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Folder Title:
Black History Month 2/25/91 [OA 6029]

Stack:	Row:	Section:	Shelf:	Position:
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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.

- 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.

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."

THIS IS AN IDEAL PLACE FOR US TO COMMIT OURSELVES TO WRITING THAT CHAPTER. FOR IN THIS ROOM 27 YEARS AGO, THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964 BECAME LAW: 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 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 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. \\ \\

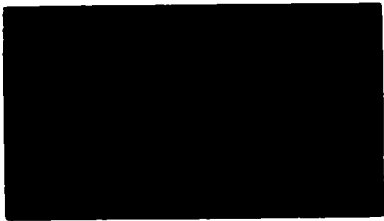
THIS HOUSE, AMERICA'S HOUSE, IS STEEPED IN HISTORY. WHEN WE LISTEN, IT BRINGS TO LIFE THE PROUD VOICES OF BLACK HEROES ECHOING ACROSS THE CENTURIES. THE PLEADING OF THE MASSACHUSETTS SLAVES. \\ THE RESONANCE OF THE CIVIL WAR GRAVES. \\

**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.

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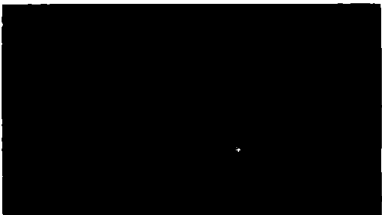
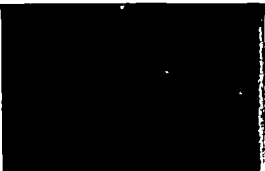
- A -

I KNOW THE ISSUE ON ALL OF OUR MINDS IS THE WAR IN THE GULF. I AM GLAD TO REPORT THAT THE NEWS IS GOOD. COALITION AIR AND GROUND FORCES ARE ADVANCING ON THEIR OBJECTIVES. ENEMY PRISONERS ARE SURRENDERING IN LARGE NUMBERS; THUS FAR, U.S. AND COALITION CASUALTIES ARE FEW. THE LIBERATION OF KUWAIT IS ON COURSE AND ON SCHEDULE. WE HAVE THE INITIATIVE, AND WE INTEND TO KEEP IT.

- B -

WE MUST GUARD AGAINST EUPHORIA; THERE ARE BATTLES YET TO COME, AND CASUALTIES TO BE BORNE. BUT MAKE NO MISTAKE. WE WILL PREVAIL. KUWAIT WILL SOON BE FREE. AND AMERICA'S MEN AND WOMEN IN UNIFORM WILL RETURN HOME TO THE THANKS AND RESPECT OF A GRATEFUL NATION.

THIS WAS A WAR THRUST UPON US; IT WAS NOT A WAR THAT WE SOUGHT. BUT NAKED AGGRESSION SUCH AS WE HAVE SEEN MUST BE RESISTED IF IT IS NOT TO BECOME A PATTERN. AND OUR SUCCESS IN THE GULF WILL BRING WITH IT NOT JUST A NEW OPPORTUNITY FOR PEACE AND STABILITY IN A CRITICAL PART OF THE WORLD, BUT A CHANCE TO BUILD A NEW WORLD ORDER BASED UPON THE PRINCIPLES OF COLLECTIVE SECURITY, AND THE RULE OF LAW.



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

February 22, 1991

INFORMATION

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

THROUGH: CHRISS WINSTON *cw*
FROM: BETH HINCHLIFFE *BH*
SUBJECT: BLACK HISTORY MONTH ADDRESS

I. SUMMARY

On Monday, February 25 at 11 a.m. in the East Room, you will be addressing an audience of about 200 in relation to Black History Month. In attendance will be representatives of a wide range of black groups, including: editors and publishers; Tuskegee Airmen veterans (and the cast of "Black Eagles"); HBCU presidents; historians; community leaders; and students. Also present will be Secretary Sullivan, General Colin Powell, Congressman Gary Franks, and Sharon Pratt Dixon.

II. DISCUSSION

Since you will be discussing details of your Civil Rights policy as part of the Opportunities Package briefing on Wednesday, these remarks take a broader view of the importance of Black History Month. Set in the context of your visit to "Black Eagles," they address the importance of black heroes to America.

In addition, they give you the chance to honor the troops and to answer critics of the proportion of blacks in today's military. Finally, they talk about the need to focus on opportunity for all in today's society.

(Note: the bracketed material is a story researchers are in the process of documenting.)

(Hinchliffe/Simon)
February 22, 1991 4 p.m.
BLACK

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 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 I saw a play called "Black Eagles," about the Tuskegee Airmen of WWII -- who were led by legendary General Benjamin Davis. An incredible story of men who took their places among a very special group of heroes: black Americans who've 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 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 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 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 WWI. But when their sons joined up 25 years later, they found there was much work left to do. [[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.

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. 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: 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: General Colin Powell. You know, there's a scene in "Black Eagles" where the veterans toast Colin. When I was there, the audience exploded in a warm, spontaneous tribute -- cheering this magnificent leader.

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."

This is an ideal place for us to commit ourselves to writing that chapter. For in this room 27 years ago, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 became law: 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 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 giving power the individual and the family; investing in our future; 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.

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM FOR DAVID DEMAREST

FROM: SICHAN SIV
 JOE WATKINS

DATE: FEBRUARY 22, 1991

RE: AUDIENCE FOR BLACK HISTORY MONTH EVENT ON 2/25

We currently expect to have an audience of about 220 people for the President's February 25th East Room speech commemorating Black History Month. We have worked with intergovernmental affairs, political affairs, the RNC, media relations, legislative affairs and presidential personnel in determining and getting sign-offs for our invitees. Here is a general breakdown of our invited audience:

- Black Revolutionary War Patriots Memorial Foundation
- Board and Supporters
- Tuskegee Airmen
- Cast of "Black Eagles"
- Local college presidents
- HBCU presidents and President's Advisory Board on HBCUs
- Descendants and former associates of Carter G. Woodson
(founder of Black History Month)
- School winners of Black History Month contests
- Black Historians
- Senior Level Black Administration Appointees
- Black White House Fellows
- Members of the Cabinet
- Mayor Sharon Pratt Dixon
- Congressman Gary Franks
- General Colin Powell
- Black republicans and conservatives

WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM

91 FEB 22 A8:51

DATE: 02/21/91 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: 2:00 p.m. Friday 02/22

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: BLACK HISTORY MONTH
(02/19 3:00 p.m. draft)

	ACTION FYI			ACTION FYI	
VICE PRESIDENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MCCLURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SUNUNU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NEWMAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SCOWCROFT <i>N/C</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PORTER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DARMAN	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ROGICH <i>N/C</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BRADY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	UNTERMAYER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CARD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ROGERS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
DEMAREST	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	WINSTON	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
FITZWATER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	TREFRY <i>N/C</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
GRAY <i>7898 J. Bybee N/C</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	FIRESTONE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
HOLIDAY AS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PORTER ROSE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

REMARKS:

Please forward your comments directly to Chriss Winston, Rm. 122, x 2930, no later than 2:00 p.m. on Friday, 02/22, with a copy to this office. Thanks.

RESPONSE:

PHILLIP D. BRADY
 Assistant to the President
 and Staff Secretary
 Ext. 2702

91 FEB 21 PM 6:28

(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 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 I saw a play called "Black Eagles," about the Tuskegee Airmen of WWII, ^{and their} ~~I was lucky enough to see it with a~~ ^{legendary} ~~true legend:~~ ^{General} 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 ^{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 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 ^{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} ~~his call for equality~~, ^{they are endowed with} and for the ~~unali-~~ ^{in?}enable rights to life, liberty and the pur^osuit 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 blacks who made up 1/6 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 charge ^{the movie} so powerfully reenacted in "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 ~~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~~ ^{use} ~~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^{ized} -- 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: 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.} ~~W.E.B. DuBois~~, who fought for ^{the rights of millions;} ~~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~~ ^{to Rosa Parks} George Washington Carver ^{to Mickey} Leland. Pioneers like Dr. Charles Drew and Ron McNair. ^{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, ~~-- zero-tolerance, like in the military.~~ Opportunity means ^{jobs} the dignity of work. Opportunity means ^{owning} 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

of 1964

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 ^{giving power} 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.

#

~~must and we will ensure~~
 We need to be sure that the men and women coming home from the Gulf, come home to an America of opportunity.

WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM

91 FEB 22 P3:49

DATE: 02/21/91 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: 2:00 p.m. Friday 02/22

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: BLACK HISTORY MONTH
(02/19 3:00 p.m. draft)

	ACTION FYI			ACTION FYI	
VICE PRESIDENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MCCLURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SUNUNU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NEWMAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SCOWCROFT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PORTER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DARMAN	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ROGICH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BRADY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	UNTERMAYER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CARD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>ROGERS</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
DEMAREST	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>WINSTON</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
FITZWATER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>TREFRY</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
GRAY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>FIRESTONE</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<u>HOLIDAY</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>PORTER ROSE</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

REMARKS:

Please forward your comments directly to Chriss Winston, Rm. 122, x 2930, no later than 2:00 p.m. on Friday, 02/22, with a copy to this office. Thanks.

