

Jim Crow, Uncle Sam, and the Formation of the Tuskegee Flying Units



Members of the 99th Fighter Squadron stationed in Italy.

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1998 marked the fiftieth anniversary of Executive Order 9981, the order declaring that “there shall be equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons in the armed forces without regard to race, color, religion, or national origin.”¹ In issuing this order in July 1948, President Harry Truman reversed the segregation policies previously installed in the American military. This landmark event in the civil rights movement owed much to the war-time achievements of the Tuskegee Airmen, the African American fighter pilots of the United States Army Air Corps who fought in the Mediterranean Theater during World War II.

Trained at Tuskegee Army Air Field in Tuskegee, Alabama, these black pilots endured the harsh slights of racism and prejudice inherent within the U.S. military’s segregated training facilities. Yet, they still managed to come through the war with a highly distinguished combat

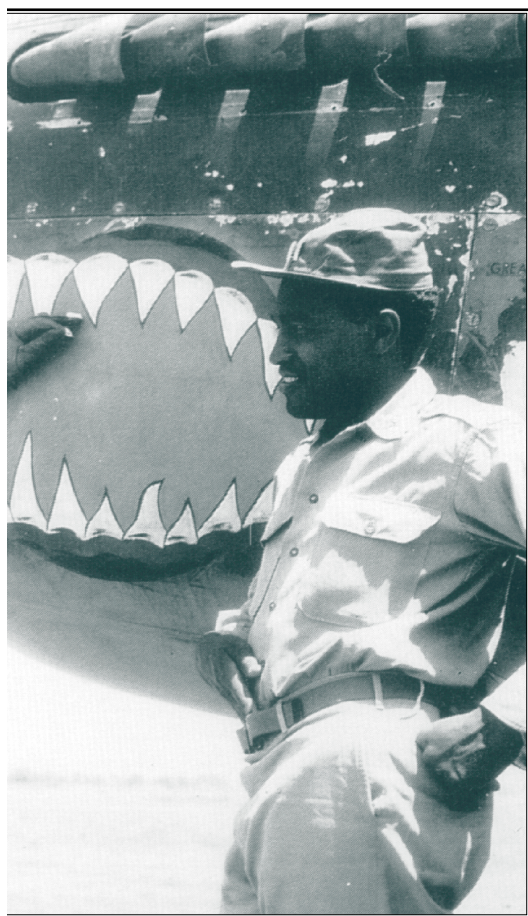
record. The all-black 99th Fighter Squadron and the 332nd Fighter Group were unique in that while on escort duty, they never lost an Allied bomber to enemy fighters—a record no other U.S. fighter unit can claim.² Such heroic accomplishments in the face of adversity proved the “Tuskegee Experiment” a success and set the stage for Truman’s Executive Order 9981. This article and the accompanying lesson plan will detail the political origins and confrontations of 1940-1941 surrounding the “Tuskegee Experiment.”

Background: The Political Debate

Although there was a U.S. black infantry unit in World War I, it was headed by white officers and allowed to fight only alongside the French army. In the succeeding decades before World War II, blacks in the Army were denied entrance to combat groups and could only serve in segregated maintenance and labor units. The U.S. Army Air Corps had rejected all applications from minorities since World War I,

stating that it was impossible to mix blacks and whites together in the same unit. For years, the military swore by the racist conclusions drawn by the Army War College studies of the 1920s, which declared that the black man lacked the mental and physical capabilities necessary to make an effective soldier.

With the rise of fascism and the need for an adequate defense becoming ever more apparent, most political and military leaders felt that the armed forces was no place to conduct racial or social “experiments,” and that to train African Americans for combat—let alone put them into the same units as white servicemen—would create situations destructive to morale and detrimental to combat efficiency.³ In the late 1930s, however, black activists and black institutions directed substantial political pressure toward the Roosevelt Administration for greater participation within the military for ethnic minorities. Seeking the considerable African American vote for what promised



Courtesy of the National Air and Space Museum

to be a close election against Republican candidate Wendell Wilkie, the Roosevelt Administration edged toward making changes in the policies that prevented African Americans from serving in combat units.⁴

The process of initiating this "experiment" proved to be lengthy and complex, with the White House dealing with black activists on the one hand and uniformed conservatives on the other. Pressuring the Roosevelt Administration for better treatment of minorities were such leaders as Walter White, Executive Secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (N.A.A.C.P.); T. Arnold Hill, an assistant in the National Youth Administration; and A. Phillip Randolph, union leader and head of the March on Washington Movement (MOWM). The objectives of Randolph's MOWM included an integrated military and a less prejudiced environment for black defense industry workers. The march itself was forestalled when FDR

provided Executive Order 8802, which—though it pertained to integration in the defense industry only—still placated Randolph.⁵

Like many of his military colleagues, General Henry "Hap" Arnold, Chief of the Air Corps, did not share his commander-in-chief's enthusiasm for any move toward integration in military units. In a memo of May 31, 1940, he recommended against any training of Negro pilots for combat duty, whether in integrated or segregated units within the Army Air Corps (see Document A). According to Arnold, the possibility of having Negro pilots (officers) serving over white enlisted men would "create an impossible social problem," while it was not feasible to organize an "all Negro Air Corps unit" in time for the needed mobilization.

In view of the upcoming election, FDR decided nevertheless to listen more closely to minority views on greater participation for blacks within the military. To discuss the issue, Roosevelt held a White House conference on September 27, 1940, with White, Randolph, Hill, Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox, and Assistant Secretary of War Robert Patterson. White argued that an army fighting for democracy "should be the last place in which to practice undemocratic segregation." According to a conference summary, Roosevelt seemed "immediately receptive" to the activists' call for non segregated units and, with the War and Navy Department representatives, promised to study a memorandum offered by the activists stating their positions on the possibilities for integrated service (see Document B).⁶

During the same month (September 1940), the Roosevelt Administration championed and Congress passed the Selective Service and Training Act, otherwise known as the draft. Besides providing for peacetime conscription, this act called for the admission of African Americans into all types of combat units—paving the way for the activation of the 99th Pursuit Squadron, America's first all-black squadron of fighter pilots.⁷ However, a White House statement of October 9 announced a policy of segregation for Negro units in the Army. It was followed by a War Department memo of October 16 that stated as policy:

that the services of negroes will be utilized on a fair and equitable basis. The policy of the War Department is not to intermingle colored and white enlisted personnel in the same regimental organizations. This policy has been proven satisfactory over a long period of years and to make changes would produce situations destructive to morale and detrimental to the preparation for national defense.... It is the opinion of the War Department that no experiments should be tried with the organizational set-up of these units at this critical time.⁸

Understandably, the black activists felt betrayed that FDR had, arguably, "stabbed them in the back" after appearing "receptive" to the idea of integration. After listening to his advisers' gruesome predictions of race riots in an integrated army, Roosevelt had apparently concluded that the initiation of segregated black combat units was the best policy, and would be enough to satisfy the black population. In one sense, he was right, as borne out by the applications of tens of thousands of young black men for positions within the military (though racism barred many from being accepted).

Much of the black press voiced support for the Administration's plan for segregated combat units.⁹ For example, articles in *The Pittsburgh Courier* and *The Afro-American* generally expressed praise for the black man's opportunity to prove himself in combat, even if it had to take place within the environment of segregation. (Editorial cartoons in *The Afro-American* were another matter, as can be seen from the cartoons illustrating this article). To more militant black activists, however, this was pathetic behavior. They protested what they saw as a meager government "handout" intended to placate African American voters, and verbally blasted FDR for a government press release implying that White, Randolph, and Hill had approved of the segregated unit system (see Document B).

The Administration's "compromise" failed to appease either black activists or the Army Air Corps. Viewing the War Department's plan as an insult and a step

Just Leave Everything to Us



From *The Afro-American*, September 7, 1940.

in the wrong direction, White and Randolph continued to lobby (but in vain) for integrated training and service units. At the same time, Air Corps officials remained reluctant to entertain the notion of a black fighter squadron, despite the conditions set forth that it train and operate separately from white units. As the rest of this article will make clear, one could argue that this branch of the armed forces never fully approached the "Tuskegee Experiment" with an unbiased attitude; the Air Corps' official interactions with the Tuskegee units at all administrative levels were plagued with neglect, indifference, and outright racism.

