

Long Live Cyprus.
Long Live Greece.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. JONES of North Carolina addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCHENRY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MCHENRY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. GARRETT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CARTER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. CARTER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MORAN of Kansas addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. FLAKE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. HINCHEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. HINCHEY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

60TH ANNIVERSARY OF INTEGRATION OF UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent for Members to have 5 legislative business days to submit their statements for the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Maryland?

There was no objection.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, this evening I rise, along with my distinguished colleagues, for the next hour, which shall be ours, to salute and to mark the 60th anniversary of the integration of the United States Armed Forces.

I rise today to celebrate this historic occasion as a step toward greater social justice for minorities and women alike, which shaped the road to equality within the United States and strengthened the very foundation and moral character of our great Nation.

On July 26, 1948, President Harry Truman signed executive order 9981, requiring the integration of the Armed Forces regardless of one's race, religion, or national origin.

President's Truman's brazen action back there in 1948 set the stage for later victories, including the Supreme Court's ruling in *Brown vs. Board of Education*, the Civil Rights Act, and the Voting Rights Act.

We are aware, Mr. Speaker, as our history attests, that the shared sacrifice of African Americans in the defense of our great Nation did not begin in 1948. Individuals such as William Williams, a Maryland fugitive slave, overcame the odds by enlisting as a private in the United States Army and defending Fort McHenry of Baltimore, Maryland in 1812. Countless others also served prior to the issuance of executive order 9981, including the Buffalo Soldiers of the 9th and 10th Cavalry Regiments, members of the Navy and Marine Corps' Stewards Branch, and the highly distinguished and honored Tuskegee Airmen. These brave servicemembers paved the way for minority men and women who proudly wear the uniform today. Sadly, back then, Mr. Speaker, they were often unseen, unnoticed, unappreciated, unapplauded and unsung, but today we pause to celebrate their lives and their contributions to our great Nation.

It is because of their sacrifices that I, along with the 42 other members of the Congressional Black Caucus, serve in the Congress of the United States today. It is through their sacrifices

that I serve on the Board of Visitors at the Naval Academy, as a member of the House Armed Services Committee, and Chair of the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Subcommittee of the House Transportation Committee. As such, minorities have played a pivotal role in shaping this Nation's armed services, and I'm proud to say that this role continues today.

With the benefit of historical hindsight, we know that the sacrifice of brave Americans on the battlefield had to become a shared experience for America to truly move toward becoming "one Nation, indivisible." Therefore, a segregated Armed Force could not be a foundation for an integrated society, nor could it truly offer "justice for all."

However, just as President George Washington initially refused to recruit African Americans in the American Revolutionary War despite the British welcoming the enlistment of minorities in 1775, President Truman's executive order was also met with much opposition by the Marine Corps and the Army. Consequently, this significant change and transition in racial policy took nearly 15 years before the executive order was fully implemented by all of the Armed Forces.

Because of President Truman's unyielding vigilance in ensuring the complete integration of the Armed Forces, all Americans today are more secure and remain free.

As we remember and honor the brave men and women of every race who have served our Nation, we should also remember those visionary leaders who gave to our Nation, including our colleagues, Representative CHARLES RANGEL of New York, JOHN CONYERS of Michigan, Representative BOBBY RUSH of Illinois, EDOLPHUS TOWNS of New York, BOBBY SCOTT of Virginia, and so many others, the opportunity to share in that sacrifice which has preserved the America we all love so much.

We know that the transformation of our military has not been easily accomplished, and we honor those soldiers, sailors, airmen, guardsmen and women, and marines who, over the years, have challenged the status quo to do what is simply right.

All too often in our past, minorities in our Armed Forces have been forced to endure injustice and discrimination. All too often, promotions, choice assignments, and desired occupational fields have not been open to all on the basis of merit alone. Yet, the patriotism of our countrymen and women has kept the transformation and vision by President Truman alive.