RESPONSE:

*See comments. Thanks.
 Holly Williamson
 2-22-91*

PHILLIP D. BRADY
 Assistant to the President
 and Staff Secretary
 Ext. 2702

91 FEB 21 PM 6:28

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

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

*Please mention
Dr. MLK. + Rosa
Park*

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.

*Justice
Patronize*

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: 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."

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} ~~his call for equality, and for the unalienable rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.~~

✓ OCA - Jefferson did not "call" for equality

What these men sent was a message ~~from the heart~~ ^{all} 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 blacks who made up 1/6 of the Revolutionary War forces -- loyal, courageous men who will at long last be honored with a memorial here on the Mall.

✓ OCA - the message is a rational one not an emotional one.

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

✓ OCA ✓ OCA

says, reflect on what he must do to help those who ^{are} yet to come. ✓ HITS

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.

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That's why it's such an affront to hear talk about ~~the number~~ ^{as if they were merely statistics.} of blacks in the military today. ✓ OCA 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."

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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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✓ HUD

opportunity means owning your own home.

✓ OCA
zero tolerance was a name of a somewhat controversial policy no longer in use.

✓ HUD *
Jobs -- and

✓ HHS

✓ HHS

* Secretary Kemp wants to mention - JOBS

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.

Add in sentence

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#

We need to be sure that the men & women coming home from the Gulf, come^{home} to an America more full of opportunity than ever before.

WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM

31 FEB 25 8:41

DATE: 02/22/91 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: _____

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: BLACK HISTORY MONTH
(02/22 4:00 p.m. draft)

	ACTION	FYI		ACTION	FYI
VICE PRESIDENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MCCLURE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
SUNUNU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NEWMAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SCOWCROFT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PORTER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
DARMAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ROGICH	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
BRADY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	UNTERMEYER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CARD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>ROGERS</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
DEMAREST	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>WINSTON</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
FITZWATER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>TREFRY</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
GRAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>FIRESTONE</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
HOLIDAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>PORTER ROSE</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

REMARKS:

The attached has been forwarded to the President.

RESPONSE:

PHILLIP D. BRADY
 Assistant to the President
 and Staff Secretary
 Ext. 2702

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

91 FEB 22 PM 6:44

February 22, 1991

INFORMATION

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

THROUGH: CHRISS WINSTON *cw*
FROM: BETH HINCHLIFFE *BH*
SUBJECT: BLACK HISTORY MONTH ADDRESS

I. SUMMARY

On Monday, February 25 at 11 a.m. in the East Room, you will be addressing an audience of about 200 in relation to Black History Month. In attendance will be representatives of a wide range of black groups, including: editors and publishers; Tuskegee Airmen veterans (and the cast of "Black Eagles"); HBCU presidents; historians; community leaders; and students. Also present will be Secretary Sullivan, General Colin Powell, Congressman Gary Franks, and Sharon Pratt Dixon.

II. DISCUSSION

Since you will be discussing details of your Civil Rights policy as part of the Opportunities Package briefing on Wednesday, these remarks take a broader view of the importance of Black History Month. Set in the context of your visit to "Black Eagles," they address the importance of black heroes to America.

In addition, they give you the chance to honor the troops and to answer critics of the proportion of blacks in today's military. Finally, they talk about the need to focus on opportunity for all in today's society.

(Note: the bracketed material is a story researchers are in the process of documenting.)

(Hinchliffe/Simon)
February 22, 1991 4 p.m.
BLACK

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 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 I saw a play called "Black Eagles," about the Tuskegee Airmen of WWII -- who were led by legendary General Benjamin Davis. An incredible story of men who took their places among a very special group of heroes: black Americans who've 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 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 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 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 WWI. But when their sons joined up 25 years later, they found there was much work left to do. [[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.

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. 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: 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: General Colin Powell. You know, there's a scene in "Black Eagles" where the veterans toast Colin. When I was there, the audience exploded in a warm, spontaneous tribute -- cheering this magnificent leader.

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."

This is an ideal place for us to commit ourselves to writing that chapter. For in this room 27 years ago, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 became law: 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 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 giving power the individual and the family; investing in our future; 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.