The Tuskegee Experiment in Action

The Tuskegee "experiment" forged ahead, nevertheless, at a segregated Army Air Field in Tuskegee, Alabama. After several months of training, which included unfair treatment at the hands of

bigoted white instructors and officers, the 99th was declared ready for combat in the summer of 1942.¹⁰ It was not until the following April, however, that the squadron received its deployment orders, so concerned was the War Department about choosing a theater of war where racial and political factors would make the presence of black fighter pilots the least objectionable.¹¹

After considering various proposals, the Pentagon finally decided on North Africa and the Mediterranean Theater as the battleground for the 99th Squadron's initiation into combat. Once there, the squadron's mission—under the command of Tuskegee graduate Colonel Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., and in conjunction with other AAF units—was to provide tactical air support for Allied ground forces in driving the German Army back up the Italian peninsula. (For these tactical missions, the 99th used the Curtiss P-40

Warhawk as its aircraft until late in the war).¹²

The notion of the 99th operating with and alongside white squadrons, though still in separate units, infuriated many AAF officials, as this concept deviated from the original plan for strictly segregated service. A black infantry platoon, for instance, would receive its orders and fight engagements completely separate from any white ground units in the area. However, the War Department, again contemplating the political implications, saw the need for the fledgling squadron to fly with and gain experience from veteran fighter groups already in combat.¹³ In any case, considering the fluidity and mobility of air warfare, a single squadron could not very well carry out combat missions by itself. Regardless of the type of mission the 99th flew, it would either be supporting white units on the ground, flying escort for white bomber crews, or flying alongside white fighter pilots on tactical maneuvers; complete segregation in the air, then, was an impossibility.

Beginning in April 1943, the 99th operated with four different white fighter groups, each consisting of three fighter squadrons, for a year in the Mediterranean. The level of both recognition and guidance accorded to the 99th from each fighter group varied tremendously, revealing an interesting correlation. In the words of one historian, "whenever racial



Pilots from the 332nd Fighter Group, 15th Air Force,

discrimination and segregation were minimized, it appears that the performance and efficiency of the all-black squadron increased, and the unit ever distinguished itself in combat."¹⁴

As the war progressed from North Africa to the Italian peninsula, so too did the fortunes and racial relationships of the black airmen. In its initial attachments to various fighter groups, the 99th operated on a mediocre level, in part due to inexperience, but also because of the prejudice and indifference displayed toward the black fliers by certain white commanders. Later in the war, however, squadron members came to be regarded and treated as professional equals, especially when they flew in conjunction with the 79th Fighter Group led by Colonel Earl E. Bates. It was during its attachment with the 79th that the 99th matured as a combat asset so that, by early 1944, it had amassed an impressive "kill" ratio against German fighter aircraft and perfected the techniques of tactical ground support that helped earn the 79th a Presidential Unit Citation in April.¹⁵

Meanwhile, Davis had returned to the states to help prepare three other black fighter squadrons for combat. These squadrons, the 100th, the 301st, and the 302nd, would make up the 332nd Fighter Group and conduct missions over Italy and much of southern Europe. The 332nd traveled to Capodichino Airport in Italy

A White House Run-Around Conference



From *The Afro-American*, October 12, 1940.

in January 1944 to begin combat operations.¹⁶ After some weeks of flying relatively unimportant convoy patrols, Davis and the 332nd were offered an appealing proposition by the commander of the Fifteenth Air Force, General Ira C. Eaker.

Eaker's bomber groups were conducting strategic raids throughout southern Europe in an attempt to halt the German war-time industrial production; he explained to Davis that he needed a fighter group to carry out better escort duty than the Fifteenth Fighter Command was providing to the bomber units. Davis quickly realized the opportunity that lay here, for strategic bombing was vital to the war effort, and the protection of the bombers by fighter support was essential to their success. If the Tuskegee squadrons could succeed in this mission, Davis believed that the future of African Americans within the military, and especially the Air Force, might progress to levels never before envisioned in America's Jim Crow society.¹⁷

Incorporating the veteran 99th Squadron into his group, Davis and the 332nd took on the role of strategic escort for the Fifteenth Air Force for the last year of the war. (For such operations, all four squadrons flew the Republican P-47 Thunderbolt and later the North American P-51 Mustang, long-range fighters that were vastly superior to the P-40). Dedicated to producing the best escort group possible, Davis ran an extraordinarily disciplined command and impressed his determination upon his men with a will.

Upon penalty of court martial, no black fighter pilot would leave the bomber formation on a raid at any time, even to attack a lone enemy fighter some distance away.¹⁸ Viewed as an easy "kill," such lone fighters often served as "decoys" to draw Allied fighters away from the bombers and leave them unprotected. The one exception to this rule would be the shepherding of "crippled" bombers that had fallen out of the protective formation.¹⁹



stationed in Italy discuss the results of a recent mission.

Courtesy of the National Air and Space Museum

Why Not Tear the Others Down?



From *The Afro-American*, January 25, 1941, and captioned: "A crowd of 2,000 Californians cheered as two sailors yanked down a Nazi flag flying from the window of a German consulate."

By following its orders to the letter, the 332nd did not score near as high a "kill" ratio as did most other fighter groups during the war. Yet, Davis and his men carried out their strategic mission so well that not a single American bomber fell to enemy aircraft when the 332nd handled escort duty—a record unique in U.S. Air Force history. Such devotion to duty endeared the black airmen to white bomber crews, so much so that eventually white bomber units began to request the 332nd as their escort for raids over enemy territory.²⁰ The 332nd's outstanding military achievements, as well as its close professional ties with other units, continued until the German war machine lay smashed in the spring of 1945.

By war's end, in addition to their warm rapport with the rest of the Army Air Forces, the black airmen had garnered substantial recognition from the Air Command in the form of over 700 Air Medals,

95 Distinguished Flying Crosses, and many other decorations and awards.²¹ Based on the semi-integrated interactions with other units, then, the "Tuskegee Experiment" proved a success. Along with black political pressure and the deficiencies of stateside segregation in the late 1940s, the wartime achievements of the Tuskegee pilots were a major impetus toward the overall desegregation of America's armed forces.²² President Truman issued Executive Order 9981 as part of his civil rights program, and, as far as the American military was concerned, Jim Crow was dead.

Teaching Ideas

1. Reproduced here are two documents that cast light on the political developments of 1940 that lay behind the formation of the Tuskegee flying units.

Document A, dated May 31, 1940, is a memorandum to the Assistant Chief of

Staff from the Chief of the Air Corps, Major General Henry "Hap" Arnold. Arnold is responding to a previous War Department memo titled "Employment of Negro Personnel in Air Corps Units" and states the reasons why he believes that "Negro pilots cannot be used" in the U.S. Army Air Forces.

Document B, dating from November 1940, is from an article titled "White House Blesses Jim Crow" from the NAACP's house organ, *The Crisis*. The NAACP responds to a White House press release of October 9 announcing its policy of segregation for blacks in the Army. The article denounces the wording of the press release, claiming that it implied that black activists had approved of the segregation policy during the White House conference on September 27. Make copies of this article and assign students to read it. Then provide students with copies of both documents for analysis in class using the following sets of questions.

With regard to Document A:

- What is Arnold's overall position on the use of blacks in combat?
- What is his position on training black pilots for the Air Corps?
- What rationale (one or more reasons) does he give for not accepting blacks into the Air Corps?
- What do you think of the merits of this rationale?
- What do you judge to be Arnold's main motive for adopting this position? Support your answer.

With regard to Document B:

- What event prompted this article?
- How does "The Non-Jim Crow Program Presented to the White House September 27" differ from the White House statement of October 9 (which the article titles "The White House Jim Crow Plan")?
- Judging from this article, how does the N.A.A.C.P. view the War Department's policy?
- What mention does the article make of aviation units?
- What statements are made about President Roosevelt as Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy? Do you think they are justified?

- What reasons are given to protest segregation in the military?
- How do you evaluate the N.A.A.C.P.'s stance on this issue?

2. This article contains three cartoons from *The Afro-American* that appeared between September 1940 and January 1941. Using the article and research as necessary, have students analyze each cartoon in terms of its message and the events of the period that prompted it.