Today, minorities continue to serve with distinction throughout our Armed Forces. Of the more than 1.8 million servicemembers who have participated in support of Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom, more than 20 percent have been minorities.

Mr. Speaker, it was just today that we congratulated Ensign DeCarol Davis for her selection as being the first African American and the first African

American woman to serve as valedictorian of a graduating class of the Coast Guard Academy. However, despite these advancements, minorities and women continue to be overlooked in being promoted fairly to Flag Officer rank or other leadership positions within the armed services. In fact, minorities remain over-represented in the enlisted ranks of our armed services, but clearly under-represented in the officer ranks.

African Americans constitute less than 6 percent of the general officers serving on active duty, amounting to merely 53 officers. And today, 60 years after executive order 9981, the Department of Defense still lacks a comprehensive plan and definition of diversity that can be applied Defense-wide.

Moreover, while the number of minorities and women admitted into the service academy has increased, reaching 24.1 percent of minorities for the graduating class of 2007 to 2011 at West Point and 22.7 percent of the United States Naval Academy, reports of the hate-inspired display of nooses at the United States Coast Guard Academy certainly demonstrate how much further we have to go as a Nation.

Mr. Speaker, we can do better. Not only can we do better, but we must do better. There is no excuse today for having one Four Star minority general officer, just as there was no excuse 60 years ago for the failure of the Army and the Marine Corps to immediately implement President Truman's noble orders of integration within the services.

That is why, together with Representatives KENDRICK MEEK, HANK JOHNSON and KATHY CASTOR, I successfully sponsored the "Senior Military Leadership Diversity Commission" amendment to the 2009 National Defense Authorization Act.

And I would be more than remiss if I did not say that our whip, Mr. JIM CLYBURN of South Carolina, has made this entire cause of promotions within the ranks one of his major, major themes and something that he has worked on very, very hard, and I want to thank him for all of his efforts.

The commission that I spoke about a minute ago will study diversity within the senior leadership of the Armed Forces with the goal of enhancing the role of minorities and women. As I previously observed, Mr. Speaker, shared sacrifice and service to our Nation must be balanced by a fair and equitable sharing of responsibilities, opportunities and promotions.

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For this reason, the commission's mission will be to evaluate and assess the opportunities for the advancement of minority and female members within the military branches as well as the challenge of retaining our Nation's best and brightest.

The Armed Forces continue to be a great career opportunity for the young men and women today. As a Nation, we

have a compelling need to further increase the retention and recruitment of minority officers; yet as the co-chair of a task force on minority recruitment in the academies, and as a member of the Board of Visitors of the Naval Academy, I remain deeply concerned.

Mr. Speaker, this Nation's long march toward shared opportunity as well as shared sacrifice in the defense of America will continue, as it must. The security and the honor of America are at stake.

And with that, Mr. Speaker, I yield to my distinguished colleague, Ms. WATSON of California.

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in celebration of the 60th anniversary of the integration of the U.S. Armed Forces. The policy that opened the door to full integration of the military was executive order 9981, signed by President Harry Truman on July 26, 1948. Despite the fact that President Truman signed this order, African Americans have served in this Nation's military with distinction since the Revolutionary War.

Some of the storied accomplishments of blacks in the military date back to the War of 1812. During the Battle of Lake Erie in September of 1813, which this event is depicted in a painting at the head of the east stairway in the Senate wing of the Capitol, nine small ships defeated a British squadron of six vessels, and due to the shortage of personnel, about 25 percent of the sailors involved were black.

During the Civil War in September, 1864, the Battle of New Market Heights was one of the last major fights before the war came to a conclusion. During the conflict, 14 blacks won the Congressional Medal of Honor for their bravery in the line of fire. This event marked the largest amount of blacks to receive the Medal of Honor for a single battle. This accomplishment has almost been left out of the history books, but today we recognize their honorable service and contributions to freedom.

During World War II in 1943 and 1944, a group of young determined black men who called themselves the Tuskegee Airmen, which my late first cousin, First Lieutenant Ira O'Neal, served as one of the original pilots, fought in the skies over North Africa and Europe with honor and with courage. The Airmen flew over 15,000 sorties and over 200 bomber escort missions. Some individuals have questioned their record of never losing a bomber to enemy fire, but, nevertheless, their accomplishments blazed a trail of fire towards integration in the Armed Forces.

Even after the signing of executive order 9981 in 1948, neither the Army nor the Navy planned to alter their existing racial policies, and it wasn't until October 30, 1954, when the Secretary of Defense finally announced that the last racial segregated unit in the Armed Forces of the United States had been abolished.

In April of 1948, there were only 41 black officers in the regular Army, and

that was up from 8 in June of 1945. By the end of June, 1948, there were only 5 warrant officers and 65,000 black enlisted men and women.

During fiscal year 2004, the total strength of the Armed Forces was over 2.2 million people. Military demographics showed that African American men and women made up over 16,800 commissioned officers, more than 3,300 warrant officers and over 313,900 enlisted. At that time blacks made up 16.7 percent of the total strength of the Armed Forces.

We have come a long way as a Nation in 60 years to integrate the U.S. military. African Americans in defense of this Nation are now commanders of warships, advisers to Presidents, but there is still more work to be done in terms of diversity in the senior levels of military leadership.

Currently, less than 5 percent of officers at the rank of one star general and above are African American. As this Nation moves forward and we realize the future threats we will face, it is imperative that we tap into our full potential and give minorities opportunities to hold senior leadership roles in our military.

That is why I would like to thank Representatives CUMMINGS, MEEK, JOHNSON, and CASTOR of the House Armed Services Committee for sponsoring the Senior Military Leadership Diversity Commission. The commission will study the development of minorities to reach the general and flag officer ranks of the Armed Forces.

For many years blacks have fought on two fronts in their military careers. One front was on the battlefield in pursuit of freedom for our country, and the second front was on the city streets, where they fought against racism and discrimination.

So, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to working with my colleagues to further diversify the senior ranks of the military, and I look forward to the official celebration of the 60th anniversary of the integration of the Armed Forces in the Capitol rotunda.

And I would just like to add that our new superintendent of schools in Los Angeles is a former admiral, Admiral Brewer, and we're very proud to have him. Not an educator, but a well-proven military leader.

Mr. CUMMINGS. I want to thank the gentlewoman for her strong comments.

And I also would note, Mr. Speaker, that throughout these presentations, I think you will hear a common theme, and that is that while minorities are enlisted in the military in the rank and file, there is a concerted effort on our part to make sure that they enter the ranks of officers. It's not enough to give your blood, your sweat, your tears. We want to see more of them in the officer ranks.

And with that, Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield to the distinguished gentlewoman from Maryland, one of the newest Members of Congress. And she didn't hit the ground running,

she hit the ground flying. From the Fourth Congressional District, Congresswoman DONNA EDWARDS.

Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I rise to lend my voice in recognizing the 60th anniversary of the integration of our Nation's Armed Forces.

Having grown up in a military family, my life has been directly impacted and enriched by President Truman's executive order. Though African Americans' history of service and sacrifice did not begin with the integration of the armed services, it's been more validated because of it.

From my great grandfather who volunteered as a Freeman to fight on the side of the union in this Nation's Civil War; to my grandfather who served in a segregated Navy during World War II; to my father, who was among those to join the Air Force in 1949, among the first airmen to integrate in the United States Air Force under the executive order; to my brother who just out of high school joined to serve during Vietnam, I've been a witness to the honor, bravery, and sacrifice associated with military service. And regardless of one's race, religion, or ethnicity, President Truman and military leaders at the time understood the importance of the principle "I am my brother's keeper." This principle serves as a foundation on which our armed services are built, and without executive order 9981, equality of treatment and opportunity for all in our armed services, our country would surely have suffered.

We must never forget the service of African American soldiers throughout our Nation's history. From the 54th Massachusetts Regiment that stormed the beaches and battlements of Fort Wagner in South Carolina; to the Harlem Hellfighters of the 369th Infantry Regiment, who not once saw a man captured or ground taken; to the famed Tuskegee Airmen, who were among the first African American fighter pilots and the first unit to receive a presidential unit citation for "outstanding courage," these servicemembers, along with countless others, gave their lives to help pave the way for the integration of our Armed Forces. And we can't underestimate what that integration meant, opening the door to increased educational benefits and employment opportunities for all of us and serving really as a blueprint for the private sector to integrate as well.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to say that, like my colleagues, I agree that the service doesn't end with simply giving your blood and your sweat and your tears, but it means having the capacity to rise to the level of flag officers, of commanding officers in our United States Armed Forces. And until all those doors are open, we will not have recognized and realized the opportunity put forth by President Truman on the signing of executive order 9981.

Mr. CUMMINGS. I want to thank the gentlewoman for her statement.

Mr. Speaker, I will just take a moment to also salute the members of the

Armed Services Committee from the Congressional Black Caucus, Congressman KENDRICK MEEK, who has worked very hard on these issues; and certainly Congressman HANK JOHNSON out of Georgia; and yours truly.

So in closing, Mr. Speaker, as all Americans are painfully aware, our history as a Nation has been a collage of contradictions, a struggle between discrimination and social justice, which has been repeatedly overcome by the power of patriotism and love for our Nation.

JIM CLYBURN loves to tell the story, and many of us have heard these stories, where African American men and women have served many, many years in the military, and then when it came time for them to be promoted, they did not make the list. So after they had given much of their lives to their country, because they were not selected to move up as far as rank was concerned, then they had to leave. And that has happened to so many over and over and over again.

But no matter what, they still kept coming. On the one hand, many of them felt that they had not been treated fairly. But on the other hand, they still saluted the flag. They put up the flag every day. They did everything they knew how to be good patriots. Sometimes while they were being wonderful, wonderful patriots, they also found themselves in pain. So it was a dual situation for them, standing up for their country in some instances where they did not feel that their country always stood up for them. And you can hear those stories no matter where you go in any African American neighborhood throughout our country.

So going back to President Truman's executive order 9981, requiring the integration of the armed services prior to the Supreme Court's ruling in Brown versus Board of Education, the Civil Rights Act, and the Voting Rights Act is a testament to this shared struggle.

President Truman's executive order was essential to America's history and to his quest to truly offer justice for all. And that's what these soldiers were asking for, simply justice for all. They did not want anybody to do them any big favors. They simply wanted to have what was due them, an opportunity to lead.

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And so, just as we eventually came together as a Nation to ensure the full implementation of the Executive Order 9981, I thank my colleagues for joining me and coming together as Members of Congress and celebrating the 60th anniversary of this momentous occasion.

And I would be more than remiss if I did not give credit to our staff who worked so hard on this special order, Miss Leah Perry, a very distinguished lawyer in her own right, and Miss Ca-Asia Shields, a young lady who is one of our fellows from the military services. And we're very, very pleased with the great work that they did for us.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 60th year of an integrated United States military. On July 26, 1948, President Harry S. Truman signed Executive Order 9981. Since that date, people of color have been able to serve honorably in our Armed Forces.

As I reflect upon that day and the significance that it holds, I wonder how it was received in my district. I can imagine the pride and optimism that my parents felt as they picked up their copy of the Cleveland Plain Dealer on July 27, 1948, and read the headline "Segregation Hit in Truman Orders." As the civil rights movement was beginning to gain momentum, the Democratic Party of the North began to break away from their Southern affiliates. As the article indicates, President Truman grew tired of waiting for Congress to act on his civil rights legislation. So through an executive order, he recognized the injustice that had been done to millions of Americans and unilaterally opened the door for them to participate in civil service.

