

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION
MUSEUM LECTURE SERIES
Defending Liberty Panel Lecture**

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER

02:53:03:00 [ORDERS, MARCHING, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE]

02:54:44:04 MS: Please be seated. Wanna take this opportunity to thank the old Guard from Fort Meyer, right down the street here in Arlington, Virginia, for coming this morning to present the colors. Today is the third in our 2004 lecture series presented by the DEA Museum. This is, as many of you already known, an ongoing program where the DEA Museum presents guests speakers who have extensive experience in the fields on a variety of subjects.

02:55:15:22 This month the World War II memorial is scheduled to open on the downtown Mall. Today we are officially opening Defending Liberty: A Salute to Veterans, our exhibit here at DEA Headquarters. It was specifically designed to honor DEA employees in the military and family members of DEA employees who have served.

02:55:37:26 Back in December we broadcast a call for submissions of photographs and artifacts, and collected close to

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800 photos and artifacts. From those a selection of the most unique and interesting have been chosen for display. I wish to thank the employees who took the time to dig through their attics, their basements and garages and bring us those cherished pieces of the past and, most importantly, the stories they tell.

02:56:07:19 It is also an effort to relay in some way the sacrifices that our military has made to defend this country and maintain our freedom. I owe a great debt of thanks to Susie Vehill (ph.) and Vince Lutz from the museum staff who took this idea from small e-mails five months ago into the exhibit and the program today.

02:56:31:06 We have invited a panel, which is assembled before you this morning, of guest speakers who'll be presenting a number of wonderful stories this morning. Following the program I invite you to join them in the lobby for a walkthrough of the new exhibit and also refreshments.

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02:56:46:19 Susie has told me there is cake and so I must mention the cake and the refreshments afterward. So we begin. In 1941 a plan existed to build an isolated flight school at Tuskegee University, Alabama, and that plan was approved by the Secretary of War. A segregated nation had unfairly placed restrictions on many African American men who wanted to be pilots until the advent of the Tuskegee experiment.

02:57:17:07 These men went on to distinguish themselves individually and as a group. Known as the "Black Birdmen" by the Germans, they were feared and respected. Known as the "Red-tailed Angles" by the white bomber crews because of their red tail assemblies and for not losing bombers to enemy fighters as they provided escorts over strategic targets in Europe.

02:57:41:08 It is a pleasure and an honor to introduce Mr. William Broadwater from the Maryland Chapter of the Tuskegee Airmen. Mr. Broadwater. [CLAPPING]

WILLIAM BROADWATER ("WB")

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02:57:58:22 WB: Thanks for that wonderful introduction. I happen to represent the East Coast Chapter, Tuskegee Airmen, Incorporation. I have been the National President and the Local Chapter President. We have 36 chapters throughout the country and today our mission is to maintain the legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen.

02:58:16:24 And in doing so, we have a flight school here, for example, at Clinton, Maryland, and I have seven students right now in flight training. That's our major project. We have a National Scholarship Program in which we issue more than 30 \$2,000.00 scholarships a year.

02:58:34:12 It took us about 15 years to build that base but, anyway, it's doing very good. I wanna thank you for having me here, on behalf of my fellow Tuskegee Airmen. As you know, we're probably thinning out a little bit. The average age of the pilots is approximately 83 years old.

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02:58:54:02 We had a thousand—roughly a thousand pilots, 120 bombardiers and navigators, approximately 300 officers. And other than that, there are 13,000 people on the whole roster. That was two total bases that were completely run by black people back in that era, and the only—the only whites we had were at Tuskegee itself.

02:59:16:13 We had a white commanding officer and we had approximately 35 instructors. And everybody else - administrative, medical, cooks, you name it - were all black. Okay. And you used the term "experiment" which I wish to elaborate a little bit on. That... That's what it was called, an experiment.

02:59:36:26 That's what we called it at least, because it was designed to fail. There was a lot of agitation. I don't know how well you know how things were back in the '30s, but there was a war college study that said that blacks... They weren't blacks. We were negroes and colored then.

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02:59:54:00 And it said that we were not capable of mastering complex equipment needed to conduct war. As a matter of fact, it said that probably didn't have enough courage to withstand the enemy, probably would run in the face of the enemy, etc. It was a very denigrating report.

03:00:10:12 And it tended to set the tone of the situation—the social situation in America at that period. Notwithstanding, there were still—you know, blacks fought in every war in the country. The first person killed in World War—correction in the Revolution was Christus (ph.) Addox (ph.).

03:00:28:13 There were several... In the War of 1812 there were several sailors—black sailors, by the way, in a non-segregated Navy, which is interesting in that period. You had able-bodied seamen plus not only cooks and waiters, but you had AB—quite a few ABs sailors in that period.

03:00:46:22 Then the Civil War there were 210,000 blacks in that. Everybody knows the stories of the 554th—or the 54th

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rather in Massachusetts, etc. My great grandfather fought in the Civil War. I found that out because they put this monument at 10th & U and I happened to see it, the gravesite down in Jersey, this little gravestone modeled and it had written on it, "Charles Still" (ph.), 24th Colored Infantry, Company F".

03:01:15:12 And so I asked my uncle, "Who's that guy next to Grandpop and Grandma" and he says, "That's your Great Granddad. So, I said, "Wow"! So when they decided to put that monument at 10th & U, they said you had to prove that your parent or forbearer was a member of the-whatever unit in Civil War.

03:01:32:01 So I hired an archologist [*sic*]-archeologist rather-archivist, and she went down to the Archives here. She came back with a file that thick on my Great Granddad. And here I never knew anything about him. Didn't even know who he was. Never knew he was in the Civil War or anything.

03:01:48:03 The file was so thick because he got injured and he was given a disability. So all this was back and

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forth. And, by the way, I've given copies of these documents to several museums. It's all in handwriting, beautiful handwriting. And most of it's used to justify his disability, of course.

03:02:04:03 And he sustained that disability until he died in 1913. So, anyway, moving on, World War I, had several relatives fought in that war. We had a Black Ace even, a Flying Ace which nobody knows about much in this country. But he fought for the French. He fought in the Foreign Legion, got injured.

03:02:21:26 As a reward, they let him take flight training. And I don't know how many have ever heard of the gentleman, but he became an Ace in the French Air Force. And moving on, Bessie Coleman, first black pilot—correction, female pilot licensed in America. She went to France to get her license, however.

03:02:41:08 And then we come to the 1930s. We had C. Alfred Anderson, Chief Anderson. And any of you know the story of him flying Mrs. Roosevelt at Tuskegee knew that he was the first commercial black pilot in

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America. The reason we got the unit going at Tuskegee, they had something called the "Civilian Pilot Training Program".

03:03:01:02 This was to come up with a cadre of pilots in case we got in a war, which the Nazis were conducting then in the late '30s. And, anyway, they formed this group in colleges called "CPTP", Civilian Pilot Training Program. So they allowed seven black colleges to participate in that program.

03:03:20:06 Tuskegee happened to be one of them. That's where we ended up being trained, but the civilian portion of it was not supposed to go past that. Anyway, Mrs. Roosevelt, on a visit to Tuskegee (at that time it was an institute), arrived on the field and saw all these yellow Piper Cubs flying around.

03:03:36:29 She said, "Who's flying those" and they told her black students. She says, "Well, I wanna go for a ride in one of them". Well, the Secret Service went berserk. They went to the telephone and called the President

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who said, "I can't do anything about it. Eleanor's her own woman".

03:03:54:14 "If she wants to go, she's going." So later on I'll show you a picture. I have a picture of her sitting in the back of that airplane. And it just so happens that this C. Alfred Anderson's my godfather. He's from my hometown and was my inspiration to fly. He bought an airplane in 1931 and nobody would teach him to fly it.

03:04:11:13 So he taught himself and he promptly cracked it up. But, anyway, he got it fixed up enough to fly again. And, eventually, he did find one person who would teach him to fly. And he became an outstanding pilot. He flew across country. He went down the Caribbean. I understand we have pictures of him landing in the streets in the Bahamas.

03:04:31:23 He was quite a character. And he had a sponsor, a doctor Foresight in Jersey, who spent most of the money. But, anyway, he was—ended up being the chief instructor at Tuskegee, the civilian instructor. As a

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matter of fact, when you used to come in town in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania (that's where I'm from, suburban Philadelphia) and there was a—the highest thing in town was a chimney on the hospital.

03:04:52:06 Well, he would circle that chimney and if he was gonna land, he'd go towards the baseball field. So we'd all see him out there stunting around the chimney. And if he headed to the southwest, we all ran to the—ran that two miles down to the air fi—I mean, the baseball field.

