

second-class, not third-class—first-class citizenship for all. As John Kerry mentioned, it started in the Army. Obviously, it really manifested itself on the baseball field. After all, it was Branch Rickey who said he was looking for a man to cross the color line who could play baseball and had the character necessary to do so. Jackie Robinson had both. And that's why we're honoring him today.

I found Martin Luther King's quote about him interesting. I'm sure you will too. He said, "He was a freedom rider before freedom rides." That's a pretty high compliment, when you think about it. He was—to me, it just says courage and decency and honor.

This son of Georgia sharecroppers was taught by his mother that the best weapon against racism was the use of his talent, his God-given talent, not to waste a minute, and he didn't. And that spirit, passed on from mother to son and now son to family, still lives through the Jackie Robinson Foundation. The Jackie Robinson Foundation is a noble cause to help academically gifted students of color go to college. I know the Dodgers will continue to support that foundation. I hope baseball continues to do so as well.

It is my honor now to join Speaker Hastert and Senator Stevens in presenting the Congressional Gold Medal to Rachel Robinson, in the name of her husband, the great baseball star and great American, Jackie Robinson.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:18 p.m. at the U.S. Capitol. In his remarks, he referred to Rachel Robinson, widow of Jackie Robinson, and their daughter, Sharon Robinson, and son David Robinson; Allan H. "Bud" Selig, commissioner, Major League Baseball; Rev. Jesse L. Jackson, Sr., founder and president, Rainbow/PUSH Coalition, Inc.; and Frank McCourt, chairman, and Jamie McCourt, vice chairman, Los Angeles Dodgers.

Remarks Honoring the 2004 World Series Champion Boston Red Sox

March 2, 2005

Please be seated, unless you don't have a chair. [Laughter] So, like, what took you so long? [Laughter] Welcome. And welcome to the citizens of the Red Sox Nation. I'm proud

to be joined by the Vice President. He's a Chicago Cubs fan. So, like, he knows what you've been through. [Laughter] We're really glad you're here.

There's been a lot of people in this town waiting for this day to come. Some have said it would be a cold day when the Red Sox made it here. [Laughter] I am honored to welcome the world champs, the mighty Boston Red Sox, to the White House.

I want to welcome the members of the Massachusetts delegation who are here. I know that Senator Kennedy is here. Senator Kerry is on his way. We have just finished a ceremony honoring Jackie Robinson. I know members of the congressional delegation are here from like Massachusetts, and everybody else that claims to be a Red Sox State. [Laughter] You all are welcome here.

I appreciate the commissioner coming. And Bob, it's good to see you. I thank the members of my Cabinet who are here. I appreciate the mayor being here, the mayor of Boston. You've had a heck of a year, Mayor. [Laughter] I want to thank and welcome my friend Tom Werner and Larry Lucchino. I'm sorry John Henry is sick. You know, Lucchino, I knew you'd amount to something eventually. [Laughter]

I appreciate the way this team played baseball. You know, it took a lot of guts, and it took a lot of hair. [Laughter] It took a great manager and coaching staff, and I'll never forget calling Terry Francona after the team won the championship, and he—the only thing I remember him saying was, "It's all—it all depended upon the players," which is why he's a good manager, isn't it?

I appreciate the fact that Dom DiMaggio and Jimmy Piersall are with us. You guys represent a lot of great Boston Red Sox players that a lot of us grew up watching play, and you're welcome here in the White House, and you're representing a great tradition of wonderful folks.

You know, the last time the Red Sox were here, Woodrow Wilson lived here. [Laughter] There were only 16 teams in baseball then. After the World Series victory in 1918, a reporter from Boston said, "The luckiest baseball spot on Earth is Boston, for it has never lost a World Series." [Laughter] That's one optimistic writer. [Laughter]

Senator, welcome. Good to see you. Only time I—I like to see Senator Kerry, except when we’re fixing to debate—[laughter]—if you know what I mean. [Laughter]

No one really expected the answer to the “Curse of the Bambino” would come from a group of players that call themselves “idiots,” except for maybe idiots who don’t understand baseball. This is a heck of a team. This is a team that came together from South Korea and Dominican Republic, from Anchorage, Alaska, Fort Riley, Kansas, and incredibly enough, Midland, Texas. [Applause] Oh, yes. Finally, somebody from Midland amounted to something. [Laughter]

I love the way this team played, and so do baseball fans. I mean, this is a team that won eight games in a row when it wasn’t supposed to. It’s kind of courage and a couple of stitches. You answered 86 years of prayer. That’s an amazing feat, isn’t it? I mean, when the Red Sox won, people all over the world cheered. They cheered in New England, and they cheered in Baghdad, Iraq. One guy said—from Boston—he said, “Now we just have to wait for the other six signs of the apocalypse.” [Laughter]

I really appreciate what Boston does off the field too. The Jimmy Fund is a classic example of a sports franchise giving something back to the community in which they play. You created the Red Sox Scholars, which awards scholarships to disadvantaged fifth graders. I appreciate what individual players do. I know firsthand what the Schillings do, the SHADE Foundation to work to prevent skin cancer and the—and Shonda and Curt’s leadership in the battle against Lou Gehrig’s disease. I appreciate what the Red Sox are doing in the Dominican Republic with “Senor Octubre.”

But most of all, our purpose here is to welcome champs. We wish you all the best in the upcoming season. We know that you’ve been able to do what has been viewed to be the impossible. And just like that sports-writer said in 1918, you know, Boston is the place to cover champs.

Welcome to the White House. May God continue to bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:54 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Allan H. “Bud” Selig, commis-

sioner, and Robert A. DuPuy, president and chief executive officer, Major League Baseball; Thomas C. Werner, chairman, Larry Lucchino, president and chief executive officer, John W. Henry, principal owner, and Terry Francona, manager, Boston Red Sox; Red Sox pitcher Curt Schilling and his wife, Shonda Schilling; former Red Sox players Dom DiMaggio and Jimmy Piersall; and Red Sox designated hitter David “Senor Octubre” Ortiz.

Proclamation 7872—Women’s History Month, 2005

March 2, 2005

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

During Women’s History Month, we celebrate the achievements of our Nation’s women. For generations, American women have helped build our great Nation through their leadership as writers, teachers, artists, politicians, doctors, and scientists, and in other professions. As mothers, daughters, and sisters, women have supported and strengthened American families and communities. Women are at the forefront of entrepreneurship in America, creating millions of new jobs and helping to build our Nation’s economic prosperity.

We celebrate those who have broken down barriers for women, such as Jacqueline Cochran, who was the founder and director of the Women’s Air Force Service Pilots during World War II and the first woman to break the sound barrier. Gerty Theresa Radnitz Cori was the first American woman to receive a Nobel Prize in the sciences, and her research significantly advanced the treatment of diabetes. In 1926, Olympic Gold Medalist Gertrude Ederle became the first woman to swim the English Channel. Marian Anderson, a Presidential Medal of Freedom recipient, opened doors in music as the first African American to perform with the New York Metropolitan Opera. Juliette Gordon Low encouraged community service and the physical, mental, and spiritual development of America’s young women as founder of the Girl Scouts of the United States of America. As we work to advance freedom and peace and fight the war on terror, American women