The cartoon, "Just Leave Everything to Us," appeared on September 7, 1940.

- What role for black men in the U.S. Army and Navy is suggested by the chart?
- Who are Stimson and Knox?
- What attitude toward the President does the cartoon show them exhibiting? How is the President responding?
- Noting the cartoon's date, to what debate in Congress may it refer?
- What does use of the term "Jim-Crow" suggest about how this cartoon is meant to be interpreted?

The cartoon, "A White House Run-Around Conference," appeared on October 12, 1940.

- To what White House conference does the cartoon refer? When did it take place?
- Who are the black activists and what organizations did they represent?
- How does the cartoonist depict President Roosevelt?
- How does the cartoon characterize the President's relationship with his guests?
- How does the cartoon characterize the attitudes of the Army and Navy?
- What important event bearing on segregation in the military occurred between the White House conference and the appearance of this cartoon?
- What is the central message of this cartoon?

The cartoon, "Why Not Tear the Others Down?," appeared on January 25, 1941.

- What occurrence in California provided the impetus for this cartoon?
- How does this incident relate to government actions of 1940 to prepare for the event of war?

- This cartoon depicts three flags. On what kind of building had the swastika flag been flying? Where does the cartoonist place the flag, "Jim Crow Navy and Air Force?" Does this imply blame for segregation in the military on one branch of the federal government more than another? Why do you think the cartoonist has devoted the greatest amount of space to the American flag?
- How is the cartoonist using the incident referred to here to make a point about continuing segregation in the armed forces? About democracy?

3. To examine the challenges facing advocates of racial equality in the 1940s, direct students to conduct a news conference on the War Department's policy of segregation of the armed forces during World War II. Students can adopt roles that represent several different points of view. Examples might include a reporter from a black newspaper, an NAACP representative, an Army Air Force official, a White House staffperson, an assistant to the Secretary of War, and an African American attempting to enlist in the Army Air Corps. The rest of the class should draft appropriate questions for the news conference.

Document A. Memorandum from Major General Henry "Hap" Arnold.

<p style="text-align: center;">WAR DEPARTMENT OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF THE AIR CORPS WASHINGTON</p>	
<p style="text-align: right;">May 31, 1940.</p>	
<p>MEMORANDUM FOR: Assistant Chief of Staff, G-3.</p>	
<p>SUBJECT: Employment of Negro Personnel in Air Corps Units.</p>	
<p>1. In reply to your Memorandum to the Chief of the Air Corps, Subject: "Employment of Negro Personnel in Air Corps Units", dated May 24, 1940, the following is submitted. There are no type units, combat or service, for which it is recommended that Negro personnel be used for mobilization planning purpose or as peacetime augmentation in the Regular Army.</p>	
<p>2. This matter was the subject of intensive study at the time the Air Corps Expansion Bill was before Congress and the bill was so worded that the training of Negro pilots was allotted to the Civil Aeronautics Authority.</p>	
<p>3. The Secretary of War adopted a policy to the effect that Negro pilots would not be trained for the Army Air Corps but that their training would be given by the Civil Aeronautics Authority at one of the civil schools used by the Army Air Corps. This method of training is being carried out at the present time at Chicago, Illinois.</p>	
<p>4. Negro pilots cannot be used in our present Air Corps Unit since this would result in having Negro officers serving over white enlisted men. This would create an impossible social problem.</p>	
<p>5. In order to organize an all Negro Air Corps unit, it would take several years to train the enlisted men to become competent mechanics.</p>	
<p>6. In view of the above reason, it is not considered feasible to train Negro pilots for the Air Corps or to organize Negro units for augmentation of the Regular Army or for mobilization planning purposes.</p>	
<p style="text-align: right;">/s/ H. H. ARNOLD, Major General, Air Corps, Chief of the Air Corps.</p>	

White House Blesses Jim Crow

A STATEMENT from the White House, October 9, implying that a committee of three persons, including Walter White, secretary of the N.A.A.C.P., had approved a policy of segregation for Negro units in the Army, was repudiated and denounced October 10 in a prompt telegram of protest to President Roosevelt.

The United Press account of the White house statement declared:

"White House secretary Early said the segregation policy was approved after Mr. Roosevelt had conferred with Walter White, president of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and two other Negro leaders, etc."