03:05:06:08 So this was Sunday morning, we're coming out of Sunday School and I've got on my nice Sunday whites, and we get down to the field and he's stuck in the corner. And so we all rush over and he says, "Hey, I'm stuck in the mud here. It's kind of muddy". He said, "If a couple of you kids will pick up the tail, I'll gun it and, you know, get out of here".

03:05:23:01 So we all knocked each other down trying to get to the tail. So we picked it up and he gunned it and mud all over everybody. (Inaud.) mud. Well, anyway, he felt

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sorry for me and... He knew me. Him and my father used to work together at a school in Bryn Mawr. And he said, "Little Broadwater, I'll take you for a ride one day".

03:05:40:13 I said, "Well, let's go now". He says, "No, I-it's too muddy. I might not even be able to get out of here myself". So he always promised me this ride and I was about 10 years old then. And I knew at that point I was gonna be a pilot. So, anyway, when the war broke out I was 15 years old.

03:05:56:01 World War II. Pretty young, too young to go, but still had the desire. But I bought, believe it or not... I was so interested in flying, I bought every book I could find on how to fly. And I have a book in my briefcase here which I'll show ya at the latter part.

03:06:11:24 Now I bought... And it has all the tests you need to become a pilot. Well, I looked at it and I said, "Geez, I don't have enough math for this". So I used to help my Dad who had a landscaping gardening

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business and I used to make 10 bucks—10 cents an hour, something like that.

03:06:27:07 So I saved up a few dollars. So I bought this book for a dollar fifty and—as I said, and then I also had \$110.00 in my bank account. So I took an international correspondence course in aviation math and three years later I went down to take the test at the Customs House in Philadelphia.

03:06:45:13 Had no idea that there was black people flying. And I went down there as a joke because they had the big sign, "Uncle Sam Wants You to Fly". So I went down and told the sergeant, "I wanna fly". He says, "Okay. Fill out the forms". So I filled em in. I was 17 and six months old, by the way.

03:07:00:21 And I thought he was joking. He says... And he says, "Okay", he says, "I'll call you in a couple weeks and you can come down and take the test". So, sure enough, they sent me out to Almstead (ph.) Air Force Base in Harrisburg. Took the psycho-motive,

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psychological and written tests and a physical, all day long.

03:07:16:10 Came back and I'm saying, "Boy, I'll go along with this joke", you know. But, anyway, sure enough, when I got back and I told the sergeant—I says, "You know, I went along with your joke, but why are you playing around with me"? He says, "Oh, no. They're flying down at Tuskegee".

03:07:29:12 "They have a program down there for black people." So I says, "Really"? So, anyway, I passed the test, by the way, in flying colors. It was exactly like the course. And here I am 17 and six months old and told em I'm not old enough to go. In those days you had local draft boards and when you turned 18, the next day you were—you were assigned somewhere - a defense industry, infantry, whatever.

03:07:53:16 So in order to prevent that you had to volunteer. So I volunteered, got sworn in in the enlisted reserve corps at 17 and six months. Eighteen and seven days I was on my way to Tusk—actually, to Keesir (ph.) Field,

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Mississippi. And, anyway, ended up at Tuskegee in a flight training program and did very well, by the way.

03:08:11:16 Never told anybody I never finished high school. I was in my last year at that time. I was always afraid they'd say, "Well, get rid of this bum", you know. But I survived. And the washout rate was 60—about 65% in the people in the flying training programs. So, anyway, I survived.

03:08:26:04 And with that, I have brought a video. It's approximately 15 minutes or, I guess, a little less than that long. It kind of encapsulates pretty much a Tuskegee Airman's story, and it covers things I probably would forget. So afterwards I'll, you know, answer any questions you have on it. Can I have the video please?

[VIDEO]

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKERS & WILLIAM

BROADWATER ("WB")

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- 03:08:48:18 MS: The interesting common fact that surrounded all their backgrounds was that all of em had wanted to fly. [PLANE NOISES]
- 03:09:02:10 WB: That voice was General Theo (ph.) Davis, Jr., our first black Hanover Air Force Air Commanding Officer. [MUSIC]
- 03:09:20:13 MS: There has never been in the course of time more inspiring words written than those that read "That all men are created equal". Sadly, for many, these same words proved a hollow promise left to echo in time, resounding as a mockery of inequality that would demand years of struggle overshadowed by bitter disappointment.
- 03:09:41:29 Equality was to remain an allusive dream. The dim light of hope never blazed brighter for black Americans than during an era in American history when they began challenging the discriminatory practices of the Armed Forces. Key to the demands of major black organizations such as the NAACP, the National Urban League and others was for the designation of centers

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where Negroes could be trained for work in **all** branches of the aviation corps.

03:10:16:05 It was not enough to train pilots alone, but navigators, bombardiers, gunners, radio men and even mechanics. Under this collective pressure congress made concessions by passing Public Law 18. Under its directive, an air school to prepare blacks for military service was authorized.

03:10:38:12 Ninety-one of the 100 young Negro college students enrolled in the Civilian Pilot Training Program qualified for civil licenses during 1939 and 1940. In spite of all these facts, the Army erred (inaud.)...

03:10:52:21 WB: That's me at 18 years old.

03:10:54:05 MS: ...stand and allowed blacks to fly. In 1941, with guidance from the NAACP, a Howard University student named Yancy Williams filed suit against the War Department to compel his admission to an air training center. Almost immediately the War Department responded by announcing that it would establish an air

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unit near Tuskegee Institute, Alabama, the 99th
(Inaud.) Squadron.

03:11:40:21 Activated March 21st, 1941, the fighting 99th began training ground support troops at (Inaud.) Field, Illinois. Eager, young, black Americans received specialized training in maintenance engineering, armament and communication. Just a few months later an inaugural address was given at the Tuskegee Institute initiating the training of black aviators from the United States Army Air Corps.

03:12:07:29 This hard-fought privilege brought with it a great responsibility. The nation was watching and the fate of (inaud.) black military aviation rested in the hands of these intrepid, young flyers. In a bold and inspiring departure from the expected, the contract for construction of Tuskegee Army Air Field was awarded to the firm of McKissock (ph.) and McKissock, headed by a black architect and engineer.

03:12:36:03 In July construction began on the facility for basic and advanced flying training. The first class for

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pilots consisted of 12 cadets and one military officer, Captain Benjamin O. Davis, Jr. They commenced primary flying training July 19th, 1941 at Molden (ph.) Field.

03:12:57:05 Soon young Tuskegee graduates would show the world they could not only fly, but fight. Shortly after graduating in the first class of 1942, Second Lieutenant Charles DeBow (ph.) was stopped on the street by a white civilian and asked, "You one of those new colored flyers over at Tuskegee"?

03:13:18:00 He proudly answered that he was. "Tell me one thing. What do you boys wanna fly for anyhow", he was asked. Shocked, but not surprised, DeBow said he couldn't really think of an adequate answer at the time but afterward realized the simple elegance of his answer. He was flying for his country.

03:13:37:27 He felt he had a job to do for his country and his race. And just as Booker T. Washington and George Washington Carver had proven themselves as educator

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and scientist, he might prove to someone that Negroes could become good pilots and officers.

03:13:57:09 Armed only with their bravery and determination, fueled by dreams of dignity for others like themselves, Lieutenant DeBow and four of his fellow pioneers, Captain Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., Second Lieutenant (Inaud.), Second Lieutenant George S. Roberts and Second Lieutenant Mack Ross became the first graduates paving the way for the other 961 black military aviators who were trained at Tuskegee Army Air Field during World War II.

03:14:29:01 Under the command of Colonel Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., 450 of the graduates served as fighter pilots, retaining dignity and glory in the aerial war over North Africa, Sicily and Europe. [PLANE NOISES] Flying P40s, P39s, P47s and P51 type aircraft, the 99th Squadron became the 332nd Fighter Group, which also included the 100th, 301st and 302nd fighter squadrons.

03:15:17:07 Together they flew 15,553 (inaud.) and completed 1,578 missions with the 12th tactical U.S. Army Air Force and

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the 15th Strategic U.S. Army Air Force. And with each and every mission, yet another victory was achieved not just for the nation, but for a people as well.

03:15:44:07 MS: The interesting common fact that surrounded all of their backgrounds was that all of em had wanted to fly. When I started out with these young people back in a black Air Force in Europe and in World War II, performance is the absolute key in combat. To prevent the bombers, to prevent them from getting shot down by enemy fighters, the 99th (inaud.) Squadron was an expert in dropping bombs and hitting targets and hitting locomotives.

03:16:14:22 It was an also in aerial combat. The 99th Squadron did one thing (inaud.) that no other squadron did, shot down 16 enemy airplanes.

03:16:25:06 MS: Now yesterday I fulfilled one of my ambitions as a combat pilot. I got one airplane.

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03:16:30:21 MS: This was my country. I wanted a piece of it. I had to fight for it, but I'll be damned if I was gonna let some other country come in and take it over.

03:16:40:14 MS: Though no real plans had been made for the usage, by mid-1943 Negro candidates were being screened to determine their relative aptitude as pilots for multi-engineered craft, as well as bombardiers and navigators. Class 43 (Inaud.) was the first of Tuskegee with about half of its members training in the multi-engineered Beechcraft (ph.) AT10 hoping that the bomb (inaud.) program would actually develop.

03:17:06:04 The first Air Cadets to train outside Tuskegee were the navigators who graduated in Hondo Field, Texas, February 26th, 1944. The 477th Bombardment Group was officially activated January 15th, 1944 at Selfridge (ph.) Field. Although the 477th never entered combat due to the war's end, their struggle for equality and performance as military professionals, along with the magnificent war-time record of the 99th and 332nd, led to a reversal of the U.S. War Department's racial policy.

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03:17:51:06 In 1946 Tuskegee Army Air Field closed. Shortly after its closing, the former base commander, Colonel Noel Parish, in discussing the success of the flying school, said the following: "How good were our pilots? How good is any pilot? Our men were good enough to graduate from any flying school in the country".

03:18:15:29 "We made sure of that. And working together we proved it. We emphasize that a pilot or a man of whatever color, size or shape, is just as good as he proves himself to be. Men and pilots have to be considered as individual. We have had some of the worst pilots in the world right here, and we have had some of the best."

03:18:41:13 "In the first place, they flew and fought as men, and they have had pretty alibis for being failures if they wanted to use these alibis. Or they may have been proud of their group as the only one like it in the world. But they had a right to be. But when the test came, they had to fly and fight just as men."

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03:19:04:01 "Americans against a common enemy." Today there are over 425,000 black Americans serving in the Armed Forces as an integral part of the defense of this great nation. Their position in the military, the communities and, indeed, the world has been attained and preserved for achievement and honor.

03:19:25:18 The direct result of commitment to their ideal and dedication to their dreams.

03:19:32:08 MS: In the early days of Tuskegee, in addition to the already difficult job of flying, we trained under the additional pressures of segregation. But we had no time for self-pity and despair. We were too busy preparing ourselves for a career of service to our nation.

03:19:49:24 The state of our fully integrated Air Force today is a pretty good indication that we did a good job. That doesn't mean that the future will be a rose garden or that there will not be other obstacles to overcome. Freedom must be repurchased by every new generation.

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When the Tuskegee flying program was offered to America's black youngsters, we were ready.

03:20:11:22 We had prepared ourselves for this opportunity, and when it presented itself, we grabbed it with both hands. (Inaud.) so that when your Tuskegee (inaud.), you will be ready.

03:20:26:05 WB: That voice was General Chappy James, the first black four-star general in the country—in the history of the country. [MUSIC] You can cut. Yeah, by the way, the red jacket here commemorates those red tails. And, you know, the claim to fame of the Tuskegee Airmen, their greatest claim to fame was they did 200 combat escort missions in bombers.

03:20:50:14 And I don't now if you realize, but at one point we lost as many as 70 bombers in daylight raids in one day. We're talking like from eight to 10 people on each airplane. So we could not sustain the war at those losses—at those rates of loss. And, of course, the P51 Mustang, which you see here with the red tail,

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is the ultimate airplane that won the war because it could go as far as 1,600 miles on escort missions.

03:21:14:11 They had external tanks and they equipped the Tuskegee Airmen with that group. That was the 332nd Fighter Group. And their claim to fame was they never lost in 200 escort missions a bomber to another fighter—an enemy fighter. So, anyway, with that, I'm gonna turn it back to them. [CLAPPING.]

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER

03:21:41:01 MS: What we're gonna do is move through the different speakers and then have an opportunity at the end for question and answer with the audience. Our next speaker is Robert Straussberg. Born in Brooklyn, New York, in June 1925, Bob was drafted into the U.S. Army in September, 1943.

03:22:01:26 He went to Fort Belvoir and was trained as an Army Engineer, after which he was sent overseas in the 175th Engineering Regiment, part of the 5th Army. Mr. Straussberg built bridges, lots of bridges, which

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enabled the Army to plow through Italy and eventually win the war.

03:22:21:08 Bob is a unique character and a great storyteller, to which many of us here can attest, and is going to personalize World War II through several anecdotes. Also of interest to those of you here in the room who are counting days to retirement, Bob retired from federal service in 1980 but has continued to work and is presently working here at DEA as a contractor.

03:22:45:25 Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome Bob Straussberg.
[CLAPPING]

ROBERT STRAUSSBERG ("RS")

03:23:00:28 RS: Hi, folks. Well, thank you for the introduction. I'm happy to be here with my coworkers and friends. In fact, I'm happy to be anywhere. The announcement on e-mail said I was a DEA employee. I have been here forever, but I am a contractor, as many of you know. I feel honored to be asked to speak.

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03:23:29:26 I feel inadequate to speak about World War II in which produced untold millions of heroes, enormous sacrifices and unaccountable acts of dedication and courage. In 1939 World War II began. In 1941 the U.S. was attacked and formally entered the war. The War ended in 1945.

03:23:54:17 Germany and Japan both unconditionally surrendered. World War II was the most significant event of the 20th Century. Results of World War II have changed the course of world history. It made America the world leader. It shaped the world we live in today. Freedom and democracy have flourished where formerly dictatorship and totalitarianism existed.

03:24:21:23 Oppressed people were freed. In the U.S. women worked in factories and shipyards. Remember Rosie the Riveter? They no longer were only to be housewives or teachers or nurses. In June 1943 I was 18 years old. Throughout America men volunteered and the draft selected men from 18 to 45.

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- 03:24:46:29 On the civilian side every family had family members in the service, whether a son, a father, a moth-brother, a sister, cousins, uncles. It was rationing sugar, meat, butter, gasoline. Certainly there were no new cars. Any extra money anyone had went into war bonds and war stamps.
- 03:25:09:20 Backyards, basements and garages were searched for metal to be donated. Every house had a flag in the window with one or more blue stars indicating persons in the service. Some had gold stars too indicating a dead service man. Everyone in the United States did what they could to support the war.
- 03:25:31:23 It meant the survival of our country. In early 1944, 18 years old and with a full set of hair, and you can check the picture outside (it's for real), I was in Italy as a replacement in the United States Army Engineers, General Service Engineers 175th General Service Regiment.
- 03:25:56:19 We built and maintained roads, built bridges. Dirty work, hard work, seven days a week, dawn to dusk,

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tough stuff. Italy, as you know, looks like a (inaud.). The mountains (inaud.) ultimately becoming smaller into hills, and finally a river, the Po, with a wide river plain on both sides.

03:26:19:29 Further north the Alps and Switzerland. We finally broke out of the mountains and the Germans ran across the Po plain and up to the base of the Alps, and our war in Italy was over. The Germans left their trucks, tanks, horses and dogs on the south side of the river where we stopped while the rest of the Army continued behind the Germans.

03:26:41:10 We had a field day collecting their leftover radios, pistols and other loot. We had to rebuild the bridges which had been bombed out, maintain (inaud.) and strengthen the floating bridge and construct a timber trestle bridge. We had good times (I will not describe some of them for obvious reasons) since now there was less urgency to get things done and we had our captured horses and dogs.

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03:27:07:27 Horse time story. Our horses were great. Every morning we'd jump on them to get to the river. Grab their manes and off we'd go. The same coming back. Sometimes they would get fed at the camp. But good times don't last. One day the officers took the horses away and used them to prance around while we were working.

03:27:29:17 And one day the officers decided that we were in the Army, we had to dress up, line up and get inspected. So we did so. And they moved through the open ranks on horseback. What a mistake they made. We spooked the horses who bolted. We had to break ranks. It was a comedy scene.

03:27:46:23 We were never inspected again. Well, one day there were no more horses. I think they were prob—they were given to the Italians. The descendents probably know—somehow know that they helped some crazy American engineers build the Po River bridges. Good times don't last.

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03:28:04:29 One day there was still a war in the Pacific and Japan had not surrendered yet. We were told to pack up and we were going to Japan. So we loaded up our gear to go. The orders were leave your dogs. We were on the trucks, a few dogs hidden with us. And we wanted... And we... Let me put my glasses on. I'm old, you know.

03:28:33:17 And we waited as the long line of trucks formed. Hurry up and wait. Finally the convoy moved. We attached broomsticks to the trucks, placed rolls of toilet paper on the broomsticks to unroll as we moved. The left over dogs traced the trucks. We urged them on, toilet paper unraveling.

