

## **Assembly Joint Resolution No. 33**

### **RESOLUTION CHAPTER 3**

Assembly Joint Resolution No. 33—Relative to a commemorative stamp recognizing the Nisei (Japanese American) veterans of World War II.

[Filed with Secretary of State February 13, 2008.]

#### **LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST**

AJR 33, Eng. Commemorative postage stamp: Nisei (Japanese American) veterans of World War II.

This measure would urge the Legislature of California to encourage the Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee of the United States Postal Service to approve a commemorative postage stamp honoring the Nisei (Japanese American) veterans who served in the United States Army during World War II.

WHEREAS, Over 20,000 Nisei (American-born children of Japanese immigrants) enlisted in the United States Army in World War II, many from internment camps, despite the prejudice against them generated after the attack of Pearl Harbor by Japan in 1941; and

WHEREAS, Nisei served in a number of capacities in the United States Army during the World War II era both at home and abroad. Many were born and raised here in California, where they and their families would be unjustly incarcerated at internment camps like Manzanar in Inyo County and Tule Lake in Modoc County; and

WHEREAS, Over 300 Nisei women across the nation enlisted in the Women's Army Corps and Cadet Nurse Corps; and

WHEREAS, Among their many battles, Nisei soldiers in Europe fought at Monte Cassino and Anzio and they were critical in breaking the German "Gothic Line." They liberated towns such as Bruyeres, Biffontaine, and Belvedere. They also freed and aided Holocaust victims from the Dachau concentration camps; and

WHEREAS, The most famous unit, the 100th/442nd Regimental Combat Team also known as the "Go For Broke" regiment, became one of the most decorated and acclaimed units in American history. The 100th Infantry Battalion established a reputation as a tough combat outfit in Italy and were known as the "Purple Heart Battalion" because of the heavy number of casualties it had suffered at Monte Cassino and Anzio in May 1944; and

WHEREAS, The 100th/442nd Regimental Combat Team's "Rescue of the Lost Battalion" was acknowledged to be one of the prominent battles in United States Army history. This battle became one of 16 depicted in "The Army in Action" series of paintings for the United States Army's Center of Military History. This regiment led a heroic drive through German

lines in the Vosges Mountains in October 1944 freeing over 200 fellow American soldiers of the 36th Texas Division; and

WHEREAS, The Nisei of the United States Army's secret Military Intelligence Service (MIS) played a key role in the Pacific, using Nisei soldiers' knowledge of the Japanese language and culture to support the Allied war efforts, including the occupation of Japan; and

WHEREAS, The Military Intelligence Service was awarded a Presidential Unit Citation for their contributions to the war effort, and is considered to be the pioneering group of what would become the United States Armed Forces' Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center located at the Presidio of Monterey, which today trains military linguists in over 84 languages and dialects, and is considered one of the finest schools for foreign language study in the world; and

WHEREAS, Among their many awards, Nisei soldiers of World War II earned over 9,000 Purple Hearts, 21 Medals of Honor, and a total of nine Presidential Unit Citations; and

WHEREAS, Congress would later apologize for the en masse World War II incarceration of 120,000 American citizens and permanent residents of Japanese ancestry as "a grave injustice" that grew mainly from "racial prejudice, wartime hysteria, and a failure of political leadership" as stated in the Civil Liberties Act of 1988; and

WHEREAS, Nisei World War II veterans are a shining example of patriotic sacrifice in our nation's history, and their service cautions the nation against questioning the loyalty of a person based on their heritage. The constitutional rights of these American citizens were removed due to their ancestry, and we need to be vigilant against similar actions in the future; and

WHEREAS, The Nisei World War II veterans commemorative stamp is being considered for issuance by the United States Postal Service Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee; and

WHEREAS, The dedicated service of our current Armed Forces being so honorably served by minorities today, we find it fitting that the diverse heritage of our military be recognized; now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the Assembly and the Senate of the State of California, jointly,* That the Legislature urges the Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee of the United States Postal Service to approve the issuance of a commemorative postal stamp honoring the significant contributions of Nisei in the United States Army during World War II; and be it further

*Resolved,* That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies of this resolution to the President and the Vice President of the United States, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, to the Majority Leader of the Senate, to each Senator and Representative from California in the Congress of the United States, and to the Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee.