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Black History Month, 2/25/91 [OA 6855] [1]

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<b>G</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>

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BLACK HISTORY MONTH \ EAST ROOM  
FEBRUARY 25, 1991 \ 11 A.M.


GOOD MORNING. ITS A PLEASURE FOR BARBARA AND ME TO WELCOME YOU TO THE WHITE HOUSE. ITS GOOD TO SEE SO MANY FRIENDS HERE TODAY, INCLUDING MEMBERS OF MY ADMINISTRATION: VICE PRESIDENT QUAYLE, LOUIS SULLIVAN, JACK KEMP, LYNN MARTIN, CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS, GENERAL COLIN POWELL, CONNIE NEWMAN, AND ART FLETCHER.

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- 2 -

TODAY, WE CELEBRATE THE PROUD SPECTRUM OF BLACK ACHIEVEMENT. FOR WE RECOGNIZE THAT BLACK HISTORY -- THIS RICH TALE OF ROOTS, PURPOSE AND PRIDE -- IS REALLY EVERYONE'S HISTORY. \\\

AND SOMETHING ELSE, TOO. YOU KNOW, IN THE MIDST OF WAR, WE FIND OURSELVES THINKING ABOUT HEROES. WELL, THIS IS THE TIME TO THINK ESPECIALLY OF BLACK HEROES. THOSE WHO BY THEIR FIERCE CONVICTIONS SHOWED NO RACE HAS A MONOPOLY ON IDEALISM OR EXCELLENCE. \\\

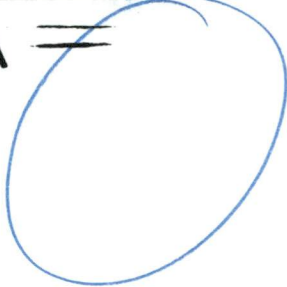


WE MUST TELL STORIES OF BLACK SUCCESSES TO EVERY CHILD IN OUR COUNTRY. BECAUSE WE NEED HEROES. WE NEED THEM AS MUCH AS WE NEED OUR DREAMS. AND BLACK AMERICANS HAVE ALWAYS PROVIDED BOTH. \\


A FEW NIGHTS AGO, AIR FORCE CHIEF OF STAFF GENERAL MERRILL McPEAK; \\ TUSKEGEE UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT DR. BENJAMIN PAYTON, \\ JUSTICE DAVID SOUTER AND I WENT OVER TO FORD'S THEATER TO SEE A PLAY CALLED "BLACK EAGLES" -- ABOUT THE TUSKEGEE AIRMEN OF WORLD WAR II -- WHO WERE LED BY THE LEGENDARY GENERAL BENJAMIN DAVIS.

AN INCREDIBLE STORY OF MEN WHO TOOK THEIR PLACES AMONG A VERY SPECIAL GROUP OF HEROES: BLACK AMERICANS WHO HAVE FOUGHT FOR THIS COUNTRY FOR OVER 200 YEARS. \\ \\

THEY'VE NEVER RECEIVED THE CREDIT THEY DESERVE FOR THEIR DEVOTED PATRIOTISM; \\ THEIR VISION, \\ AND THEIR SACRIFICES. AMERICA OWES A LONG-OVERDUE TRIBUTE TO THESE MEN AND WOMEN WHO -- LONG BEFORE THEY HAD RIGHTS -- BELIEVED IN WHAT WAS RIGHT. \\ \\



FOR TWO CENTURIES, BLACK SOLDIERS HAVE ESTABLISHED  
A RECORD OF PRIDE IN THE FACE OF INCREDIBLE OBSTACLES.  
FOR NOT ONLY DID THEY RISK THEIR LIVES FIGHTING FOR  
FREEDOM FOR THEIR OWN AND FOR OTHER COUNTRIES -- BUT  
THEY DID IT AT THE SAME TIME THEY WERE BEING DENIED  
THEIR GOD-GIVEN FREEDOMS AT HOME. \\ THINK ABOUT HOW  
MUCH THEY MUST HAVE LOVED THIS COUNTRY. HOW THEY  
BELIEVED IN ITS DREAMS. IT'S AN ASTOUNDING DEVOTION  
-- IN A LEAGUE BY ITSELF. \\ \\



YOU CAN FEEL THAT LOVE OF COUNTRY JUST AS STRONGLY  
IN THE GULF TODAY. YES, WE'VE MADE GREAT PROGRESS IN  
RIGHTING THE WRONGS OF THE PAST -- BUT, TRAGICALLY,  
RACISM AND BIGOTRY, ILLITERACY AND POVERTY STILL EXIST.

AMERICA IS NOT WITHOUT PROBLEMS, AND BLACK  
AMERICANS SERVING IN THE GULF UNDERSTAND THAT. YET  
THEY'VE CHOSEN TO FIGHT BECAUSE THEY FUNDAMENTALLY  
BELIEVE IN THIS COUNTRY.

AND WHEN THESE GULF HEROES COME HOME, THEY'LL CONTINUE TO FIGHT INJUSTICE BY FIGHTING DISCRIMINATION AND DESPAIR WITH THE SAME COMMITMENT. WE WILL STAND WITH THEM. \\\

SO TO THOSE WHO QUESTION THE PROPORTION OF BLACKS IN THE ARMED SERVICES TODAY, MY ANSWER IS SIMPLE. THE MILITARY OF THE UNITED STATES IS THE GREATEST EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER AROUND. \\\

EVERY SOLDIER, SAILOR, AIRMAN, COASTGUARDSMAN AND MARINE HAS ENLISTED BECAUSE THEY WANT TO BE PART OF THE AMERICAN ARMED SERVICES. BECAUSE THEY KNOW IT IS A PLACE OF OPENNESS AND TRUE MERITOCRACY. AND BECAUSE THEY KNOW THAT EVERY SERVICEMAN AND WOMAN RECEIVES EQUAL TREATMENT AND THE FINEST TRAINING -- WITH EDUCATION, FUNDING, AND TECHNICAL SKILLS WHICH WILL OPEN UP UNLIMITED FUTURES. \\\

IF ANYONE THINKS THE MILITARY IS NOT THE PLACE FOR EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND ADVANCEMENT -- THEN TALK TO LT. GENERAL CALVIN WALLER, DEPUTY COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE CENTRAL COMMAND. OR COLONEL JOHN HOPPER, DEPUTY COMMANDER OF THE 63RD AIRLIFT WING. OR AIR FORCE COLONEL LEONARD RANDOLPH FROM LANGLEY A.F.B. \\\

OR LISTEN TO GENERAL COLIN POWELL, WHO ANSWERS THOSE WHO CRITICIZE THE PROPORTION OF BLACKS BY CHALLENGING ALL OF AMERICA "TO CREATE THE SAME PATHS OF OPPORTUNITY WHICH WE HAVE IN THE MILITARY." \\\

LOOK AT THOSE BRAVE MEN AND WOMEN PUTTING THEIR LIVES ON THE LINE FOR US -- AND YOU DON'T SEE COLORS OR CREEDS. ALL YOU SEE ARE AMERICANS. GOOD, BRAVE, DEDICATED AMERICANS. \\\ AMERICANS WHO VOLUNTEERED. \\\

AMERICANS WHO PUT THEIR DEVOTION TO COUNTRY FIRST. \\  
AMERICANS WITH DIGNITY AND PRIDE -- CALLING AMERICA  
BACK TO HER BETTER SELF. \\ AMERICANS SERVING AS  
EQUALS. -\\ AMERICANS MEASURED ONLY BY THEIR  
ABILITIES. \\ AMERICA'S HEROES -- THE REAL THING. \\  
THANK GOD WE HAVE THEM, EVERY SINGLE ONE. \\

AND THANK GOD FOR THOSE WHO WENT BEFORE. FOR OUR  
NEW HEROES ARE PART OF A LONG TRADITION.

THE AIRMEN IN "BLACK EAGLES" TALK ABOUT IT -- FOR THEY  
MADE THEIR OWN VERY SPECIAL MARK IN THE ROLL CALL OF  
GENERATIONS WHO BATTLED NOT ONLY THEIR COUNTRY'S ENEMY,  
BUT ALSO THEIR COUNTRYMEN'S PREJUDICE. IN THE PLAY,  
THESE BRAVE WARRIORS EXPLAIN THEY WERE "PAVING THE  
WAY...PAVING THE WAY." \\

IT WAS MORE THAN TWO CENTURIES AGO THAT THE FIRST  
BLACK PATRIOTS STARTED TO PAVE THE WAY OF FREEDOM ROAD.

IN 1774, SLAVES SENT A PLEA TO THE ROYAL GOVERNOR OF MASSACHUSETTS SAYING: "WE HAVE IN COMMON WITH ALL OTHER MEN A NATURAL RIGHT TO OUR FREEDOMS WITHOUT BEING DEPRIVED OF THEM BY OUR FELLOW MEN."

SEEMS LIKE THESE SENTIMENTS MIGHT HAVE INSPIRED THE WORDS THOMAS JEFFERSON WROTE TWO YEARS LATER: THAT ALL MEN ARE CREATED EQUAL AND THAT THEY ARE ENDOWED WITH THE INALIENABLE RIGHTS TO LIFE, LIBERTY AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS. \\

WHAT THESE MEN SENT WAS A MESSAGE FROM THE HEART TO THOSE WHO WOULD FOLLOW: STAND UP FOR FREEDOM. \\ CRY OUT FOR FREEDOM. \\ RISK ALL FOR FREEDOM. ///

AND THAT'S WHAT BLACKS HAVE DONE IN EVERY WAR IN THIS NATION'S HISTORY. THEY'VE DONE IT WITH HEROES LIKE CRISPUS ATTUCKS -- THE FIRST AMERICAN TO DIE FOR THE CAUSE OF HIS COUNTRY'S LIBERTY. \\

WITH HEROES LIKE THE 5,000 BLACKS WHO FOUGHT IN THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR -- LOYAL, COURAGEOUS MEN WHO WILL AT LONG LAST BE HONORED WITH A MEMORIAL HERE ON THE MALL.

\\

FREEDOM ROAD LED NEARLY A QUARTER MILLION NEWLY-FREED SLAVES INTO THE CIVIL WAR. HEROES EMERGED LIKE THE MEN OF THE FT. WAGNER CHARGE -- SO POWERFULLY REENACTED IN THE MOVIE "GLORY."

THE BLACK REGIMENT LOST HALF ITS MEN BUT WON THE DIGNITY AND RESPECT IT RIGHTFULLY DESERVED. \\

FREEDOM ROAD TOOK BLACK HEROES UP SAN JUAN HILL WITH TEDDY ROOSEVELT. \\ BY THE WAY, COLIN POWELL HAS A PAINTING OF THEM IN HIS OFFICE -- SAYS HE LIKES TO LOOK UP FROM HIS DESK, SEE THEM, AND REMEMBER THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THOSE WHO WENT BEFORE. AND, HE SAYS, REFLECT ON WHAT HE MUST DO TO HELP THOSE YET TO COME.

///

BLACK HEROES ALSO PAVED FREEDOM ROAD ON THE FRENCH FIELDS AND RHINE RIVER OF WORLD WAR I. \\  
\\

BUT WHEN THEIR SONS JOINED UP 25 YEARS LATER, THEY FOUND THERE WAS MUCH WORK LEFT TO DO. I HEARD A SHOCKING STORY THAT TOOK PLACE RIGHT HERE IN AMERICA IN 1943, IN THE MIDDLE OF WORLD WAR II. BLACK SOLDIERS STOPPED AND TRIED TO EAT AT A RESTAURANT. INSIDE, GERMAN PRISONERS OF WAR WERE BEING SERVED A STEAK MEAL. BUT THE RESTAURANT REFUSED TO ADMIT THE BLACK SOLDIERS. \\  
\\

BY THE END OF THE WAR, AMERICAN BLACK SOLDIERS HAD PAVED A VICTORIOUS PATH -- PAVED IT IN BRAVERY AND IN BLOOD. THEY WON BATTLES AND MEDALS. THEY WON RESPECT AS MEN AND ACCEPTANCE AS AMERICANS. AND AT LONG LAST THEY WON THE INTEGRATION OF THE ARMED FORCES.

THESE GENERATIONS OF HEROES RISKED THEIR LIVES SO THEIR GRANDCHILDREN COULD REALIZE A DREAM. THE DREAM OF HAVING THE FREEDOM TO CHOOSE TO SERVE THEIR COUNTRY. \\  
\\

THE DREAM THAT AMERICA WOULD BE A PLACE WHERE THE ONLY LIMITS ON A MAN WOULD BE THE LIMITS OF HIS OWN VISION.

\\ THE DREAM OF A NATION WHERE NONE WOULD BE CALLED "THE FIRST BLACK" -- BUT RATHER, SIMPLY, "THE BEST."

\\\

FOR, AS BOOKER T. WASHINGTON SAID: "NO GREATER INJURY CAN BE DONE TO ANY YOUTH THAN TO LET HIM FEEL THAT BECAUSE HE BELONGS TO THIS OR THAT RACE HE WILL BE ADVANCED REGARDLESS OF HIS OWN MERIT OR EFFORTS." \\\

BUT THE DREAM IS NOT YET FULLY REALIZED -- THERE IS TODAY TOO MUCH CRIME, TOO MUCH CRACK, TOO MUCH DESPAIR. YET THERE IS ALSO TODAY TOO MUCH FAITH, TOO MUCH PRIDE, AND TOO MUCH HUMAN DIGNITY TO GIVE UP OR TO GIVE IN.

\\

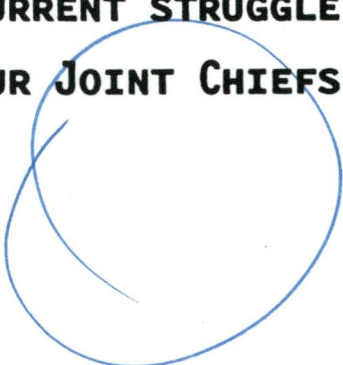
THAT'S WHY WE URGENTLY NEED TO TURN TO THE TRADITION OF BLACK HEROES TODAY -- TO INSPIRE A NEW GENERATION TO BELIEVE IN ITSELF AND IN THE FUTURE.

HOMEGROWN HEROES LIKE FREDERICK DOUGLASS, WHO FOUGHT FOR DIGNITY; DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., WHO FOUGHT FOR THE RIGHTS OF MILLIONS; JACKIE ROBINSON, WHO FOUGHT JUST TO DO WHAT HE DID BEST.

LIKE RALPH BUNCHE, WHO WON THE NOBEL PRIZE; GWENDOLYN BROOKS, WHO WON THE PULITZER; JESSE OWENS, WHO WON OLYMPIC MEDALS AND THE RESPECT OF THE WORLD.

HUMANITARIANS AND LEADERS FROM GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER TO ROSA PARKS TO MICKEY LELAND. PIONEERS LIKE DR. CHARLES DREW AND ASTRONAUT RON MCNAIR.

AND, OF COURSE, THE MAN WHO HAS BROUGHT INSPIRATION, STRENGTH AND THE TRUE SPIRIT OF HEROISM TO THE WORLD'S CURRENT STRUGGLE FOR HUMANITY -- THE CHAIRMAN OF OUR JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF -- GENERAL COLIN POWELL.    \\\



BUT THEY'RE NOT THE ONLY ONES. IT'S UP TO US --  
EACH OF US. TOGETHER, WE MUST WRITE A NEW CHAPTER IN  
THE HISTORY OF CIVIL RIGHTS. A CHAPTER THAT SAYS:  
OPPORTUNITY MUST REPLACE DESPAIR.

FOR OPPORTUNITY MEANS EDUCATION -- EQUIPPING KIDS  
WITH THE TOOLS THEY NEED TO COMPETE IN A NEW CENTURY.

\\

OPPORTUNITY MEANS FREEDOM FROM DRUGS. \\

OPPORTUNITY MEANS JOBS -- THE DIGNITY OF WORK. \\

OPPORTUNITY MEANS OWNING YOUR OWN HOME -- AND BEING  
SAFE IN IT. \\

OPPORTUNITY MEANS SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO KEEP FAMILIES  
TOGETHER -- AND HEALTH CARE TO KEEP THEM STRONG. \\

AND, ABOVE ALL, OPPORTUNITY MEANS WE MUST TREASURE  
AND DEFEND THE VALUE OF EVERY HUMAN LIFE. FOR AS  
LANGSTON HUGHES WROTE, "THERE'S A DREAM IN THIS LAND  
WITH ITS BACK AGAINST THE WALL; TO SAVE THE DREAM FOR  
ONE, IT MUST BE SAVED FOR ALL."



I AM ABSOLUTELY COMMITTED TO ENSURING THAT EVERYONE RECEIVES A FULL SHARE OF AMERICA'S BOUNTY. \\

IN A FEW DAYS, I'LL HAVE MORE TO SAY ABOUT OUR EFFORTS TO ENSURE OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL AMERICANS -- EFFORTS ROOTED IN GIVING POWER TO THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE FAMILY; \\ INVESTING IN OUR FUTURE; \\ ELIMINATING DISCRIMINATION IN THE WORKPLACE; \\ AND BUILDING A HEALTHY FOUNDATION OF ECONOMIC GROWTH.

WE MUST AND WE WILL ENSURE THAT THE MEN AND WOMEN COMING HOME FROM THE GULF COME HOME TO AN AMERICA OF OPPORTUNITY. \\ \\

THIS HOUSE, AMERICA'S HOUSE, IS STEEPED IN HISTORY. WHEN WE LISTEN, IT BRINGS TO LIFE THE PROUD VOICES OF BLACK HEROES ECHOING ACROSS THE CENTURIES. THE PLEADING OF THE MASSACHUSETTS SLAVES. \\ THE RESONANCE OF THE CIVIL WAR GRAVES. \\

**THE TUSKEGEE AIRMEN'S CALL FOR VICTORY IN WAR AND IN  
THE EYES OF MEN.**

**AND WE HEAR THE VOICES OF THEIR DESCENDANTS NOW IN  
THE GULF SOUNDING THE OLDEST CALL OF OUR LAND -- ONE WE  
ALL SHARE, NO MATTER OUR COLOR, NO MATTER OUR ROOTS. A  
CALL FOR AN AMERICA STRONG -- AN AMERICA FAIR -- AN  
AMERICA FREE. \\\**

**GOD BLESS AMERICA AND ALL HER CHILDREN.**

**# # #**



10TH STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

Proprietary to the United Press International 1983

March 20, 1983, Sunday, PM cycle

SECTION: Domestic News

LENGTH: 506 words

HEADLINE: Black GI's described Jim Crow Army

BYLINE: By JOAN GOULDING

DATELINE: LOS ANGELES

KEYWORD:  
Soldiers

BODY:

Black soldiers in World War II were disillusioned and confused in a Jim Crow military where one private said "German POWs have more rights and freedom," recently published letters that were classified for decades reveal.

"Negroes and whites are quitting their jobs to increase the military strength of this nation because we all think that a nation worth being in is worth fighting for," an anonymous private wrote a government official.

"But in view of this so-called unity and national emergency, the age-old monster of prejudice has raised its head high in the Army."

Phillip McGuire, associate professor of history at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, discovered the letters at the National Archives in 1980 shortly after the documents were declassified.

The unedited letters have been collected for the first time in McGuire's book, "Taps for a Jim Crow Army," released last month by a Santa Barbara, Calif., publisher.

"The unique thing about the letters is they are written from the perspective of the black soldiers themselves," McGuire said.

"The basic tenor of the letters is that they were confused. They were going to war to fight for the four freedoms, to make the world safe for democracy and they were suffering discrimination in the armed forces."

The military was officially segregated until President Harry Truman issued an executive order in July 1948 to integrate the services. During World War II, black units were usually assigned labor and supply duty because of the prevailing attitude that blacks were not good in combat, McGuire said.

Most of the letters were written to civilian aides to the Secretary of War who were assigned to recommend the most effective ways to utilize black soldiers during the war. Others were written to the black press.

Many of the letters to the government officials were unsigned because of the fear of repercussions if officers discovered they complained about conditions.

Proprietary to the United Press International, March 20, 1983

'I had heard and read of cruel treatment given colored soldiers and somehow, even among existing conditions of civilian life, I couldn't understand how white people could be so down on one who wears the uniform of the fighting forces of their country,' said one letter signed 'a loyal Negro soldier.'

'From civilian life I was drafted and now I prepare to fight for the continuation of discriminatory practices against my people and me.'

Army Pvt. James Pritchett of the all-black 36th Regiment in Louisiana told a government official that 'German POWs have more rights and freedom.'

McGuire said black soldiers were often called disparaging names, were sometimes not allowed to ride military buses into town or permitted in base theaters, and could not share latrine facilities with white soldiers.

'The interesting thing is, that in numerous letters they express loyalty to the United States and the ideals which it pursued,' McGuire said. 'They always said they couldn't understand this (the discrimination), they saw democracy as an illusion.'

14TH STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

The Associated Press

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February 15, 1980, Friday, PM cycle

SECTION: Domestic News

LENGTH: 420 words

HEADLINE: Army Museum Exhibit Honors Black Soldiers

BYLINE: By FRANCES D'EMILIO, Associated Press Writer

DATELINE: SAN FRANCISCO

KEYWORD:

Black GI-Tribute

BODY:

Tony Powell's grandfather used to tell him about the 10th Cavalry -- a black unit -- in World War I, but all he "ever saw in war movies was John Wayne."

"I never saw blacks in (high) positions. They were loading ships or digging graves," said Powell, a historian who is black.

So he set out to document the role of blacks in the American military, creating an exhibit now displayed at a San Francisco museum.

The Presidio Army Museum bills the show as "the first such exhibit to honor the history of the black soldiers and heroes in the U.S. Army."

History shows that blacks have served with devotion in the American armed services and played a key role in the nation's defense, Powell says.

"I wanted to show the black soldier as a person who laughed, cried and died," said Powell on the exhibit's opening day Thursday.

The show also points out the indignities black soldiers suffered. They often were reminded that "even donning the American uniform would not afford blacks the same rights" enjoyed by whites, Powell said.

In 1943, a group of black soldiers with the 92nd Infantry on maneuvers were denied service at a Louisiana restaurant, Powell said, while German prisoners of war dined on "succulent steak."

Powell, who now runs a San Jose publishing firm, began documenting the black soldier's place in American military history 10 years ago, after the death of his grandfather, who served in the 10th Cavalry during World War I.

The exhibit is titled "Ready and Forward!" -- the motto of his grandfather's unit.

The Associated Press, February 15, 1980

"When my grandfather died, I made it my resolution" to show the true role of blacks in the military, Powell said.

He found "a lack of sensitivity on the part of historians and ignorance of blacks" during his research. Most of his information came from talks with army veterans -- black and white -- of the Spanish-American War to the present volunteer army.

Artifacts in the show include Civil War magazine illustrations depicting blacks and the uniform of Sgt. 1st Class Lawrence Joel, a black man who won the Medal of Honor for helping wounded men while under fire in Vietnam.

One blowup of a Harper's Weekly illustration from March 1863 caricatured black trainees at a rifle-training session for recruits.

Another drawing of the battle of Vicksburg showed a dignified black soldier on a horse.

The latter drawing acknowledged the military abilities of blacks, who were used in combat for the first time in any great numbers during the Civil War, Powell said.

91 FEB 25 A10: 37



OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN  
THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF  
THE PENTAGON  
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RESEARCH OFFICE, OEOB  
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**THE COMPLETE POEMS OF LANGSTON HUGHES**

**Edited by George Houston Bass**

**Manuscript 9/22/88**

**Working Copy in Two Volumes**

This copy is **THE FIRST OF TWO**  
**VOLUMES** \_\_\_\_\_

This copy is **THE SECOND OF TWO**  
**VOLUMES** \_\_\_\_\_

*To be published by Knopf*

POEMS, 1961-1966**Dream Of Freedom**

There is a dream in the land  
With its back against the wall.  
By muddled names and strange  
Sometimes the dream is called.

There are those who claim  
This dream for theirs alone--  
A sin for which we know  
They must atone.

Unless shared in common  
Like sunlight and like air,  
The dream will die for lack  
Of substance anywhere.

The dream knows no frontier or tongue,  
The dream no class or race.  
The dream cannot be kept secure  
In any one looked place.

This dream today embattled,  
With its back against the wall--  
To save the dream for one  
It must be saved for ALL--  
Our dream of freedom!

**Small Memory**

I have this  
Strange small memory  
Of death  
And seven trees  
And winds that have  
No ecstasies  
To search  
And find  
And search  
And find  
The search  
That is  
Not mine.

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

Pilot in WWI  
+ WWII

Ensign Bullard } 1st black  
Bessie Coleman } licensed  
1893-1926 } pilots

trained in France

102 licensed by 1941

---

film NASM

destroyed 260 enemy  
aircraft

Jet  
- Ship

As Delivered.

REMARKS BY GENERAL COLIN L. POWELL, COMMANDER IN  
CHIEF FORCES COMMAND, TO THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION  
OF BLACK-JOURNALISTS, NEW YORK CITY  
17 AUG 89

THANK YOU VERY MUCH, MR. PRESIDENT, FOR THAT KIND  
INTRODUCTION. AND THANK YOU SO VERY MUCH, LADIES AND  
GENTLEMEN, FOR YOUR VERY, VERY WARM WELCOME.

IT'S BEEN A VERY EXCITING WEEK FOR ME HAVING BEEN  
NOMINATED TO BE CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF. AND  
IN THE COURSE OF THE LAST COUPLE OF DAYS, AS I EVALUATED THE  
NEW CHALLENGES BEFORE ME, AND STARTED TO ARRANGE MY  
CALENDAR, I LOOKED AT THIS EVENT AND WONDERED WHETHER I  
SHOULD COME TO NEW YORK AND PARTICIPATE IN YOUR PROGRAM.

THEN I REMEMBERED THAT I WAS FROM NEW YORK AND I  
COULDN'T REALLY TURN DOWN A HOME TOWN OPPORTUNITY. AND I  
KNEW YOU WERE COUNTING ON ME BECAUSE I PROMISED TO DO THIS  
MONTHS AND MONTHS AGO. BUT WHAT FINALLY TURNED ME IN  
THE DIRECTION OF COMING WERE THE RUMORS ABOUT MY BEING  
NOMINATED FOR THE CHAIRMAN'S JOB. TRYING TO GET MORE  
INFORMATION -- REPORTERS CALLING MY CHILDREN, MY WIFE, MY  
FRIENDS...

AS YOU WELL KNOW, WASHINGTON IS NOT THE MOST AIR-TIGHT  
TOWN IN THE FIRST PLACE. BY LATE WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON,  
THERE WAS SUFFICIENT CORROBORATION THAT THE NETWORKS  
WENT WITH THE STORY. ONE NETWORK ACTUALLY LED THE NEWS  
WITH THE STORY. WE WERE THEN OFF AND RUNNING.

THE NEXT DAY THE NEWSPAPERS PICKED IT UP. CNN REPORTED IT  
EVERY 15 MINUTES SO THAT FINALLY MY YOUNG TEENAGE  
DAUGHTER SAID, "I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF THIS!" AND CHANGED THE  
CHANNEL TO MTV AND HID THE REMOTE.

BY FRIDAY, THE FOLLOW-UP WAS WELL UNDERWAY WITH  
PERSONALITY PIECES BEING WRITTEN. AND THEN BY LATE FRIDAY  
AFTERNOON, A POSSE BEGAN TO FORM AND PEOPLE STARTED TAKING

SHOTS AT LONG RANGE TO SEE IF THEY COULD HIT ME IN THE LEG OR SOMEPLACE, BEFORE I DISAPPEARED OVER THE HORIZON.

AND THEN, OF ALL THINGS, ON SUNDAY *PARADE MAGAZINE* CAME OUT WITH THEIR COVER PROFILE ARTICLE WHICH CONCLUDED A MOST EXCITING 4-DAY PERIOD FOR ME AND FOR MY FAMILY.

AS I LOOKED AT ALL THAT COVERAGE, THERE WERE TWO ANGLES THAT I ESPECIALLY LIKED. ANGLE ONE WAS WHEN MY NOMINATION WAS MARRIED UP WITH ANOTHER EVENT THAT HAD NO RELATIONSHIP TO MY NOMINATION. AND THAT WAS THE ANNOUNCEMENT THAT AT THE U.S. MILITARY ACADEMY AT WEST POINT A YOUNG LADY WAS ABOUT TO BE MADE FIRST CAPTAIN OF THE CORPS FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HISTORY. AND SO THOSE TWO EVENTS TOGETHER -- MY APPOINTMENT AND YOUNG KRISTIN BAKER'S APPOINTMENT TO BE THE FIRST CAPTAIN OF THE CORPS -- WERE LINKED TOGETHER AND LED TO THE SECOND ANGLE THAT I FOUND INTERESTING.

THE FACT THAT THERE'S SUCH A "MERITOCRACY", AS ONE EDITORIAL WRITER PUT IT, WITHIN THE ARMED FORCES OF THE UNITED STATES. THE ARMED FORCES OF THE UNITED STATES AFFORDS THE KIND OF OPPORTUNITY FOR ADVANCEMENT THAT, REGRETTABLY, IS NOT IN EVERY PART OF OUR SOCIETY, EVEN WITHIN YOUR OWN PROFESSION. THE KIND OF OPPORTUNITY THAT THE ARMED FORCES HAVE LED THE WAY WITH AND HOPEFULLY WILL EVENTUALLY SPREAD TO ALL PARTS OF OUR SOCIETY SO THAT ONLY ACHIEVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE WILL BE THE BASIS FOR ADVANCEMENT.

AND YET THERE'S ANOTHER ANGLE IN THE STORY THAT HAS NOT BEEN COVERED WHICH I'D LIKE TO COVER. I'D LIKE TO TELL YOU HOW I'D WRITE THE STORY.

"DATELINE WASHINGTON: PRESIDENT BUSH NOMINATED GENERAL COLIN POWELL FOR CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF. IF CONFIRMED HE WILL ASSUME THE OFFICES OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF CHAIRMAN ON THE 29TH OF SEPTEMBER. POWELL, 52, IS BLACK AND WILL BE THE FIRST BLACK TO OCCUPY THAT OFFICE."

END OF LEAD PARAGRAPH.

PARAGRAPH TWO: --

"POWELL'S APPOINTMENT WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE WITHOUT THE SACRIFICES OF THOSE BLACK SOLDIERS WHO SERVED THIS GREAT NATION IN WAR FOR OVER TWO HUNDRED YEARS PREVIOUSLY. "FROM THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR, WHERE ONE-SIXTH OF THOSE WHO FOUGHT FOR FREEDOM WERE BLACK, TO THE WAR OF 1812, TO THE CIVIL WAR WHERE BLACK SOLDIERS CONTRIBUTED TO THE FREEDOM AND PRESERVATION OF THE UNION THAT WE NOW ENJOY, TO THE BUFFALO SOLDIERS OF THE LATE 19TH CENTURY, TO SAN JUAN HILL WHERE FOUR BLACK REGIMENTS WENT UP THAT HILL WITH TEDDY ROOSEVELT. YOU NEVER SEE A PICTURE OF IT, BUT FOUR BLACK REGIMENTS WENT UP THAT HILL. THROUGH WORLD WAR I, WORLD WAR II, TO INTEGRATION IN THE LATE 1940'S WHEN THE NATION FINALLY HAD TO LOOK AT ITSELF IN THE MIRROR AND SEE THAT YOU COULD NOT ASK MEN TO DIE FOR THEIR COUNTRY IF THEIR COUNTRY WAS NOT WILLING TO GIVE THEM THEIR DUE AS FULL CITIZENS. THROUGH KOREA, THROUGH VIETNAM, UNTIL FINALLY WE REACHED MY GENERATION IN THE MILITARY.

A GENERATION WHERE ALMOST ALL BARRIERS HAVE NOW DROPPED, A GENERATION THAT SAW A CHAPPIE JAMES COME ALONG AND PROVE THAT HE WAS AS QUALIFIED AS ANYBODY TO FLY AN F-4 AIRPLANE. OR A FRANK PETERSON COME ALONG TO BECOME THE FIRST BLACK MARINE AVIATOR AND FLY A JET LIKE FEW OTHERS HAVE. OR GENERAL ROSCOE ROBINSON WHO BECAME OUR FIRST BLACK ARMY FOUR-STAR AND NOT ONLY DEMONSTRATED THAT HE COULD BE A GREAT COMMANDER OF OUR ALL AMERICAN 82D AIRBORNE DIVISION, BUT HE COULD ALSO BE THE SENIOR ARMY OFFICER IN JAPAN, AND THAT HE COULD ALSO SERVE IN NATO AS A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PRESIDENT AND HIS COUNTRY. AND A GENERAL JULIUS BECTON WHO BECAME THE FIRST BLACK OFFICER TO COMMAND A COMBAT CORPS. AND AIR FORCE GENERAL BERNARD RANDOLPH WHO COMMANDS THE AIR FORCE SYSTEMS COMMAND. OR MAJOR GENERAL RETIRED HARRY BROOKS, HERE WITH US TODAY, WHO STARTED OUT WITH ME MANY, MANY YEARS AGO WHEN I WAS A LIEUTENANT AND HE WAS A CAPTAIN -- AND WHO WENT ON TO A DISTINGUISHED CAREER IN THE MILITARY BEFORE NOW MOVING ON TO A DISTINGUISHED CAREER IN CORPORATE LIFE.

AND NOT ONLY THESE OFFICERS DEMONSTRATED THAT WE COULD DO IT AS WELL AS ANYBODY, BUT ALL THOSE NCO'S AND SOLDIERS WHO HAVE SERVED THEIR NATION SO WELL.

SO THE REAL STORY IS THAT, YES, I CLIMBED -- I CLIMBED WELL AND I CLIMBED HARD AND I CLIMBED OVER THE CLIFF. BUT ALWAYS ON THE BACKS AND THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THOSE WHO WENT BEFORE ME. YOUR CHALLENGE, AND MY CHALLENGE, IS TO TELL OUR YOUNG PEOPLE THROUGHOUT THE LAND, BLACK, WHITE, OR WHATEVER COLORATION, THAT THEY'VE GOT TO PREPARE THEMSELVES. THEY'VE GOT TO BE READY. I MAY HAVE CROSSED OVER AND CLIMBED THE CLIFF -- WITH THE HELP OF MANY OTHERS -- BUT NOW THAT WE'RE ON TOP OF THAT CLIFF AND LOOKING AHEAD, THERE ARE STILL MORE RIVERS TO CROSS. AND OUR YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE TO BE READY.

AND NOW YOU'VE HEARD 'THE REST OF THE STORY.'"

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I'VE BEEN A PUBLIC SERVANT ALL OF MY ADULT LIFE BUT ONLY IN RECENT YEARS HAVE I BECOME A "SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL" IN THE JARGON OF YOUR PROFESSION. AND ONLY IN THE PAST TWO YEARS -- WITH MY NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL EXPERIENCE AND NOW -- HAVE I TRULY COME TO UNDERSTAND DEEP DOWN THE VERY VITAL ROLE THAT YOU, AS JOURNALISTS, PLAY IN OUR SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT AND IN MAINTAINING OUR WAY OF LIFE. I KNEW IT ALL ALONG AS AN ACADEMIC MATTER, BUT ONLY IN WORKING WITH JOURNALISTS ON A DAILY BASIS HAS THAT ACADEMIC KNOWLEDGE BECOME EXPERIENCED KNOWLEDGE.

I HAVE COME TO UNDERSTAND THE RESPONSIBILITY YOU BEAR FOR KEEPING THIS GREAT NATION ON COURSE AND TRUE TO ITS PRINCIPLES BY INFORMING ITS PEOPLE ON THE CONDUCT OF ITS BUSINESS.

THE FUNDAMENTAL BASIS OF OUR GOVERNMENT IS THE OPINION OF THE PEOPLE, SO THE VERY FIRST PRIORITY IS TO INFORM THAT OPINION AND TO REPORT IT. AN AGGRESSIVE, FREE, CHALLENGING PRESS IS BY FAR THE MOST EFFECTIVE MEANS OF KEEPING THE PEOPLE INFORMED AND OF INSURING THE GOVERNMENT'S ACCOUNTABILITY TO THE PEOPLE.

WHAT PRESCIENCE THE FOUNDERS OF OUR NATION HAD IN GUARANTEEING THROUGH A FREE PRESS THE RIGHTS GRANTED TO OUR CITIZENS. THEY INTENDED FOR THE FREE PRESS TO AFFLICT THE COMFORTABLE AND TO CHAMPION THE DISADVANTAGED. BLACK

JOURNALISTS HAVE AN EVEN MORE VITAL CHARGE AS YOU WORK TO INSURE THAT THE DREAMS OF MOST OF THE FOUNDING FATHERS ARE EXTENDED TO ALL AMERICANS.

YOUR CONVENTION THEME IS "SHAPING THE WORLD VIEW." THAT'S A GOOD THEME BECAUSE AROUND THE WORLD THE RIGHTS THAT YOU PROTECT HERE ARE BEING SOUGHT BY ALL PEOPLES.

AS LANGSTON HUGHES WROTE SO ELOQUENTLY, "THERE'S A DREAM IN THIS LAND WITH ITS BACK AGAINST THE WALL; TO SAVE THE DREAM FOR ONE, IT MUST BE SAVED FOR ALL." "THIS LAND" IS NOW THE WORLD AND "THE DREAM" IS NOW THE WORLD'S DREAM.

SAVING THE DREAM IS THE ESSENCE OF YOUR OBLIGATION. IT'S THE ESSENCE OF EVERY JOURNALIST'S OBLIGATION IN AMERICA, BLACK OR WHITE OR WHATEVER PIGMENTATION OF SKIN. AS A MATTER OF FACT, I BELIEVE IT'S THE ESSENCE OF THE OBLIGATION OF EVERY JOURNALIST IN THE WORLD -- NOW, AT LAST, PERHAPS EVEN IN SOVIET RUSSIA.

ONE OF THE MOST FASCINATING THINGS ABOUT THE PRESENT RENAISSANCE IN THE SOVIET UNION IS THAT THE DREAM IS EVEN ENFOLDING THEIR JOURNALISTS! THEY'RE ASKING ABOUT THE LARGER-THAN-LIFE MOTIVATORS OF THE DREAM -- FREEDOM, HUMAN DIGNITY, ECONOMIC PROSPERITY, THE RULE OF LAW, AND PEACE. THEY'RE REPORTING THE FRUSTRATION AND ASPIRATIONS OF THE SOVIET PEOPLE. PRESIDENT GORBACHEV IS QUOTING POLL RESULTS. LAST WEEK A SOVIET PAPER EVEN REPORTED A UFO SIGHTING.

DEFENDING THE DREAM AND PROMOTING THE DREAM ARE SACRED OBLIGATIONS OF EVERY JOURNALIST. KEEPING THE PEOPLE INFORMED AND SHAPING THE WORLD VIEW ARE INEXTRICABLY INTERTWINED. THE TWO IDEAS CANNOT BE SEPARATED, THEY CANNOT BE DEALT WITH IN ISOLATION OF ONE ANOTHER.

I'M A SOLDIER. MY JOB IS ALSO TO DEFEND THE DREAM. AND DEFENDING THE DREAM IS THE SACRED OBLIGATION OF EVERY SOLDIER. OUR JOB HAS THE SAME PURPOSE AS YOURS.

THE DREAM IS PROSPERING IN THE WORLD TODAY. IN MANY IMPORTANT WAYS, THE DREAM IS THE MOST POWERFUL POLITICAL

FORCE SHAPING THE WORLD TODAY. WE ARE SEEING IT DO ITS WORK IN PLACES WE WOULD NOT HAVE IMAGINED JUST THREE OR FOUR YEARS AGO -- RUSSIA, POLAND, HUNGARY, CHINA, AND EVEN PERHAPS IN NORTH KOREA AND VIETNAM.

