

made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 24, but was embargoed for release until 6 p.m. on December 24. The

Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Statement on the Death of Percy Sutton *December 27, 2009*

Percy Sutton was a true hero to African Americans in New York City and around the country. We will remember him for his service to the country as a Tuskegee airman, to New York State as a State assemblyman, to New York City as Manhattan borough president, and to the community of Harlem in leading

the effort to revitalize the world renowned Apollo Theater. His life-long dedication to the fight for civil rights and his career as an entrepreneur and public servant made the rise of countless young African Americans possible.

Michelle and I extend our deepest condolences to his family on this sad day.

Remarks in Kaneohe, Hawaii *December 28, 2009*

Attempted Terrorist Act on Northwest Airlines Flight 253

Hey, guys. Good morning, everybody. I want to take just a few minutes to update the American people on the attempted terrorist attack that occurred on Christmas Day and the steps we're taking to ensure the safety and security of the country.

The investigation's ongoing, and I spoke again this morning with Attorney General Eric Holder, the Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano, and my Counterterrorism and Homeland Security Adviser, John Brennan. I asked them to keep—continue monitoring the situation, to keep the American people and Members of Congress informed.

Here's what we know so far. On Christmas Day, Northwest Airlines Flight 253 was en route from Amsterdam, Netherlands, to Detroit. As the plane made its final approach to Detroit Metropolitan Airport, a passenger allegedly tried to ignite an explosive device on his body, setting off a fire.

Thanks to the quick and heroic actions of passengers and crew, the suspect was immediately subdued, the fire was put out, and the plane landed safely. The suspect is now in custody and has been charged with attempting to destroy an aircraft. And a full investigation has been launched into this attempted act of ter-

rorism, and we will not rest until we find all who were involved and hold them accountable.

Now, this was a serious reminder of the dangers that we face and the nature of those who threaten our homeland. Had the suspect succeeded in bringing down that plane, it could have killed nearly 300 passengers and crew, innocent civilians preparing to celebrate the holidays with their families and friends.

The American people should be assured that we are doing everything in our power to keep you and your families safe and secure during this busy holiday season. Since I was first notified of this incident, I've ordered the following actions to be taken to protect the American people and to secure air travel.

First, I directed that we take immediate steps to ensure the safety of the traveling public. We made sure that all flights still in the air were secure and could land safely. We immediately enhanced screening and security procedures for all flights, domestic and international. We added Federal air marshals to flights entering and leaving the United States. And we're working closely in this country—Federal, State, and local law enforcement—with our international partners.

Second, I've ordered two important reviews, because it's absolutely critical that we learn from this incident and take the necessary