03:28:50:19 We laughed like hell as the dogs slowly ran themselves to exhaustion and no longer were in sight. My dog and I exited... My dog, by the way, is in the picture outside there. I even remember his name. My dog and I exited the truck at Leghorn. I got chewed out. It wasn't the first time.

03:29:08:16 The 175th left for Japan to go by way of Gibraltar and the Panama Canal. Before they got to the Panama

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Canal, something called the Atomic Bomb convinced the Japanese to surrender. The 175th was diverted to the United States to be broken up and personnel discharged.

03:29:26:14 I was still in Italy. In Leghorn I had gotten hepatitis and was sent to the hospital and had to wait until I could get sent home to be discharged. I was then 21 years old. There were 16,000,353 persons in the service. Sixteen million. The Army alone at one time had—over the course of the year of the war had eight million people.

03:29:52:16 The remainder of the 16,000,000 were in the Navy, Air Corps, Marines, Coast Guard. Four hundred and five thousand five hundred Americans were killed in World War II. Recall the World War—the World Trade Center only lost about—a little over 2,000. Six hundred and seventy-one thousand seven hundred and fifty were wounded.

03:30:12:11 There were 105,000 prisoners of war and in the women's Army Corps, which is—we used to call them the WACs,

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there were 150,000 women. That didn't count nurses. Today there are—World War II veterans are dying at about 1,200 a day. So among—so for among other reasons, you see why I'm so happy to be here. Thank you very much. [CLAPPING]

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER

03:30:49:25 MS: Thank you very much, Bob. Colonel Reginald Malibranch (ph.) is a native of Haiti. He immigrated to the United States as a young man after a political upheaval in his Caribbean country. He joined the U.S. Army and served for 27 years, retiring in October 1990.

03:31:09:20 During his service he was selected as a Major to command a battalion in the 5th Infantry Division and served in Vietnam with the 3rd Surgical Hospital and the 1st Infantry Division. His awards include the Legion of Merit, the Meritorious Service Medal with Three Oak Cluster and the Expert Field Medical Badge.

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03:31:29:19 Colonel Malibbranch will detail his experiences in the medical field in Vietnam. Please welcome Colonel Reginald Malibbranch. [CLAPPING]

COLONEL REGINALD MALIBRANCH ("RM")

[HEAVY ACCENT]

03:31:46:25 RM: Good morning. Susie, I wanna thank you and I wanna thank really the DEA for this honor because as a veteran, you know, it always warms one *[sic]* heart to be able to relate your experiences—past experiences, and really thank the country for accepting you and making you what you had become.

03:32:13:09 So, yeah, I owe a debt of gratitude to this country and to all of you for the—really accepting us. You know, as a young foreigner, I came here and I didn't speak a word of English. In fact, I didn't know what the English language was. I went to school in Canada and in Canada we did not speak English at all.

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- 03:32:40:23 The French Canadian didn't wanna have anything to do with the English language. So once a week we used to have something called "grammar" English, and it was just learning how to conjugate a verb and, I guess, say a couple of phrases. I graduated from school and wanted to go to medical college.
- 03:33:05:26 But by then the—Haiti was in upheaval. My family (inaud.). I lost two uncles in the revolution, my father lost his job and here we are—or here I am in New York City living in Riverside Drive and 145th Street and I don't know anything about the United States. I have absolutely no idea.
- 03:33:28:11 So my grandmother comes in, my father decide, "We'll we're going to go to Canada because, you know, you guys were students there so you can get a Visa very easy. And beside, your grandmother's there. So nobody's going to deny your grandmother a Visa". So we go the border and who do they stop? Me.
- 03:33:47:19 I don't know why but they stopped me. And they sent me to Cuba to get a permanent Visa. I get a permanent

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Visa, come back here and the draft board sends me a letter. I don't know what the letter says except that it's from the draft board. So I go down to 42nd Street and Times Square.

03:34:13:10 There's a little recruiting place there. And I met an NCO and the guy is from Panama. He speaks Creole and speaks French. And he said, "You know, the Army can send you to medical school". I said, "Great. Where do I sign". So I signed the papers and ended up in Fort Dix, New Jersey, in the middle of the winter.

03:34:36:15 I don't know anything about the winter except what I had in Montreal. And here I am now in the Army as a private. And my new... In Haiti we were very, eh, we were well off, you know. So my first thing was "going to what they used to call KP". And I go to the Mess Hall and the guy look [sic] at me and said, "What do you want"?

03:35:05:23 I said, "Well, I want this thing here" and that's, you know, the trays. You know, so you carry the trays from the kitchen, you put them there. And he looked

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at me and said, "Who do you think you are? You're going to go into the grease pit". And for those of you that don't know the grease pit, the grease pit is where it's a steel section and all the grease from the Mess Hall comes there.

03:35:30:17 So by the time you finish there, your hair—everything is full of grease. And I have never seen grease, I had never done my bed, never shined my shoes and here I am, I'm crying. And it was my start in the military. Six months later I meet another sergeant who tells me that I can get a commission and that I don't have to go to ROTC or OCS.

03:35:58:15 And I said, "Well, where do I sign again"? So I sign again. And lo and behold I get commissioned as a Second Lieutenant. I hardly speak English. They send me to school in San Antonio. I'm... Myself and another Puerto Rican were the last two the class of the 135. He was 133, I'm 134 and there was one guy that quit.

03:36:26:15 And graduated. Then they sent me to San Francisco. My town. And now I'm having the time of my life. And

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for those of you who haven't been to San Francisco, there's nothing like it. In 1965 somebody decided that I had enough of San Francisco that they're going to send me to Vietnam. And I thought, "My God, this is not possible because I am not a citizen".

03:36:53:01 "This is not my war. This is your guys' war." You know, "Why do I have to go to Vietnam? I didn't do anything against those guys". Well, I'm in medical service school and I know "medical system" and they need people in Vietnam. The war was just starting '64, '65.

03:37:14:27 The increase in troops were starting. And I get to Vietnam and, believe me, it is quite an experience. There are no lines of departures, there are no lines of demarcation. The entire country is a war zone. You don't know who is the enemy. You don't know who is going to take a pot shot at you or going to blow you up.

03:37:45:00 You have no idea. The medical support is a—consists of the hospital's physician in key areas of the

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country. The entire country is a war zone. The thing that really saved us, and I say "saves" in terms of the casualties was the advent of the helicopter. The helicopter was probably the single-most critical piece of equipment we had in Vietnam.

03:38:19:20 The helicopter could go anywhere and the pilots—those pilots were probably crazy. They'd go in places where we couldn't go, we would not go. The mission was the evacuation of those casualties. And we took that seriously in the medical department. We had to get those guys out regardless.

03:38:45:15 Regardless of the danger, we had to get them out. I don't know if some of you saw the movie "The Old Soldier"? Is that... Help me out. A former commander, name of (Unint.), was in Vietnam the same time, 1965. Got tangled with the VC. And he did not know it at the time, but he got tangled with really a regimen or two regimens of the North Vietnamese Army.

03:39:16:04 Battled lasted weeks. And I forgot the name of the movie.

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03:39:21:05 MS: "We Were Soldiers."

03:39:22:02 RM: That's it. And that thing was one heck of a fight. And if you saw the movie and saw how we evacuated folks during that thing, that gives you an idea of what it was. The Viet Kong and the North Vietnamese had tunnels dug up everywhere in the country.

03:39:45:12 As a matter of fact, the first hospital that I went to visit was one that we captured from the Viet Kong. And we didn't know that—how complete the hospital was. Believe me. They had all kinds of things, things we didn't have. We used their penicillin, we used all of their medication.

03:40:09:21 But it was underground. They had full sets of operating room fully complete with very piece of equipment that one could imagine. And here we are, you know, in little tents, you know, looking at the "expired medical supplies". So we used all of their medical supplies.

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03:40:34:18 But the helicopter was the single-most important piece of equipment for us and, as I said, took out people from deep in war zone deep or in Thailand or in Cambodia. And people would tell (inaud.) Cambodia. Yeah, yeah, we went to Cambodia. I went to Cambodia. And we went under (inaud.).

03:41:02:17 We were many (inaud.) in Cambodia. But the helicopters' evacuation of casualties was fantastic. The other thing that was outstanding was the dedication and the professionalism of the medical people. There was nothing we would not do for those soldiers no matter what conditions they were in, no matter what limb was missing, no matter what happened.

03:41:28:09 We went to extreme to help those soldiers. The folks—the medical folks did really some courageous things in Vietnam. And we—and, you know, to this day we don't call it the Vietnam War, we call it the Vietnam Conflict. Why? Well, we never declared war. Dedication was one of the most important thing for us.