WE STILL HAVE CONFLICTS AND CRISES, AND THE WORLD IS CERTAINLY NOT OUT OF DANGER, BUT IT DOES SEEM TO BE QUIETER AS THE DREAM IS PURSUED. THE WORLD DOES SEEM TO BE BREATHING A LITTLE EASIER.

THE SOVIETS, AFTER NINE YEARS, HAVE LEFT AFGHANISTAN, ALTHOUGH THAT TERRIBLE WAR CONTINUES. THE CUBANS ARE LEAVING ANGOLA AND THERE IS HOPE AGAIN IN NAMIBIA. A CEASEFIRE IS IN PLACE BETWEEN IRAQ AND IRAN AND OIL FLOWS SAFELY THROUGH THE PERSIAN GULF.

IN SOUTHEAST ASIA PROGRESS IS BEING MADE TOWARD A VIETNAMESE WITHDRAWAL FROM CAMBODIA. THERE IS CONTINUED PEACE AND PROSPERITY WITHIN OUR GREAT ALLIANCES IN THE ATLANTIC AND PACIFIC.

WE HAVE COMPLETED AN ARMS CONTROL AGREEMENT THAT FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THE HISTORY OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS IS ELIMINATING AN ENTIRE CLASS OF WEAPONS.

THERE IS CERTAINLY NO SHORTAGE OF TROUBLE TO WORRY ABOUT -- CENTRAL AMERICA, PANAMA, THE TRAGEDY OF BEIRUT, THE WEST BANK, SOUTH AFRICA, DRUGS, TERRORISM. AND YET, WHEN YOU COMPARE THIS SITUATION WITH THAT OF SIX OR SEVEN YEARS EARLIER -- IT IS QUIETER. THERE IS HOPE AROUND THE WORLD. HOPE FOR THE FUTURE. CREDIT FOR THIS MUST BE GIVEN IN PART TO THE WRENCHING AND HISTORIC CHANGES THAT ARE OCCURRING WITH OUR CHIEF ADVERSARY, THE SOVIET UNION.

WE ARE SEEING THE MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN THE SOVIET UNION SINCE THEIR 1917 REVOLUTION. THE SOVIETS KNOW THEIR SYSTEM IS BROKEN, THAT IT CANNOT MEET THE CHALLENGES OF THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY. PRESIDENT GORBACHEV HAS PUBLICLY SAID SO. FROM OVERSIGHT COMMITTEES FOR THE KGB AND THE RED ARMY, TO ECONOMIC AUTONOMY IN THE BALTIC STATES, THE SOVIETS ARE DESPERATELY TRYING TO RESTRUCTURE THEIR SYSTEM AND REVITALIZE THEIR ECONOMY.

THE OBSTACLES PRESIDENT GORBACHEV FACES ARE SO ENORMOUS THAT IT'S DIFFICULT TO ENVISION ANY LARGE DEGREE OF SUCCESS -- AT LEAST CERTAINLY NOT ANY QUICK SUCCESS. WHAT WE'RE SEEING IS A PROCESS THAT WILL TAKE DECADES, NOT MONTHS, TO UNFOLD.

EXCEPT FOR CENTRAL AMERICA, SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY HAS BEEN MORE RESPONSIBLE IN RECENT YEARS. THE SOVIET UNION HAS CONTRIBUTED TO THIS QUIETER WORLD. I ALSO BELIEVE THAT MANY LEADERS AROUND THE WORLD HAVE DEVELOPED THE WISDOM TO SEE THE FUTILITY OF WAR AND THE ATTRACTIONS OF PEACE. THERE IS A CERTAIN WAR-WEARINESS EVIDENT IN MANY OF THE SO-CALLED TROUBLE SPOTS OF THE WORLD BECAUSE YEARS AND YEARS OF CONFLICT HAVE PRODUCED NO RESULTS.

AND ACROSS THE GLOBE, FROM AFRICA TO LATIN AMERICA, FROM ASIA TO EASTERN EUROPE, MORE AND MORE NATIONS ARE COMING TO REALIZE THAT ECONOMIC PROSPERITY DOES NOT ACCOMPANY MARXIST, STATE-MANAGED ECONOMIES. MARXISM AND COMMUNISM ARE DYING, FATALLY WOUNDED BY THEIR OWN FAILURES AND CONTRADICTIONS.

I ALSO BELIEVE THAT THE EFFECTIVE RESISTANCE TO AGGRESSION DEMONSTRATED BY THE UNITED STATES OVER THE PAST SEVEN OR EIGHT YEARS HAS CONTRIBUTED TO THE QUIETNESS.

EFFECTIVE RESISTANCE TO AGGRESSION IS WHAT DEMONSTRATES GRAPHICALLY THE FUTILITY OF WAR. THE SIDE THAT SEES AN EASY VICTORY OFTEN WILL GO AFTER IT. AND THE SO-CALLED PEACE PURCHASED AT THE PRICE OF SURRENDER IS NOT PEACE OR SECURITY.

I BELIEVE THAT THE RESURGENT STRENGTH OF THE UNITED STATES -- AND THE ACCOMPANYING POLITICAL WILL TO USE THAT STRENGTH WISELY -- CONTRIBUTED MARKEDLY TO THE WINDING DOWN OF SEVERAL MAJOR CONFLICTS AND TO THE SUCCESSFUL DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS THAT REPLACED THEM.

BUT THE LION'S SHARE OF THE CREDIT FOR WHAT WE SEE HAPPENING MUST GO TO THE SYSTEMIC STRENGTH OF THE WESTERN WORLD, LED BY THE UNITED STATES. WE ARE THE SUPERPOWER, THE LEADER -- A ROLE WE MUST PLAY. IT IS OUR VALUES, OUR

ECONOMIC SYSTEM, AND OUR POLITICAL PROCESS THAT ARE BEING LOOKED TO FOR EXAMPLE AND INSPIRATION.

A DECADE OR SO AGO, SOME PESSIMISTS DISMISSED DEMOCRACY AS A LUXURY OF THE INDUSTRIALIZED NATIONS. YET TODAY THE DEEP DESIRE FOR FREEDOM AND FOR THE DEMOCRATIC FORMS OF GOVERNMENT THAT INSURE IT, ARE FORCES SWEEPING ACROSS THE GLOBE.

WHERE THE SOVIETS FACE SYSTEMIC FAILURE, WE ENJOY SYSTEMIC SUCCESS. WHERE THE SOVIETS SEEK PERESTROIKA, OR RESTRUCTURING, WE ARE BLESSED WITH AN ADAPTIVE STRUCTURE THAT IS ESSENTIALLY UNCHANGED IN OVER TWO HUNDRED YEARS.

WE ARE CELEBRATING THE 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF OUR CONSTITUTION REFRESHED BY THAT DOCUMENT AND CONFIDENT OF OUR ROOTS AND OUR FUTURE. THE SOVIETS APPROACH THE 72D ANNIVERSARY OF THEIR REVOLUTION AND CONFRONT A FAILED SYSTEM -- WITH LEADERS STRUGGLING TO DEAL WITH THE IDEOLOGICAL CAUSE OF THAT FAILURE. GLASNOST TO THE SOVIET PEOPLE IS GRANTED TO THEM AT THE WILL AND WHIM OF A SMALL RULING ELITE. GLASNOST TO AMERICANS IS A BIRTHRIGHT, BEQUEATHED TO US BY OUR FOUNDING FATHERS. BEQUEATHED TO US AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE DREAM. PROTECTED, NOT THREATENED, BY OUR INSTITUTIONS.

AND THE DREAM'S GREAT IDEAS -- FREEDOM, HUMAN DIGNITY, ECONOMIC PROSPERITY -- HAVE STRUCK THE FANCY OF MUCH OF THE GLOBE.

AND THE GREAT IDEA OF FREDERICK DOUGLASS THAT IF YOU WANT THE DREAM TO COME TRUE YOU HAVE TO BE PREPARED TO AGITATE, HAS SPARKED ESTONIANS, UKRANIANS, COALMINERS IN SIBERIA, AND UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN BEIJING -- AS WELL AS EVERY BLACK MAN AND WOMAN IN SOUTHERN AFRICA.

THE REMARKABLE THING IS THESE PEOPLE SEEM TO BE PUSHING THE DREAM, FOR THE MOST PART, IN A PEACEFUL WAY AND NOT THROUGH MASS VIOLENCE. IN FACT, THE VIOLENCE SEEMS TO COME FROM THE OTHER SIDE. THE CHINESE IN JUNE IN BEIJING STAND AS STARK PROOF OF MY WORDS. MARTIN LUTHER KING KNEW THE POLITICAL POTENCY OF THIS PEACEFUL PURSUIT OF THE DREAM. INDEED, IT MOTIVATED HIS VERY LIFE.

BUT THE ENORMOUS SUCCESSES BEING SCORED ALMOST DAILY IN THE WORLD TODAY, BELIE THE DANGER THAT STILL REMAINS.

AS A SOLDIER, IT'S THE DANGER IN THE WORLD THAT CONCERNS ME. IT'S THAT DANGER I HAVE TO WATCH, TO KEEP A CAREFUL EYE ON. IT'S THAT DANGER THE OVER ONE MILLION SOLDIERS THAT I NOW COMMAND MUST BE ALWAYS READY TO CONTEND WITH. AND IT'S THAT DANGER I NEED YOUR HELP TO COMBAT AND TO DEFEND AGAINST.

A SUBSTANTIAL PART OF THE REASON WE ARE SEEING OUR IDEAS WORKING SO POWERFULLY IN TODAY'S WORLD, HAS BEEN THE AMERICAN MILITARY STRENGTH THAT SHIELDED THE DREAM. AND THE MILITARY STRENGTH OF AMERICA'S ALLIES AND FRIENDS IN THE WORLD.

UNDER THAT MILITARY SHIELD, FREEDOM, ECONOMIC PROSPERITY, AND HUMAN RIGHTS HAVE MADE GREAT PROGRESS SINCE 1945. THAT SHIELD, COMBINED WITH OUR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC STRENGTH AND, MOST IMPORTANTLY, WITH OUR VALUES, HAS ALLOWED THE FREE WORLD TO PROSPER LIKE NEVER BEFORE.

IN FACT OUR PROGRESS, SOME PEOPLE SAY, HAS BEEN SO GREAT THAT WE NO LONGER REQUIRE THE MILITARY SHIELD, OR THE SHIELD CAN BE LOWERED OR SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCED IN SIZE.

I WANT TO TELL YOU THAT THE TIME IS NOT YET HERE. I WELCOME THE CHANGES IN OUR CHIEF ADVERSARY, THE SOVIET UNION. I HOPE THOSE CHANGES LEAD TO A LESS THREATENING SOVIET UNION. I WELCOME THE RESTRUCTURING OCCURRING IN EASTERN EUROPE, AND IN ASIA. I WELCOME THE SETTLEMENT IN ANGOLO, AND THE DETERMINATION OF SOME SOUTH AFRICANS TO CHANGE THE POLITICAL STRUCTURE OF THAT TROUBLED NATION.

I WELCOME THE TREMENDOUS CHANGE IN LATIN AMERICA FROM MILITARY GOVERNMENTS TO DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENTS.

I WELCOME ALL THESE ENCOURAGING DEVELOPMENTS. BUT WHEN YOU ARE BEGINNING TO SEE SIGNS OF VICTORY IS NOT THE TIME TO QUIT, NOT THE TIME TO RELAX, AND NOT THE TIME TO DECLARE THE BATTLE WON. HISTORY TELLS US MANY A BATTLE HAS BEEN LOST FOR JUST SUCH A REASON.

THE MILITARY SHIELD IS INDISPENSABLE TO AMERICA'S FUTURE. WE MUST MAINTAIN AMERICA'S STRENGTH AND AT THE SAME TIME CONTINUE VIGOROUSLY TO EXPLOIT THESE HISTORIC OPPORTUNITIES PUSHING THE WORLD TOWARD PEACE.

WE MUST ALSO BE COGNIZANT OF OUR OTHER NEEDS -- TO FIGHT DRUGS, TO CLEAN OUR ENVIRONMENT, AND TO HELP THE HELPLESS. WE MUST DO ALL OF THESE THINGS -- AND WE CAN.

YOU KNOW, SOMETIMES WHEN I RIDE THROUGH THE STREETS OF ATLANTA OR NEW YORK, I WATCH THE YOUNG PEOPLE MOVING ALONG THE STREETS, GOING TO AND FROM THEIR JOBS, TALKING, RUNNING TO CATCH THE BUSES, OR JUST BROWSING AT SHOP WINDOWS. AND I FEEL AN URGE TO ASK THEM: "DO YOU REALIZE WHAT A MOMENT IN HISTORY YOU'RE LIVING IN? DO YOU KNOW HOW FRAGILE MIGHT BE THE MOMENT, THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GOING BACKWARD AND GOING FORWARD? DO YOU UNDERSTAND THAT WE ARE THE LEADERS OF THE WORLD, THAT WE HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO ALL OF MANKIND TO EXERCISE THAT LEADERSHIP PRUDENTLY AND WELL?"

I WOULD LIKE TO SEE MORE EDITORIALS ASKING OUR YOUNG PEOPLE SUCH QUESTIONS. I WOULD LIKE TO SEE OUR NEWSPAPERS TAKING THEIR READERS TO THE HEART OF THESE VITAL ISSUES.

