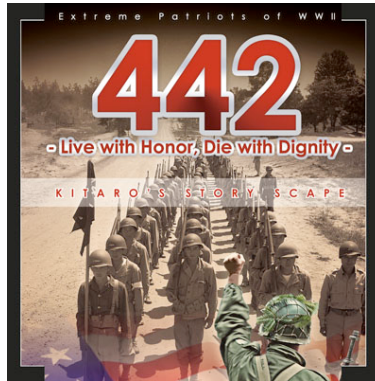


442 –Live with Honor, Die with Dignity- Kitaro's Story Script



Track 1 (1:33)

Narrator: World War II was the bloodiest and fiercest battle in the history of human kind. Over one hundred million soldiers fought worldwide with more than 50 million lives, including civilians lost. In the European Campaign was a unit that produced astonishing combat results in. They were the 100th Battalion and the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, composed mainly of Japanese Americans. This film is about the 100th Battalion and the 442nd Regimental Combat team who were first seen as the problem, but later proved to be the problem-solvers. This is the story of 442 veterans who are now normal American civilians.

Track 2 (2:17)

Narrator: The attack on Pearl Harbor by the Japanese military forever changed the lives of Japanese Americans. For them, the surprise attack on Hawaii was a tremendous shock. Their lives were changed overnight from American citizens to the hateful enemy, the “Japanese” who carried out the attack.

Steve Fumio Shimizu, F Company: I was right in the area where I saw those bombings. I actually saw it. It just happened that because I was a welder and we were building the underground fuel storage in Pearl Harbor, we actually saw all the bombings and I actually saw the battleship Arizona getting hit direct and also the battleship Oklahoma was hit direct.

Ted Tatsuya Tsukiyama, Military Intelligence Service Veteran: I was First Sergeant of Company B of the ROTC Regiment. And when that was converted into the Hawaii Territorial Guard, the whole organization and structure and rank and everything was converted into the Hawaii Territorial Guard. The service in the Hawaii Territorial Guard was quite short. You know, the Pentagon, they discovered to their horror that Hawaii, Honolulu was being guarded by hundreds

of "Japs" in American uniform. And eighty percent of the Hawaiian Territorial Guard was discharged.

Yoshikaki Fujitani, 86 Military Intelligence Service Veteran: Yeah, I remember our company commander was a man named **Knolly Smith**, he was black by the way. He was the one who had to tell us that we were being "inactivated." I mean, they used that fancy word. Actually, we're "fired" you know. But the unit was inactivated, and so Captain **Knolly Smith** gathered us and he had to tell us. And when he told us, he shed tears. And of course, we also cried too. You know, we felt so bad.

Track 3 (2:48)

Narrator: In Hawaii, while the students in the "VVV" contributed their labor to the national war effort, U.S. military officials were baffled about what to do with the Japanese American soldiers serving in the military prior to the war. Discharging all could equal approximately half of Hawaii's military force and lead to chaos. However, they could not include them with the general military unit. After much deliberation, in May 1942, General George C. Marshall decided to form an all Japanese American unit. This unit of approximately 1,400 soldiers was formed and shipped out of Hawaii to the mainland in June 1942. They were named the 100th Battalion. They later became part of the most decorated unit in U.S. army history. In Hawaii, the devotion of the "VVV" won the confidence of the army. On the mainland, the 100th Battalion was already gaining trust because of their outstanding training records.

Floyd Mori, National Executive Director, JACL: When WWII began, of course Japanese Americans were classified as "enemy aliens" at the beginning. But there was an effort, particularly on the part of our then executive secretary Mike Masaoka, who worked with the Department of Army to form an all-Japanese American unit. So after a lot of persuasion, a lot of discussion, the unit was created for Japanese Americans.

Steve Fumio Shimizu, F Company: I was working for the defense plant in Pearl Harbor. I didn't think that was enough contribution. At that age when we were young, maybe we were looking for adventure. I really can't say what motivated me, but I knew that I wanted to do my part, and that was the main reason for volunteering. I had no thoughts of what might happen to me.

Track 4 (7:11)

Neison Akagi, 522nd Field Artillery Battalion: This was a 70 acre piece and a railroad track bisect the farm into two sections: 40 acres below the track and another 30 acres above the track. In order to make the plan complete, we had to name the streets and donate the streets to the city. So that's why we ended up with "Akagi Lane," "Nashi Lane," "Hana Court," everything is Japanese

connected on this development except over here, you can read "Lindsay Grove Court," and that came from the town that we lived in California.

Dad bought the oldest son a 40-acre piece on the hillside before the war, and then lost it due to the evacuation.

Milton S. Eisenhower, Director of War Relocation Authority: When the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, our West Coast became a potential combat zone. Living in that zone were more than a 100,000 persons of Japanese ancestry. We knew that some among them were potentially dangerous. Military authorities therefore determined that all of them, citizens and aliens alike, would have to move. Neither the army nor the War Relocation Authority relished the idea of taking men, women and children from their homes, their shops and their farms, so the military and civilian agencies alike determined to do the job as a democracy should, with real consideration for the people involved.

Nelson Akagi, 552nd Artillery Battalion: The day before we were to leave, my brother and I distributed the field boxes out into the tomato patch to pick the next day. And that afternoon, after my brother and I distributed the boxes to pick the tomatoes, the War Relocation Authority, they were in charge of the evacuation, they came over and said, "Alright, you move out tomorrow morning." And at 8 o'clock in the morning, the War Relocation Authority sent an army bus out to load our family into the bus with two soldiers with sub-Thompson machine guns guarding us. And we had only one suitcase apiece.

