



Recently, I had the honor of presenting the Congressional Gold Medal to nineteen heroes who served in the Japanese-American Military Intelligence Service, the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, and the 100th Infantry Battalion during World War II. This medal, the highest civilian award presented by Congress, is awarded for an “outstanding deed or act of service to the United States.” Four veterans attended the ceremony to receive their Congressional Gold Medal, and fifteen veterans were awarded it posthumously.

After the attack on Pearl Harbor, our national leaders chose to relocate Japanese-Americans against their will, an action rooted in irrational panic and blatant prejudice.



Even when our nation committed an injustice against them, however, these patriots remained

fiercely loyal to the country they loved. Members of the Military Intelligence Service served as interpreters, translators, and counter-intelligence agents. The 100th Infantry Battalion and the 442nd Regiment Combat Team participated in eight major campaigns in Italy, France and Germany. The motto of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team was fitting: "Go for Broke!" Each of the courageous men in these three units truly did wager everything to protect our nation and our freedoms. They embodied the courage to petition leaders who were against them, the integrity to do what was right in the midst of unspeakable adversity, and the grace to never give up on America. I am delighted that they have received this much-deserved recognition for their dedicated service.

You can read my full speech [here](#) .