

Some of the historical documents contained in this curriculum guide reflect deep-seated and disturbing racial prejudices regarding African-Americans that were common among many white Americans in the early and middle years of the twentieth century. It is important to remember that these documents must be viewed in the context of their own time. While offensive to modern readers, they help us understand the intense opposition the Roosevelts and the Tuskegee Airmen faced over the issue of allowing black men to pilot military aircraft. FDR Presidential Library and Museum

October 14, 1944

My dear Mr. White:

I have read with much interest your letter to me of October 5, 1944 advising of the concern among Negro servicemen of the kind of life to which they will return after the war.

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I share with you the thought that in our administration of laws respecting benefits for our veterans there must be assurance of equality of opportunity without regard to race, creed, color, or national origin, and that the administration of the important Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 (the so-called "G. I. Bill of Rights") should be definitely at that level.

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I note your correspondence with General Frank T. Hines, Administrator of Veterans' Affairs, concerning your recommendation that there be included in the personnel of the Veterans Administration a qualified Negro as Assistant Administrator of Veterans' Affairs, in order that a representative of your race should serve the Veterans Administration and the United States as a policy-making and policy-executing executive.

Realizing the importance of this issue to your Association and to the colored race, I feel I can give every assurance that General Hines in his administration will see to it that there is no discrimination against any race, creed, or color and will not hesitate, should he find the circumstances warrant, to meet with you on this subject and to take that action which will recognize the splendid service being rendered our country by those of your race who are in its armed forces.

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Would it not be well in the further development of your thought in this regard and your interests, that you arrange to meet with General Hines in order that a full discussion may be had.

Very sincerely yours,

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

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x pp 7 1336  
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