

those who made the freedom we enjoy today possible. Those brave men and women who laid their lives on the line for a country that too often treated them as second class citizens. The invocation was given by Rev. Nathaniel Nicholson, 24th Infantry Regiment Silver Star winner; opening remarks by Mr. Wayne Gatewood, Jr., President & CEO, Quality Support, Inc.; with my brief introductory remarks for our keynote speaker and awards presenter the champion of America's veterans at the Department of Veterans Affairs, Acting Secretary Hershel Gober with Ron Armstead, Executive Director, CBC Veterans' Braintrust as announcer.

Secretary Gober thanked everyone for their warm welcome and especially thanked the Veterans Braintrust of the Congressional Black Caucus for arranging this event to honor some of our nation's most distinguished veterans—our African American veterans of the Korean War. He applauded the Veterans Braintrust of the Congressional Black Caucus for having worked hand-in-hand with the Department of Veterans Affairs as an advocate for minority veterans. And our Department is proud of our long association with this important group. It is a true partnership, and our nation's veterans have seen real benefits from it.

In addition, he stated, fifty years ago, in response to an invasion by foreign troops, the United States and fifteen other nations sent troops to fight for the Korean Republic. It was the first time in history an international organization sent an international army to preserve democracy, and to fight for the freedom of another nation. 6.8 million Americans served in our military on active duty during the Korean War era; 1.8 million of them in the theater of operations. Nearly 37,000 Americans died; more than 92,000 were wounded. The fates of as many as 8,000 more men have never been accounted for. But thanks to their service and their sacrifices, Korea stands today a free nation, with people proud of their freedom, and grateful to the men and women from the United States who came to stand and fight with them in their hour of crisis. Among the 1.8 million men and women who fought in the Korean War there were more than 100,000 African Americans. Black personnel made up 13% of the total military strength in Korea. Americans of African descent have always served our nation with distinction; from Crispus Attucks at Bunker Hill, to the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry during the Civil War, to the Tuskegee Airmen of World War II. But before 1948, they fought, when they were allowed to fight, in segregated units—denied the opportunity to show their abilities in an integrated setting. However, after President Truman's 1948 executive order and the armed forces compliance forced by the requirements of war African American soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines were quick to show they were every bit the equal of any soldier in combat, anywhere.

Fifty years after the Korea was began, we know that America is best defended by an armed force that is truly representative of all of our nation's diversity. And it is also best defended by an armed force that is recruited, trained, and led in accordance with our nation's highest ideals—the ideals black veterans fought for in Korea. That knowledge may be the most important legacy that black Korean

war veterans have given us. VA is proud to serve the heroes of the Korean war, and of all wars.

The 50th Anniversary of the Korean War Commemorative Awards went to the following (partial list of) brave African American men and women LTC Mary Ellen Anderson, USA, Ret., Mr. Lonnie Ashe, Lt. Gen. Julius Becton, Jr., USA, Ret., Mr. Francis Brown, First Sergeant George Bussey, Sr., USA, Ret., Ens. Jesse L. Brown, USN (Posthumous), Mr. Nathaniel Brunson, Maj. David Carlisle, USA (Posthumous), Mr. Harold Cecil, Sgt. Cornelius Charlton, Congressional Medal of Honor Recipient (Posthumous), Col. Fred Cherry, USAF, Ret., Mr. Earnest Cornish, Mr. Arthur Code, Mr. Samuel Crawford (Posthumous), Sgt. Earl Danzler, Sr., Sgt. Edward Dixon, Mr. Gerald Eldridge, Sr., Mr. Daniel Faulk, Mr. Joseph Frederick, Mr. Willie Wren, Sr., Mr. Albert Gibson, Sgt. Maj. Samuel Gilliam, USA, Ret., SFC. Novel Harris, Mr. Oliver Holiday, SFC. Laurence Hogan, USA, Ret., Mr. Theodore Ted Hudson, Jr., CSM. Samuel Jenkins, USA, Ret., Dr. Edwin Nichols, Dr. Leonard Lockley, Mr. Wilfred Matthews, Col. Charles E. McGee, USAF, Ret., Mr. Jerome Milborne, Mr. Curtis 'KoJo' Morrow, Rev. Nathaniel Nicholson, 1st Lt. Mamie Smith Pierce, USA, Mr. William Ponder, Sr., Gen. Roscoe Robinson, USA, Ret. (Posthumous), Lt. Col. Lyle Rishell, USA, Ret., Sgt. Maj. Lewis Roundtree, USMC, Ret., Lt. Gen. Frank E. Peterson, Jr., USMC, Ret., Mr. Joseph Williams; Dr. Freeman Pollard, Ms. Marcine Shaw, Mr. Halbert Swan (Posthumous), Mr. James Thompson, PFC William Thompson, Congressional Medal of Honor Recipient (Posthumous), Mr. LaVonne Willis, Mr. Robert Fletcher, Mr. Joseph Patterson, Dr. Jerome Long, Mr. Thomas Wynn, Sr., Dr. Charles Johnson, Jr., Mr. Leemon Smith (Posthumous), Mr. Jerry Carter, Mr. Joel Ward, and Sr. Master Sergeant Eddie Wright, USAF, Ret. With special unit awards going to the 503rd Field Artillery Battalion, 2nd Ranger Infantry Company (Airborne), 77th Engineers Combat Company, 159th Field Artillery Battalion, 272nd Field Artillery Battalion (MNG), 24th Infantry Regiment Combat Team Association, Inc., 630th Ordnance Ammunition Company, 231st Transportation Truck Battalion (MNG), 376th Engineer Construction Battalion (MNG), 715th Transportation Truck Battalion, 65th Infantry Regiment, and 65th Infantry Honors Task Force.

For the commemorative forms overwhelming success I would like to give special thanks to Ms. Constance Burns, Curator, US Army Center of Military History; First Sgt. George Bussey, Sr., USA, Ret., Member of the 24th Infantry Regimental Combat Team (RCT); Mr. Leroy Colston, President African American Naval Veterans Association; Mr. Harry A. Davis, Immediate Past President, 24th Infantry RCT Association; Col. William DeShields, USA, Ret., Founder & President, Black Military History Institute of America, Inc.; Dr. Deborah Newman Ham, Professor, Morgan State University, Department of History; Mr. Reginald Lawrence, Team Leader, Jacksonville Vet Center; Dr. Charles Johnson, Jr., Professor, Morgan State University, Department of History; Mr. Wayne Gatewood, Jr., President & CEO, Quality Support, Inc.; Mr. Nicholas Martinelli, Representative CORRINE

BROWN'S SANFORD BISHOP, Jr.'s Legislative Staff; Mr. Daniel Smith, Founder & President, Korean War Family Endowment; Mr. Wilson Smith, Founder & President of African American Medal of Honor Memorial Association; Mr. Gabriel Tenabe, Curator, Morgan State University Museum; Mr. Marvin Eason, White House Liaison, Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Clifton Toulson, Associate Administrator, U.S. Small Business Administration; Ms. Marilyn Valliant, Catering Manager, Doubletree Park Terrace Hotel, and Mr. Ron E. Armstead, Executive Director, Congressional Black Caucus Foundation Veterans Braintrust.

Once more, we would like to pay a very special tribute to three distinguished current members of Congress and Korean War veterans. Honorable CHARLES B. RANGEL (D-NY), Ranking Member on the House Ways and Means Committee, and Founder of the Congressional Black Caucus Veterans Braintrust; the Honorable JOHN CONYERS (D-MI), Ranking member on the House Judiciary Committee; and the Honorable WILLIAM CLAY (D-MO) Ranking Member on the House Education and the Workforce Committee. Three veterans who have also fought in the long hard battle for social, political and economic justice for all Americans.

Finally, to the families of those killed, wounded, missing in action, or former prisoners of war, and particularly, Mr. Leemon Smith, Mr. Talmadge Foster, Past Director of Alabama's Veterans Leadership Program, Gen. Roscoe Robinson, USA, Ret. and Military Historians Col. David Carlisle and Col. John A. Cash, USA, Ret., speaking on behalf of the entire membership of the Congressional Black Caucus I would like to express our sincerest condolences and appreciation for their commitment, indomitable fortitude and dedicated service to country, community and family that characterized their lives.

We owe you all.

TRIBUTE TO THE LATE DR.
SAMUEL F. PETRAGLIA

HON. JAMES A. TRAFICANT, JR.

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 15, 2000

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, today, I was deeply saddened to hear of the passing of my dear friend, Dr. Samuel F. Petraglia.

Dr. Petraglia, a decorated World War II veteran, was a family physician for forty-two years and an upstanding citizen of the community. He was the first Italian doctor to establish a practice in Poland, Ohio.

Dr. Petraglia was a very dedicated physician who never refused to treat a patient because they were unable to afford his services. He was also one of the few remaining physicians willing to make house calls to patients who were incapacitated.

Dr. Petraglia served on the staff of St. Elizabeth Health Care Center and the adjunct staff of Northeast Ohio Universities College of Medicine. I send my deepest regrets and sympathy to his wife and to his family. May God bless them.