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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

25-Feb-1991 09:23 EDT

UNCLASSIFIED

MEMORANDUM FOR:

Florence E. Gantt

(GANTT)

FROM:

Richard N. Haass
(HAASS)

SUBJECT:

Black History Month Speech insert

haass-2/25-0915

insert to President's 11:00 a.m. remarks

We are gathered here this morning to mark Black History Month. Yet it is impossible to forget even for a moment that history is being made while we meet. Halfway across the world, a great struggle is being waged. It is a struggle of good against that which is truly evil, a struggle against a foreign dictator who has invaded a defenseless neighbor, who has raped and ravaged its people, who has torched its oil wells and scorched the earth.

Before we begin,
I know the issue on all of our minds is the war in the Gulf
I am glad to report that the news ~~from the Gulf~~ is good. Coalition air and ground forces are advancing on their objectives. Enemy prisoners are surrendering in large numbers; thus far, U.S. and coalition casualties are few. The liberation of Kuwait is on course and on schedule. We have the initiative, and we intend to keep it.

C. A.

B
We must guard against euphoria; there are battles yet to come,

and casualties to be borne. But make no mistake. We will prevail. Kuwait will again be free. And America's men and women in uniform will return home to the thanks and respect of a grateful nation.

C.L.
✓

This was a war thrust upon us; it was not a war that we sought. But naked aggression such as we have seen must be resisted if it is not to become a pattern. And our success in the Gulf will bring with it not just a new opportunity for peace and stability in a critical part of the world, but a chance to build a new world order based upon the principles of restraint, collective security, and the rule of law.

I would be remiss if I did not address the fact that many of the men and women in uniform who are doing so much for their country are black. Some in this country have seen fit to criticize this. I for one see it as grounds for pride. How can one not have pride in the professionalism and grace under pressure of Colin Powell, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff? Or in Norm Schwarzkopf's Deputy, Lt. General Calvin Waller? Or in the tens of thousands of other black Americans who are serving with distinction in the army, the air force, the navy and the marines? Black History Month next year, and for years to come, will have new heroes and new role models to celebrate.

CC: Robin A. Uhl

(UHL)

CC: Wilma G. Hall

(HALL)

Simon

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

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: BLACK HISTORY MONTH
East Room
Monday, 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 ^{that} 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 ^{plenty of} 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: 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."

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 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} ~~made up 1/6~~ ⁱⁿ 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 charge so powerfully reenacted in "Glory." The black regiment lost half its men but ^{much more:} [^] 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 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.

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 ^{ast}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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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.

*only
Communism
promises
everyone
an "equal
Share"*

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*All comments
and staff*

*VERSION
II*

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

Acknowledgments

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

*African
American*

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.

They show us what is good and right about ourselves. They show us our potential.

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~~ *suggested that today I* a very special group of heroes -- the ~~blacks~~ *men and women of color?* who have fought for this country. They have never received ~~credit~~ *proper* 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 -- *believed in what was right.* ~~had the right idea.~~ *long*

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 *what that* ~~how much~~

~~said about their character - their hopes and their~~
~~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~~ ^{have} volunteered to fight for ~~it abroad.~~ ^{principles central to the American ideal.} And when these
Gulf heroes come home -- they'll continue ~~to fight for it~~ ^{that principled} here. ^{right} ~~at home.~~

So ~~I want to say something to~~ ^{those} anyone who dares to criticize
the number of blacks in the armed services today, ^{my answer is simple} ~~say anything~~
~~to demean our military -- and you answer to me.~~ ^{men and women} These guys are

America's heroes. The real thing. Volunteers, every one. ~~Look at those~~ ^{They've}
~~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 patri-
ots 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 ^{just here in America} ~~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 ^{affront} ~~insult~~ to hear talk about the number of blacks in the military today. ^{Some just} ~~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. ^{And Bigotry and racism still exist in America} 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~~ ^{Homegrown} 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. ^{Leaders in} Government ~~leaders~~ like ^{Dr.} 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.

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So we must as a nation pledge that never again will ~~men~~ ^{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 every-one receives a full and equal share of

America's bounty. So in a few days I ~~am going to introduce our~~ ^{will have more to say about} ~~our efforts to ensure opportunity for all Americans.~~ ~~Opportunities Act of 1991.~~ ~~And it will include the new Civil Rights Bill~~ ^{efforts} ~~rooted in empowerment and ennoblement; not in~~ ^{ing the individual and the family, investing} ~~in our future and building a healthy foundation of economic growth.~~ ~~false promises or quotas.~~ After all, it was Frederick Douglass

~~who said: "Equality of numbers has nothing to do with quality of attainment."~~ ^{This house, America's house, is ~~still~~ steeped in history. When we listen, it brings to life}

~~When we listen, we can hear~~ 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 ~~cry~~ ^{call} of our land -- one we all share, no matter our color, no matter our roots. A ~~cry~~ ^{call} for an America ~~whole~~ ^{strong} -- an America fair -- ~~an America equal~~ -- an America strong -- an America free.

