


Benicia, CA 94510

July 1, 1994

Mr. Kevin O'Brien
Manager
KTVU - CHANNEL 2
2 Jack London Square
Oakland, CA 94607

Dear Mr. O'Brien:

The presentation of D-Day Remembered shown on Channel 2 during the week of June 1-6, 1994, excluded black American veterans from speaking of their skirmishes with the enemy like white American veterans who did speak showing camera clips in combat. Black American soldiers left England crossing the English Channel to France during the "D-Day Invasion." While landing, black and white soldiers were segregated fighting the enemy together.

Narrator Bob McKenzie did speak of black American soldiers having a unit of their own, showing a black American soldier with his back to the audience waving a baton leading a musical band having their entertainment.

On June 6, 1994, Channel 2 presented a black veteran with his wife speaking about how awful it was handling and burying dead soldiers and what a smell it was. Charles Spellman who was presented as a black historian relating to black soldiers, also spoke of black soldiers during the invasion handling dead soldiers and did not seem very knowledgeable.

Statements made by Narrator Bob McKenzie and Charles Spellman portrayed black soldiers as jumping and jiving to music and burying the dead. That is totally incorrect. Black soldiers landed, fought, shot the enemy and died during the invasions on French and German soil. I would like to think that it was an oversight on the part of Narrator McKenzie who presented 4 to 7 white American GI's telling of their participation during the D-Day Invasion. I can imagine the impression that millions of viewers have of black soldiers' participation in the D-Day Invasion through the Channel 2 presentation.

I'm really perplexed and I'm certain millions of viewers do not and cannot understand why Channel 2's managing staff would allow a presentation in its entirety to exclude men of color from telling or showing their exploits during the D-Day Invasion. The enemy knew the black and white soldiers were segregated after landing on French soil. Knowing of this, the German commanders had their soldiers dress and talk impersonating the white American soldier. These impersonators were deployed amongst black American area positions.

I am appalled because Channel 2 with such notables as Dennis Richmond and other persons of color were not sought for their recommendations of possible black veterans. I am positive they would have recommended several black veterans, possibly myself.

[REDACTED], I am very disappointed that Channel 2 depicted the black soldier as non-participants, not part of the invasion or liberating force and thereby not really an integral part of American history.

It's fair to include people of color especially Black History, which is not part of the American school curriculum. All children need to see themselves on television. It's critically important for young adults, children, all people colors to understand and appreciate each others accomplishments, thereby ultimately learning and respecting one another.

Channel 2 perpetuated racism in their programming of D-Day Remembered. I noticed the word "Ford" on the first day's showing of D-Day Remembered. Was this meant to convey to millions of viewers watching that the Ford Foundation was the sponsor?

Sincerely, C 1
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