

May 25, 1986

Dear Mary and Bill,

Congratulations, dear Mary. We were delighted to learn in the Michener that you and Frank Zim are among the principal characters in "U.S. on Trial". Should be a wonderful film and we look forward to it.

Bill, here are a few photo's (now ten years old) which I send for your albums. You ~~(and that's Walter's background)~~ me at Ruby Schaar's place, remember?

And, by the way, should you ever come across the negatives of the photos Bill took of us in February at our place, please allow us to make copies. We'll return negatives promptly.

In addition, if you ever come across those letters from the Gules League Convention held in Camp Gila... No hurry though.

Hope this finds you well. Walter joins me in sending you our love. Do take care, please!

Michu





Japanese Soldiers As Liberators

"A black page in American history," says Ben Elkerbout, producer. During World War II, 4,500 soldiers fought along with the American Army while family members were locked up in internment camps.

For making a documentary on this subject, the producer claims that no cooperation was obtained from American authorities. He says they hid behind "vague excuses."

Ludi Boeken and Katri Schori took part in the making of the film about this Japanese American Army unit, the film entitled "Yankee Samurai." Their starting point was a reunion in late fall, 1984, in a little city of Bruyeres in the Vosges Mountain, where the battle unit, the 442nd, delivered their heaviest blow. The survivors were of the opinion that the Japanese American soldiers were largely engaged in the dirtiest work and the most impossible missions.

Their wish to be seen as real Americans, and their bravery, became legendary. They achieved fame as the most decorated unit of the American Army.

The producer points to the parallel to occupied (detained?) population in Europe and to parents of these troops in "concentration camps." The internment had been ordered by President Roosevelt a few weeks after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.

Only in 1976 did President Ford officially rescind the order.

During the 20's and 30's Japanese Americans, who had settled in Hawaii and in California, were the "Yellow Peril" to jingoists. After the outbreak of the war, more than 116,000 of them were interned, and property estimated to be valued around \$400,000,000 was confiscated. This amount was never returned. "But I would be happy if the American government would give each of us a letter of apology," says a former internee.

Out of such camps came the volunteers for the army. They hoped through their enlistment to plead for and gain better treatment for themselves and family members.

Though much has improved for these people after the war, anti-Asiatic prejudices in the United States has not totally disappeared. And Elkerbout thinks that the showing of his film, at this moment, will form a little counterweight against the many films about Japan as an unscrupulous conquering power. The stereotyping is getting stronger again.

The documentary was co-financed through Veronica and a French station Canal Plus, which began distributing the film a week ago.

(Photo caption: An American soldier in 1943 with m

We should make
use of this film
perhaps as a
part of a fundraiser.
I hear it's excellent.

love,
Michi

For An American Hero Dying Young

Gently rock the olive trees ~
 Over the spent shell of a spirit fled ~
 On a sun drenched Italian hillside ~
 A young Nisei soldier lay dead.

The battle was long, hot and dry ~
 In which his youthful spirit fled ~
 Beside him amid grim details of war ~
 A butterfly its wings of beauty spread.

Loyalty? Was there ever any doubt?
 Yes, we his fellow countrymen are to blame ~
 For abuse and vile incarceration ~
 A burden still of national shame.

And still few pause to notice ~
 A young Nisei soldier from afar ~
 A pocket filled with love and sorrow ~
 In letters postmarked Manzanar.

His life was spent for you and me ~
 On a sunny hill in Italy ~
 With parents denied their liberty ~
 A tragic price for loyalty.

by Jan A. Miller

For my dear friend Michi:

Some thoughts from my office while gazing at the distant Blue Ridge mtns.
 What an image of fortitude and courage the Japanese American soldier stands
 he to all of us. Your friend, Jan.