

Dear Editor:

Screescanda's arrogant and inadequate defense of "Right of Passage," directed by Janice Tanaka, strikes out in failing to address the historic inaccuracies in Tanaka's DVD as to why President Reagan changed his mind to sign HR 442 (aka Redress legislation). Screescanda's letter, published in the May 10, 2016, edition of NikkeiWest, appears to promote his ego rather than to address the concerns about Tanaka's fictitiously created "mystery" of why President Reagan changed his mind.

Strike 1: Screescanda in his letter and Tanaka in her DVD provide no explanation as to why the President should not be believed and taken at his word. Just before signing HR 442, President Reagan stated that he was signing the legislation in honor of the sacrifices made by the 442nd Regimental Combat Team during World War II. I was present at the signing ceremony and can attest that the President clearly stated his reason for signing HR 442 was in memory of Sgt Kaz Masuda and in honor of the 442nd RCT. The President's signing statement is publicly available online.

Strike 2: Screescanda and Tanaka dismiss Grant Ujifusa and Governor Tom Kean's contributions in developing the critical strategy on behalf of JACL to change President Reagan's mind -- refreshing the President's memory about his role in 1945 in awarding a military award to the Masuda family in honor of Sgt. Masuda, who was a 442nd RCT soldier and was killed in action. For his contribution to Redress, Ujifusa was awarded the Japanese Emperor's Rising Sun Award. Screescanda makes the baseless and insulting claim that the New York Consul General did not research Ujifusa's contribution in making the nomination and thereby misled the Emperor. Again, I was present at the award ceremony in New York, and can attest that the Consul General was well versed in explaining Ujifusa's contribution in changing President Reagan's mind and that Governor Kean, who also participated in the ceremony, explained in detail how he was recruited by Ujifusa to help implement Ujifusa's strategy to bring June Masuda's letter to the President's attention.

Strike 3: Screescanda and Tanaka do not address why they do not believe the JACL's 1991 video entitled "Redress: The JACL Campaign for Justice." This video can be found on YouTube. The JACL video states that the sacrifices made by the 442nd RCT were critically important in the passage of Redress; credits Ujifusa and Governor Kean with the strategy to change President Reagan's mind; and includes footage of the signing ceremony showing the President stating that he was signing HR 442 in honor of the 442nd RCT. Screescanda and Tanaka fail to explain why the JACL's video is not credible in giving the reason why President Reagan signed the legislation and acknowledging Ujifusa and Governor Kean's contributions.

Nitto Tire USA should be commended if it has decided not to enable Tanaka to show her DVD promoting a fictitious "mystery" theme. As such, Tanaka's DVD does not qualify as a documentary. Not to detract from the contributions made by Senators Matsunaga and Inouye and Congressmen Matsui and Mineta in obtaining approval by the Congress, there would have been no Redress legislation enacted if President Reagan continued to oppose the legislation. The valor of the members of 442nd RCT is what changed the President's mind. By failing to give them credit, Screescanda and Tanaka dishonor the sacrifices and the service of the 442nd RCT.

Gerald H. Yamada