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03:41:57:04 We were not in secured areas. All the people said, "Well, yeah, you were in secured areas". I says, "No, we're not". Because the entire country was an insecure area. When I got to the division and I went to see the Brigade Commander and I said, "You know, we are medics and we need protection from the infantry", and he look *[sic]* at me and thought that I was kidding.

03:42:24:12 And I said, "No, sir, I'm not kidding". I said, "I need protection from the infantry". He said, "Captain", he said, "get out of my office", you know. "Go to the supply line there and pick up all the weapons you need and then that will be your protection."

03:42:39:01 And I thought, "You gotta be kidding me". "No. Go down to supply." So I went down to supply and I got 50 calibers *[sic]* machine gun. Never seen those things, you know. I've got 50 calibers. I've got Claymore (ph.) mines. And I started putting the Claymore mines and one guy look *[sic]* at me and said,

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"Sir, I don't think you put those Claymore mines like that".

03:42:59:03 I said, "What do you mean you don't"? He said, "Well, you're putting them facing us". I said, "You're kidding me"? He said, "No". He said, "When they blow, they're going to blow-get us". So we had to change those things around, you know. And if you have never seen a bunch of medics trying to change weapons around, I tell you it is a site to see.

03:43:25:24 Or medics trying to fire 50 caliber machine gun and every time you fire it, you know, it gives you a kick so far back you don't know what to do with it. You know? So it's—it was an unbelievable thing. (Unint.) was the logistic system. The logistic system was really fantastic.

03:43:49:08 Blood. Removing blood from one component from Japan to—or Korea to Vietnam and keeping the blood in condition that you can give it immediately to a soldier in need, that was unbelievable. We came up at the time with, I guess, what we would call "little

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refrigerators", you know, these little coolers, you know.

03:44:16:24 And you put all the blood in there. Some of you probably use that same refrigerator later on to carry beer around, you know, and-or-or-or keep the ice, you know. But moving those things and moving them quickly to where it was needed was really an exercise and, again, proved the dedication of the entire medical system, the entire medical staff.

03:44:45:11 The other part was the impact of the political environment. Now mind you every time you had to fire a shot, you had to call the Pentagon and get permission to fire. You know, now you're about, you know, 10,000 miles away. There's a guy shooting at you or they're blowing you apart and you had to ask permission, you know, to shoot back.

03:45:12:14 That was uncanny pressure, uncanny pressure on you, on your troops, on everybody that you were supporting. There's a gentleman here, I don't know if he was in Vietnam at the time but the-the-the-the focus, the

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ability not to just really... You had no idea who the enemy was.

03:45:35:27 You know, everyday you'd see them. You know, they're in black pajamas and you see them in the field. And they're not (unint.). You say, "My God, who is the enemy"? They've got a different kind of uniform. Or you go somewhere and you're going to assist the village and you go into the village and there's a bunch of kids and they're all running to the trucks.

03:46:00:15 You know, you're giving them chocolates, candies, you know, and suddenly "Bang", you know, a grenade exploding. And who did that? And you look around and, you know, there's a 13 year old. Now you know he's not (inaud.). You're not gonna shoot a 13 year old.

03:46:20:14 So you just look and say, "My God", you know, "what are we doing here? What is it for us"? But we never gave up. We helped those 13 years old [sic]. We always conducted what we would call a Medical Civil

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Action Plans, you know, MED CAP for those of you that were in Vietnam.

03:46:43:22 And we went to those villages, we continued to help, we continued to provide whatever medical support that we could provide. And we never really became deterred by anything. We continued to fight. I remember coming back and landed in San Francisco Airport. And I was in uniform and I'm walking out from the aircraft going to pick up my luggage.

03:47:18:02 And a group of folks, we used to call them "Pisnicks" (ph.)... And somebody spat at me and I thought, "Holy mackerel, what the hell is going on with this", you know. The uniform was not welcomed. We were not welcomed from Vietnam. We were never looked upon as any kind of heroes or anything.

03:47:42:28 We were spat at, we were laughed at, everything was done. And then we had (inaud.) major problem and that was the drug (inaud.). Vietnam became, I suspect, a Mecca for the drugs. You know, LSD, crack, marijuana.

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We had soldiers that were constantly on that stuff.
They were ineffective.

03:48:15:24 They couldn't fight, they couldn't do anything. We couldn't do anything with them. We couldn't even send them back to the States. You know, before they got back, they had to go to a testing period and if their urinalysis were positive, well, they stayed there or they were evacuated to Japan for treatment.

03:48:36:21 It became a hell of a (inaud.) and I suspect it still continues today. You know, it's funny that when I look back in that period, '65, '66, '67, '68, we had the Republican Convention in San Francisco. And for the first time in my life I saw San Francisco go down in terms of the city, in terms of what San Francisco represented.

03:49:08:25 (Inaud.) was born. And you know we had a lot of soldiers that were from that area. And a lot of them went back—or went to Vietnam and our problems became really quadruple. And today we're still struggling

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with that. I guess you guys are still struggling with it.

03:49:34:25 But at the same time I think we owe you also a debt of gratitude because what you're doing is trying to eliminate it. And as much as we tried to do it in the military, now you're trying to do it, you know, for your country and for everything that we have. So we also owe you a debt of gratitude.

03:49:58:10 As a veteran, I thank you. As a soldier, or a former soldier I should say, I thank this country because it gave me what I have. It give *[sic]* me the character that I have, the integrity, the honestly, the ability to see things forward. As people used to tell me and my wife could tell me that all the time, "You got a one track mind".

03:50:27:17 "You know, you can't move one way or the other. You don't listen." Well, I do listen. I probably listen in a different way that she don't like, but that's okay. But I wanna thank her. She's here today. And I wanna thank her because she also helps me to be what

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I am. And, again, thank you and thank you America.

[CLAPPING]

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER

03:51:06:02 MS: Thank you very much, Colonel Malibranch. A little birdie, by the way, has told me that someone is celebrating a birthday today. So we offer you a happy birthday as you join us. [CLAPPING] Colonel Bill Finell (ph.) should be a familiar face to many of you. I don't he would know that he was gonna be referred to as the "youngster" on the panel.

03:51:31:18 Not often that he gets referred to as the "youngster". He began work with DEA in 1995 as the Counter-Drug Liaison Officer while still with the U.S. Army. In 2000 he retired from the military and is now the Chief of Inter-Agency Policy and Liaison Unit here for the Office of Intelligence.

03:51:50:28 His 29 year military career began in the regular Army Military Police. He had many assignments in the D.C. area, but also had combat duty in Panama during

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Operation Just Cause when Manuel Noriega was arrested. He has served as a Platoon Leader, a Hostage Negotiator, a War Gamer, an Operations Office and a Company Commander, to only name a few.

03:52:16:16 Bill is an expert in commanding military police in a correctional facility and will be detailing some of his experiences during Operation Just Cause. Please welcome Colonel Bill Finell. [CLAPPING]

COLONEL BILL FINELL ("BF")

03:52:40:03 BF: Well, good morning. First of all I'd like to thank Susie and Sean and certainly Vince and everybody else that worked in the museum for even putting this on. It's really kind of nice that people take the time, especially during the memorial month that we're celebrating right now, to do something like this.

03:52:57:03 And, Susie, and—I really appreciate all the effort that you went through to put this all together. Secondly, I'd like to do something that I really hadn't planned. Before I start talking about what I

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did in the military, I wanna take a few seconds here to just thank two people that are sitting on the panel here with me.

03:53:12:21 Two of em were in World War II. While Reggie and I served our country, these two gentleman actually served the world. I think that if we would all stop for a moment and think about what they did and what their—contributions they made to the lives that we can now enjoy today, I really think that these are the monumental efforts of people who gave far more than anyone else that I've ever known.

03:53:36:14 So if you would, would you join me in a round of applause for the two gentlemen from World War II.
[CLAPPING] Thank you guys. Well done. Thank you for your service to our country. I don't come from a long lineage of military history, even my family. My Dad was a Corporal in World War II with the Aviation Corps, which I remind him was the Army Aviation Corps.

03:54:22:17 But despite all the ranks that I achieved while I was in the military, I never quite got to outrank Dad. So

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I always did exactly what he said whenever we did it.
Came in the Army...

END OF SIDE A

03:54:31:13 BF: ...in 1972, which was right at the end of the Vietnam era. Vietnam was winding down. I had just graduated from college and was headed out to my first assignment. It was with the meet the 25th Division as it was returning from Vietnam. Back in those days the Army was having a very tough time with its change over from the draft Army to a volunteer Army.

03:54:51:25 There were a lot of changes that the Army went through, but the early days were really tough. We experienced an awful lot of things with drugs in the Army that were a real problem. We also experienced an awful lot of problems with training and trying to get people to do more with less.