BECAUSE OUR VALUES ARE THE WORLD'S HOPE. FREEDOM, THE DIGNITY OF THE INDIVIDUAL HUMAN BEING, AND ECONOMIC PROSPERITY ARE THE PRIME ESSENTIALS TO A FUTURE OF PROMISE AND PEACE. AND OUR ARMED FORCES ARE THE SHIELD THAT PROTECTS THAT FUTURE AND THAT PEACE.

I AM VERY PROUD OF THE ONE MILLION SOLDIERS UNDER MY COMMAND. I WILL BE PROUDER STILL OF THE SEVERAL MILLION SOLDIERS, SAILORS, MARINES, AIRMEN, AND COAST GUARDSMEN I WILL BE REPRESENTING AS CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF. ALL VOLUNTEERS PROUDLY SERVING THEIR NATION. THEY PROTECT THE DREAM, THEY DESERVE OUR SUPPORT. THAT'S THE MESSAGE I WANT YOU TO CARRY TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. THAT'S THE REASON I'VE COME HERE TODAY. AND TO THAT END I ASK FOR YOUR HELP.

ONE OF THE FIRST PLACES I VISITED AFTER ARRIVING IN ATLANTA IN APRIL OF THIS YEAR WAS THE KING CENTER. MRS. KING GAVE ME A PORTRAIT OF THE GREAT FREEDOM FIGHTER AND MY STAFF HUNG THE PORTRAIT ON THE WALL OPPOSITE MY CHAIR IN OUR CONFERENCE ROOM. SITTING IN THAT ROOM, I LOOK DIRECTLY AT THE PORTRAIT -- AND IT'S AN IMPOSING LIKENESS.

FROM MY SEAT AT THE CONFERENCE TABLE, I CAN READ THE WORDS INSCRIBED DIRECTLY BENEATH THE PORTRAIT: IT SAYS "FREEDOM HAS ALWAYS BEEN AN EXPENSIVE THING." WORDS SPOKEN BY A MAN WHO KNEW.

THROUGH THE YEARS MEN AND WOMEN HAVE PAID A PRECIOUS PRICE FOR FREEDOM. DOCTOR KING WENT TO JAIL FOR IT, HE MARCHED FOR IT, AND HE DIED FOR IT. LECH WALESIA WENT TO JAIL FOR IT. NELSON MANDELA WENT TO JAIL FOR IT -- IS STILL IN JAIL TODAY. CHINESE STUDENTS WENT TO JAIL AND MANY DIED FOR IT.

THOUSANDS UPON THOUSANDS OF AMERICAN SOLDIERS, AND SAILORS, AND AIRMEN, AND MARINES, AND COASTGUARDSMEN HAVE MADE THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE FOR IT, AND MEN AND WOMEN LIKE THEM TODAY MUST BE PREPARED TO DO SO AGAIN TO PROTECT THE DREAM. AND THEY ARE PREPARED -- THEY'RE TRAINED, AND THEY'RE READY, AND PROUD TO SERVE AND SACRIFICE FOR FREEDOM. BUT WE MUST NEVER SEND THEM FORTH TO FREEDOM'S DEFENSE UNREADY OR TO THE CALL OF AN UNCERTAIN TRUMPET. WEAKNESS INVITES TYRANTS AND WAR. STRENGTH DETERS BOTH TYRANTS AND WAR. "FREEDOM HAS ALWAYS BEEN AN EXPENSIVE THING" -- BUT WORTH WHATEVER IT COSTS.

YOU, LADIES AND GENTLEMAN, ARE THE ULTIMATE GUARDIANS OF FREEDOM AND THE DREAM. YOU PAY BY HONESTY AND AGGRESSIVENESS AND COMMITMENT AS YOU PERFORM YOUR CONSTITUTIONAL ROLE. AND IN THE WAY THAT YOU SHAPE PEOPLE'S VIEWS, YOU PLAY A VITAL ROLE IN DETERMINING HOW HIGH THE PRICE OF FREEDOM WILL BE FOR OTHERS. AND IF YOU ARE SUCCESSFUL, FREEDOM WILL FLOURISH NOT ONLY THROUGHOUT THIS LAND BUT UNTO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH. AND AMERICAN SOLDIERS WILL PAY ONLY THE PRICE OF ETERNAL READINESS, AND NOT THE TRAGIC AND PRECIOUS PRICE OF LIFE.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

(Hinchliffe/Simon)  
February 19, 1991 3 p.m.  
BLACKHIS

**PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: BLACK HISTORY MONTH**  
**East Room**  
**February 25, 1991 11 a.m.**

Today, we celebrate the proud spectrum of black achievement. For we recognize that black history -- this rich tale of roots, purpose and pride -- is really everyone's history. And something else, too. You know, in the midst of war, we find ourselves thinking about heroes. Well, this is the time to think especially of black heroes. Those who by their fierce convictions showed <sup>that</sup> no race has a monopoly on idealism or excellence. We must tell stories of black successes to every child in our country. Because we need heroes. We need them as much as we need our dreams. And black Americans have always provided <sup>plenty of</sup> both.

A few nights ago I saw a play called "Black Eagles," about the Tuskegee Airmen of WWII. ~~I was lucky enough to see it with a true legend:~~ <sup>and</sup> their leader, Gen. Benjamin Davis. Seeing the play and being with this great man made me think more about a very special group of heroes: black Americans who've fought for this country for 200 years. They've never received the credit they deserve for their devoted patriotism; their vision, and their sacrifices. America owes a long-overdue tribute to these men and women who-- long before they had rights -- believed in what was right.

For two centuries, black soldiers have established a record of pride in the face of incredible obstacles. For not only did they risk their lives fighting for freedom for their own and for other countries -- but they did it at the same time they were

being denied their God-given freedoms at home. Think about how much they must have loved this country. How they believed in its dreams. It's an astounding devotion -- in a league by itself.

You can feel that love of country just as strongly in the Gulf today. Yes we've made progress in righting the wrongs of the past; but, tragically, racism and bigotry, illiteracy and poverty still exist. America is not without problems, and black Americans serving in the Gulf understand that. Yet they've chosen to fight because they also believe in this country. And when these Gulf heroes come home, they'll continue to fight injustice by fighting discrimination and despair with the same commitment. I tell you now, this President and this Administration will fight with them.

So to those who criticize the number of blacks in the armed services today, my answer is simple. They are America's heroes. The real thing. Volunteers, every one. Look at those brave men and women putting their lives on the line for us -- and you don't see colors or creeds. All you see are Americans. Good, brave, dedicated Americans. Americans who chose to be there. Americans who put their devotion to country first. Americans with dignity and pride -- calling America back to her better self. Americans serving as equals. Americans measured only by their abilities. Thank God we have them, every one.

And thank God for those who went before. For our new heroes are part of a long tradition. The airmen in "Black Eagles" talk about it -- for they made their own very special mark in the roll call of generations who battled not only their country's enemy,

but also their countrymen's prejudice. In the play, these brave warriors explain they were "paving the way ... paving the way." *Beth Hindlife*

It was more than two centuries ago that the first black patriots started to pave the way of Freedom Road. In 1774, slaves sent a plea to the Royal Governor of Massachusetts saying: "we have in common with all other men a natural right to our freedoms without being deprived of them by our fellow men." Seems like these sentiments might have inspired the words Thomas Jefferson wrote two years later: his call for equality, and for the unalienable rights to life, liberty and the purusit of happiness.

*The American Reader see file*

What these men sent was a message from the heart to those who would follow: Stand up for freedom. Cry out for freedom.

Risk all for freedom. And that's what blacks have done in every war in this nation's history. They've done it with heroes like

*Encyclopedia of Black America p. 144 p. 833*

Crispus Attucks -- the first American to die for the cause of his country's liberty. With heroes like the blacks who <sup>5000</sup> ~~made up 1/6~~ <sup>fought</sup>

<sup>in</sup> of the Revolutionary War ~~forces~~ -- loyal, courageous men who will at long last be honored with a memorial here on the Mall.

Freedom Road led nearly a quarter million newly-freed slaves into the Civil War. Heroes emerged like the men of the Ft. Wagner

*Encyclopedia of Black America New Republic 1-8-90 p. 22*

charge so powerfully reenacted in "Glory." The black regiment lost half its men but won <sup>much more</sup> the dignity and respect it rightfully

deserved. Freedom Road took black heroes up San Juan Hill with Teddy Roosevelt. By the way, Colin Powell has a painting of them

*Powell speech 2-27-90*

in his office - says he likes to look up from his desk, see them, and remember the contributions of those who went before. And, he

says, reflect on what he must do to help those who yet to come.

Black heroes also paved Freedom Road on the French fields and Rhine River of WWI. But when their sons joined up 25 years later, they found there was much work left to do. Their mission was to win the war -- and to prove their race. I heard a shocking story of black soldiers who were bringing German prisoners to a POW camp here in America during the war. They stopped to eat. The lunch counter would serve the Germans -- but not the blacks.

By the end of the war these black soldiers had paved a victorious path; paved it in bravery and in blood. They won battles and medals. They won respect as men and acceptance as Americans. And at long last they won the integration of the armed forces.

That's why it's such an affront to hear talk about the number of blacks in the military today. Some just don't understand that generations of heroes risked their lives so their grandchildren could realize a dream. The dream of having the freedom to choose to serve their country. The dream that America would be a place where the only limits on a man would be the limits of his own vision. The dream of a nation where none would be called

"the first black": but rather, simply, "the best." For, as Booker T. Washington said: "No greater injury can be done to any youth than to let him feel that because he belongs to this or that race he will be advanced regardless of his own merit or efforts."

But the dream is not yet fully real -- there is today too much crime, too much crack, too much despair. But there is also today too much faith, too much pride, and too much human dignity

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to give up or to give in. That's why we urgently need to turn to the tradition of black heroes today: to inspire a new generation to believe in itself and in the future. Homegrown heroes like Frederick Douglass, who fought for dignity; W.E.B. DuBois, who fought for opportunity; Jackie Robinson, who fought just to do what he did best. Like Ralph Bunche, who won the Nobel Prize; Gwendolyn Brooks, who won the Pulitzer; Jesse Owens, who won Olympic medals and the respect of the world. Humanitarians and leaders from Harriet Tubman to George Washington Carver to Mickey Leland. Pioneers like Dr. Charles Drew and Ron McNair.

But they're not the only ones. It's up to us -- each of us. Together, we must write a new chapter in the history of civil rights. A chapter that says: opportunity must replace despair.

For opportunity means education -- equipping kids with the tools they need to compete in a new century. Opportunity means freedom from drugs -- zero-tolerance, like in the military. Opportunity means the dignity of work. Opportunity means having your own home; and being safe in it. Opportunity means social programs to keep families together -- and health care to keep them strong. And, above all, opportunity means we must treasure and defend the value of every human life. For as Langston Hughes wrote, "There's a dream in this land with its back against the wall; to save the dream for one, it must be saved for all."

This is an ideal place for us to commit ourselves to writing that chapter. For in this room 27 years ago, the original Civil Rights Act became law: that long overdue payment on a promissory

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file

note of equality signed two centuries before. But as long as discrimination -- born of ignorance and inhumanity -- still exists, our work is not yet finished. As long as the four horsemen of the American night -- illiteracy, inequality, indigence and fear -- threaten any of us, our work is not yet finished.

So we must as a nation pledge that never again will the individual be degraded and devalued. That we will remember the Black Eagles, who soared from bigotry on earth to equality in the skies. I am absolutely committed to civil rights and opportunity for every person in this great country. I am absolutely committed to ensuring that everyone receives a full and equal share of America's bounty. In a few days, I'll have more to say about our efforts to ensure opportunity for all Americans -- efforts rooted in empowering the individual and the family; investing in our future; and building a healthy foundation of economic growth.

This house, America's house, is steeped in history. When we listen, it brings to life the proud voices of black heroes echoing across the centuries. The pleading of the Massachusetts slaves. The resonance of the Civil War graves. The Tuskegee Airmen's call for victory in war and in the eyes of men. And we hear the voices of their descendants now in the Gulf sounding the oldest call of our land -- one we all share, no matter our color, no matter our roots. A call for an America strong -- an America fair -- an America free. God bless America and all her children.

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SECTION: PERSPECTIVE; Pg. 3; ZONE: C

LENGTH: 854 words

HEADLINE: Minority students: Don't panic

BYLINE: Clarence Page

BODY:

The caller's voice quivered with alarm.

"Are you going to write something about what the Education Department is trying to do to minority scholarships?" he asked.

Why, yes, as a matter of fact, I am, I said.

"Good," he said. The caller sounded relieved. Too bad he hung up before I could tell him what I planned to write. I have a feeling it might not be what he thinks.

He was calling about the ruling by Michael L. Williams, the Department of Education's assistant secretary for civil rights, that would stop colleges and universities from administering scholarship programs to which only minorities can apply.

But the caller is sadly mistaken if he thinks I am going to add my voice to those of Jesse Jackson, Benjamin Hooks, Sen. Paul Simon and various other assorted educators, politicians and civil-rights advocates who were outraged by the ruling.

I sing in another chorus. Although I favor efforts by colleges to diversify their student bodies by admitting more minorities (I don't find such efforts to be any less moral than past efforts to diversify campuses with more athletes, concert pianists, foreign nationals or children of wealthy alumni), I have always been troubled by "race-exclusive" scholarships.

It's hard to argue, for example, that money out of the limited scholarship pot should be given to my son simply because he is black when it could be used to help needier cases, including black children who are struggling to make their way out of the urban underclass.