This phraseology in the press was characterized by the N.A.A.C.P. as a "trick" to give the impression that Negroes had approved of the Army jim crow, and to remove the pressure from President Roosevelt as Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy.

The telegram, signed by Mr. White, A. Philip Randolph, president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, and T. Arnold Hill, formerly industrial secretary of the National Urban League and at present an assistant in the National Youth Administration, declared

"in a written memorandum we submitted we specifically repudiated segregation."

On other points of policy enunciated by the White House statement, the telegram declared:

"We most vigorously protest your approval of War Department policy regarding Negroes in armed forces which precludes Negro officers except chaplains and doctors in regular army units other than two national guard regiments staffed by Negro officers. We deny statement that 'at arsenals and army posts Negro civilians are accorded equal opportunity for employment.'

"We ask proof that even one Negro is now being given aviation training as pilot in army air corps. As recently as October 1, 1940, the Adjutant General of the War Department wrote 'applications from colored persons for flying cadet appointment or for enlistment in the Air Corps are not being accepted.'

"We further vigorously question your statement that morale is splendid in existing Negro units of the regular army. Many enlisted men in these

segregated units have made repeated protests at being forced to serve as hostlers and servants to white army officers. We further question that jim crow policy of army 'has been proven satisfactory.' It has never been satisfactory nor is it now to Negro Americans. Such segregation has been destructive of morale and has permitted prejudiced superiors to exercise their bigotry on defenseless Negro regiments.

The White House Jim Crow Plan

The statement as given out at the White House follows:

"It is the policy of the War Department that the services of Negroes will be utilized on a fair and equitable basis. In line with this policy provision will be made as follows:

"1. The strength of the Negro personnel of the Army of the United States will be maintained on the general basis of proportion of the Negro population of the country.

"2. Negro organizations will be established in each major branch of the service, combatant as well as non-combatant.

"3. Negro reserve officers eligible for active duty will be assigned to Negro units officered by colored personnel.

"4. When officer candidate schools are established, opportunity will be given to Negroes to qualify for reserve commissions.

"5. Negroes are being given aviation training as pilots, mechanics and technical specialists. This training will be accelerated. Negro aviation units will be formed as soon as the necessary personnel has been trained.

"6. At arsenals and army posts Negro civilians are accorded equal opportunity for employment at work for which they are qualified by ability, education, and experience.

"7. The policy of the War Department is not to intermingle colored and white enlisted personnel in the same regimental organizations. This policy has been proven satisfactory over a long period of years, and to make changes would produce situations destructive to morale and detrimental to the preparation for national defense. For similar reasons the department does not contemplate assigning colored reserve officers other than those of the Medical Corps and chaplains to existing Negro combat units of the Regular Army. These regular units are going concerns, accustomed through many years to the present system. Their morale is splendid, their rate of reenlistment is exceptionally high, and their field training is well advanced. It is the opinion of the War Department that no experiments should be tried with the organizational set-up of these units at this critical time."

4. Have students conduct interviews with a relative or neighbor who lived during World War II and can relate experiences about soldiers or defense plant workers of different ethnic groups. If the subject in question was a minority participant, try to arrange to have that person speak in class on his or her experiences and answer questions from students.

5. Extension activity for research, writing, and discussion. Some historians consider World War II not only a turning point with regard to segregation in the armed forces, but a proving ground for the broader civil rights protests of the 1950s and 1960s. What gains were made by African Americans in the military during World War II? How were they achieved? What

rights continued to be denied them? Research the background of and reaction to President Truman's Executive Order 9981 in July 1948 ending segregation in the U.S. armed forces. How do you think this decision relates to what came before and/or after it in the struggle to end racial segregation in the United States? 📖

"We are inexpressibly shocked that a President of the United States at a time of national peril should surrender so completely to enemies of Democracy who would destroy national unity by advocating segregation. Official approval by the Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy of such discrimination

and segregation is a stab in the back of Democracy. It is a tragic coincidence that you issued your statement on the same day the coup de grace was given by Senate Majority Leader Alben Barkley to the Anti-Lynching bill. The two acts are a double blow at the patriotism of twelve million Negro citizens."