03:55:06:28 The '70s were a bad era, but coming out of the late '70s into the early '80s many of the things were beginning to change. And a lot of that is

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attributable to the people who had the vision to train and change the Army for equipment to fight in the modern-day battle fields.

03:55:21:26 Probably my best recollection of my most harrowing time in the Army was as a young Company Commander when I first got ready to take over a unit. Probably most people don't know the unit that I commanded, but it was during an integration period in the Army, which is probably the second one we went through.

03:55:38:23 This time we were gonna integrate women into the Army. In 1976 I was asked to take over an all-female basic training company as one of the only males in the entire battalion. Two other males were there with me, my Senior Drill and the Sergeant Major for the entire battalion.

03:55:55:18 I had 200 women in basic training. I had 12 cadre members. I had an entire battalion staff to include my Battalion Commander that were all women. And I was the first male Commander that had ever done one of these units. You wanna talk about strenuous. I

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learned an awful lot about women and their capabilities, what they can do, what they can't do.

03:56:15:19 And, gee, what I found out was they're really quite capable individuals. Actually, women in the military have come a long way and done an awful lot of things. One of the early integrations was into the Military Police Corps and I'm awful proud to say that I was associated with some of the very first integration systems that were built for them so that we could bring them in and do exactly the same things that males are expected to do.

03:56:36:22 You'll see women today in every facet of the military, except maybe the infantry, that are doing extremely well in everything that they do. The second thing I wanted to talk about a little bit in my career was a--an incident that we went through and called "Just Cause".

03:56:51:18 In 19... Well, in the mid-'80s a guy named Manuel Noriega actually took over as a strong man in Panama. Manuel Noriega took over as a result of an incident

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that probably was promulgated in 1979. It was the Jimmy Carter and the (Unint.) Treaty that was signed that said that we would give the Panama Canal to the Panamanians.

03:57:11:00 Notice I didn't say give it back to them. In the... When the Panama Canal was built, it was built by the Americans. It was built in what we carved out, a canal zone, so that the zone was in American territory. As years went on... [CLEARING THROAT] Excuse me.

03:57:25:26 As years went on, the use and implementation of the canal itself became more and more of a joint Panamanian/U.S. operation, as well it should be. In 1979 Carter decided that the Panama Canal needed to be given 100% to the Panamanians, that they were quite capable of handling their own defense and certainly the operation of the canal.

03:57:45:28 Manuel Noriega was the—a man who grew up in Panama, was very proud of his Panamanian heritage and became quite a nationalist. One of the things, I think, that

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Noriega did to help develop the country was to galvanize the people into believing in the ability that they could, in fact, do this.

03:58:02:14 What Manuel Noriega did wrong was that he stopped believing in himself to pass on the country when others were elected. In 1988 there was an open election and Noriega was defeated. Noriega refused to turn over the Panama Canal, as well as the Presidency of the Panama country.

03:58:22:17 In late 1988 many things were going on. Part of it was the build up that we were doing in the Panama Canal zone to make sure that the hand over and the transition was going to be effective. The civilian government elected an individual named—the civilians elected an individual named William Endara (ph.).

03:58:39:13 Endara was gonna be the new President. When Manuel Noriega refused to let him take over, he became the *de facto* dictator of Panama. Many people were in Panama at the time, and the United States troops numbered about 10,000. There were an awful lot of people that

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were there that did an awful lot of things, but we also had our families when we were down there in the military.

03:58:57:06 Two of them are here with us today. Tom and Michelle Smith are sitting out there in front of us. Michelle was evacuated, sent back home during (Unint.), I think, was the operation we sent everybody home. Tom got to stay on and enjoy the fun that came a little bit later.

03:59:11:28 As part of the harassment that was going on, Noriega stopped allowing free movement of U.S. personnel throughout the country. You gotta realize there was an awful lot of U.S. citizens who were down there because everyone who worked on the Panama Canal were automatically granted citizenship, as were their children.

03:59:28:20 So a lot of U.S. citizens still moved around Panama doing normal, everyday business, [CLEARING THROAT] going to the store [CLEARING THROAT] and just working in general. [CLEARINT THROAT] Pardon me. I'm sorry.

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Once these actions started going on with Noriega starting to—to start to harass U.S. movement, many of the operations the United States Army took became harassment in nature.

03:59:51:12 What we were trying to do is trying to defeat Manuel Noriega with a lot of psychological operations, as well as military maneuvers. [CLEARING THROAT] We decided that one of the best ways for us to defeat Manuel was to exercise our rights over the defense of the Panama Canal.

04:00:05:18 United States troops moved freely throughout the canal zone and did an awful lot of things that were being perceived by them as military maneuvers and harassment of his government when, in fact, they were nothing more than our operations that we do for normal training.

04:00:18:17 Part of the effect of that was to exhaust his force. Part of it also was to create an atmosphere where Manuel Noriega would consider stepping down. He, of course, never did. Toward, it had to be October of

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1989, there was an attempted coupe on Manuel Noriega's life.

04:00:40:06 Many of his officers came and took over him—took over the Commandancia (ph.) which is where his headquarters was, actually captured Manuel Noriega. In one of our intelligence failures (if you can believe we had em even then) the operation went sort of unknown as to what was going on until we received a phone call in the headquarters.

04:00:58:22 The head—the phone call came in and said, "We've captured Manuel Noriega. Please come down and take charge of him". We couldn't move because our intelligence couldn't confirm that, in fact, it was realistic. The next thing that we had to do was sit back and wait.

04:01:11:02 And, in fact, I can claim that I wasn't really in the country at the time when all that happened. Ahhh, thank you, Susie. You're wonderful (inaud.). Thank you, Ghunga (ph.) Din. By the time that the U.S.

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forces [CLEARING THROAT] could react, it was almost too late.

04:01:28:22 Manuel's [sic] Noriega's Doberman brigade-battalion had come into the city and taken charge back of the Commandancia area and had, in fact, secured the individuals who were attempting to take Manuel Noriega and turn him over to the United States. Unfortunately, the four people that were involved in that, the senior officers, were all executed by Noriega personally.

04:01:50:09 With this happening in October, it only stepped up the problems that we were going into between the United States and Panama, and harassments continued. We had numerous confrontations, many thing [sic] that happened. I tell the story one time of having a U.S. vehicle that was stopped by some of the PDF, which is the Panamanian Defense Forces.

04:02:06:12 We immediately used to respond with a Military Police Platoon. Now platoon doesn't sound like a whole lot til you figure it's four vehicles, which are the

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Humvees that you see nowadays with 50 caliber machine guns mounted on them. We could roll those within a matter of minutes.

04:02:20:05 They would go out there and they would be on the thing and they would confront the infantry from the PDF. PDF called for backup and the next thing you know, there were more vehicles of the PDF that would show up. We called for backup and the next thing you know, we had armored vehicles showing up.

04:02:32:15 Well, I tell the story the one time about when the Marines showed up for us in their LAVs. A 50 caliber machine gun was mounted on top of the LAV. And as one of the standoffs continued (and they would go on for hours sometimes while negotiations (inaud.) trying to get the vehicle freed and released to come back), one of the young Marines fell asleep.

04:02:50:00 As he fell asleep, he leaned forward and he fired off the 50 caliber machine gun. It leveled a tree across the open area where everybody was (inaud.). Everybody hit the ground and everybody kept looking at each

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other and saying, "Who fired"? The Marine wakes up as he does all this thing and his first comment was, "What happened"?

04:03:07:05 Well, by the time the Platoon Leader and the NCO yanked him off the 50 cal and put him back in (inaud.), everything kind of quieted down. And the Panamanian forces were very quick to release our vehicle for us. Incidences like this continued, though, until it was almost Christmas.

04:03:20:08 On December 17th one of the most serious incidence, in fact, the trigger incident of all, happened. Four of our young Lieutenants were downtown moving through and were stopped at one of the Panamanian Defense Force check points. They began to harass the four individuals who were inside there and actually tried to yank them out of the car.

04:03:36:18 The driver of the vehicle panicked, slammed the door shut on them and sped forward. The PDF yelled to the next check point up the thing... They didn't have radios. You gotta realize that they were very

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primitive in their—in their communications devices.
Yelled to the next one up.

04:03:49:25 As the—as the vehicle approached the next one, it also blew through that check point. Panamanian Forces at that checkpoint, not knowing anything else was going on, simply opened up with their 1847s and killed Lieutenant Pyles who was in the rear seat. We were at a Christmas party that night for (Unint.).

04:04:04:23 We got the call at the Christmas party that we had had one of our Lieutenants killed and we reported over to the hospital. Going to the hospital we realized that there had been two others wounded, as well as the killing of this individual. My boss was a Colonel named Larry Robb (ph.) who was the Brigade Commander of Military Police.