While the Civil Rights Movement is not over, we have seen and continue to see progress in our society's treatment of minorities. Even before President Truman used his pen to integrate the Federal Government, minorities were loyally serving our Nation. I am still in awe when I think of how men of color fought in the Civil War, how they participated in our westward expansion, the Great War, World War II, and even Korea, all without the respect of being treated as an equal at home. The passion shared by minority communities for the principles our Nation undoubtedly motivated millions of individuals to fight the good fight and work for a better tomorrow.

As we celebrate 60 years of an integrated military, my colleagues and I in the House of Representatives are preparing to celebrate the career of LTC Joselyn Lloyd Bell, Jr. Lieutenant Colonel Bell will be retiring from the United States Army on July 25th after 20 years of distinguished service. An outstanding African-American officer, Lieutenant Colonel Bell represents all that minority men and women in uniform dreamed of experiencing prior to EO 9981.

After being commissioned through the Recruit Officer Training Corps at the University of Central Arkansas, Second Lieutenant Bell became a military intelligence officer. His service at the tactical and operational levels provided him with the ability to demonstrate his strong leadership and professional skills. Eventually, he would apply his expertise and help prepare the Army for the future by commanding units which tested several of the platforms currently in use today. Lieutenant Colonel Bell's last assignment prior to retirement was with the Office of Army Legislative Liaison. Through this role, he was able to advocate for a stronger Army and share his experience with my colleagues.

One day following the publication of EO 9981, President Truman addressed Congress in a special session. In his speech he addressed a slowing economy, housing issues and the ability of Americans to find suitable employment. I find it interesting that now, almost 60 years later, my colleagues and I are discussing the same issues. Today we monitor the price of oil, we work vigorously to address the housing foreclosure issue and to keep jobs here in America. While our military is integrated we have yet to reach our full potential.

The racial composition of our enlisted and officer corps does not reflect the progress that we have achieved. Out of the 899 flag officers, only 27 are African-American. The statistics concerning women, Latinos, Asian-Americans, American Indian and Alaskan Natives are equally disappointing. In 2003, several key individuals within the military community filed an amicus brief to reiterate that the strength of our military rests firmly upon the diversity within it.

As we thank Lieutenant Colonel Bell for his service and his family for their support, we may again turn to the words of President Truman. As the President closed his address to Congress on July 27th, 1948, he stated, "The vigor of our democracy is judged by its ability to take decisive actions—actions which are necessary to maintain our physical and moral strength and to raise our standards of living. In these days of continued stress, the test of that vigor becomes more and more difficult . . ." As our global community is challenged by the threat of non-state actors, our Armed Forces continue to be involved in two major conflicts, and our communities progress towards complete integration, I feel that we in the Congress have it within us to honor those that have served and those who are serving. We must continue to work with our men and women in uniform to provide all Americans with the opportunity to succeed.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, HASC Chairman IKE SKELTON submitted H. Con. Res. 377 last month to authorize the use of the Rotunda of the Capitol for a ceremony commemorating the 60th Anniversary of the beginning of the integration of the United States Armed Forces. Specifically, President Harry S. Truman signed Executive Order 9981 in 1948, which provided for equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons in the armed services without regard to race, color, religion or national origin.

The resolution commemorating this event was overwhelmingly adopted by the House, with the Senate concurring, and tomorrow's ceremony is the result. Significant House leadership (bipartisan) is expected to attend, among them Speaker PELOSI, Leaders HOYER/BOEHNER, Chairman SKELTON and many Members of the U.S. House of Representatives. All U.S. Senators have been invited—Leaders REID and MCCONNELL have accepted; numerous Senators are also expected to be in attendance. Executive Branch invites were also extended. I would like to thank Congressman ELIJAH CUMMINGS for leading this special order and for his leadership on this issue.

The integration of the armed forces was a momentous event in our military and national history; it represented a milestone in the development of the armed forces and the fulfillment of the democratic ideal. The existence of integrated rather than segregated armed forces is an important factor in our military establishment today. Also we must continue to promote the promotion to office for these minority soldiers and women soldiers.