I prefer scholarships that, to paraphrase an old Jesse Jackson line, trim out the greedy and help the truly needy. I am not so naive to propose, as some others suggest, that racism has become so benign that we should be "color-blind" about scholarships. I only suggest that race should not be the only yardstick. Class matters.

And, while The New York Times, among other critics of the Education Department decree, laments the "devastating signal" it sends to minority students, I cannot help but feel an even more dangerous signal has reached the

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youngsters who have been telling reporters that they worry about whether they can stay on campus without the benefit of a minorities-only scholarship.

I don't blame the students. I blame the rest of us who have misled them.

As Booker T. Washington, a former slave who earned a degree from Virginia's historically black Hampton College and went on to found Alabama's Tuskegee Institute, once said, "No greater injury can be done to any youth than to let him feel that because he belongs to this or that race he will be advanced regardless of his own merit or efforts."

That's the signal Williams sent when he said scholarships limited only to minorities were discriminatory and therefore illegal but, at the same time, reaffirmed the ability of colleges and universities to take race into account when they award scholarships.

Williams backed up that finding by citing the famous 1978 Supreme Court decision of Bakke v. University of California at Davis, which held that a state institution could not have fixed quotas for certain racial or ethnic groups but reaffirmed the right of universities to take race into account in efforts to remedy past discrimination and diversify their student bodies.

William's ruling only covers university-administered scholarships, not those scholarships awarded by private groups or foundations like the United Negro College Fund, which raises money for historically black colleges.

Williams also declined to disturb the awarding of scholarships based on financial need, and that's an important distinction. Truly "race-exclusive" scholarships are pretty rare. Those that do exist can be easily refashioned to fit Williams' new guidelines, and the same goal, more minority students, still can be achieved - targeted, one hopes, more effectively toward those most needy of a chance to prove themselves on campus.

With that in mind, colleges and the Bush administration should take immediate steps to assure minority students that their futures will not be jeopardized by a technicality some already are turning into a political football.

Any college or university officials who cannot refashion their school's "race-exclusive" scholarship program into one that results in just as many minority students based on criteria of need instead of skin color should turn their jobs over to someone else who can.

Ironically, Democrats and others who defend "race-exclusive" scholarships are turning this technical dispute into a quota fight that is sure to play right into the hands of Bush, Jesse Helms, Louisiana Rep. David Duke and every other Republican who has benefited from the "quotas" issue in the past or plans to benefit from it in the future.

It need not be so. Williams' controversial ruling would not have been greeted so harshly had it been part of a comprehensive package from President Bush for education reform. Unfortunately, our "education president" has done about as much to improve education as he has done to improve race relations, which is less than zero. He's still having trouble with "the vision thing."

WARS



**American Revolution** When Continental Congress voted to support Massachusetts farmers against the king's troops, which marked the beginning of the military aspect of the American Revolution, the expectation was that the war would be fought by white colonists. Washington had wanted no black soldiers, but the British forced Washington and the colonists to change their minds.

The British offered slaves in the South their freedom if they would rally round the king's standard, and some did. The British commanders intended to train them and use them as they saw fit to further their military action.

For the colonists, this represented an invitation to a slave insurrection, an action that would produce a bloodbath and death to soldier and civilian alike. From today's viewpoint, this is an eighteenth-century glimpse at the concept of

total war. From the colonial viewpoint, this was one of the most vile ideas a man could harbor and further proof of the baseness of the enemy.

The fact that some Afro-Americans responded to the British invitation led the Americans to accept the **service of free blacks in their Army**. Some, by their own choice, carried a musket, and others served as substitutes for white men. **Blacks, both slave and free, acted as guides, messengers, teamsters, laborers, and spies. Afro-Americans served as members of crews and as pilots in the Continental Navy.**

Most of the time, Afro-Americans served in what we today would call **integrated units**. It has been estimated that of the total combat force of 300,000 men for the whole war, **some 5,000** were Afro-Americans.

The British succeeded in recruiting a large number of slaves whom they used to help build fortifications. Although the insurrection of the slaves never materialized, the fear of one remained.

**War of 1812** This same fear was revived during the War of 1812. This war was not a popular war, especially in the Northeast. Even among those who supported the war, there were unpopular assignments. One was on gunboats assigned to defend local harbors; another was service on the Great Lakes. In the gunboat service and the lakes service, the chance of supplementing one's meager pay with prize money for the capture of enemy vessels was virtually nonexistent. Money was only to be had on the high seas in the Navy or on a privateer. **Afro-Americans who had the opportunity to serve on a privateer did so.** The number of Afro-Americans in the Navy was not great because a regulation existed against enlisting them. When short of men, however, a captain was apt to disregard such a regulation.

In the **lakes service**, Afro-Americans served with Commodore Oliver H. Perry's squadron on Lake Erie, with Commodore Isaac Chauncey's on Lake Ontario, and with Commodore Thomas McDonough's on Lake Champlain.

Far left: Standing at the north end of Battle Monument Plaza on Calvert Street, an historic site in Baltimore, this statue is a memorial to Afro-Americans who served in all of the nation's wars. Sculpted by James E. Lewis, a professor of art at Morgan State University, the statue was unveiled on June 12, 1972. Its completion was a civic undertaking encouraged by various groups and individuals, including the mayor and other city officials, art groups, the press, and radio and television stations. (Courtesy of James E. Lewis.)

The general manpower situation in the Army suggests that Afro-Americans were probably used, when available, in the Northern campaigns and in various efforts to defend the East Coast from British forays in 1814. They were most conspicuous, however, in the Southwest. Free blacks responded to Andrew Jackson's call for volunteers. Two battalions of free men of color helped turn back the British in the Battle of New Orleans.

In 1820, the year of the Missouri Compromise, the Army adjutant general's office issued this order: "No Negro or Mulatto will be received as a recruit in the Army."

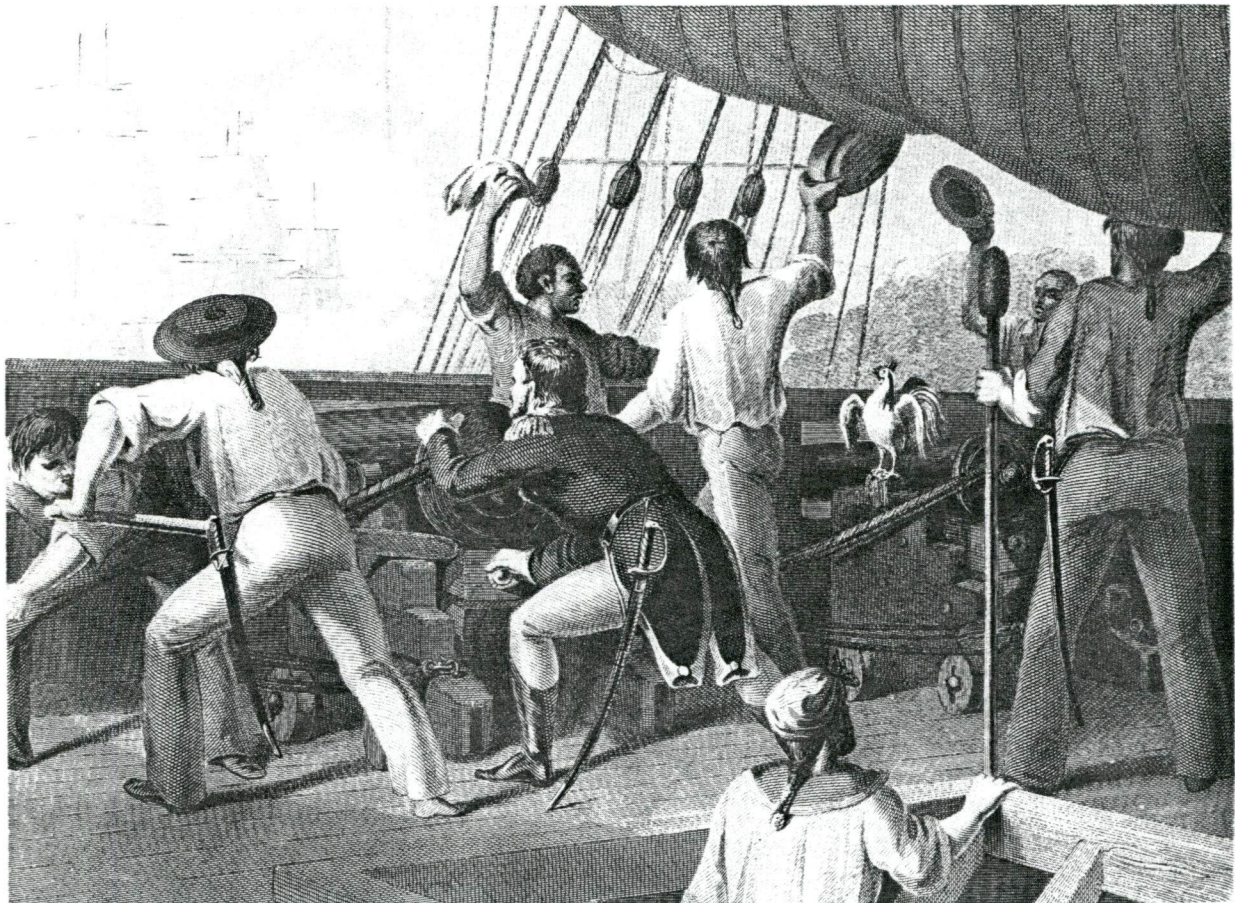
**Mexican War** Service by Afro-Americans in the Mexican War was apparently limited to those who served as crews of Navy vessels on duty off the Mexican coast and in California. By this time the old restrictions against enlisting Afro-Americans in the Navy had given way to a regulation that permitted them to constitute one-twentieth of a crew. Under no circumstances were slaves to be enlisted, although some southern officers did

bring a servant to sea with them. Slaves were used, however, in laboring forces at navy yards.

**Civil War** The leadership of both sides in the Civil War never expected the war to last for four years. As the war dragged on and took its toll, abolitionists and others urged President Abraham Lincoln to enlist Afro-Americans. By the middle of the war, this course was being followed; but Afro-American soldiers were only gradually accepted. As members of a segregated unit, the first Afro-American volunteers were given a great deal of fatigue duty, which tended to underscore the idea that they were only laborers in uniform. It was not until the summer of 1864 that the practice of concentrating noncombatant work in Afro-American regiments was discontinued.

Other problems still remained. The Afro-American soldier received six dollars a month less in pay and uniforms than whites. He was armed with poor or obsolete weapons and received inferior medical care.

When finally given combat duty, Afro-Ameri-



Battle of Lake Erie  
(War of 1812).  
(Library of  
Congress.)

an regiments participated in 449 engagements, 9 of which may be considered as major battles. The fact that Afro-Americans, if captured, asked being executed induced President Lincoln to try to keep them in areas where the chance of being captured was minimal. Lincoln finally had to resort to threats of retaliation before the Confederates treated Afro-Americans as official prisoners of war. Even then, the South was unwilling to exchange prisoners (involving Afro-Americans) on a man-for-man basis since this would be an admission of equality. By the

served in infantry regiments; others served engineering, light artillery, and cavalry units. In every case, it was segregated service. About 75 to 100 Afro-Americans received commissions, the highest of which was that of a lieutenant colonel.

Some 29,000 Afro-Americans served in various capacities in the Union Navy, which was an integrated service. None, however, made the rank of officer.

Despite all these restrictions, Afro-Americans won the Medal of Honor. Medal of Honor recipients in the Union Army were:

- 1863 Sgt. William Harvey Carney, Co. C, 54th Mass. Vols.
- 1864 Sgt. Maj. Christian A. Fleetwood, 4th U.S.C.T.
- 1864 Sgt. Alfred B. Hilton, Co. H, 4th U.S.C.T.
- 1864 Cpl. Charles Veal, Co. D, 4th U.S.C.T.
- 1864 Sgt. Milton M. Holland, Co. C, 5th U.S.C.T.
- 1864 1st Sgt. James E. Bronson, Co. D, 5th U.S.C.T.
- 1864 1st Sgt. Powhatan Beatty, Co. G, 5th U.S.C.T.
- 1864 1st Sgt. Robert A. Pinn, Co. I, 5th U.S.C.T.
- 1864 Sgt. Maj. Thomas R. Hawkins, 6th U.S.C.T.
- 1864 Sgt. Alexander Kelly, Co. F, 6th U.S.C.T.
- 1864 Cpl. Miles James, Co. B, 36th U.S.C.T.
- 1864 Pvt. James Gardiner, Co. I, 36th U.S.C.T.
- 1864 1st Sgt. Edward Ratcliffe, Co. C, 38th U.S.C.T.
- 1864 Sgt. James H. Harris, Co. B, 38th U.S.C.T.
- 1864 Pvt. William H. Barnes, Co. C, 38th U.S.C.T.
- 1864 Sgt. Decatur Dorsey, Co. B, 39th U.S.C.T.

Far left: A cook watches over the mess at an army rail head (Union), City Point, Virginia, during the Civil War. (Library of Congress.)



time the South did agree to a man-for-man exchange, the North had adopted a policy of no exchanges in order to deprive the South of manpower.

Service in the Union Navy was not popular during the Civil War. States did not pay bounties to men who joined the Navy; and, also, blockade duty was very boring. To meet his manpower demands, the secretary of the navy found it necessary to transfer some soldiers with maritime backgrounds to duty on board naval ships. A somewhat similar situation prevailed in relation to the gunboat service on the western waters.