God bless America and all her children.

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(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 ^{often} 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 ^{American} 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. ^{Seeing the play, & being with him, suggest made me realize} This play made me realize that today I want to talk about

a very special group of heroes -- ^{black Americans} ~~the blacks~~ who have fought for this country. They have never received ^{proper} credit ^{they deserve} for their devoted patriotism -- for their vision and their sacrifices. The United States owes a long-overdue tribute to ^{these} ~~the~~ men and women who --

^{long} before they had rights -- had the right idea. ^{believed in what was right.}

^{Two centuries} 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

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~~to~~

2 }
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You can feel that love of country ^(just as) so strongly in the Gulf, ^{today,}
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 ^{chose} 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 ^{those who} anyone who dares to criticize
the number of blacks in the armed services today, ^{my answer is simple.} ~~say anything.~~
~~They're not statistics. They're~~ ^{These men and women are America's}
~~to demean our military -- and you answer to me. These guys are~~

heroes. The real thing. Volunteers, every one. Look at those
brave ^{men and women} ~~guys~~ 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.

^{dedicated} Americans who put their devotion to country first. Americans
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are part of a ^{long} tradition. The airmen in "Black Eagles" talk about
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of generations who battled not only their country's enemy, but
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~~play~~ explain that they were "paving the way ... paving the way."

It was more than ^{two} centuries ago that the first black patri-
ots started ^{to lay the first stones of that} ~~to pave the way of~~ Freedom Road. In 1774, ~~a~~ slaves

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What *was a* *to*
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~~out for freedom. to put their lives on the line for freedom.~~ *to sit all*

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 -- ~~astounding~~ *brave* loyal men who will at long last be honored with a memorial here on the Mall.

The Freedom Road led nearly ~~14~~ *a quarter* 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~~ *but found the* dignity and respect. *they 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 who yet to come.

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

4

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 ^{being} escorting German POWs ^{prison} ~~to a south POW camp right here in An.~~ ^{in the south} in the midst of the war. They stopped to eat. The lunch counter would serve the Germans -- but not the black ^{heroes escorting} ~~black soldiers~~ ^{them.}

By the end of the war, though, ^{black soldiers} ~~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 ^{the} ^{of} integration ^{affront} in the armed forces. ~~at the time~~

~~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 ^{all these} ^{of heroes} 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."~~

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Washington Carver to Mickey Leland. ~~Government leaders like~~
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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.

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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:} ~~was signed~~: that long overdue payment on a promissory note of equality signed two centuries before. ~~But as long as dis-~~

crimination -- 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.

keep

So ~~we must~~ ^{let us} as a nation pledge that never again will ~~men~~ ^{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 every-one receives a full and equal share of
America's bounty. ~~So~~ ^{I'll have press today about our efforts} in a few days, I'm going to introduce our
~~insue . . . (600 p2)~~
Opportunities Act of 1991. And it will include the new Civil
Rights Bill -- 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 can hear 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 cry of our land -- one we all share, ~~no matter our color,~~
~~no matter our roots.~~ ^{Call} A cry for an America whole -- an America
fair -- an America equal -- an America strong ^{and an} ~~an~~ America free.

God bless America and all her children.

#

A

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, and I tell you now, this President and this Administration will fight with them.

WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM

91 FEB 22 AM: 08

DATE: 02/21/91 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: 2:00 p.m. Friday 02/22

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: BLACK HISTORY MONTH
(02/19 3:00 p.m. draft)

	ACTION FYI			ACTION FYI	
VICE PRESIDENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MCCLURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SUNUNU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NEWMAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SCOWCROFT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PORTER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DARMAN	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ROGICH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BRADY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	UNTERMAYER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CARD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ROGERS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
DEMAREST	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	WINSTON	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
FITZWATER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	TREFRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
GRAY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	FIRESTONE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
HOLIDAY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PORTER ROSE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

REMARKS:

Please forward your comments directly to Chriss Winston, Rm. 122, x 2930, no later than 2:00 p.m. on Friday, 02/22, with a copy to this office. Thanks.