The experiences in World War II and the postwar pressures generated by the civil rights movement compelled all the services—Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps—to reexamine their traditional practices of segregation. While there were differences in the ways that the services moved toward integration, all were subject to the same demands, fears, and prejudices and had the same need to use their

resources in a more rational and economical way. All of them reached the same conclusion: traditional attitudes toward minorities must give way to democratic concepts of civil rights.

If the integration of the armed services now seems to have been inevitable in a democratic society, it nevertheless faced opposition that had to be overcome and problems that had to be solved through the combined efforts of political and civil rights leaders and civil and military officials. In many ways the military services were at the cutting edge in the struggle for racial equality.

The 60th anniversary of the integration of the U.S. armed forces reflects the quarter century that followed America's entry into World War II, beginning with reluctant inclusion of a few segregated "Negroes", to African-American service men and women's routine acceptance in a racially integrated military establishment.

In the name of equality of treatment and opportunity, the Department of Defense took a long time to adequately challenge racial injustices deeply rooted in American society.

Clearly, it was a practical answer to pressing political problems that had plagued several national administrations. In another, it was the services expression of those liberalizing tendencies that were pervading American society during the era of civil rights activism.

Sadly, just as Martin Luther King, Jr. spoke of affecting the establishment with financial boycotts because it was easier to change laws than to change hearts; to a considerable extent the policy of racial equality was more a response to the need for military efficiency than a belief in true equal opportunity.

Men like Walter F. White of the NAACP and the National Urban League's T. Arnold Hill sought to use World War II to expand opportunities for the black American. From the start they tried to translate the idealistic sentiment for democracy into widespread support for civil rights in the United States.

The became readily apparent during President Truman's years in the White House, that winning equality at home was just as important as advancing the cause of freedom abroad. As George S. Schuyler, a widely quoted African-American columnist put it: "If nothing more comes out of this emergency (World War II) than the widespread understanding among White leaders that the Negro's loyalty is conditional, we shall not have suffered in vain."

The NAACP spelled out the challenge even more clearly in its monthly publication, *The Crisis*, which declared itself "sorry for brutality, blood, and death among the peoples of Europe, just as we were sorry for China and Ethiopia. But the hysterical cries of the preachers of democracy for Europe leave us cold. We want democracy in Alabama, Arkansas, in Mississippi and Michigan, in the District of Columbia—in the Senate of the United States."

The administration began responding to these pressures before America entered World War II. At the urging of the White House the Army announced plans for the mobilization of African-Americans, and Congress amended several mobilization measures to define and increase the military training opportunities for African-Americans.

The most important of these legislative amendments in terms of influence on future race relations were made to the Selective

Service Act of 1940. The matter of race played only a small part in the debate on this highly controversial legislation, but during congressional hearings on the bill African-Americans testified on discrimination against Negroes in the services. These witnesses concluded that if the draft law did not provide specific guarantees against it, discrimination would prevail. Luckily, Congress agreed.

On July 26, 1948, President Truman signed Executive Order 9981, ordering the racial integration of the Armed Forces, declaring that, "there is equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons in the armed services without regard to race, color, religion or national origin." The policy was to be put into effect, "rapidly as possible, having due regard to the time required to effectuate any necessary changes without impairing efficiency or morale."

Unfortunately, the all-black 24th Infantry was the only black active duty regiment left intact after World War II. The 25th Infantry Regiment was also still on active duty, but its battalions were split and attached to various divisions to replace inactive or unfilled organic elements. The all-black 9th and 10th Cavalry Regiments were reactivated in 1950 as separate tank battalions—keeping full integration still in the distant future.

In February 1946 The U.S. Navy published a circular letter making black sailors "eligible for all types of assignments in all ratings in all activities and all ships of naval service. Yet it was a full 3 years later before the first military service group, the Air Force integrated under the executive order.

The true fulfillment of the entire scope of Executive Order 9981—equality of treatment and opportunity—actually required an additional change in Defense Department policy which did not occur until July 26, 1963, 15 years to the day after Truman signed the original order.