Susan Akagi, Mark Akagi's Wife: It's the first time I've heard his story. Oh, I can feel what he's feeling. I can feel the pain.

Dorothy Shimizu, 83, Steve's Wife & former Minidoka Internee: The worst thing that happened was when my girlfriend...her father said to her mother and her family, "You go ahead. Because I just want to make sure the house is all locked up." They said "Alright." So they went down and he never came to the train station, he never showed up. And they got so worried, they went to the police and said, "He's supposed to come and he didn't show up." So the police went back to the house and they found him, and he was dead in the house. He just couldn't fathom life in a concentration camp and that was one of the saddest, hardest things for us to hear, that her father had committed suicide.

Narrator: Japanese Americans in the mainland were forced into internment camps. Their constitutional rights as U.S. citizens were violated. The first round of volunteers in the mainland fell far below the army's expectations at merely 1,000.

Neison Akagi, 552nd Field Artillery Battalion: I didn't join to say, "Oh, I'm joining to prove my loyalty," or I didn't say "I'm going to join so that my family could have a better life maybe." Those thoughts never came to me.

Before I left home, my dad told me "shikkari shinasai" ("Be a man!"), yeah. So he did not object at all. I said, "Wow! Did that come out of my dad's mouth?" I

thought he was going to say, "Oh, you dumb fool!" He just wanted me to do my best.

The other issue that was very interesting, which was very crucial to the formation of Japanese American soldiers, was that Japanese American Nisei from Hawaii and Japanese American from the mainland were very different. Very different culturally. So when these two groups got together, it was like oil and water, they did not get along. And they would fight, one misunderstood the other. And the fights were so terrible.

Eric Saul: And then **Colonel Pence** and the **Chaplain Hiro Higuchi** said, "I got an idea. If these guys aren't getting along, let's send all the Hawaiian troublemakers who are getting into all of these fights to the concentration camp in Rohwer, Arkansas." And all the Hawaiians were having a good time, saying "We're going to go and meet all of these wahine," and wahine is a girl. And then these Niseis drove up to the camp and what did they see? Barbed wire. Twelve feet high, surrounded by guard towers with live machine guns that was pointed in the camp. And then they were quiet, and their faces changed. And they looked around and on the way back, not one person said a word. And the fighting stopped, and this became a fighting unit that were fighting, even the Hawaiians knew, that it was a fight against prejudice.

Narrator: While the 442nd Regimental Combat Team was in training, the 100th Battalion landed in Italy in September 1943. A few days later during their first battle, Hawaii's baseball star **Sergeant Joe Takata** became the first Japanese American killed in combat and the first to receive the Distinguished Service Cross for the 100th Battalion.

Track 5 (4:19)

Narrator: At the top of the mountain where the monastery stood, the German military had a dominating position, and the Allied Forces continued to suffer casualties and damages. The Allied Forces planned to breakthrough by destroying the monastery with aerial bombings. A monastery with over 1,000 years of history was completely destroyed. The 100th Battalion never retreated in combat and their casualty rate was tremendously high. However, U.S. military officials quickly learned of their bravery and excellence. Due to the numerous decorations awarded to the countless dead and wounded, the 100th Battalion was nicknamed the "Purple Heart Battalion." In the battle of Monte Cassino, approximately 55,000 Allied forces were killed in action. Also, the 100th Battalion lost half of its men and was removed from the battle of Monte Cassino. The 100th Battalion left by sea and landed in Anzio in order to receive replacements and to open the path to Rome. Afterwards the 100th Battalion, now reduced to approximately 1,000 soldiers, liberated the road to Rome. However, they were stopped from entering the city. Jeeps and tanks filled with Caucasian soldiers passed them by.

Ara Ryokan, Tendai Shu Buddhist Priest in Honolulu & Editor of Testimonials by Japanese American Soldiers: これはもう、悲しかっただろうなと思う。ローマ

、１００大隊がローマに入って行った、一番先に行ったのは１００大隊だから。ローマに行った、そこで１００大隊にストップがかかったから。戦車隊が後ろからやってきて、戦車隊が後ろから来たんですよ。後ろから来て、１００大隊の後で、ここで止まっていると。で、戦車隊が行った。そして結局は１００大隊はローマに入れなかったんですよ。それで戦車隊の白人の部隊がローマに入った。その日系兵達は夜、密かにローマを介してローマの先を行くと。それが忘れられないね、あの人涙流して話していた。まあ、そのいわゆる日系部隊のシチュエーションがそれで解るね。

(Translation) How sad they must have felt. The 100th Battalion was the first to get close to Rome. That is where the 100th were stopped. The tanks came from behind and went past the 100th Battalion. In the end, they were not allowed to enter Rome. Caucasian soldiers entered Rome. So those Nisei soldiers at night were sent away from Rome. I could never forget that veteran who shed tears as he told the story. You can tell by that incident alone the prejudice Japanese American soldiers faced.

Narrator: "They passed the age-old Colosseum. While the people of the capital of Italy cheer the flags of America, Britain, Canada and other allied nations with whom fascist Italy was recently at war. General Clark, was mobbed by the enthusiastic Romans. 'Take it easy' says the General." In June 1944, news of the liberation of the ancient city of Rome by Allied Forces suddenly brought national attention to the Italian front in the U.S. Two days later, the Allied Forces invaded Normandy in northern France, the largest amphibious operation in history. After landing, the Italian campaign never garnered similar national interest.

