Comedian Silverman Under Fire for ‘Chink’ on ‘Politically Incorrect’

By TRACY UBA
Writer/Reporter

To comedians, race and culture are not only fair game but fodder for cheap laughs. After all, Chris Rock dishes the dirt on ignorant black folks, Margaret Cho spouts her eyes and mimics her Korean mother and Jeff Foxworthy takes potatoes at fellow rednecks.

But when former “Saturday Night Live” cast member Sarah Silverman told a joke involving the word ‘chink’ in a recent episode of NBC’s “Late Night with Conan O’Brien,” she crossed the line, even for a comedian, any outraged American.

Graykly, president of the Media Action Network for Asian Americans, was one of the first to come off with Silverman at Aug. 23 taping of the ABC TV show “Politically Incorrect” to address her use of the racial slur and its impact on Asian Americans.

“Calling a Chinese person a ‘chink’ is like calling a black person a ‘nigger,’” said Askia on the show. “This is the way we talk, and we don’t think that racial slurs should be used in this kind of off-the-cuff, kind of fun way because it gives more permission for people to use it in less appropriate situations.”

Planda Askia and Silverman were joined by Anne-Marie Johnson, sen. actor and chair of the Screen Actor’s Guild (SAG) Ethnic Employment Concerns Committee, Comedian Sandra Bullock and "Politically Incorrect” host Bill Maher for a roundtable discussion on race relations.

For those who weren’t around of the controversy, producer Bill Silverman to retell the joke. He originally aired a censored July 11 on O’Brien’s show and is part of her current roundtable.

It’s a joke about getting a jury duty notice. You get a notice and you’re randomly selected and you don’t want to do jury duty. Silverman said to the audience, “I’m sure this is just a joke.”

Janet Yellen, the judge from Brooklyn, and my friend, said, “Hey, you don’t write something like this if you’re inappropriate like I hate you,” she said. And I’m thinking, ‘I’m not going to say anything because I don’t want people to think that of me. You know, I just wanna get out of jury duty. So I just filled out the form and I wrote ‘I have a heart attack’ and it was just hilarious.’

The joke elicited immediate criticism from MANA, a media watchdog group, which sent e-mail to both Silverman and O’Brien requesting apologies. Silverman acknowledged the offensive nature of that word, did apologize and said he would omit “chink” out of any future airings.

Silverman, rather than apologizing, defended her position on “Politically Incorrect,” saying she believed the joke was “just a joke. It’s a ‘play on words’ and ‘points a finger at racism’ in a comedic way.”

But Johnson, an African American, says he and his peers are outraged. As a producer of the show, he said, “It’s just not right. On your show, what you’re doing to Asian American students is not right.”

Johnson was a student at Lagoon High School, Calif. When O’Brien’s show let him and other white neighbor’s allegedly homophobia, which affected a community and their supposed political support that Asian Americans do not have, in order to be “called a chink” to that is a political trick to link to hit black crime (Chink murder) to a joke.

Askia disagreed. “Here’s Sarah Silverman going on ‘Politically Incorrect’ that this term really didn’t hurt me. That was worse than what she said on Conan because she re- vealed herself to be someone who is very ignorant and very racist. I wanted to say, ‘Look, this is a person that shows up someone else and he killed him.”

In a previous guest appearance “Politically Incorrect” hosted by O’Brien aired July 20, Silverman said she’d be back. “But the Askia’s attempt to link her name with racism in various media publications. Asian American Professor “Martial Law” co-star Kelly Hu was on a panel that same night that was supposed to discuss the anime animation movement in the show about the offensive nature of the word ‘chink.”

Other AAAs, however, had a stronger reaction to Silverman’s joke and were angered even more by how she attempted to justify it on the show.

“She just wasn’t big enough to say sorry,” said Yee Gohata, who attended the recent taping as a member of the San Fernando Valley Asian American Student Congress.

“Moreo I think it has to do with his character,” said Gohata’s wife, Nancy. “That scares me more than anything.”