This major about-face in policy issued by Secretary of Defense Robert J. McNamara expanded the military's responsibility to include the elimination of off-base discrimination detrimental to the military effectiveness of black servicemen.

As of 2008, the Department of Defense has a total of 1,375,105 service members serving on active duty in the Armed Forces. Minorities serve in senior leadership positions throughout the Armed Forces, as commissioned, warrant and non-commissioned officers, evidence that the integration of the Armed Forces has enhanced the combat effectiveness of the military 60 years ago and still holds true today.

There have been more than 1,754,900 service members from this volunteer force that have fought in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation Enduring Freedom, of which more than 20 percent are minorities, evidence that the United States could not maintain an all-volunteer force without the service of and critical role played by minorities.

The Armed Forces has been lead in creating opportunities for no matter the national origin, religion nor race. Making equal opportunity not just a slogan but a way of life. It is a place where regularly minorities serve as leaders, companies, battalions, divisions. It also serves a great opportunity to grow morally, ethically, and professionally.

The United States Military Academy—West Point, (USMA) currently has the highest enrollment percentage (24.1 percent) of minorities

for graduating classes of 2007–2011. The United States Naval Academy (USNA) is at a close 22.7 percent and has seen a steady and consistent increase in enrollment of minorities well over 20 percent graduating classes of 2007–2011.

The USNA has the highest enrollment number for females (20 percent), with the USAFA close behind—19 percent. USMA has the highest number of African American enrollment, however it is important to note that the enrollment numbers for West Point are about 90–100 students more than the Naval Academy and about the same enrollment numbers for the Air Force.

Current Active Duty Flag Officer statistics throughout the Department of Defense:

- 4-Star Generals, 1 is an African American (General “Kip” Ward)
- 137 3-Star Generals, 8 are African American
- 279 2-Star Generals, 17 are African American
- 444 1-Star Generals, 24 are African American
- TOTAL: 899 General Officers, 40 are African American—4.4 percent of General Officers on Active Duty.

I am also lucky to serve with several Congressional Black Caucus Members that have served in our Armed Forces including:

- CHARLES RANGEL (NY) Served in the Korean War in United States Army during the period of 1948–1952; Purple Heart and Bronze Star Recipient
- JOHN CONYERS Jr. (MI) Served in the United States Army during the Korean War
- BOBBY RUSH (1st IL) Served 5 years in the United States Army
- EDOLPHUS TOWNS (10th NY) United States Army
- ROBERT “BOBBY” SCOTT (3rd VA) United States Army

I am proud to stand here today and honor the many African-Americans, Hispanics, Asians, Europeans, and all the other ethnic groups that make up our armed forces. No matter their race or national origin they have but three things in common—their desire to champion the ideals of democracy, their willingness to give the ultimate sacrifice for their country, and their compelling devotion to duty.

AMERICAN ENERGY SOLUTIONS FOR LOWER GAS PRICES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WESTMORELAND) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Speaker, again, we come tonight to talk about something that is on all Americans’ minds tonight, and that is the price of energy. We have been here for the last couple of weeks talking about the problem that we have with the energy prices and especially the price of gasoline in this country. And we are unable to break a deadlock, it seems like, in the House, Mr. Speaker, to have the representatives vote for a bill that would really increase energy production.

And I have got a few charts that I’m going to put up here now. These charts

that I put up just represent a little petition that I had made up for the Members of this body. I had been contacted, as many of you, Mr. Speaker, have heard me say before, that I was contacted by many constituents that asked me if I had signed off the Internet petitions about drill here, drill now, pay less. There have been several petitions about wanting to bring down the price of gas.

In fact, I was in a local service station. I got my gas. I went in to buy some other things. And there was a petition there on the counter. It said, “sign here if you want to lower gas prices.” And I’m assuming the proprietor of that business did that to keep people from hollering at him about how much they were paying for their gas. But after reading this and learning that over about 1.5 million people had signed the petition on the Internet telling Congress, hey, look, we want you to drill here, we want you to drill now, I came up with the idea, Mr. Speaker, that I would come up with a petition for the Members of this body.

