

29
March 29, 1976

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GENERAL

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ME

HU 2

Dear Mr. Williams:

President Ford has asked me to reply to your letter of January 7.

The President appreciates your sharing your views with him, and welcomes your thoughts on this important matter.

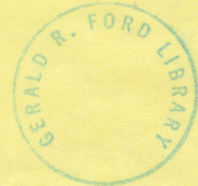
You are perhaps aware by now that there are a number of Black-oriented Bicentennial programs in existence or in the planning stage across the country. The contributions of Black Americans to this Nation's progress are being given proper emphasis as the Bicentennial Anniversary programs unfold.

There was a special focus during the month of February in connection with Black History Month. I enclose a copy of the Presidential Message on Black History Month. I also thought you'd like to have a copy of the Presidential Message on the Bicentennial, which I enclose.

All of us in the Administration are enthusiastically and actively supporting programs which point up the significant role Blacks have played in building America.

Again, thank you for your interest and concern.

Sincerely,



JOHN CALHOUN
Special Assistant to the President

x
Mr. Nelson J. Williams, Jr.
Warren Hall, Room 247
Carbondale, Illinois 62901

2/
Enclosure

RECEIVED

MAR 31 1976

CENTRAL FILES

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

R. Hunt

March 12, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR:

JOHN CALHOUN

FROM:

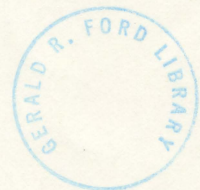
MILT MITLER *Mitler*

John, I think you should answer the attached letter from Mr. Nelson J. Williams, Jr.

As you know, there are a number of black oriented Bicentennial programs now in existence or in the planning stages. The important factor is that people create programs, which is the manner in which the Bicentennial is being commemorated nationally.

Thanks.

Attachment (Ltr. fr. Nelson J. Williams, Jr./Corbondale, Illinois)



JAN 9 1976

m/sd Dear Mr. President,

In the upcoming Bicentennial Celebration, I fear that the contributions of Black people will be left out. I feel the celebration will be incomplete, as indeed America will be incomplete, as long as ~~some~~ the courage and willingness to sacrifice of some of her people continues to go unrecognized. Among them are:

Crispus Attucks, who led the men struck down in the infamous Boston Massacre, and ~~he~~ was the first to fall;

Primer Whipple, clearly visible in the front of G. Washington's boat in the portrait of his crossing of the Delaware River;

Benjamin Banneker, who mapped Washington, D.C. and put the streets in alphabetical



betrial order;

the black soldiers who joined G. Washington at Valley Forge; and many others.

I am urging you to do all in your authority to make sure that these and many other black patriots will not have struggled in vain. To allow them to go unremembered leaves American history incomplete. It's time that was corrected.

~~Let us go forward to the next 200 yrs~~

I would appreciate any feed back or ideas you have on this matter.

Sincerely yours

Nelson J. Williams

NELSON J. WILLIAMS
JR