

I would like to ask all the veterans of the Pacific war who are here to stand or, if you cannot stand, to wave your hand and be recognized. Please stand up. [Applause]

We also owe you a very great deal because of what you did with your remarkable victory. You did not leave your ideals at the war's edge; you brought them home. You carried them to college on the GI bill and into work. And together, you created the most prosperous nation on Earth. You extended our vision across the globe to rebuild our allies and our former adversaries, to win the cold war, to advance the cause of peace and freedom.

So to all of you who brought us from the *Arizona* to the *Missouri*, all of us who followed will always remember your commitment, your

deeds, and your sacrifice. They are as constant as the tides and as vast as this great Pacific Ocean.

May God bless you, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:30 a.m. on the flight deck. In his remarks, he referred to Rear Adm. Eugene Fluckey, USN (Ret.), Congressional Medal of Honor recipient; Adm. Jeremy M. Boorda, USN, Chief of Naval Operations; Adm. Ronald J. Zlatoper, USN, Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet; Adm. Thomas H. Moorer, USN (Ret.), former Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff; Rear Adm. Edward Moore, Jr., USN, Commander, Cruiser Destroyer Group Three; and Capt. Larry C. Baucom, USN, Commanding Officer, U.S.S. *Carl Vinson*.

Remarks at a Stamp Unveiling Ceremony Aboard the U.S.S. *Carl Vinson* in Pearl Harbor

September 2, 1995

Postmaster General Runyon, let me begin by thanking you for the outstanding job you have done in promoting this project. I have enjoyed very much participating with you in it. Secretary Dalton, Secretary Brown, and distinguished military leaders who are here, Mrs. Howard and Mr. Carter, who assisted us in the unveiling, I am delighted to unveil this fifth and final set of stamps honoring the men and women who brought our Nation victory in World War II.

Again, let me congratulate the Postal Service on producing these stamps. They will for a long time remind all of our people of the spirit that animated our triumph and the common cause that united us 50 years ago. They also remind us that in World War II, as never before in our history up to that time, the many who make up our Nation came together as one. Old divisions melted away as our people turned to the job of liberating the world and then to the task of creating a better future at home.

We are fortunate to have with us today in this unveiling two individuals whose service exemplifies the best of this changed America that emerged from World War II and the best of our changed military.

Herbert Carter was a member of the famed Tuskegee Airmen. He flew 77 combat missions over North Africa and Italy. He has a chest full of medals and a record of real bravery and achievement. His accomplishments and those of thousands of other African-Americans who served our Nation so valiantly helped to open the way to the day when all Americans will be judged by the content of their character and not by the color of their skin.

Rita Howard joined the Navy Nurse Corps in 1941. At war's end, she was serving on board of the hospital ship U.S.S. *Refuge*, mending the wounds and lifting the spirits of newly freed POW's. Because of her and hundreds of thousands of women like her who wore the uniform and millions more who helped build democracy's arsenal, the role of women in our Nation was changed forever. And, I might add, the role of women in our military has been changed forever. Their achievements cleared the way for women to reach their full potential whether in boardrooms or on board bombers.

The generation that fought World War II came home and built America into the richest, freest nation in history. They returned to their towns and cities and built careers and communities. Some, like Herbert Carter and Rita How-

ard, remained in uniform, safeguarding our liberties and ensuring that tyranny never again threatened our shores. Together, they built a half a century of progress and security for which we must all be eternally grateful.

I hope all Americans will remember the debt they owe to Herbert Carter, to Rita Howard, to the millions of others they see embodied in

these fine stamps. And I hope all of us will be inspired to carry forward their work of continuing to make our Nation safe and strong and free.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 12:40 p.m.

Remarks at a World War II Commemorative Service in Honolulu, Hawaii *September 3, 1995*

Thank you, Bishop, for your remarks, your service, your introduction. To all of the distinguished people who have participated in this magnificent program today, let me say that after Captain Lovell spoke and Colonel Washington sang and the Bishop made his remarks, I'm not sure there's much else to say. *[Laughter]* And I'm certain that the rest of us have been warmed by this ceremony beyond belief.

But I do believe—I think there are two brief things that ought to be said. One is we ought to express our appreciation to this magnificent choir for the music they have given us today. *[Applause]* And secondly, inasmuch as this is the last of a long and magnificent series of events commemorating the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II, I would like to ask General Mick Kicklighter and any other members of the World War II Commemorative Commission who are here to stand and receive our gratitude for a job very well done. *[Applause]*

Let me ask you as we close what you believe people will say about World War II 100 or 200 or 300 years from today. I believe the lesson will be that people, when given a choice, will not choose to live under empire; that citizens, when given a choice, will not choose to live under dictators; that people, when given the opportunity to let the better angels of their natures rise to the top, will not embrace theories of political or racial or ethnic or religious superiority; that in the end, we know that Thomas Jefferson was right: God created us all equal, with the rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, and whatever differences there are among us, we have more in common.

That was the ultimate lesson of the magnificent remarks that Captain Lovell made. And

it better be the ultimate lesson we learn from the tragedy of World War II. As we move into the 21st century, as the world gets smaller and smaller, as the fragile resources we have that sustains life and permit progress have to be maintained and enhanced, we must remember that.

That was a lesson that some people knew even in World War II. And I'd like to close with a reading from this little book, "The Soldier's and Sailor's Prayer Book," that a lot of our veterans carried with them in battle in World War II. This is a prayer written by the famous American poet Stephen Vincent Benet that became known as the President's prayer because President Franklin Roosevelt prayed it on Flag Day, June 14th, 1942. I hope this is what people remember as the lesson of World War II one and two hundred years from now:

"God of the free, grant us brotherhood and hope and union, not only for the space of this bitter war but for the days to come, which shall and must unite all the children of Earth. We are, all of us, children of Earth. Grant us that simple knowledge. If our brothers are oppressed, then we are oppressed. If they hunger, then we hunger. If their freedom is taken away, our freedom is not secure. Grant us the common faith that man shall know bread and peace; that he shall know justice and righteousness, freedom, and security; an equal opportunity and an equal chance to do his best not only in our own land but throughout the world. And in that faith, let us march toward the clean world our hands can make."

Amen, and God bless America.