Track 6 (1:07)

Narrator: While the soldiers of the 100th Battalion continued their fight in the violent European campaign, the U.S. military's top "secret weapon," the Military Intelligence Service (MIS) were also making remarkable contributions to the War in the Pacific. Shooting down the plane of Japan's best naval admiral **Isoroku Yamamoto** was possible only with intelligence acquired by the MIS. Also, the interrogation of captured Japanese soldiers, translations of diaries, and monitoring of telegraphs were crucial contributions made by the MIS that is said to have shortened the Pacific War by two years.

Track 7 (:40)

Narrator: They helped perhaps to save a million lives, not only American lives, but Japanese lives and civilian lives.

George Takei, Actor: For example, in places like Iwo Jima and Saipan, where people were holed up in the caves, they were able to shout to them in Japanese as American soldiers, and urge them not to kill themselves or not to do something that's suicidal.

Track 8 (2:06)

Narrator: While many Japanese Americans proved their loyalty to the U.S. by volunteering into the 442nd Regimental Combat Team to fight for their country, some Japanese Americans challenged the draft due to their internment and loss of constitutional rights. In February 1943, branded as "enemy aliens," Japanese Americans were forced into internment camps and yet asked to swear their loyalty to the U.S. by the "Loyalty Questionnaire." This caused great conflict within the Japanese American community. Those who answered 'no' to the loyalty questions were considered "disloyal" and sent to the segregated Tule Lake Internment Camp.

Jimi Yamaguchi, 86, Former President Tuie Lake Preservation Committee: Tule Lake, "bad guy." They just, right off the bat, they just named you as a bad guy regardless, even the people that was never in camp. "Oh, Tule Lake? Bad guys, they're bunch of bad guys." When we see a draft resister, more so.

Sanator Daniel Ken Inoue, 86, 442nd RCT Veteran Medal of Honor Recipient: Some looked upon them as "cowards." They're not cowards! It took a lot of strength, a lot of courage to do what they did. To go through prison sentence, that's not easy. Physical courage is easy. It's moral and spiritual courage that's difficult. We did what we thought was right with courage, they did what they thought was right with courage. And that's the American way.

Track 9 (3:28)

Narrator: At Camp Shelby in Mississippi, the 442nd Regimental Combat Team ended their training and left the U.S. for Italy, where they were joined by the 100th Battalion in Civitavecchia. Although the 100th Battalion was the first battalion of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, their exceptional combat records allowed the unit to retain their name as the 100th Battalion within the 442nd. Shortly after, the 100th Battalion showed their experience and importance to the newly arrived 442nd Regimental Combat Team. The 100th Battalion's exceptional achievements on the battlefield and the Liberation of Belvedere led to their first Presidential Unit Citation. It would be the first of seven Presidential Unit Citations awarded to the Japanese Americans of the 100th / 442nd RCT.

Lawson Sakai, 86, 442nd RCT Veteran: We had severe casualties on the very first day. We lost a number of men killed, a number of men wounded. Finally, we were able to move away from the front to the back of the hill, and then we were able to fire back. We really didn't know what was happening. I could still remember seeing the dust flying from the machine gun hitting the ground, we didn't even know what that was. It was the bullets hitting the ground, causing the dust to fly, and we didn't realize it because it was our first day.

Narrator: The two units went in, they didn't know what they were doing. I mean, we didn't. So the 100th was called in, they came in and they just chopped up the Germans. And it was a sight to behold. Then the 442nd men said "Wow, those guys, they really know how to do it."

Senator Daniel Ken Inoue, 86, 442nd RCT Veteran & Medal of Honor Recipient: Yes, I was afraid. Everyone was afraid, I would think. And I've seen men under heavy fire find themselves with wet pants. You can't control it. Well, that's part of human nature. But the thing that's horrified me when I killed my first German. And instead of experiencing remorse, when I realized I had taken a human life, the men all praised me. "Terrific, Dan! Terrific!" And I was proud. Because early on in my training since I was one of the best shots in the company, they made me the sniper. I had a scope, which was the symbol of something special. And here I am, a good Christian boy, singing in the choir and taught Sunday school, and I'm the number one killer.

Track 10 (2:27)

Edward Masaru Yamasaki, 85, 442nd RCT Veteran: I became a driver to pick up dead bodies, my main job. At first it was kind of hard, but after a while, somehow you get used to it, you know. Dead body on a stretcher. One time, I knew the guy and that was hard. Tommy, he was a sergeant machine gun section leader. Not my section, but the next section, and we trained for one year. So I sat next to him...just the whole night. I don't remember sleeping. I sat on my helmet, this was when we all had helmets, and that was a great support. I sat on it and saw Tommy lying in front of me in his uniform and very much at peace asleep. And he was so clean. I mean his uniform, There was no blood or anything. ...I guess I was really sad for the loss. He was a good guy, a decent good guy.

Narrator: In September 1944, the 100th / 442nd Regimental Combat Team was ordered to go from Italy to the French battlefield. In October 1944, the French town of Bruyeres long occupied by the Germans was finally liberated by the 100th / 442nd RCT but at a tremendous cost. To celebrate the 65th anniversary of the liberation, veterans of the 100th / 442nd RCT revisited their former battlegrounds.

Track 11 (2:05)

Narrator: French townsmen continue today to show deep gratitude towards their Japanese American liberators.

Etienne Poucher, General Council Vosges Region, France: We want to thank them, because it's very important for us. We know that it was a very big battle with lots of wounded, murder and killed persons, so people here know that it depended on that for our liberation, and that it was not easy for them. It's more than heroes. I think all American soldiers who went in France were heroes because they were young, they were fighting in a land they didn't know, and a lot

of them died. They are all heroes but those from the 442 are more than that, because more than that, they were fighting against discrimination and they were fighting to show others that they were the good guys. So it's very emotional.