RESPONSE:

*V. / Gocel
S.R.*

PHILLIP D. BRADY
Assistant to the President
and Staff Secretary
Ext. 2702

91 FEB 21 PM 6:28

(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 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 I saw a play called "Black Eagles," about the Tuskegee Airmen of WWII. I was lucky enough to see it with a true legend: 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."

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.

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 blacks who made up 1/6 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 charge so powerfully reenacted in "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 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

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."

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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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WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM

91 FEB 22 All: 45

DATE: 02/21/91 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: 2:00 p.m. Friday 02/22

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: BLACK HISTORY MONTH
(02/19 3:00 p.m. draft)

	ACTION FYI			ACTION FYI	
VICE PRESIDENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MCCLURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SUNUNU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NEWMAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SCOWCROFT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PORTER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DARMAN	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ROGICH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BRADY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	UNTERMEYER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CARD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>ROGERS</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
DEMAREST	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>WINSTON</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
FITZWATER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>TREFRY</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
GRAY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>FIRESTONE</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
HOLIDAY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>PORTER ROSE</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

REMARKS:

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RESPONSE:

PHILLIP D. BRADY
Assistant to the President
and Staff Secretary
Ext. 2702

STAFFED FOR 2:PM FRIDAY

(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 ^{often} find ourselves thinking about heroes. Well, this is the time to think especially of ^{the America's} black heroes. ^{not only of war but also of peace.} Those who by their fierce convictions showed no race has a monopoly on idealism or excellence. ^{Our children} We must ^{learn us tell the} ~~tell~~ stories of black successes ~~to every child in our country.~~ ^{They show us what is good and right about ourselves. They show us our potential for achievement.} 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 I saw a play called "Black Eagles," about the Tuskegee Airmen of WWII. I was lucky enough to see it with a true legend: 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 -- ^{long} believed in ^{the rightness of the American ideal.} ~~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 ~~the American people~~ ~~stands for~~ 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.~~ *join with them to build the better America we know she can become.*

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.

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#

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Date: 2/22

TO: *Chris / Beth*

FROM: **JOHN S. GARDNER**
Special Assistant to the President
and Assistant Staff Secretary

Please see suggestions / questions.

Thanks,
J.S.

91 FEB 21 PM 6:28

(Hinchliffe/Simon)
February 19, 1991 3 p.m. All: 46
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 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 I saw a play called "Black Eagles," about the Tuskegee Airmen of WWII. I was lucky enough to see it with a true legend: 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 ^{or [1770-1991]} 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 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.

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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,

? In the South during the Revolution the British gave freedom to those who fought w/ them + opposed the U.S. Are you sure this quote reflects support for the Patriot rather than the Loyalist side?

3

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: his call for equality, and for the unalienable rights to life, liberty and the purusit of happiness.

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Wasn't one of the black regiments the most decorated in WWI?

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*More suggestions: Benjamin Banneker - helped survey Washington
Matthew Henson - explorer, w/ Peary at N. Pole
Carl Kohn (?)*

5

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→ no mention of
"equality of opportunity in the
workplace" here?

WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM

DATE: 02/21/91 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: 2:00 p.m. Friday 02/22

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: BLACK HISTORY MONTH
(02/19 3:00 p.m. draft)

	ACTION FYI			ACTION FYI	
VICE PRESIDENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MCCLURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SUNUNU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NEWMAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SCOWCROFT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PORTER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DARMAN	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ROGICH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BRADY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	UNTERMEYER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CARD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ROGERS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
DEMAREST	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	WINSTON	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
FITZWATER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	TREFRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
GRAY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	FIRESTONE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
HOLIDAY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PORTER ROSE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

REMARKS:

Please forward your comments directly to Chriss Winston, Rm. 122, x 2930, no later than 2:00 p.m. on Friday, 02/22, with a copy to this office. Thanks.

RESPONSE:

PHILLIP D. BRADY
Assistant to the President
and Staff Secretary
Ext. 2702

91 FEB 21 PM 6:28

(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 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 I saw a play called "Black Eagles," about the Tuskegee Airmen of WWII. I was lucky enough to see it with a true legend: 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."