Given this manpower shortage, Afro-Americans were enlisted whenever possible. In December 1862 the secretary of the navy issued an order that no "contrabands" (a black slave who had fled, had been smuggled behind the Union lines, or who had remained in territory captured by the Union Army) were to be enlisted at a rating higher than that of landsman, the lowest rating. If they were found to be qualified, they could later be advanced to the rating of coal-heaver, fireman, ordinary seaman, and seaman. If they were transferred to another vessel, they had to begin again at the lowest rating.

When all was said and done, 186,000 Afro-Americans served in the Union Army. Most



Sgt. William H. Carney. (Moorland-Spingarn Research Center, Howard University.)

Medal of Honor recipients in the Union Navy were:

- 1863 Robert Blake, Contraband, U.S.S. Marblehead
- 1864 Joachim Pease, Seaman, U.S.S. Kearsarge



Christian Fleetwood, 1860 Congressional Medal of Honor recipient. (Lincoln University.)

## WARS: Spanish-American War

- 1864 John H. Lawson, Landsman, U.S.S. *Hartford*  
1864 Clement Dees, Seaman, U.S.S. *Pontoosuc*  
1865 Aaron Anderson, Landsman, U.S.S. *Wyandank*

Far right: The 369th, one of the most decorated units of World War I, marches up Fifth Avenue, passing the New York Public Library, in a victory parade (1918). (*The National Archives.*)

For recipients in other wars, see Robert Ewell Greene, cited in References below (pp 376–377). There were, however, some outstanding heroes who did not receive the Medal of Honor; such was Robert Lee Campbell, a captain of Infantry in World War I, who received the Distinguished Service Cross. Campbell was also a veteran of the Spanish-American War who, after World War I, served on the faculties of Tuskegee Institute and A & T College. Immediately after World War II began, Campbell volunteered his services.

The Afro-American's service in the Civil War induced the War Department to create four Afro-American units as part of the postwar Regular Army. These were the 24th and 25th Infantry regiments and the 9th and 10th Cavalry regiments. They saw service in the Indian Wars, mainly in the Southwest.

**Spanish-American War** Sixteen regiments of black volunteers were raised in the Spanish-American War, but the war ended too soon for most of the volunteers to reach the front. Elements of the Regular Army Afro-American regiments did see action in Cuba, especially at San Juan Hill along with Teddy Roosevelt's dismounted Rough Riders.

The 9th cavalry, one of the oldest combat regiments, embarks for Cuba during the Spanish-American War (1898). (*The National Archives.*)



By this time, fewer Afro-Americans were serving in the Navy, and those in service tended to be cooks and stewards.

**World War I** With the beginning of World War I, 370,000 Afro-Americans (11 percent of American combat forces) enlisted or were drafted. More than half of these men were assigned to the

all-black 92d and 93d Infantry divisions. Separate regiments of the 92d Division served with French troops and earned the *Croix de Guerre*.



The 369th Infantry Regiment ("Hell Fighters") of the 93d Infantry Division was outstanding. It was in continuous combat longer than any other American unit; and it was the first Allied regiment to reach the Rhine River in the offensive against Germany. However, the overwhelming majority of black fighting men were assigned to service units, including outfits engaged as stevedores on French docks for the American Expeditionary Force. In the Navy, Afro-American service was limited to 10,000 messmen; there were no commissioned officers. In fact, black officers numbered only about 1,400 (about one for every 2,600 black enlisted men), and the highest ranking of these officers was a colonel. By official policy, the Wilson administration and its War Department carried out rigid segregation. Black leadership protested these restrictions as discriminatory. Commissions, for example, were only reluctantly granted, and most commissions had come through the controversial all-black officers' training school in Des Moines, Iowa. See NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE (NAACP): THE NAACP, WILSON, AND WORLD WAR I.

**World War II** About a million black Americans served in the armed forces in World War II, including several thousand women in the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps (WACS). By the end of the war, about 165,000 enlisted men were in the Navy. Blacks served in all theaters, largely in the service corps: quartermaster, engineer, ordinance, and transportation. About half of all enlisted men served overseas.

However, there were several black combat units. The largest in Europe was the 92d Infantry Division, known as the "Buffalo Division" because of a history of service in the post-Civil



Far left:  
In the newly  
liberated city of  
Genoa, Italy, the  
92d Division troops  
enter the Galleria  
Guiseppe Garibaldi  
(1945). (U.S. Army  
Photograph.)

War American West. The 93d Infantry Division was the largest combat unit in the Pacific theater. Smaller combat units, less than division strength, included the 761st Tank Battalion (highly commended for gallantry), the 614th Tank Destroyer Battalion, the 593d Field Artillery, and several anti-aircraft units (then under Coast Artillery Command). Moreover, the 99th and 332d fighter plane squadrons were outstanding.

Trained at Ft. Huachuca, Ariz., and committed to combat action with the Fifth Army, the 92d Division ended its career near the close of the war in Italy after actions in Cascina, Cinquale Canal, and La Spezia. The 93d Division, or its units, saw service in several Pacific islands, including the Solomons.

As in World War I, blacks were restricted to service in segregated units; but by the close of the war, some training schools, including some Officer Candidate Schools, were integrated. **Throughout the war, segregation was enforced at all military posts:** in theaters, service clubs, mess halls, living areas, transport, and other facilities. There was also discrimination in promotion and assignments. For example, black enlisted men faced difficulties in becoming commissioned officers; the Navy did not commission its first black officer (Bernard W. Robinson) until 1942 and by the end of the war had only 53 black officers. The Navy had the first national Afro-American hero of the war (**Dorie Miller**) in 1941 when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. Also, those who were commissioned faced discrimination in promotion, especially above the rank of captain. Blacks were almost completely excluded from the command function beyond junior officer levels. Protests against segregation and discrimination were made by soldiers: sometimes by individuals "through channels"; sometimes by rioting groups in training camps or posts. Per-



Members of the  
"Suicide Six,"  
reputedly one of the  
fastest gun crews in  
the 2d Infantry  
Division (Korean  
Conflict, 1951).  
(U.S. Army  
Photograph.)

haps more significant were the protests made by the black press and by the leadership of the NAACP and the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. Protests led to the beginning of integration at the end of World War II in 1945. See NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE (NAACP): THE NAACP IN WORLD WAR II.

**Military Activity after 1945** The end of World War II and the beginning of the cold war brought occupation duty in Germany, in Austria, and in Japan, and additional problems of integration. In 1948 President Harry S. Truman issued an executive order ending segregation in the Armed Forces. A new era in the history of the fighting man began. This integration was quickly completed so that by the beginning of the Korean War in June, 1950, only the 25th Infantry Regiment of the old demobilized 93d Infantry Division was still identifiable as an Afro-American unit. As members of integrated units, Afro-Americans gave a good account of themselves in Korea.



General Moreland is surrounded by two advisors to the 24th Infantry Division in Vietnam. (U.S. photograph.)

A new problem arose out of integration. It was now possible for a black man to make a career as a soldier or sailor in an integrated unit, and many did. But this situation took on a different dimension as the American involvement in Vietnam increased. If the U.S. Army was bearing the brunt of that war, and if much of the army was Afro-American, was this the ultimate test of an integrated service? Or, was it the case of a minority group's bearing a disproportionate share of the ordeal? These questions and their implica-

tions were being discussed a long time after America's departure from Vietnam.

The following list is a breakdown by percentages of black, white, and other participation in the Armed Forces according to a Department of Defense report issued on June 30, 1972. Since that time the number of enlistees has dropped as the military has reduced its strength following the end of the Vietnam War. The category "others" includes Spanish-speaking Americans, Orientals, and American Indians.

RACIAL COMPOSITION OF THE ARMED FORCES, 1972

Races	Percent
Total in all branches of the military	2,311,194
Caucasians	87.2 percent
Afro-Americans	11.1 percent
Others	1.7 percent
Army enlisted men total	686,695
Caucasians	81.9 percent
Afro-Americans	17.0 percent
Others	1.1 percent
Army officers total	121,290
Caucasians	95.7 percent
Afro-Americans	3.9 percent
Others	.4 percent
Navy enlisted men total	510,669
Caucasians	89.0 percent
Afro-Americans	6.4 percent
Others	4.6 percent
Navy officers total	73,155
Caucasians	98.7 percent
Afro-Americans	.9 percent
Others	.4 percent
Air Force enlisted men total	599,774
Caucasians	86.6 percent
Afro-Americans	12.6 percent
Others	.8 percent
Air Force officers total	121,674
Caucasians	97.7 percent
Afro-Americans	1.7 percent
Others	.6 percent
Marine Corps enlisted men total	178,395
Caucasians	86.1 percent
Afro-Americans	12.6 percent
Others	1.3 percent
Marine Corps officers total	19,542
Caucasians	98.0 percent
Afro-Americans	1.5 percent
Others	.5 percent

Over the years, and especially during World War I and World War II, the white man's belief in the ability of Afro-American units was apt to decrease as the size of the unit increased. Thus, companies and regiments were well regarded, whereas divisions were not. Virtually everyone agrees that the quality of white officers in Afro-American divisions was very bad. As members of an integrated fighting unit, Afro-Americans performed well. Much of the problem, seemingly, stemmed directly or indirectly from leader-

**ATLANTA UNIVERSITY** Atlanta University, at Atlanta, Ga., was founded at the end of the Civil War to teach the children of slaves. Atlanta University now consists of four undergraduate colleges—Morehouse, Spelman, Clark, and Morris Brown (see entries under separate college names)—all of which adjoin the campus of the university. The coeducational university offers degrees through the doctorate. It is an independent school with a 1975 enrollment of nearly 1,150. The first classes, however, were held in a church and a railroad boxcar. Its formal work under its present name did not begin until 1869, though it was chartered two years before; the school was active as early as November 1865. Its first normal class was graduated in 1873 and its first college class in 1876.

Of necessity, the school began with students of low academic standing. During the first year, only one student ranked higher than first year in high school; yet, by 1894, all work below the high school level was discontinued. In 1925 the high school classes were also discontinued, and by the fall of 1928 no students below freshman and junior normal classification were admitted.

In 1929 an arrangement was reached among Atlanta University and Morehouse and Spelman colleges for the affiliation of the three institutions in a university system: graduate and professional educations to be offered by Atlanta University; undergraduate courses to be available through Morehouse and Spelman colleges.

More recently, Clark College, Interdenominational Theological Center, and Morris Brown College have joined the university affiliation. Each institution is independently organized, but all facilities are available to all students in the university. Atlanta University offers a limited number of undergraduate-graduate courses. It has been, and remains, one of the most prestigious black institutions of higher learning in the United States. See also **CLARK COLLEGE**; **INTERDENOMINATIONAL THEOLOGICAL CENTER**; **MOREHOUSE COLLEGE**; **MORRIS BROWN COLLEGE**; **SPELMAN COLLEGE**.

**ATLANTA WORLD** The first Afro-American daily newspaper in the United States, beginning in 1932. It was founded as a weekly in 1928, in Atlanta Ga., by the Scott family. The editor and general manager was Cornelius Adolphus Scott, born in Edwards, Miss., in 1908. See also **NEWSPAPERS**.

**ATTUCKS, CRISPUS** (1723–70), patriot, martyr, hero; born in Framingham, Mass. The first martyr

in an event prior to the Revolutionary War, Attucks was the son of Prince Attucks, a native African, and Nancy Attucks, a native Natick American Indian. When the British were in central Boston at Dock Square near Custom House, March 5, 1770, he was with a band of leaders that was the first to defy the red coats. The black patriot was the first to die in the melee and be buried with honor. By age eleven, Attucks had become unhappy with the difference he had observed between slavery and freedom. As a child, he had been sold from one slave owner to another but eventually ran away to become a sailor and whaler. Attucks learned to read and write and to understand the fundamental principles that underlay different forms of government. Prior to the Boston Massacre, he attended several meetings with other patriots to discuss burdensome taxes levied by England. Attucks later wrote a letter of protest to Governor Thomas Hutchinson, the Tory governor of the province, which showed wisdom, insight, and his devotion to the cause of freedom. The Boston Massacre Monument on Boston Common preserves Attucks' memory. See also **AFRO-AMERICAN HISTORY: COLONIAL PERIOD**; **HISTORIANS**.

**AUGUSTA, ALEXANDER** (1825– ? ), physician, soldier; born in Va. Augusta received his M.D. degree from Trinity Medical College (Toronto, Canada) in 1836. Augusta was quite young when he arrived in Canada. He practiced as a doctor for some time in Toronto and had mostly white patients. In 1863 he joined the Union Army and was appointed "surgeon to the U.S. Colored Troops" with the rank of lieutenant colonel. In the following year, two of his white assistants complained to President Abraham Lincoln about the "unnatural situation" involved in serving under a black officer. In February 1864 Augusta was transferred to another unit. Augusta was the first black doctor to head a hospital in the United States—the Freedmen's Hospital in Washington, D.C. See also **PHYSICIANS**; **WARS**.

**AUGUSTA INSTITUTE** See **MOREHOUSE COLLEGE**.

**AUNT JEMIMA** The name of a particular brand of pancake flour, "Aunt Jemima" was also the name of the character that advertised the product on radio and television. She was a round and jolly black woman, her head covered with a colorful kerchief. She became a stereotypical figure of the black "mammy."



Alexander Augusta.  
(Moorland-Spangarn Research Center, Howard University.)