Craig Shimizu, Steve Shimizu's Son: In Bruyeres, a road named "Rue Du 442" commemorates their liberation by the 100th / 442nd Regimental Combat Team.

Right, October 1944

So they came right through this area

We went through this area, yeah

Ellen Shimizu, Steve's Granddaughter: This experience has been so great and enjoyable, and I've learned so many things from all the stories I've heard, and I'm just so excited to hear them and to pass them on.

George Kanatani, 442nd RCT Veteran: The weather was just so miserable...

George Sakato & Kanatani, 442 RCT: Raining, snowing **(Together)**

George Kanatani, 442nd RCT Veteran: Cold... Yeah... I never experienced such bad weather as I did in the Vosges mountains there...

Track 12 (11:02)

George Sakato, 89, 442 RCT Veteran & Medal of Honor Recipient: That was incoming. I picked myself up over there about 10 feet, I'm all black-and-blue, just like this. I get black-and-blue when somebody grabs me by the arm. This is how I get. Concussion...I was all black and blue. Ached all over, but I just had a scratch. But my friend **Yohei Sagami** was on the ground, I turned him over, ...he got cut in the "juggler" veins here. And the blood was just "Tick, tick, tick, tick" every time his pulse would beat, the stream of blood would come out. He hit one of his main arteries, and the blood was... he lost too much blood and he died. He was the first Nisei to be killed in France.

Pierre Moulin, Historian: The first group of survivors of the 442nd came to my village two years in 1971. Seventeen members of the K company. I was named to guide their guide and they were really, really emotional. To have only seventeen survivors in their company, losing all of their friends in a couple of yards over there, they just get together and began to cry. Sergeant **Ben Inakazu**, Hawaii. 442nd Infantry, WWII. He died the day of the liberation of my village on October 19, 1944. There's a lot of these graves over there. They died in my village.

Narrator: After the liberation of Bruyères, the soldiers of the 100/442nd RCT were in a state of great exhaustion. Then, they were ordered to rescue the Texas

Battalion surrounded by the Germans in the Vosges Mountains. Later, this rescue mission would be designated as one of the ten major battles in U.S. Army history.

Matsuji Sakumoto, 87, 442 RCT Veteran: We just came back from a four-day engagement against the enemy. So the first thing when we get together, it's "Come on! Get the games! Let's play games!" You know? Then the sergeant came and said, "Bad news! We're going to hit the front tomorrow."

Barney Hajiuro, 93 442nd RCT Veteran & Medal of Honor Recipient: Everybody said, "Geez, they don't give us a rest." We would like to stay and drink beer, or...

Senator Daniel Ken Inoue, 86, 442nd RCT Veteran & Medal of Honor Recipient: We knew we were being used because we were expendable. And we welcomed this because we felt that here was the opportunity we wanted to demonstrate what we're worth.

Narrator: The Texas Battalion was surrounded by the German military. Several rescue attempts by the Texas regiment were suppressed by the German forces.

Lawson Sakai, 86, 442nd RCT Veteran: And I remember it was just my birthday. I was 21 years old and I was real happy, you know? It was terrible condition: it was raining, cold, muddy, the Germans were shelling us and we were trying to attack a hill, and machine guns were shooting at us. And all of a sudden, a German popped up and shot me. But somehow, he was only like from me to you, just 6 or 7 ft away. And he just point blank missed. And I turned around, I shot him and I ran up and grabbed him by the neck. He was just a kid, maybe a 14 or 15 year old kid. He was probably more scared than I was in a way, he shot at me and missed me. I should've been dead. But it's just things like that, and you see your friends get shot, and just bodies flying and just flying ...and you just can't forget those things. And somebody next to you, right away he's gone, you just keep going. You can't stop, you have to keep going. October 27, 1944, I became 21. I just remember that day so well and I should've been dead.

Nelson Akagi, 86, 522nd Field Artillery Battalion 442nd RCT Veteran: I was one of those that walked into the forest and bomb! I tripped a booby trap. And it was wet and cold so the charge must've gotten wet, because even if it exploded, the blast went away from me. My mind is a complete blank as to what I did afterward. Did I run somewhere or go and hide? What did I do?

Narrator: One of the problems in the region is that heavy forest trees would get hit and rendered new shell. Always the shell would burst on top of the trees and the shrapnel will just come down like an umbrella. So there was no way you can avoid getting injured.

Senator Daniel Ken Inoue, 86, 442nd RCT Veteran Medal of Honor Recipient: In one case where he was about 10 ft away, and I happened to be talking to him and all of a sudden, the shell came "Zoom!" A shrapnel cut the top of his head off.

Lawson Sakai, 86, 442nd RCT Veteran: Bang! Bang! Bang! Just continuously, and the tree bursts were coming and everybody was trying to stay hidden behind the trees or the rocks. But the shells kept bursting, coming down. That's when I got the shrapnel, the big piece of shrapnel in my back. Right behind here, it came it but it came in at an angle, so it came around like this, slid right around, the big piece of red, hot shrapnel. Oh, the pain was unbearable. It just...not only from piercing your body, but the hot, hot metal that's inside of you. And it's just burning and it hurts so much, you can't move. You just kind of curl up and you can't move, your body is in shock. You can't do anything.

George Kanatani, 92, 442nd RCT Veteran: I got hit when I was in a foxhole, trying to cover myself up and I got hit in the back there. The piece of shrapnel. The shrapnel was too close to my spine so they didn't take it out. I believe it's still embedded in my back. (laughs) In the morning as we were moving out, the Germans knew exactly where we were and they were shelling us oh like crazy, real heavy. All kinds of shells coming, and one of the shells landed on top of that heavy tree that we were under. And of all the people that was there, I was the only one that got hit.

