

263 16th Avenue  
San Francisco, Ca. 94118  
June 9, 1986

Roger G. Kennedy, Director  
National Museum of American History  
Smithsonian Institution  
Washington D.C. 20506

Dear Dr. Kennedy:

In January of this year I mailed to your office, the enclosed copies of letters: one written to Mr. Harold Langley, Naval History Curator, and a copy of a letter written to a community paper. I am sending them to you again for easy access. They both address my concern over the military, i.e., Go for Broke, focus in the forthcoming Japanese American exhibit.

Mr. Langley's reply concurred that "the whole story must be presented, not just the military side". I assumed this to mean that a broad, balanced, and accurate story should be told. Eric Saul, spokesman for the men of Go for Broke, publically announced last year at a kick-off dinner for the exhibit, the necessity for Go for Broke, Inc. to retire its military mantle for a broader image and rename itself the Japanese Historical Society in order for the organization to represent the entire Japanese American community, past and present.

I have just reviewed the list of members of your Advisory Committee and the unit script for the exhibit which became available through Mrs. Aiko Herzig, member of that committee. Of the twelve members of the committee, eight are people with a military orientation. (Seven members are non-Japanese Americans). Since Go for Broke is allegedly not a military organization any longer and since the exhibit is in commemoration of the 200th anniversary of the Constitution, I do not understand the rationale behind the heavy military representation. I do not even see any reason for one member of the military to serve as advisor for such an exhibit.

In reviewing the script, I am appalled that rather than a play-down, the military segment has become the focal point of the entire exhibit in its celebration of the 100/442/MIS experience. I still support my statement in my letter to Mr. Langley that this criticism is "absolutely not to diminish the remarkable achievements of these men". The inordinate amount of coverage and space devoted to the war experience, (11 pages on the script against 9 pages devoted to our incarceration experience) is neither an accurate nor a fair depiction of our history. If anything, the high visibility of the military portion with its stories of the campaigns, replicas of a battlefield in Europe and a jungle site on an island in the Pacific theater, displays of weaponry and decorations, etc., add up to a frightful glorification of war.

Furthermore, the 100/442/MIS story represents only a segment of Japanese American servicemen. In both my enclosures I refer to a relatively unknown story of hundreds of JA soldiers, many of whom were volunteers

before Pearl Harbor. Upon the issuance of EO9066 they collectively protested by refusing orders on the grounds that their families were being denied constitutional rights, well aware that this was an action punishable by death. They valued constitutional rights more than they did their lives. Rather than a military story this should be treated as a constitutional issue.

Each group of immigrant Americans has made a significant contribution to the building of this nation. There is nothing in the script which tells, for instance, of the physical and psychological hardships endured by the pioneer Japanese who turned the vast desert of Imperial Valley and the arid acres of San Joaquin Valley in California into productive fields to become the produce basket of the nation. This story can be tied in with legal and constitutional issues since these early pioneers toiled against the onus of legalized racism: Prohibition of Naturalization Act, Alien Land Law.

There are any number of stories of the contributions of early and present Japanese Americans. In order to get a broad scope of our history, there needs to be a wide diversity of representation from the Japanese American community on the Advisory Committee: historians, social scientists, women, writers, constitutional lawyers, and others.

Lastly, the most significant current issue is that of redress and reparations. It is a constitutional focus which is very much alive. There would be a dramatic statement if the exhibit were to end with the issue of redress and reparations. The proceedings which continue on in Washington is to test the validity of the Constitution. Is it truly a document which protects and guarantees liberty and justice for all?

*our rights*

Respectfully,

*Kiku Hori Funabiki*

(Mrs.) Kiku Hori Funabiki

cc: Mrs. Aiko Herzig, member, Advisory Committee