We are hearing from our constituents. And right now, about 73 percent of Americans are telling us, drill here. Drill now. We want to lower our gas prices. We want to be more dependent on our own natural resources than we are on foreign resources and be independent of other people to supply us with our energy needs.

So I came up with a petition. It says “American energy solutions for lower gas prices.” It includes bringing onshore oil online, bringing deep water oil online, and bringing new refineries online. A lot of people, Mr. Speaker, do not realize that we have not built a refinery in this country since 1978. In order to do that, we have got to do something to persuade these refining companies to bring refineries online, to do something to streamline the regulation process and the permitting process to be able to do this.

When the Republicans were in the majority, we did do that. We brought about a bill that offered an opportunity to streamline and to actually put some of these refineries on some of the military bases that were going to be closed. I came up with a petition. I had the petition over here. It is a House of Representatives energy petition. It says “I will vote to increase U.S. oil production to lower gas prices for Americans.”

Now that is too simple, Mr. Speaker, for a lot of people in this body, in that it’s one sentence, “I will vote to increase U.S. oil production to lower gas prices for Americans.” That’s pretty simple. There’s no discharge petition. There’s no legislation that goes with it, Mr. Speaker. It’s just an opportunity for not only the 435 voting Members of this body, but also the other seven delegates from U.S. territories around the world, to let their constituents know how they feel about increasing U.S. production to lower the gas prices. Well, we have sent at least two

e-mails to everybody’s office. We have talked to probably 230 or 240, maybe 250 people on this floor. So far, we have had 192 Members sign this simple petition. It says, “I will vote to increase U.S. oil production to lower gas prices for Americans.”

Now, if you’re sitting at home—Mr. Speaker, if anybody was sitting at home watching TV and wanting to find out if their Congressman had signed, Mr. Speaker, they would go to house.gov/westmoreland. And, Mr. Speaker, on this Web site, we have a list of all those Members who have signed. And we have a list of those who have refused to sign. And if your Member is not in either one of those lists, then they have not signed.

So everybody in here has had an opportunity to do this. So far, 192 Members—and as I said, it’s very simple, nothing, no piece of legislation, it’s just a simple comment to the voters at home to let you know how the people in this body, because we are the ones, Mr. Speaker, that are going to have to take some action to make this happen.

Last week the President recalled or withdrew the Presidential ban on offshore drilling. Now, it’s up to this House to do the same thing. We have to withdraw the congressional ban to explore and to do the offshore drilling. But so far, we’ve refused to do that. In fact, every bill that has come to this floor, including the Democrats’ energy bill of January of 2007, has been either under a closed rule or under suspension.

Now, Mr. Speaker, you know that being under suspension, you have no ability to amend the bill, there is 20 minutes of debate normally on each side, probably not even a subcommittee or a committee hearing on the process. So these bills have come with little input from all the Members of this body.

What we have called for, what the Republicans have called for, is for the Democrats to bring a bill to this floor that is an open rule bill. That means a bill, Mr. Speaker, that would allow all 435 Members of this body to put forth ideas, because the total solution is not drilling. The total solution is not conserving. The real solution is all of the above, a complete energy plan that would call for drilling on our Outer Continental Shelf, that would allow us to drill on Federal lands, do coal-to-oil conversion, create oil from the shale in the Western States, wind power, solar power, all of the above.

But so far, the Democratic majority, Mr. Speaker, has refused to allow those type of bills to the floor so everybody can have input. Now, I see here one of my colleagues, the gentleman from California, who just got back from a trip, Mr. Speaker, to some of these regions that we’re talking about. And so I would like for my colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCARTHY) to get up and maybe tell us a little bit about his trip to some of the area that we believe we have some of the largest oil reserves in this country.