See POLITICALLY INCORRECT/4

JACL Urges Boy Scouts to Recommit Stance Against Homosexuality

By CAROLYN OATAY
Kaiser Writer

SAN FRANCISCO—A resolution commending the Girl Scouts for their stance against discrimination was easily passed at the recent national board meeting Aug. 19-20, following a resolution asking the Boy Scouts of America to reconsider their stance against homosexuality was beaten by a 2-1 vote.

Commending the Girl Scouts and the group’s president Connie Matta for standing firmly behind their commitment to prohibit discrimination, the resolution, the JACL also encouraged “all other such organizations to adopt similar policies that are inclusive and foster a healthy, positive, sensitive environment for all.”

But when Ken Inouye, PSP gov- ernor and JACL representative to the Boy Scouts of America, asked the Boy Scouts to reconsider their stance against allowing homosexuals to be board members and staff, the group’s president, Robert C. W. McFarland, said the JACL was at odds with the Boy Scouts as a whole.

JACL president Floyd Mori was optimistic that the rejection, putting out some that many JACL chapters chapters

San Francisco— JACL’s current financial crisis has top news and on the minds of the national organization’s leaders and membership for several months now and were different at the recent national board meeting.

Reporting on JACL’s current financial status, Art Rago, national treasurer, described the outlook as containing “some good news and some bad news.”

The good news, he said, was since the last national board meeting in May, national JACL has had a significant boost in membership revenue and is expected to surpass the budgeted amount by more than $60,000. The national fund-raiser through the Pacific Cities campaign held in June has so far generated more than $85,000.

John Tateishi, national executive director, reported on additional fund raising developments that include: $30,000 from the JACL’s fund raiser, $50,000 from the Ford Company, $10,000 from the Japanese American community and $10,000 from Farmer’s Insurance for general operations.

Apologies, Endowment, and fund raising from State Farm for the hate crime program is currently in excess of $10,000. As a result of JACL’s decision to turn down Philip Morris’ $2 million, letters of support and some dona- tions have also been coming in, said Tateishi. All 153, a bill sponsored by Rep. George Nakano, D-Hawaii, in support of the hate crime bill in the House, has been signed by 40,000 and $10,000 from Farmer’s-Insurance for general operations.

At the end of the meeting, Tateishi said that both the JACL Washington, D.C. office and national headquarters and the Asian American service organizations in the model for board and national staff and a tremendous boost.

But even with all these adjust- ments and changes, it is still obvious that projecting is deficient for 2001 of approximately $110,000, but it’s a fig- ure that has been cut and current expenditures are being kept to a minimum. Currently, there is a plan in place for $30,000 for board and national staff and a 25 percent cut in operating expenses.

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Increase in Membership, P.C. Fundraiser Help Decrease Projected Deficit

By LAWRENCE TATEISHI
Nat’l Executive Director

By the time this article appears in the Pacific Citizen, we will have arrived at the close of the mid-year annual giving campaign.

The Boy Scout stance has been hotly debated and the debate is heating up as the U.S. Supreme Court’s recent decision upholding the organization’s right to exclude homosexuals in their membership and same-sex leaders.

But the Supreme Court’s decision does not make the Boy Scouts position towards homosexuals right, and Mayeda. The Supreme see BOY SCOUTS/Page 8
**JACL Supports Mineta Program Aiding Minorities and Women**

The JACL, signed onto an amicus brief in the Adarand v. Mineta case presented to the U.S. Supreme Court that supports a Department of Transportation (DOT) program offering incentives to contractors who work with businesses owned by women or people of color. The DOT, a federal agency headed by Secretary of Transportation Norman Mineta, is being challenged in court for its Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program.

The JACL fully supports Secretary Mineta and the Department of Transportation's Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program as a much-needed program that all people are given a fair shot when federal contracts are awarded," said Ryan Chin, JACL national vice president of public affairs.