The Non-Jim Crow Program Presented To the White House September 27

The complete text of the memorandum given to President Roosevelt, Col. Knox of the Navy, and Assistant Secretary of War Patterson, by Messrs. Hill, Randolph and White"

"The following are important phases of the integration of the Negro into military aspects of the national defense program:

"1. The use of presently available Negro reserve officers in training recruits and other forms of active service. At the same time, a policy of training additional Negro officers in all branches of the services should be announced. Present facilities and those to be provided in the future should be made available for such training.

"2. Immediate designation of centers where Negroes may be trained for work in all branches of the aviation corps. It is not enough to train pilots alone, but in addition navigators, bombers, gunners, radio-men, and mechanics must be trained in order to facilitate full Negro participation in the air service.

"3. Existing units of the army and units to be established should be required to accept and select officers and enlisted personnel without regard to race.

"4. Specialized personnel such as Negro physicians, dentists, pharmacists and officers of chemical warfare, camouflage service and the like should be integrated into the services.

"5. The appointment of Negroes as responsible members in the various national and local agencies engaged in the administration of the Selective Service and Training Act of 1940.

"6. The development of effective techniques for assuring the extension of the policy of integration to positions in the Navy other than the menial services to which Negroes are now restricted.

"7. The adoption of policies and the development of techniques to assure the participation of trained Negro women as Army and Navy nurses as well as in the Red Cross.

"One of the procedures which will facilitate the achievement of these objectives is the appointment of competent Negro civilians as assistants to the Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Navy. To be effective, such assistants should be responsible directly to those Cabinet members and should be vested with authority to require the cooperation and assistance of technical and administrative personnel of those Departments in the devising of effective and orderly procedures.

"In addition, there is the equally important problem of equitable participation of Negroes in employment incident to national defense, with particular reference to army arsenals, navy yards and industries having national defense contracts."

Notes

1. Executive Order 9981; quoted in The President's Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Services, *Freedom to Serve—Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Services* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1950), xi-xii.
2. Stanley Sandler, *Segregated Skies* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992), vii.
3. Alan Osur, *Blacks in the Army Air Forces During*

World War II (New York: Arno Press, 1980), 2-8.

4. Robert J. Jakeman, *The Divided Skies* (Tuscaloosa, Ala.: The University of Alabama Press, 1992), 110.
5. Richard M. Dalfume, *Desegregation of the U.S. Armed Forces* (Columbia, Mo.: University of Missouri Press, 1969), 119-21.
6. Report on Conference at the White House, 27 September 1940, subject: Discrimination Against Negroes in the Armed Forces of the United States; quoted in Morris J. MacGregor

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and Bernard C. Nalty, eds., *Blacks in the United States Armed Forces—Basic Documents, Vol. V, "Black Soldiers in World War II"* (Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources, Inc., 1977), 26-27.

7. Jakeman, 181-82.
8. Memo from Assistant Secretary of War Robert Patterson to President Franklin Roosevelt, 8 October 1940; quoted in MacGregor and Nalty, 29-30.
9. Osur, 13.
10. Charles F. Francis, *The Tuskegee Airmen* (Boston, Mass.: Branden Publishing Company, 1993), 45.
11. Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., *Benjamin O. Davis, Jr.—American* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991), 90.
12. Sandler, 44.
13. Ulysses Lee, *The Employment of Negro Troops* (Washington, D.C.: The Office of the Chief of Military History, 1966), 452.
14. Lawrence J. Paszek, "Separate, But Equal?," *Aerospace Historian* (September 1977): 141-42.
15. *History of the 79th Fighter Group*, November 1943-April 1944, Air Force Historical Research Agency, Maxwell Air Force Base, Montgomery, Ala.
16. Sandler, 89-90; Francis, 105, 108.
17. Francis, 112-13; Davis, 118.
18. Davis, 121.
19. Art Carter, "Four Pilots Get DFC," *The Afro-American* (September 16, 1944): 1-2; Francis, 132.
20. Davis, 124-25; Sandler, 115.
21. Robert Rose, *Lone Eagles* (Los Angeles, Calif.: Tuskegee Airmen, Inc., 1976), 156.
22. Dalfume, 132-39, 186.

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