Hervé Claudon, 442 Veterans Tour Coordinator: Here you can see is the mountain. It's the D? mountain, it's this one called in French "la vison." And so you see the main streets, the main streets are the same in October 1944.

"Banzai Hill they call it?"

Hervé Claudon, 442 Veterans Tour Coordinator: Yes, it's the first "Banzai Hill," you're right. The Banzai charge was done in this mountain.

Lawson Sakai, 86, 442nd RCT Veteran: So we're trying to move our men up higher because the machine guns were firing down at us. We couldn't get going because there was too much fire. So finally, we said "We'll make a Banzai Charge." So we all got the whole hill, everybody made a banzai charge up there to get close enough where they could throw a hand grenade at the machine guns. When you stop the machine gun from shooting, you can get up there close enough to shoot at them. That's what we had to do. But we were pinned down all across because they had the high spot and you're coming up and they got you. You can't get away from them. So we made the banzai charge up the hill and it was really something. You know, it was pretty bad. Bodies were flying all over, guys were getting hit left and right.

George Sakato, 89, 442 RCT Veteran & Medal of Honor Recipient: I'm down in the hole so I didn't see the Germans come around, and they start climbing the hill. They were taking the hill back, you know? Oh... I'm behind there climbing the hill and "Watch out for the Germans!" And **Saburo Taramachi** stands up and says "Where?" And the machine gun shot him. So I crawled over to his hole and picked him up and said, "Why did you stand up?" He tried to say something

but he went...(head down). Then I know he died. He died in my arms, and I'm looking at all the blood and said "Oh God..." I was mad, cried, "You son of a **tch." Took my Tommy, zig-zagged up that hill, "tut-tut-tut-tut-tut-tut" (shooting sounds) and then the rest of them went up. They said I shot twelve guys, but I don't know how many I shot. And then the other soldiers started waving handkerchiefs giving up, but I had to watch and see, maybe the guy behind him might have a gun. So they're all just waving their hands like this, and I said, "ok." They said I took 34 prisoners, but I don't know how many I took.

Track 13 (1:56)

Narrator: The Japanese American soldiers of the 100/442nd RCT proved their loyalty to their country with their own blood.

Matsuji Sakumoto, 87, 442 RCT Veteran: So I'm coming down the slope, I'm looking, I thought I saw an American guy come out from behind a tree. He looked toward me, he ran back. So I said, "Hey! I think they are the Lost Battalion!" And sure enough they came out, the Lost Battalion. So, I took out my cigarette and said, "Oh? You guys want cigarettes? I got some over in my musket, I had about three packs." Bomb! It's all gone.

Narrator: In order to rescue approximately 211 Texas Battalion soldiers, the 100/442nd suffered far more casualties, killed and wounded. **General Dahlquist** who commanded this battle was criticized. Some even called him the "Foolish General." However, this irrational plan was the turning point for Japanese Americans. The news of their achievement and sacrifice received national attention in the U.S. They were the best. The 442 was the best because they had the ability to get the people out where a lot of people couldn't. They did a terrific job in Italy also.

Janet Hardwick Daughter of "Lost Battalion Survivor": You know, he never forgot that he came home because of them.

Penny Webster, Granddaughter of "Lost Battalion Survivor": And he thought they were the only ones that could've done it as well.

Janet Hardwick Daughter of "Lost Battalion Survivor": Right.

Penny Webster, Granddaughter of "Lost Battalion Survivor": Many tried, and were not able to be successful. But the men of the 442, through strength and courage, were able to break through and rescue my grandfather.

Track 14 (11:09)

Narrator: The 100/442nd RCT received 5 presidential unit citations within a month-and-a-half in the battlefronts of France. You can imagine the severity of their continuous battles.

Senator Daniel Ken Inoue, 86, 442nd RCT Veteran Medal of Honor Recipient: The General of the 36th Division called our Colonel and said, "I want you to assemble your troops so that I can personally extend to them the gratitude of the division." And so when we got together, the general said, "What did you do? Send them out on leave and pass?" "No, they're either dead or in the hospital." The general got so shook up he couldn't say a word, he couldn't give a speech. That's how it ended.

Narrator: For example, I company had only 8 out of 193 men left standing after the rest were either seriously wounded or killed in combat.

John Bryan, son of "Lost Battalion" Survivor: It's uniquely special to see the way the French have never forgotten this event. And when I think about it, I think very simply look at the 5,000 graves in Epinal Cemetery and they realize that all of those people died for them.

Steve Shimizu, 89, 442nd RCT Veteran: You know, one of the areas that really touched me was the cemetery. I did not realize how beautifully the U.S. have kept the graves where all of the G.I.s who have passed away. So I think that was one of the areas, more than the areas that I went through fighting, that kind of touched me.

This weather was like this a lot?

Yeah

Back in 1944?

Yeah, oh yeah.

A lot of overcast?

Lawson Sakai, 442nd RCT Veteran: Well, you know, we're nearing the end of our lives too, and they gave up their lives for a long time. We've lived for so long in peace after 1944 and 1945. And I think it's just showing a little bit of respect for those who gave up their lives.

Narrator: The 522nd Field Artillery Battalion of the 100/442nd was recognized for their speed and accuracy. Needing more firepower, the 522nd Battalion was separated from the 100/442nd to march with the 7th Infantry Division towards Germany. Ironically, half of the soldiers in the 522nd who also came from U.S. internment camps would become one of the liberators of the Nazi concentration camp. They looked like Orientals. I didn't know they were Nisei then, and I didn't know they were Japanese. But after the war I knew they were Nisei.