"The JACL cannot in good conscience be guaranteeing that we are not opposing anything when awarding contracts and that we give all people a chance to partake in these advancements in our nation. We commend President Bush for supporting diversity by filing this brief before the U.S. Supreme Court," Chin said.

Bush's position on this issue came as a surprise to many minorities since he had previously stated his opposition to affirmative action programs.

Attorney General John Ashcroft consistently voted against affirmative action legislation while in the Senate and some conservatives are criticizing Bush for his support of the program.

"The truth is that affirmative action is the only way to allow different people to have the same opportunity to be a part of business," said Chin.

John Taniishi, JACL national board member, said JACL's support of the DOT's position on the Adarand case is a continuation of our seven-decade history of supporting the rights of individuals in this country, in particular those who have been excluded from opportunities afforded to whites only.

"I believe strongly that diversity is the strength of this nation, and Adarand opens an important door to equal opportunity," Taniishi said.

By-Pacific Citizen Staff and Associated Press

**Support Details CA War Rape Investigation**

WASHINGTON—The FBI has launched a "thorough, full opportunity" to review the re-election of the North Korea government of Kim Jong Il. After receiving a CIA analysis in September 1997 that challenged the underpinnings of the probe, a secret section of a government report was made public.

Then-Director Louis Freeh was among the FBI officials who received the report, according to an unsealed chapter of the government report, it was later removed. The report was released on March 8, 2001.

"This (CIA) report could have and should have caused the FBI to re-examine the predicate for the entire series of events," said White House press secretary, who the House of Representatives was in a continuous state of confusion. Instead, it took three more years before a reexamination was done.

FBI Assistant Director John Collingwood, the top naval officer, refused to comment on other issues — guarding against showing official military secrets — at the time of the CIA assessment, it was no different.

Collingwood said the bureau reviewed the report and had not discovered anything that would have affected the findings. However, he did say that significant changes had occurred in the meantime, including the appointment of a new director and a change in the military command structure.

"The (CIA) report and findings were a valuable tool for us in our ongoing efforts to keep our country safe," Collingwood said.

**State's Foreign-born Population Doubles During 1990s**

MADISON, Wis.—The number of immigrants drawn to Wisconsin by job opportunities increased dramatically in the 1990s, according to a report by S.J. Stur- gen Davis.

The report found that 5.4 percent of the state's population had been foreign-born by 2000, compared with 2.5 percent in 1990.

The index of more than 100,000 immigrants pushed the state's foreign-born population over 500,000 last year, estimates from the Census Bureau show.

Half of the state's immigrants came from Asia or Latin America.

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Filipino Vets Receive Checks from Cedillo Bill

Efforts made by California State Assemblymember Gilbert Cedillo to seek justice for Filipino American veterans the last year with the signing of AB 1978 have come full circle. The State Department of Health Services has confirmed that the initial round of checks to veterans has been received.

AB 1978 creates the "California Veterans Benefit" for Filipino veterans who served in the U.S. Army during World War II and who wish to return to the Philippines. It covers travel, medical care, and adequate financial assistance. Benefits are made available under the Veterans' Readjustment Supplement (SSS) — approximately 110,772 pesos per year — which is provided as a benefit to veterans receiving SSS.

"It is an honor to carry a piece of legislation that acknowledges a historical wrong as well as provide this special group of individuals with the recognition and honor that they so deserve," Cedillo said.

This bill is a humanitarian measure that will allow those elderly veterans to return home and comfortably live out their remaining years with their families and friends. Because of the 1946 Recession Act, Filipinos soldiers who served in the U.S. Army during WWII were prevented from receiving any sort of military benefits or pensions. As such, a majority of these veterans relied solely on SSS as their only source of income.

The bill, authored by Democra and Republican legislators, was reported out of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee and adopted last March by the Senate, as vetoed by its voting record, where it received no negative votes from both houses. Gov. Gray Davis signed the bill last year.

JACL Opposes Funding of False Groups

The JACL national board unanimously voted to pass a resolution opposing federal funding of False Group organizations on Aug. 19.

