Americans voting for Clinton are doing so because of her race, not her politics.

Please be more mindful of the manner in which your future stories are packaged. Asian Americans can be found in a variety of places outside of ethnic supermarkets.

Sincerely,

Floyd Mori
National 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.