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 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 blacks who made up 1/6 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 charge so powerfully reenacted in "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 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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Damus
Y 5044

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

91 FEB 22 P2:40



February 22, 1991

MEMORANDUM FOR CHRISS WINSTON
DEPUTY ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT FOR
COMMUNICATIONS AND DIRECTOR OF SPEECHWRITING

FROM: JAY S. BYBEE *JSB*
ASSOCIATE COUNSEL TO THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Presidential Remarks: Black History Month

Counsel's office has reviewed the above-referenced matter. We have no legal objections.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this matter.

cc: Phillip D. Brady

WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM

91 FEB 22 P 4:10

DATE: 02/21/91 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: 2:00 p.m. Friday 02/22

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: BLACK HISTORY MONTH
(02/19 3:00 p.m. draft)

	ACTION FYI			ACTION FYI	
VICE PRESIDENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MCCLURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SUNUNU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NEWMAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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DARMAN	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ROGICH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BRADY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	UNTERMAYER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CARD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>ROGERS</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
DEMAREST	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>WINSTON</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
FITZWATER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>TREFRY</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
GRAY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>FIRESTONE</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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RESPONSE:

February 22, 1991

MEMORANDUM FOR CHRISS WINSTON

The NSC staff concurs with the draft presidential remarks.

Brent Scowcroft 

PHILLIP D. BRADY
Assistant to the President
and Staff Secretary
Ext. 2702

cc: Phillip D. Brady

91 FEB 21 PM 6:28

(Hinchliffe/Simon)
February 19, 1991 3 p.m.
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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
URGENT EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT STAFFING DOCUMENT

TIME STAMP: D

91 FEB 21 07:28

SYSTEM LOG NUMBER: 1305

ACTION OFFICER: POPADIUK N. DUE: 2PM 22 FEB

Prepare Memo For Scowcroft/Gates Appropriate Action PR1.

Prepare Memo For Cicconi Prepare Memo for Sittmann

Prepare Memo SCOWCROFT to WILKINSON wcc: Brady.

CONCURRENCES/COMMENTS* PHONE* to action officer at ext. _____

Concur FYI	Concur FYI	Concur FYI
<input type="checkbox"/> Barth	<input type="checkbox"/> Hutchings	<input type="checkbox"/> Poneman
<input type="checkbox"/> Basora	<input type="checkbox"/> Jackson	<input type="checkbox"/> Popadiuk
<input type="checkbox"/> Beers	<input type="checkbox"/> Johnson	<input type="checkbox"/> Pryce
<input type="checkbox"/> Broome	<input type="checkbox"/> Kanter	<input type="checkbox"/> Rademaker
<input type="checkbox"/> Burns	<input type="checkbox"/> Kitchen	<input type="checkbox"/> Rice
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<input type="checkbox"/> Davis	<input type="checkbox"/> Melby	<input type="checkbox"/> Van Eron
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<input type="checkbox"/> Hayden	<input type="checkbox"/> Pilling	_____

INFORMATION Sittmann Hill Exec Sec Desk
 Scowcroft (advance) Gates (advance) Secretariat

COMMENTS

Logged By AM

Return to Secretariat
 379 OEOB

WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM



DATE: 02/21/91 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: 2:00 p.m. Friday 02/22

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: BLACK HISTORY MONTH
(02/19 3:00 p.m. draft)

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SUNUNU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NEWMAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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FITZWATER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>TREFRY</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
GRAY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>FIRESTONE</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
HOLIDAY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>PORTER ROSE</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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RESPONSE:

Concur as is
Richard D. Trefry
LT6 USA - PM
MAB

PHILLIP D. BRADY
Assistant to the President
and Staff Secretary
Ext. 2702

91 FEB 21 PM 6:28

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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: 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."

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 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 blacks who made up 1/6 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 charge so powerfully reenacted in "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 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

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

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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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

February 25, 1991

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
IN RECOGNITION OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH

The East Room

11:00 A.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. It is a great, great pleasure for Barbara and me to welcome you all to the White House. It's good to see so many friends here today, including so many members of our administration: our Vice President, of course; and Lou Sullivan; Jack Kemp; Lynn Martin; of course, the Chairman of our Joint Chiefs General Powell; Connie Newman; Art Fletcher and so many more. I salute our red-coated special guests. You bring honor to this place and we're delighted to have you here.

I know that the issue on all of our minds is the war in the Gulf. And I'm glad to report, after consultation a few minutes ago with Chairman Powell, General Powell, that the news is good. Coalition air and ground forces are advancing on their objectives. Enemy prisoners are surrendering in large numbers -- large numbers. And thus far, thank God, U.S. and coalition casualties are few.