In response to H.R. 968, a House-sponsored House bill that allows the government to fund non-profit religious organizations, the JACL board approved its resolution to reinforce a position taken at the JACL national convention that called for support of the separation of church and state.

"Using federal money to fund faith-based organizations is a clear violation of the Constitution, which explicitly states that there must be a separation of church and state," said Ryan Chan, JACL national vice president of public affairs.

"There is no reason that Americans who believe in one religion should be forced to pay for programs put on by another religion. Forcing one to use their own resources against themselves is one of the strictest forms of oppression,"

A companion bill to the Senate would similarly provide federal funding to faith-based organizations, but no such legislation has been passed yet. Failure for the Senate to pass such legislation would eliminate President Bush's hopes of passing his faith-based initiative.

Expressing a concern about the constitutional mandate of separation of church and state, JACL national president Floyd Mori said, "We are gravely concerned about this issue, and despite some on the board and many in the organization who have strong, personal religious convictions about their beliefs, we feel it's extremely important to this administration not begin to erode the very constitutional protections that provide for equality in this society.

John Tatsiki, JACL national executive director, said that JACL would work to "urge the members of the Senate to deep passage of this legislation because it is a critical issue to the diverse peoples of America. In their wisdom, the founding fathers understood the extreme importance of separation of church and state in the governing of a nation. It's unfortunate that some of our political leaders today are so willing to set aside such wisdom."

Holiday Cheer Thanks All Its 2000 Donors

Dear Friends,

Your contributions to the PSWDC JACL Holiday Cheer Project made the 2000 season a more joyous one for many of the less fortunate members of the Japanese American community. Your generous donations of $15,500 paid for various holidays, including $3,500 paid for Christmas gifts, $13,500 paid for Hanukkah gifts, and $2,342 was for printing, advertising, and administrative costs in December 2000.

Thank you for your continued support for this time once forgotten Japanese Americans.

Amy Tansara
Chairperson

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The JACL Pacific Southwest District announced that five community leaders will be honored in its 2001 awards dinner being held Sept. 22 at 6 p.m. at the Torrance Marriott Hotel. The U.S. Secretary of Transportation Norman Mineta will be keynote speaker.

Those being honored are: Sue Kunitomi Embrey, chairperson of the Manzanar Committee; Fred Y. Honda, president and chief executive officer and consultant to the national YMCA; Kent Nagano, Grammy award-winning music conductor; Robert Schlegel, Times-Standard editor and contributing editor, who covered the Wen Ho Lee case; and the Olympic and college basketball organization for young Nekkei since 1918.

"This year, the PSWJD will honor five highly commendable individuals and organizations, who in their unique way make significant contributions to our community," said PSWJD governor George Gehr. "Each are leaders in their own right, and it's only fitting we recognize them for these significant contributions at our awards dinner.

The Torrance Marriott Hotel is located at 3535 Fashion Way. Dinner proceeds will go towards the committee's continued development of youth leadership in JACL's PSWJD.

Tickets for the event are $100. For more information or to reserve tickets, call the PSWJD office at 310/262-4477.

Chicago to Unveil '100th-442nd-MIS Way' Street

A new street in Chicago's North- side named "100th-442nd-MIS Way" will be unveiled Oct. 10 at 10 a.m. at a dedication ceremony, which will also feature a showing of "Uncommon Courage," the 90-minute documentary about the Nisei MIS role in the Pacific.

Among those invited to attend the ceremony are Eugene Schuch, members of the Japanese American community, veterans organizations, the Japanese cultural and civic, business and political leaders.

The sign post is located on the north side of Clark Street between the 4400 block of Montrose and the 4500 block of Sunnyside, near the Japanese American Service Committee (JASC) building.

In California, you remain highways, but in Chicago only one street continues to receive honorary street naming," said Allen H. Meyer of Chicago Nisei Post 1183. "We are less than a mile from Wrigley Field on a very busy thoroughfare.