(Hinchliffe/Simon)  
February 19, 1991 1 p.m.  
BLACK

**PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: BLACK HISTORY MONTH**  
**East Room**  
**Monday, February 25, 1991**

I remember being struck many years ago when I read a plea a group of slaves had sent to the Royal Governor of Massachusetts back in 1774. They wrote: "[we] apprehend we have in common with all other men a natural right to our freedoms -- without being deprived of them by our fellow men." Seems like these sentiments might have inspired the words Thomas Jefferson wrote the next year -- his call for equality, and for the inalienable rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

When those bound men wrote from their heart, they set their nation and their heirs on a course of struggle that's lasted more than two centuries. They knew what it truly meant not to be free. And with this one letter they crafted a tradition that lives on in each generation. A tradition of standing up for America's freedom -- a tradition of calling out for freedom -- a tradition of putting their lives on the line for freedom.

That's what real patriotism is. Yet blacks have never received credit for their vision, their sacrifices and their toil in defense of this nation. The United States owes a long-overdue tribute to the men and women who, before they had rights, had the right idea. Whose sacrifice have guaranteed us the freedoms we have -- and have made this the country that it is.

And so today, here, we celebrate the legacy of black patriotism. For we recognize that black history -- this rich

tale of roots, purpose and pride -- is really everyone's history.

A few nights ago I saw a new play called "Black Eagles." It's the story of the Tuskegee Airmen -- those astonishing heroes of WWII who made up a very special chapter in the continuum of black military service. Who made their mark in the roll call of the generations who have battled not only their country's enemy, but also their countrymen's prejudice. As the airmen in the play explain -- they were "paving the way ... paving the way."

That's the story of black patriotism. Two centuries paving the way for those who would follow. Paving a proud road that began at the Boston Massacre, when former slave Crispus Attucks became the first American to die for the cause of his country's liberty. A road that became the Revolutionary War, as blacks made up one-sixth of the army, fighting in integrated units.

And then became the War of 1812, the Mexican War. And the Civil War: the pride of nearly one-quarter million recently freed slaves finally able to prove themselves by giving every-thing to the country and ideals they loved. In segregated units, these black patriots paved the road with hard-won dignity, answering with the greatest eloquence the question of whether blacks could fight. As one man reported, after the battle that inspired the powerful movie "Glory": "The answer is spoken from the cannon's mouth ... it comes to us from those graves beneath Fort Wagner's walls, which the American people will surely never forget."

We're here today to commemorate those graves -- and to say that the American people surely will never forget.

Nor will we forget the black regiments who rode up the hill with Teddy Roosevelt in the Spanish-American War. Nor the Buffalo Soldiers. Colin Powell has a painting of them on his wall, and says he likes to look over from desk, see them, remember all the contributions made by those who went before, and remember his obligation to help those who will follow. Paving the way.

As did the 370,000 WWI blacks who put their lives on the line in segregated units and returned home to a segregated nation. And, three decades later, those who had to prove their race again in WWII. Who proved themselves with such brilliance. Men like the Black Eagles. Their mission: To win the war. And to prove black men could be pilots. Fighting for the right to train. Fighting for the right to fly. Fighting for the right to be in combat. And finally -- fighting for the rights of their country.

They won battles and medals. They won respect as men. Acceptance as just Americans. And integration in the armed forces.

I had the privilege of seeing "Black Eagles" with the hero who was their leader: Gen. Benjamin Davis. The first black Air Force General, he said of his father, first black Army General: "He'd made life easier for me. Now it was my turn to make things better for those who would come after me." Paving the way.

Others paved the way on harsh roads from Seoul to Saigon. Now today's successors to the Black Eagles bring their courage and fine, burning patriotism to the sands and seas of the Gulf.

I'm amazed to hear people criticize the proportion of blacks in our armed services today. They just don't understand the gen-

erations whose legacy is a path paved in bravery and in blood. Paved so their great-grandchildren could realize the dream. The dream of having the freedom to choose to serve their country. The dream that America would be a place where the only limits on a man would be the limits of his own vision. The dream of a nation where no-one would any longer be called "the first black" -- but rather, simply, "the best." A dream realized in General Colin Powell. You know, there's a scene in "Black Eagles" where veterans toast Colin. When I was there, the audience exploded in tribute -- cheering this magnificent leader. This leader who just happens to be the "first black Chairman." The truth is: I chose him simply because he is ... the best. After all as Booker T. Washington said: "No greater injury can be done to any youth than to let him feel that because he belongs to this or that race he will be advanced regardless of his own merit or efforts."

But I want to say something to those who question the number of blacks in the military. When I went to Saudi Arabia at Thanksgiving and talked with our troops and ate with them and laughed with them and prayed with them -- all I saw were Americans. Good, brave, dedicated young Americans. Americans who had volunteered to serve. Americans who put their devotion to country first. I looked at those faces and all I saw were Americans serving with dignity and pride -- calling America back to her better self. I saw Americans serving as equals. Americans measured only for themselves. I saw in them -- the American dream fulfilled.

We must never forget those who have dreamed that dream.

Those who by their fierce convictions showed that no race has a monopoly on idealism or excellence. Every child must hear stories of black successes -- must grow up learning legacies of patriotism and identity. Because we need heroes. We need them as much as we need our dreams. Perhaps they can inspire one child whose hope is fading. There is today too much crime, too much crack, too much despair. But there is also today too much faith, too much pride, and too much human dignity to give up or give in.

And it is our job -- all of ours -- to ensure that this abundance of potential is met by equal opportunity. Together we must write a new chapter in the history of civil rights. A chapter that says that opportunity must replace despair.

A chapter that says that opportunity means education -- equipping kids with the tools they need to compete in a new century. A chapter that says that opportunity means freedom from drugs -- zero-tolerance, an example set by the military. A chapter that says that opportunity means the dignity of work. That opportunity means having your own home. And feeling safe in it. That opportunity means a guarantee of caring social programs to keep families together. That it means health care. A chapter that says, above all, that opportunity means we must treasure and defend the value of every human life. For -- as Langston Hughes wrote, "There's a dream in this land with its back against the wall; to save the dream for one, it must be saved for all."

This is an ideal place for us to commit ourselves to writing that chapter. For in this room 27 years ago, the original Civil

Rights Act was signed: that long overdue payment on a promissory note of equality signed two centuries before. But as long as discrimination -- born of ignorance and inhumanity -- still exists, our work is not yet finished. As long as the four horsemen of the American night -- illiteracy, inequality, indigence and fear -- threaten any of us, our work is not yet finished.

So we must as a nation pledge that never again will men be degraded and devalued -- like the Black Eagles, who soared from equality in the skies to bigotry on earth. I am absolutely committed to civil rights and opportunity for every person in this great country. I am absolutely committed to ensuring that everyone receives a full and equal share of America's bounty. So in a few days I'm going to introduce our new Opportunities Package. And it will include the Civil Rights Bill of 1991 -- rooted in empowerment and ennoblement; not in false promises or quotas. After all, it was Frederick Douglass who said: "Equality of numbers has nothing to do with quality of attainment."

When we listen, we hear the voices of proud black patriotism echoing across the centuries. The pleading of the Massachusetts slaves. The resonance of the Civil War graves. The Tuskegee Airmen's call for victory in war and in the eyes of men. And we hear the voices of their descendants now in the Gulf sounding the oldest cry of our land -- one we all share, no matter our color, no matter our roots. A cry for an America whole -- an America fair -- an America equal -- an America strong -- an America free.

God bless America and all her children.

(Hinchliffe/Simon)  
February 19, 1991 2 p.m.  
BLACKS

**PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: BLACK HISTORY MONTH**  
**Monday, February 25, 1991**

Black History Month is an important time for America -- a chance to celebrate the proud spectrum of black achievement. And something else, too. You know, in the midst of war, we find ourselves thinking about heroes. Well, this is the time to think especially of black heroes. Those who by their fierce convictions showed no race has a monopoly on idealism or excellence. We must tell stories of black successes to every child in our country. Because we need heroes. We need them as much as we need our dreams. And the blacks of our nation have always provided both.

A few nights ago I saw a new play called "Black Eagles" -- the story of the Tuskegee Airmen of WWII. I was lucky enough to see it with a true legend: the Black Eagles' leader, Gen Benjamin Davis. This play made me realize that today I want to talk about a very special group of heroes -- the blacks who have fought for this country. They have never received credit for their devoted patriotism -- for their vision and their sacrifices. The United States owes a long-overdue tribute to the men and women who -- before they had rights -- had the right idea.

For 200 years, black soldiers have established a record of pride in the face of incredible obstacles. For not only did they risk their lives fighting for freedom for their own and for other countries -- but they did it at the same time they were being denied their God-given freedoms at home. Think about how much

that meant they loved this country. How they believed in its dreams. It's an astounding devotion -- in a league by itself.

You can feel that love of country so strongly in the Gulf. Yes, we've made a lot of progress on the home front -- but it's still not perfect here. Yet these men and women love America so much, they've volunteered to fight for it abroad. And when these Gulf heroes come home -- they'll continue to fight for it here.

So I want to say something to anyone who dares to criticize the number of blacks in the armed services today. Say anything to demean our military -- and you answer to me. These guys are heroes. The real thing. Volunteers, every one. Look at those brave kids putting their lives on the line for us -- and you don't see colors or creeds. All you see are Americans. Good, brave, dedicated Americans. Americans who chose to be there. Americans who put their devotion to country first. Americans with dignity and pride -- calling America back to her better self. Americans serving as equals. Americans measured only by their abilities. Thank God we have them, every one.

And thank God for those who went before. For our new heroes are part of a tradition. The airmen in "Black Eagles" talk about it -- for they made their own very special mark in the roll call of generations who battled not only their country's enemy, but also their countrymen's prejudice. These brave warriors in the play explain that they were "paving the way ... paving the way."

It was more than 2 centuries ago that the first black patriots started to pave the way of Freedom Road. In 1774 a few slaves

sent a plea to the Royal Governor of Massachusetts saying: "we have in common with all other men a natural right to our freedoms without being deprived of them by our fellow men." Seems like these sentiments might have inspired the words Thomas Jefferson wrote two years later: his call for equality, and for the unalienable rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

When these bound men sent this message from the heart, they set for their heirs a charge: to stand up for freedom -- to cry out for freedom -- to put their lives on the line for freedom. And that's what blacks have done in every war in this nation's history. They've done it with heroes like Crispus Attucks of the Boston Massacre -- the first American to die for the cause of his country's liberty. With heroes like the blacks who made up 1/6 of the Revolutionary War forces -- astoundingly loyal men who will at long last be honored with a memorial here on the Mall.

The Freedom Road led nearly 1/4 million newly freed slaves into the Civil War. And heroes emerged like the men of the Fort Wagner charge so powerfully reenacted in the movie "Glory." The black regiment lost half its men but won dignity and respect.

Freedom Road took black heroes up San Juan Hill with Teddy Roosevelt. By the way, Colin Powell has a painting of them in his office -- says he likes to look up from his desk, see them, and remember the contributions of those who went before. And, he says, reflect on what he must do to help those who yet to come.

Black heroes paved Freedom Road on the French fields and Rhine River of WWI -- but when a million blacks joined up 25

years later, they found there was much work left to do. Their mission was to win the war -- and to prove their race. I heard a shocking story of black soldiers who were escorting German POWs in the south in the midst of the war. They stopped to eat. The lunch counter would serve the Germans -- but not the blacks.

By the end of the war, though, these heroes had paved a victorious path; paved it in bravery and in blood. They won battles and medals. They won respect as men and acceptance as Americans. And at long, long last they won integration in the armed forces.

So that's why it is such an insult to hear talk about the number of blacks in the military today. They don't understand that generations risked their lives so their great-grand-children could realize a dream. The dream of having the freedom to choose to serve their country. The dream that America would be a place where the only limits on a man would be the limits of his own vision. The dream of a nation where no one would be called "the first black": but rather, simply, "the best." For, as Booker T. Washington said: "No greater injury can be done to any youth than to let him feel that because he belongs to this or that race he will be advanced regardless of his own merit or efforts."

But the dream is not yet fully real -- there is today too much crime, too much crack, too much despair. But there is also today too much faith, too much pride, and too much human dignity to give up or to give in. That's why we urgently need to turn to the tradition of black heroes today -- they can inspire one child at a time to find within him the strength to believe in himself.

Black heroes that extend beyond traditional military stories. Domestic heroes like Sojourner Truth, who fought for dignity; W.E.B. DuBois, who fought for opportunity; Harriet Tubman, who fought for respect; Jackie Robinson, who fought to do just what he did best. Ralph Bunche, who won the Nobel Prize; Gwendolyn Brooks, who won the Pulitzer; Jesse Owens, who won Olympic medals and the respect of the world. Humanitarians from George Washington Carver to Mickey Leland. Government leaders like Louis Sullivan, pioneers like Dr. Charles Drew and Ron McNair.

But they're not the only ones. It's up to us -- each of us. Together, we must write a new chapter in the history of civil rights. A chapter that says: opportunity must replace despair.

For opportunity means education -- equipping kids with the tools they need to compete in a new century. Opportunity means freedom from drugs -- zero-tolerance, like in the military. Opportunity means the dignity of work. Opportunity means having your own home; and being safe in it. Opportunity means social programs to keep families together -- and health care to keep them strong. And, above all, opportunity means we must treasure and defend the value of every human life. For as Langston Hughes wrote, "There's a dream in this land with its back against the wall; to save the dream for one, it must be saved for all."

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