The liberation of Kuwait is on course and on schedule. We have the initiative. We intend to keep it. We must guard against euphoria. There are battles yet to come and casualties to be borne. But make no mistake. We will prevail. Kuwait will soon be free, and America's men and women in uniform will return home to the thanks and respect of a grateful nation. (Applause.)

This was a war thrust upon us, not a war that we sought. But naked aggression, such as we have seen, must be resisted, if it is not to become a pattern. Our success in the Gulf will bring with it not just a new opportunity for peace and stability in a critical part of the world, but a chance to build a new world order based upon the principles of collective security and the rule of law.

But today we're here to celebrate the proud spectrum of black achievement. For we recognize that black history, this rich tale of roots and 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 especially think of black heroes. Those who, by their fierce conviction, showed no race has a monopoly on idealism or excellence. And 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, General Tony McPeak, the Chief of Staff of our Air Force; and an old friend many of you know, Ben Payton, President of the Tuskegee University and Judge Souter of the Supreme Court and I, the four of us -- men's night out on the town -- (laughter) -- went over to Ford's Theater to see a play called the "Black Eagles." And for those who aren't aware of that, it's a play 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.

And they never received the credit, they never received the credit that they deserve for their devoted patriotism, for their

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vision and their sacrifices. And America owes a long-overdue tribute to these men and women who, long before they had rights, believed in what was right. (Applause.)

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

And you can feel that love of country just as strongly out there in the Gulf today. And yes, we've made great progress in righting the wrongs of the past; but, tragically, racism and bigotry, illiteracy and poverty still exist. And America, of course, is not without its problems, and black Americans serving in the Gulf understand that. And yet, they've chosen to serve 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. And we will stand with them. (Applause.)

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, Coast Guardsman and Marine have enlisted because they want to be a 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 training, and the finest training, and equal treatment every step of the way -- with education funding and technical skills which will open up unlimited futures.

If anyone thinks that the military is not the place for equal opportunity and advancement, then talk to General Waller, Lt. General Calvin Waller, or Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Central Command; or Colonel Hopper, Deputy Commander of the 63rd Airlift Wing; or Air Force Colonel Leonard Randolph from Langley -- Langley Air Force Base.

Or listen to the man sitting over my right shoulder here, who answers those who criticize the proportion of blacks by challenging all of America. Here's what General Powell -- his answer -- challenged the rest of this country 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 creed. All you see are Americans -- good, brave, dedicated Americans -- Americans who volunteered, each and every single one of them. Who put their devotion to country first, Americans with dignity and pride -- calling America back to her better self. Americans serving as equals, measured only by their abilities. America's heroes -- the real thing. Thank God we have them -- every single one. (Applause.)

Today, we thank God for those who went before. For our new heroes are a 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."

And 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 that 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. (Applause.) And 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 out here on the Mall thanks to the Patriot Foundation, which I hope we'll all support. (Applause.)

Freedom road led nearly a quarter million newly-freed slaves into the Civil War. Heroes emerged like the men of Fort Wagner charge -- so powerfully reenacted in the movie "Glory." The black regiment lost half its men -- imagine that, half its men -- but won the dignity and respect that it rightfully deserved.

Freedom road took black heroes up San Juan Hill with Teddy Roosevelt. And by the way, Colin Powell has a painting of them in his office. He 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. And 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 -- German prisoners of war were being served a 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. And they won battles and medals. And 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 that 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 let's face it -- the dream is not yet fully realized and there is today too much crime and too much crack and too much despair. And yet, there is also today too much faith and too much pride and too much human dignity to give up or to give in.

And 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 the late Mickey Leland. Pioneers like Dr. Charles Drew and astronaut Ron McNair. And, of course, the man who has brought inspiration, strength and true spirit of heroism to the world's current struggle for humanity -- the Chairman of our Joint Chiefs. (Applause.) Exactly the way we all feel.

But they're not the only ones. It is up to 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. It means freedom from drugs. Opportunity means jobs, the dignity of work. It 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."

This is an ideal place for us to commit ourselves to writing that chapter. For in this very room, 27 years ago, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 became law -- a long overdue payment on a promissory note of equality signed two centuries before.

But as long as discrimination -- borne of ignorance and inhumanity -- still exists, our work is not yet finished. (Applause.) And 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.

And 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.

And I am committed to civil rights and opportunity for every person in this great country. And I will simply say to all of you: I salute you. I thank you for coming here to share this very special day with all of America. And at this special time in our history, may God bless those who are serving us halfway around the world. May they be treated with respect and the dignity that they deserve when they come back home having freed another country.

Thank you all and God bless you. (Applause.)

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11:20 A.M. EST