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Auditioning

It's been almost exactly five years since I moved to Hawaii. Having lived my entire life in South Dakota, just thinking about the move at times, it was a difficult adjustment. I missed my family, my friends, my home. Many of my classmates and friends had left me "behind" — a sort of adobe life in a corner of the world. Hawaii, I was to discover, is a place where you can be your true self. And there I discovered a new world, one that was different from anything I had ever known.

Tribal Tensions in Paradise

The surrounding natural terrain. While I still miss those things, I've gradually gotten to like Hawaii as a place to live, to move and explore, to observe life in all of its forms. And in the end, I think I have become more or less a local, which is something I was never before. On the other hand, I do not claim to be a true local, although I have come to appreciate the beauty of the island in all of its splendor. I have learned to respect the culture and traditions of the island, and I have come to appreciate the way of life that has developed here.

Auditioning

By BRIAN NIKI

One of the most interesting things about Hawaii is the variety of lifestyle choices that come with living here. What sort of life would you and your family live? If you choose a lifestyle that is different from the norm, you will be happy and content. But if you choose a lifestyle that is like the norm, you will be happy and content. But if you choose a lifestyle that is different from the norm, you will be happy and content. But if you choose a lifestyle that is like the norm, you will be happy and content.

Very Truly Yours

Herb Honda

house in Lins and weighing about eight pounds. Title on the cover, "The Centennial of the Japanese Immigration to Peru 1899-1999" is embossed in gold on blue cloth.

Published by the Peruvian Japanese Association Commemorative Commission of the Centenary, Chairwoman Geraldine Marys reveals in the preface that it was a four-year enterprise to gather the history, information, personal experiences of several pioneers and financial support from the Japanese International Cooperation Agency and the Nikkei community.

Nikkei culture appears in the opening pages that show there were 20 Japanese living in Lima in 1914. Peru and Japan established diplomatic relations some 10 years, allowing Japanese to travel to Peru. The Peruvian Japanese marked the beginning of their residence when 790 immigrants came aboard the Sakura Maru which sailed from the Port of Callao on April 3, 1899. They comprised the first stable group of Japanese to settle in South America.

The book contains the history of Peruvian Nikkei, the accounts from the Japanese immigrants and summaries with facts and contributions of their lives, cultural, educational, religious and sports organizations. It was the adventures Japanese

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**POLITICALLY INCORRECT**
(Continued from page 1)

Phil Shimizu, a member of the JACL, Pacific Southwest Branch, Civil Rights Caucus, said he felt an unaid to Silverman after the joke initially aired, expressing the impact she, as a celebrity, has on public perception.

"When a person who has a certain amount of brainpower and public personality uses the media as a tool that, if given license to use it, will promote his words and ideas, and other people who have not had that license, but also speak out, are now in the media," Shimizu said. "We have a responsibility to the public, as well as to the nation and the world, to promote society, to educate people, and to promote human rights.

As far as his feelings towards Silverman's joke, Shimizu responded, "I'm not against American comedians or myself, but if someone is making fun of me, I'll strike the nerve that it would. I understand that some people are in no way trying to make the point that as a comedian, as is the case in this country, there are a lot of white backlash, a lot of white people are very defensive about this. They can say anything, they go to see things that show them what. David Spade was saying, I feel that I have to apologize even though it's not meant to be that way. That's a very typical attitude for a very typical person in this community, so it's hard for us to say anything about that, but it's saying it by saying, "Now, I'm not blaming everyone in the white community, I'm just saying that there is a way to say that, but that's the way they think.

That's the really tough part about having a discussion about this, because it's a very touchy subject. I need more time, you need people to not hear me.

FINANCES
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Blue Shield of California offers group health care coverage to current JACL members. Plans may include a wide range of benefits, including vision care, worldwide emergency coverage, dental care, prescription drug benefits and more. For more information about these plans, call the JACL Health Benefits Trust at 1-800-400-6633.

Website: http://www.jaclhealthbenefits.org

Obituaries

The all towns in the country as excepted as noted.

For more information, visit the JACL Health Benefits Trust website.