

September 25, 2007

Dear Service Center Chairperson,

The War, a recently released 14 hour documentary on WWII produced by Ken Burns and PBS , took more than six years to create utilizing interviews of more than 40 individuals in four communities (Waterbury, Connecticut; Mobile, Alabama; Sacramento, California; and Luverne, Minnesota). The documentary features individuals in those communities, with two ethnic/racial groups given special consideration: Japanese Americans and African Americans. The documentary also has an accompanying book and educational materials.

The historical, military, social and economic exclusion of the Latino and Native American WWII experience in this film resulted in the creation of a supplementary half hour piece attempting to fill in the gaps. The Ken Burns documentary is not a complete documentary unless the additional 28 minutes are a part of the presentation. History curriculum in public schools should be created around the principle that all people have contributed to extraordinary historical events such as World War II. Because race continues to be a significant factor in perception of past events, careful consideration is necessary to ensure incorporation of diverse populations when creating a historical record.

Members are encouraged to get an inclusive historical account by considering a number of resources that accurately portray the role of Native Americans and Latinos during WWII including:

- *A Color of Honor: A Tribute to Latinos in the US Military*, a documentary by Manny Monterrey
- *Navajo Code Talkers*, a documentary by Brendan Tully
- *Mexican Americans and World War II*, a book by Maggie Rivas-Rodriguez

At the University of Texas, Maggie Rivas-Rodriguez is coordinating a project to share the Latino experience in World War II. On videotape, the *Latino & Latina World War II Oral History Project* has documented interviews with nearly 300 veterans, most of whom are Mexican Americans living in the Southwest.

CTA is an organization that believes that participation by various cultural groups and individuals in the creation and implementation of educational activities should be encouraged. Diverse inclusion facilitates an accurate portrayal of the roles and contributions of ALL races, ethnic groups, and cultures in the curriculum and school supported/sponsored activities.

The inclusion of ALL groups in the record of all efforts to secure our freedoms is the right thing to do.

Sincerely,

David A. Sanchez, President
California Teachers Association

Cc: Dean E. Vogel
Daniel R. Vaughn
Lynette Henley
Carolyn Doggett
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