Yeah, they were called Nisei.

We were not told about them, we were not informed. Actually, we were surprised to see them. Many were very thin, emaciated, and could hardly walk. Well, the one that I knew most was called **Larry Leubetski**. He was a Lithuanian Jew, he was in Dachau, he had a tattoo on his arm with an ID number, and he was a little

bit younger than us. But he spoke very good English, German, French, several other languages, so we hired him as an interpreter for us so we could negotiate with farmers and natives in the area.

Nelson T. Akagi, 86, 522nd Field Artillery Battalion 442nd RCT Veteran: After we had parted and whenever I had a spare moment, the memory of Larry had always come into my mind. And so I went over to Washington D.C. on the day the Jewish Holocaust Monument was supposed to open, but it was closed. That was about 49 years after we had met in Europe. And so I went back the second time when I found out the Holocaust Monument was actually open, and so I presented to the man at the door, I had a picture of Larry Leubetski, the prisoner number is 83123, and I showed him the picture and the number. He said, "Oh, come on in, come on in." And about six months later, they located Larry so they gave him my telephone number. And lo and behold, Larry called me one Sunday, and I don't know if we cried more than we talked, but it was quite a conversation.

Eric Saul Former Curator of the Military Museum at the Presidio of San Francisco: When I talked to the Jewish survivors what they felt when they saw the Niseis, they said "The face of the Japanese American was the face of an angel who had come down from heaven." Japanese Americans always wanted to know who those Jews were, and the Jews always wanted to know who those Japanese were! So we finally got our answer. What day did we get our answer? May 2, 1993, on the very day they liberated the Dachau death march. And the Jerusalem Ramada Renaissance where we met them, everybody cried on that day, everybody cried on that day. We found out that the Jews were Lithuanians, and they've been in the Dachau camp number 7, which was a sub camp of Dachau, and they've been there for almost a year. And they were dying at a rate of dozens of people a week, and they never thought they were going to make it through the war. The Japanese Americans saved that last group of several hundred.

Narrator: The recognition of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team is something that is celebrated and praised altogether here in the Museum of Tolerance. It's a very important part. The troops chanced upon these camps, it was purely fortuitous, but they recognized when they did, the significance of what they had found. And we are very much indebted to those brave soldiers who not only continued to stay, to assist, to liberate, but bore important testimony and gave eyewitness accounts that ultimately stand as the record of history for what they discovered. So this is a very real chapter in the history of the Holocaust, it is a very important chapter for those people who were actually discovered and who owe their lives to the fact that those who found them cared to resuscitate them, to assist them, to restore them to life.

Eric Saul Former Curator of the Military Museum at the Presidio of San Francisco: The irony of people who had volunteered from concentration camps in America. They weren't death camps, but they were certainly terrible. Liberating camps was certainly the greatest irony of the 442nd. The other irony was that

they were told not to talk about it, and they didn't about it, so we didn't know until recently.

Narrator: It is speculated that the Holocaust of Nazi Germany was responsible for the deaths of approximately 6 million Jews and 11million lives total, a testimony to the tragedy of humans dehumanized by war. The 100/442nd finished a fierce battle in northeastern France near the German border and was transferred to southern France. Replacements finally arrived and regiments were restructured, a relatively easy stay for the soldiers. Due to the insistence of **General Mark Clark**, the 100/442nd excluding the 522nd Field Artillery Battalion was sent on a secret mission to take the Gothic Line, the last major German line of defense in the Italian Campaign. Although the loyalty of the 100/442nd was questioned at first when they were seen as a "problem," they soon proved themselves to be "problem solvers," one of the best combat units that the army counted on as their last resort.

Track 15 (7:53)

Senator Daniel Inoue, 86, 442nd RCT Veteran Medal of Honor Recipient: When my elbow was struck and I knew it was gone, the first thing that came to mind was the grenade in my right hand. So instead of screaming and yelling, which none of us did, I just pulled it out and (threw it). Luckily, it hit the enemy. But my job was to make certain that the attack continued, so I continued while the blood was gushing out of the machine gun. I had no pain. After a certain while, you don't feel pain.

Giovanni Cipollini, Historian: This monument is dedicated to the Allied soldiers fallen on the Gothic Line. For those who fought in this area from September 1944 to April 1945; American, English and Brazilian armies. They fought especially on that German line known as the Gothic Line. This soldier represents **Sadao Munemori**.

Narrator: **Sadao Munemori**, the first Japanese American soldier to receive the Medal of Honor, lost his life at the Gothic Line when an enemy grenade landed in front of his comrades. Munemori threw himself on top of the grenade to save his comrades and sacrificed his own life.

Achievements of the Japanese American soldiers are highly recognized in France and Italy.

I think good soldiers have direction. They follow rules and regulations, they certainly understand standards, but what distinguishes great soldiers from good soldiers is "motivation." And the soldiers of the 442nd were extremely motivated and committed to doing well and showing that Japanese American soldiers were loyal to this great country of ours.

Senator Daniel Ken Inoue, 86, 442nd RCT Veteran Medal of Honor Recipient: 「義務」、「名誉」 "Obligation," "Honor"

Janet Ito, Lawson's Daughter: 「我慢」 **"Patience"**

Frank Emi, 93, Founder of Fair Play Committee: 「仕方が無い」 **"Can't be helped"**

Eric Saul, former curator, Military Museum at the Presidio of San Francisco: 「恥」 **"Shame"**

George Take, Actor: **"Endurance 辛抱," "Effort 努力."** Those ideas that their Issei parents imparted to their children played a big part in how they thought. And I think that sense of "family tie" and the sense of honor and dignity that was part of the values that their parents imparted to them played a great role.