04:04:18:03 He was called up the headquarters. So the two of us went up to visit with a gentleman named Max Thurman. For those of you who were ever in the military know that Mad Max is not a man to be trifled with. General

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Thurman took it upon himself to call the President directly while we were standing there in his office.

04:04:33:02 When he called the President, he nodded a few times and said, "Yes, sir, we'll continue. Yes, sir, we'll execute". Just Cause was born that night. Two nights later on December 19th at—I'm sorry December 20th at about 1:30 in the morning U.S. Forces Airborne Units dropped into the Panama.

04:04:50:09 We launched approximately 13,000 other troops that had been building up in Panama and immediately took down the Panamanian Defense Forces. The operation was a classic operation using not only infantry forward but employing Military Police. We had three battalions of Military Police.

04:05:05:17 There have never been three battalions of Military Police used anywhere before. My battalion alone had 750 Military Policeman in it. From the initial operation everything went very quickly. There was a combat of a couple days. This has nothing to compare

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with the combat that the other three gentleman sitting here have seen.

04:05:22:02 Ours was a very short, very, very quick strike, overwhelming forces that subdued an enemy very quickly and captured the vast majority of em. Casualties were absolutely minimized. Twenty-four U.S. soldiers did die in that. Every one of those soldiers are absolutely important.

04:05:38:14 None of that should be minimized. None of those were minimized. However, when we got finished with the entire operation, we had captured the Panamanians, we had some 5,500 captive soldiers, prisoners of war. I directed a range-four prisoner war camps out at East Range that we moved the vast majority of these prisoners out to.

04:06:02:07 The other prisoners were what we called the Top 100. Every war has those. The Top 100 were being brought to a jail that I had up on Fort Clayton. My Fort Clayton Jail would normally hold about 40 prisoners. This was so crowded that we had two, three, sometimes

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four individual prisoners to each one of the cell blocks.

04:06:19:21 The Military Police ran the cell blocks. My Military Police Officers and NCOs were in those cell blocks. I wanna tell you that what happened in this last war and what they're talking about now has nothing to do with what should have happened. That's a totally untrained unit who had zero supervision from their supervisors.

04:06:37:04 A day didn't go by that I didn't personally go over to that jail to make sure that I went in and talked not to the prisoners, but to the 95 Charlies (ph.), the Military Police Intern Specialists to find out how they were doing. It should never have happened what happened before. We'll talk about that later.

04:06:53:16 The interesting part now comes in with the DEA relationship. I was contacted by one of the DEA Special Agents, a young woman named Yvette Torres. Yvette called me from down at the Embassy (she was one of the one of the NC—or one of the Special Agents in country) and said that they very much wanted to talk

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to—from a DEA perspective to not only Noriega who we had not captured yet, but to many of the Top 100 that we had up there.

04:07:14:27 (Unint.) and Yvette Torres came up to my jail, virtually a daily basis. They took many, many of them out individually and talked to, debriefed, the different individuals that we had that were involved in obviously drugs and a certain amount of money laundering that was also going on.

04:07:30:05 That was the first relationship we had with DEA, and DEA became an integral part of what we were doing. The final part of the Operation Just Cause is when Manuel Noriega finally surrendered. As everybody knows, he held up in the Papal Nunciature (ph.) for four days.

04:07:43:29 After four days of bombardment with loud music and a lot of pressure, he was brought in by the Monsignor that was there. Noriega surrendered. Noriega was then whisked off by our Special Forces Unit while we

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were there. He was loaded onto one of our Humvees and taken out to Howard Air Force Base.

04:07:57:02 And while he was being escorted up onto the back end of the—of the C5, the classic picture that was seen of DEA as shown, it shows a DEA Special Agent walking up with his ray jacket on. That was the arrest that was made so that Manuel Noriega could be tried in Miami. Noriega is now doing 25 years in Miami for many things, but that was one of the reasons that we got to work with DEA.

04:08:16:29 That was one of the reasons that was so important that we work closely with DEA while we were doing that. Military careers come and go. Every one of em come to an end at some point. I had a great time doing what I did. My last... Well, my last seven years I was fortunate enough to work with counter-drugs.

04:08:30:29 I spent two years at the Bureau and I spent the last five years over here at DEA. As a result of knowing where most of the skeletons were in the closet, I think they were forced to hire me, so I was fortunate

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enough to come here to work. I've been here at DEA now for three and a half years as a civilian.

04:08:45:08 I certainly enjoy everything that I do and I love the family that I'm working with now. The military family is an extremely close one. To break into that family is extremely difficult. To be part of another new family is certainly a reward and I very much appreciate it. Thank you very much for your time.
[CLAPPING]

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER

04:09:08:08 MS: Before we move into the question and answer period, and I know there's gonna be a lot of questions for our four esteemed panelists, I wanted to welcome a group that's joining us this morning, a contingent of the Blue Knights that has arrived and is staged out in our courtyard outside.

04:09:22:29 The Blue Knights are a non-profit fraternal organization of active and retired law enforcement men and women who enjoy riding motorcycles. Many of them

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are also veterans of the military. They are here as a gesture to honor all veterans and our gratitude goes out to all of them and to Special Agent Mike Turner for arranging to have them come here today.

04:09:44:03 They will be out in the courtyard this afternoon after the end of this service and ceremony, and I invite you to please visit with them and have your pictures taken. And I'm sure you guys will sign autographs. If you all would like to stand and be recognized, we welcome you. [CLAPPING]

04:10:08:07 I have passed Mr. Broadwater a microphone and I would ask that as each of you answer questions from the audience, if you could please use that microphone for the recording of this session. At this point we'll open it up to questions.

[QUESTIONS ARE VERY LOW AUDIO]

04:10:32:24 Q: I've heard a lot of (inaud.). What was it really like to not only (inaud.) but to know that that many

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men (inaud.) that everybody really came through
(inaud.)?

04:11:22:20 A: Well, I guess, you know, there were a lot of mixed emotions and loyalties, if you will. But you have to realize that the—of 1,000 pilots approximately 6,000 entered the program. And, by the way, the requirements in those days were a college education to become an Air Force Pilot.

04:11:42:13 They were getting desperate when they got down to me. So... They really needed pilots, believe me. But anyway it started out at four years of college, then two years and then subsequently pass the exams. So it was a quite... You gotta admit that there was quite a bunch of people there, very intelligent, very educated.

04:12:02:27 I had a real complex, as I told you, at not having even finished high school. But there was a lot of feeling there among the troops generally that, "Hey, what are we fighting for? We're not mad at the Germans. We need to fight right here". And I

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belonged to the bomber group of which 101 pilots were arrested.

04:12:23:08 I don't know if you ever heard that story. But we were segregated in our Officer's Clubs at one of our fields up at Freedman Field in Indiana. And so the guys decided to rebel and storm the club, which they did. And then 101 of em were put under house arrest. And there was threats, of course, of court martial.

04:12:41:14 Time of war, that was—you could put a gun to a guy's head in the field for refusing a direct order. And.. However, we had a great press there. We had Judge Hasty, I don't know if you ever heard of him, who was an advisor to the Secretary of War at the time. And, of course, they made quick work of squelching this big overthrow of 101 officers rebelling.

04:13:06:26 So among that group only one of them ended up with a yellow discharge. And he had been accused of a—jostling somebody who was blocking his way going in the Officer's Club. So, anyway, he ended up becoming

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our National President back in the—I guess in the
'80s.

04:13:24:03 And Bill Terry was his name. He was an attorney. He was never able to practice law because of the yellow discharge in California. But we had it overturned and—by Bill Clinton while he was President. And the emotions ran high, believe me, among the pilots themselves, of course, about, you know, what are we really fighting for.

04:13:45:22 And I don't know how many of you saw the HBO movie... How many? Well, three things in there that I usually try to dispel. The first one was you saw a Major really beating up on cadets—new cadets. His question to them was, "Why do you wanna fight for a country that doesn't want you"?

04:14:02:09 And he was very nasty if you recall. That never happened. The white officers were under the control... And you saw the gentleman who was our Commanding Office at Tuskegee, General Parish. He was a Colonel

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then. He was a Kentucky Colonel and he was a straight up guy as you could ever find.

04:14:18:01 And he told us pilots, "If you don't like it here"...
By the way, they were—all the—all the white
instructors were volunteers. And they'd tell em, "If
you don't like here, I'll get you—help you transfer".
Transfer then meant overseas. So didn't have many
volunteers.

04:14:32:24 But, anyway, they taught us to fly. They really
taught us good. There was some contention says that
they washed out guys that could fly pretty good
because they had quotas. We've never been able to
prove that, but I've talked to many of the white
instructors since and they really were pretty exacting
on making sure that we knew what we were doing when we
walked out of there.

