Historical glory is dim in 'Soul Soldier'

By Earl Calloway

"Soul Soldier," the much advertised adventure drama currently running at the Oriental Theatre highlighting the bravery of the 10th Cavalry in Texas during the years immediately following the Civil War, does not even scratch the surface of the heroism of those brave black soldiers.

According to released information, the film is supposed to be the first to depict the real, honest story of the all-black U. S. Tenth Cavalry during its early post-Civil War days.

One expected to see this truth revealed on screen, but the episode seen were mere prefabrications of the truth. It appeared from the script and scenes that much of the heroics and bravery of these soldiers over their women, chasing Indian women and children with a slight example of a small battle with Indians.

That the Indians named them the Buffalo Soldiers, was a gesture of extreme respect, because the buffalo was sacred to the native Redman.

It would have a wonderful tribute to the bravery of black soldiers and a credit to the Fanfare Corporation if they had featured the 10th Cavalry “Like it really was.” Instead the producer and director endeavored to make the movie commercially accepted. In doing so they destroyed the authenticity and dramatic excitement of a great epic in American history.

There were other black soldiers who had fought since the Civil War. But after the organization of the Tenth Cavalry at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, in 1866 with Colonel Benjamin Grierson as its commander, the men became a legend in western history.

The Tenth patrolled Kansas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Arizona. They fought the Sioux, Apaches, and Comanches, helped to capture Geronimo and Billy the Kid. Their most difficult job was to keep peace between settlers and cattlemen.

According to General John J. Pershing who served with the Tenth, they added glory to the military history of America.

The movie did not even mention the fact that at the first battle in Cuba, Las Gaspasmas, the Tenth Cavalry, distinguished itself by coming to the rescue of Theodore Roosevelt and his Rough Riders. Neither did we see any of the action during the famous Battle of San Juan Hill.

Beginning in 1871 Troops II and I rescued Major George Forsyth during the fall of 1888 when he was surrounded by 800 to 900 Indians at Sandy Creek on the Republican River.

The 21st of August, 1867, forty of the men fought against more than 500 Indians and held them until the 18th Kansas Volunteers came to their rescue. They only lost one soldier.

In 1874 the 10th helped quiet the sporadic disturbances on the Kansas frontier. When the Kiowa and Comanche broke away from their reservations in Oklahoma and started raiding the Texas Panhandle and along the Red River, they were victorious.

Early in April of 1875 Troop M of the 10th was sent to patrol the banks of the Canadian River near Fort Reno, Oklahoma.

CAST

Private Armstrong... RAEF JOHNSON
Sergeant Hatch... LINCOLN KILPATRICK
Trooper Eli Brown... ROBERT DQUI
First Sergeant Robertson... ISAAC FIELDS
Private Adams... OTIS TAYLOR
Colonel Grierson... CESAR ROMERO
Julie... JANELLE MICHIELE
Isabel... ISABEL SANFORD
Mrs. Grierson... BARBARA HALE
Walking Horse... ROBERT DQUI
Kaylah... BOBY CLARK
Captain Carpenter... STEVE BREKEL
The Sitter... BYRD HOLLAND
The Signaller... BILL COLLINS
JONH FOX
Lieutenant Bigelow... RUS NANNARIELLO, JR.
Troopers of the 10th Cavalry... BERNARD BROWN, CLARENCE COMAS, DONALD DIGGS, JEFF EVERTT, CLAY FIELD, PERRY FLEURS, NOAH BOBSON, EARL HUMPHREY, DAVID LANTON, ROY LAW
JOHN NEVILLE, JIM PACE, ERIC RICHMOND, JOHN RAMSEY, CHARLES WELLS, PAUL WHEATON, DAVID WHITE