Minoru Tonai Former Chair of Japanese American Cultural Community Center: When I was going to Compton Japanese School, this is just before the war started so it must've been 1941. And the principal would stand up on a dais? And this day, he said he received a letter from the Prime Minister of Japan, who was Hideki Tojo. He said, "This is a letter to the Nisei. You are an American, so as an American, you must be loyal to your country." And I was shocked. I thought he was Japanese, I was of Japanese descent, he would say just the opposite, to try to entice us to fight for Japan, not fight for America. I felt I was American, but I was surprised that he would say something like that. And I tried to reason why he would say something like that. And I realized that he was a soldier, and what he was doing was he was going by the bushido precepts, the samurai precepts. You have to always be loyal to your lord and to your country. For him, for us to be loyal to America is a natural thing for a person to do.

Narrator: Mr. Fujitani states the same thing, how he has heard about it with many other attendants in Hawaii at a speech by Yosuke Matsuoka, Japanese Ambassador of the League of Nations upon his arrival. In his speech in Hawaii, he emphasized that the Nisei were Americans, and that in order to be exemplary Americans, they should be loyal to America. This sentiment was echoed repeatedly by religious leaders, Japanese school teachers and by our parents. A good Nisei therefore was first a good, loyal American.

Senator Daniel Ken Inoue, 86, 442nd RCT Veteran Medal of Honor Recipient: The morning of our first battle, we're all assembled and ready to move. I sat down with the squad, I was a Sergeant then, and I asked all of them, "What were you thinking about last night? The night before the attack. Everyone gave me the same answer in different ways: "I hope I do not dishonor the family," "I hope I don't bring shame," "I hope my family is not ashamed of me," the same thing. Honor was very important. To bring shame to the family was unbearable. And so all of us went into battle fearful. That's human nature. If you're not fearful, you're crazy. But that's the way it was.

Ted Tsukiyama, 90, MIS Veteran: You know you're in a crisis when you're faced with very difficult problems, I would say these Japanese values came out and I think helped the Nisei to face these very difficult problems that they faced. Like for instance, "Kuni no tame," that means "for the sake of the country," but what country? Well, the only country we knew was America.

Joanne Sakai, Lawson's Daughter: I remember once when we found his Purple Hearts in the house, we showed them to him and said, "Oh, What are these?" And he said, "Oh, well it's from the war." "Talk to us about the war," and he said "No, it's just killing people." So he didn't talk, wouldn't talk.

Janet Ito, Lawson's Daughter: When we were young, we would go swimming or to the beach, and we would see scars, but he didn't like talking about it.

Narrator: Most veterans do not speak of their war experiences to their family members. While there are many reasons, many veterans still carry deep emotional scars from the war even today.

Lawson Sakai, 86, 442nd RCT Veteran: You know, I had Post Traumatic Stress Disorder when the war was over. I had to leave the army. I was supposed to go to training and go to school. I didn't want any of the army, I just told them, "Get me out as soon as you can," and this was 1945 when the war was over. We had a lot of problems of... for instance, nightmares, you have all kinds of strange things in your mind when you're sleeping. None of them are wild anymore, you don't wake up screaming anymore, but it's still there.

Mineko Sakai, 86, Lawson Sakai's Wife: I remember the first time I saw him out in the yard after we were married. And an airplane went over the house, he just froze. I think he kind of remembered the airplanes over in Germany or France.

George Kanatani, 92, 442nd RCT Veteran: Any sharp noise would kind of shake me up a bit because of the constant tree bursts we've experienced here in the Vosges mountains. Any sharp noise would kind of shake me up a bit.

Track 16 (6:46)

Narrator: I struggled with the nightmares for twenty years, and they start slacking off a little after twenty years until it turned into just dreams.

Jeanette Spencer, Nelson's Daughter: No, he never told us about that. But I always wondered if he did because we would watch movies for... war movies and they'd have nightmares. And "I wonder if dad does?" But he was such a quiet person that I didn't want... I don't know, I felt it's kind of invading his personal privacy... so I never asked.

Lawson Sakai, 86, 442nd RCT Veteran: My children, I don't think they're interested in what I went through, number one. So I'm not going to force myself on them. Like "Hey, I want to tell you about my wartime?" No.

Joanne Sakai, Lawson's Daughter: It's a lost legacy otherwise, for us. And...

Lawson Sakai, 86, 442nd RCT Veteran: But at the same time, they won't understand what we went through. No one could understand, unless you actually went to combat and had the killing experiences. You just can't understand it.

Senator Daniel Inoue, 86, 442nd RCT Veteran Medal of Honor Recipient: If you run over a cat, you will always remember that bump. You can never forget that. Now, if you can't forget killing a cat, how can you forget killing a human being?

Nelson T. Akagi, 86, 522nd Field Artillery Battalion 442nd RCT Veteran: 私は昔の事、酷い経験したのは話したくなかったの。I didn't want to talk about the horrible experiences I had in the past.

Senator Daniel Inoue, 86, 442nd RCT Veteran Medal of Honor Recipient: I killed a lot of people. I won't tell you how many. That's my secret.

Lawson Sakai, 86, 442nd RCT Veteran: Sometimes bodies are ripped apart and turned inside out. It's a mess.