04:14:52:13 By the way, I served 30 years with FAA afterwards. I
couldn't get a job as an airline pilot. I got out
right after the war cause I hadn't even finished high
school. So I came out and the first thing I did was

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buy a surplus airplane. Didn't have an automobile or not even a driver's license.

04:15:07:01 Used to catch the bus to the airport to fly my airplane. So I stayed pretty current. And I went down to take airline test and really scored very high. And nobody called me. So I went down and complained and they told me to take the test again. Took it a second time and come out number three out of about 90 people and I still didn't hear from anybody.

04:15:30:20 So I wrote the President, Eddie Rickenbacker (ph.), who was General Rickenbacker before he left the service and took over Eastern Airlines. He had a PR man call me at my home and said—after I wrote him the letter and says, "I'm coming up to see ya". So I figure, "Oh, boy, I'm in", you know.

04:15:46:17 So he shows—he came into my house and took maps and says, "Hey, we can't hire ya because we're—we come out of Atlanta, Georgia, is our headquarters". He says, "If I put you in that airplane, I couldn't get anybody to get on after you". I said, "Well, we'll fix that.

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Put em on first and I'll close the door when I get in".

04:16:06:26 He didn't go for that either. So, anyway... I told him I was changing my major in school. He was amazed that I owned a home—a beautiful home and whatnot, had a wife and a couple kids and an airplane. So... By the way, I bought a car by then too. So I was doing pretty good, but I still wanted to be an airline pilot.

04:16:26:01 So I couldn't get a job, so I took the test for the Air Traffic Controller's Exam with then CAA. And that was in 1949. And I was hired. Went to work in LaGuardia Airport in New York first. And I rose up through the system from the gut bottom to the number three man in (inaud.) traffic intel system.

04:16:43:02 I retired as an SCS over here at Headquarters at 7th and Independence Avenue. Had a great career and I still consult. I retired in '80, same as this gentleman". We're about the same age. We kind of parallel careers there. And I became the Head of the

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Air Traffic Control Rules and Regulations for my last five years.

04:17:02:14 And I used to head up the accident investigation group. I don't know how many of you might have seen me on the 6:00 news after a big accident, but I used to get to—you know, to fight off the press, if you will. But, anyway, I had a tremendously interesting career. Still consult.

04:17:18:03 Just finished up a job in Taiwan and I work, you know, pretty much around the world on construction of tall structures as one of my major areas that... I've got to approve the tallest building the world in Chicago twice, 2600 feet, and still working on another one right now.

04:17:36:23 I did one for Donald Trump in New York also. My other specialty is accident litigation, when people hit pow... You all see these lights blinking around the countryside? Well, that's regulatory. That's based on regulations and FAA. And nobody can build anything above 200 feet in America without going to FAA.

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04:17:53:28 So you can imagine when Donald Trump said he spent 4.7 million dollars planning a building and he goes down to City Hall with all his plans and says, "Give me my building permit" and they say, "You gotta go see FAA". "You mean FHA?" "No, FAA." So... Well, then you gotta deal with me.

04:18:10:03 You're up in their airspace. He wanted to build a 2,000 foot building on the west coast of-west side of Manhattan. So, anyway, that-it's more than a notion because it does interfere. They're hazards to flight navigation and we have to, you know, analyze them and work out the problems and operational problems that have to occur.

04:18:27:08 Anyway, does that answer your question? Okay.
[CLAPPING]

04:18:36:21 MS: Do you have some more questions for any of our four panelists? Let me pass the microphone so we can get the question.

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04:18:50:07 Q: Mr. Broadwater, we all know that Eisenhower was a little reluctant to include African Americans in combat. General McArthur was a little—was a little reluctant also. General Patton, even after—well, even after we had proven ourselves, well, you had already proven yourselves in combat, even in his letters to his wife he had—he had—he never accepted a notion of African Americans in combat.

04:19:20:14 And with that said and done, can you sort of talk about your transition from, “Well, we’ll let you fly but not in combat and we’ll let you in combat but won’t let you escort any bombers” to “We want these guys to escort us over this terrain”? So can you—can you sort of talk about that—you know, that transition from here to there and how the guys must have felt—that the Tuskegee (inaud.) must have felt when, you know, they did that?

04:19:54:19 A: Yeah. You know, we kind of realized that we had a real—something to prove. There’s no question about that. One of the mistakes... I will call it a mistake but it just was a—it happened this way. None of the

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units over in North Africa, where the 99th first went, wanted them.

04:20:13:10 Nobody wanted black troops because they had to have so much special logistics to have separate and whatnot. And so they spent an inordinate amount of time up at a place called—in Detroit—outside of Detroit. I'm trying to think of the field as... Well, the (inaud.) got me at the moment.

04:20:31:13 But anyway... Selfridge Field. Our troops were up there flying everyday and flying together, flying not the greatest airplane at that time, the P40, and what they didn't realize, when they showed up in North Africa finally, they got seven months of flying together everyday.

04:20:47:29 And these guys were expert pilots. Believe me, you don't get that much training normally after you graduate before you go into combat, especially in that time of the war which we were really cranking up. So the assignments they got, though, were just bombing and strafing.

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04:21:01:08 Never encountering the enemy pretty much. And so, as you know, those of you who saw the HBO movie, that was fairly accurate. General Da... He was then Colonel Davis, who was a Commanding Officer, was brought back and brought before a committee in congress by a bunch of southern congressman who said, "We're gonna kill this thing right now and get rid of it".

04:21:20:05 Now these guys are flying an antiquated airplane. It's probably the slowest, the least best fighter in the whole American inventory, the P40. And that-that-that's all they're flying. But they're—it's very adequate for what they're doing. However, they encounter an enemy while B.O. Davis was here talking to congress.

04:21:37:15 And the guy shoots down an FW190 with a P40. And the word got back to the States, "Shot down an F"... But they don't believe it. You know? They said, "Well, give em some real airplanes to see what they can really do". So they gave them the P39. I don't know if you know that airplane.

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04:21:52:06 Not a great machine, but better—a little better than the P40. But, anyway, they fooled around with that for about three months, and they did get some kills with it—pretty good kills. But then they were given the P47, which is—everybody knows the Jug—I don't know if you know about it, but a huge airplane for a fighter.

04:22:08:15 But they really started to come into their own with that airplane. Then, of course, when they got to Italy and were given the P51s, hey, that was it. I mean, you've got the best airplane in the world, you've got the best trained pilots in the world, and they really accounted for themselves.

04:22:23:12 So, anyway, there was a lot of contention in the sense that nobody wanted em initially, but pretty soon when the bomber pilots found out that these P51s with the red tails really hung with em and didn't run off chasing Germans trying to become heroes... And, by the way, General Davis was the—he was the glue that kept us together.

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04:22:44:11 He was a West Pointer, very rigid. Hey, we're a bunch of college kids or high school kids, whatever, you know, we're not soldiers. And he really soldiered. And he told the guys, "Anybody that breaks the formation, goes off and chases and leaves the bombers, you'll get court martialed".

04:22:59:15 And to prove his point he court martialed one guy who broke ranks. But the whole thing was the Germans used to play the game of, you know, laying off to the side and, you know, making passes to try to pull the fighters off. And then as soon as you did, you had another bunch of em sitting up here, way in high altitude, and they would just rake the bombers.

04:23:17:02 So... But that's why they never lost a bomber, because they stayed with em. As a matter of fact, they were accused in some cases where other units would see them fly by, Germans were out there, and they said we were reluctant to go chase em. We weren't aggressive enough.

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04:23:29:27 But the name of the game was get the bomber in there and get the—knock out those munitions factories and whatnot and the oil fields. And that's what had to be done in order to win that war. And I think I told you when you lose 10 men in a bomber, and you lose 70 a day, you ain't gonna last very long at that rate.

04:23:45:29 So the word went out, "Get... Save those bombers at any cost". And B.O. Davis, of course, being the soldier he was, he really enforced that. So pretty soon these guys are saying, "Hey, we don't want anybody but the red tails to protect us" cause they stuck with it. Okay?

04:24:03:02 MS: At this point I think what we'll do is make the transition from the auditorium out into the back lobby. We have a reception set up for everyone to enjoy. Our four panelists will be out in the lobby to take individual questions. Mention again that the Blue Knights are out in the courtyard with their motorcycles.

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04:24:19:17 They're also... We have a couple of pieces of armament that we've brought in out in the courtyard. I think Willy's jeep from the early 1950s. Thank you all very much for taking time out of your day to be here this morning. We really appreciate it. Thank you.
[CLAPPING]

END OF TAPE