Janet Ito, Lawson's Daughter: I'll never forget one of the first Las Vegas reunions I went to, and **Joe Sakato**, who was one of the Medal of Honor recipients was there, and he teared up because my dad introduced him and asked him to say a few words. So he got up and he talked, and he teared up and said, "I'm no hero. I had to kill people and it wasn't nice. It wasn't good." And he... he still carries that with him.

George T. Sakato, 89, 442 RCT Veteran Medal of Honor Recipient: Then I saw the Germans that did that. So I shot him in the leg here. Then he saw me, so he picks up his gun. When he picked up his gun, he made a mistake. So I shot him again and I shot him down here. And... he went back. And he was crying for somebody to come and help him. So we said "Well, we know where the Germans are," so we had to go back up. So when I got to the top, the German was crying and screaming for help, but nobody came. Pretty soon, I hear a "boom!" No more screaming, no more crying. Couldn't understand what was wrong, what was going on. He committed suicide, put a grenade...(behind his head). Later on, when we went on to see that hill, he had put a grenade under his head and blew his head off. He committed suicide. Because he was in so much pain that no Germans and his counterparts came to help him. If they came and helped him, he probably would've gone home. But he was crying in pain, and nobody helped him...so he'll never go home. Young, blond kid. That hurt me, you know. Why can't they help him you know, why can't they help him? Then when he blows his head off, that's why I wear this medal for him too. I wear this medal for those who didn't come

home. I'm not a hero. I got the medal for being a hero, but... I only wear for those that never came back. Old **Yohei Sagami** was the first one, and **Saburo Taramachi**, **George Futamoto**, **Puebla Colorado**. Then **Masuoka** and... **Taburo Tanamachi**, all these guys died you know.

Narrator: On August 14, 1945. The war ended with the Victory by the Allied Forces. On July 15, 1946, Presidential aids in Washington D.C. recommended the cancellation of the award ceremony for the 100/442nd RCT due to the rain. However, President Truman refused and stated, "The rain is nothing compared to what the boys had to endure in combat." The 100/442nd Regimental Combat Team was the only unit in U.S. history to be greeted by the President. You fought not only the enemy, but you also fought prejudice. And you've won.

Track 17 (10:41)

Narrator: **For their size and length of service, the 100/442nd Regimental Combat Team of World War II remains today as the most highly decorated unit in U.S. military history.**

George Takei, Actor: They returned as heroes, and it was the kind of "marketable" action that they took. The resisters' action, although I consider it equally heroic, was not "marketable." And it was because of the heroism of the 442nd that American changed for us. It opened the eyes of the rest of America that Americans come in this shape, that Americans can look like this. And that they owe a debt to Americans that look like us. It was not only heroic, it was powerful, forceful American statement.

Narrator: When it comes to the subject of the 442 and his experiences, he has really come out of his shell and he talks about it without any hesitation. And before, he would give it a lot of thought before he would start talking about it. So I'm glad this has happened. I think that it's been good for him, and it's been good for all of us because we found out a lot about what happened during that time. It's a wonderful feeling to know that this kind of rounds out everything, you know. After 57 years of marriage to find out that you still had things to learn about one another. And I think this really was a wonderful experience. I just love my dad and for what he's done for this country and what he's done for this family. Yeah, I'm just proud of my dad. Always think that the United States is the best place to live in the whole wide earth. It's the land of opportunities and if they can't make it, it's just their fault because they didn't try. Yes, so I tell everybody when I go give talks to the school kids, I tell them "Definitely go for broke! Study hard! Play hard! Do everything hard and you'll succeed! I even tell them, they might be the next President of the United States!"

Richard Sword Ph.D., Psychologist: Over the ten years that I've been working with them, I've noticed their psychology, there's something different, there's a reason they're so great. Why are they accomplished so much, so famous, what is it? So I started studying that and how American veterans would tend to talk

about the bad things in the war and how it effected them and how bad it was. The 442 on the other hand would come in and talk about the good things in the war, and the funny things they did, how they enjoyed each other and how they're still friends, and how they're working for a better future. I went, "Wow, that's it!" They focus on the positive of the past to create a more positive future. The future is more important than the past, although the past is important. We look to the past to learn, but we focus on creating a better future for ourselves and our children. And that's what I essentially learned from them.

Narrator: The casualty rate of the 100/442nd was shockingly high. Some of those who survived are now living happy and peaceful lives. But some still carry deep emotional and physical scars due to the war. Regardless, they remember those who died with dignity for this country and they continue to live with honor. I've interviewed about a 150 veterans, one of them was the flag-raisers on Iwo Jima, Raymond Jacobs, with the first flag raising. The theme that has come across in a lot of these oral history interviews, a lot of them have told me the one group that they admire and have a tremendous amount of respect for is the 442nd. Any person in the army, a Purple Heart is amazing and to be called the "Purple Heart Battalion." And then at the same time have 21 Medal of Honors. I don't know how to even make that as a comparison. So I think any soldier that sees that knows how significant it is. That's spectacular soldiers, super-human heroes. The more I think about it, the more it attacks my soul. They have set a tone of giving us the opportunity and paved the road so that we could follow behind them, can have the opportunities that we're able to benefit [from] today. Even though the veterans are very, very modest, they don't realize the significant impact they have had in their contributions. We don't want to repeat...we don't want to repeat the way that these people were treated after 9-11. You saw some of that and I thought, 'It's a shame. We're repeating the past. But it's amazing what these men did for our country, because they were Americans too. My father's vision is that the ambassador from the United States be of that ethnicity. So for example, the ambassador to Japan would be a Japanese American who can speak the language and understand the culture. Another country would be that person from that... Because America has every culture. The whole world is in America, and that's what he feels that would be to promote understanding and build peace. And I think he's learned that from his experience.