

Veteran's Day Feature - American History is Black History -



More evidence where the focus and issues on race originated. Revealing the Lamb-like Beast of Revelation not in the future, from the beginning of our nation.

In 1925, the United States Army War College published a report considered by them to be the final word on the subject of the leadership and analytical abilities of African Americans. It was a cold so called academic document filled with racist pseudoscience, thought to be conclusive and absolute. The Negro, it stated, was of inferior mentality, possessed a weak character, and was fundamentally subservient. The report declared that black men lacked the intelligence for technical jobs, the courage for combat, and the leadership for command. It was in their minds, a settled fact, a biological certainty.

This document became the official justification for a segregated military; a wall of prejudice built on the foundation of another lie. (When have we heard or read that before? See last month's article concerning the Invention of Race.) So, you have to ask yourself a question. How in less than 20 years did the same military that produced this garbage science report find itself in a position where its white bomber crews facing the Hornets' nest of Nazi Germany's air defenses were desperately radioing their command, begging for one specific group of fighter pilots to protect them? How did a group of men branded as inferior become the most requested, most revered, and most effective bomber escorts in the entire 15th Air Force? The answer is a story of two wars fought at the same time. One was against the Messerschmitt and Focke-Wulf of the Luftwaffe in the skies over Europe. The other was against the crushing weight of racial prejudice in their own country.

"To win the first war, they had to be good. But to win the second, they had to be perfect." This is the story of how the German Luftwaffe learned to fear the pilots that they were programmed to dismiss. The story of the Tuskegee Airmen, the man who painted the tails of their planes crimson red, and in doing so rewrote

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history in a language of fire and steel. The journey to those blood red tales began not in a cockpit, but in a political firestorm. By the late 1930s, with war looming, civil rights leaders were hammering the Roosevelt administration with an undeniable hypocrisy. How could America claim to be a champion of democracy abroad while denying it to 13 million citizens at home? The pressure worked, but only just. In 1941, the War Department announced the formation of the 99th Pursuit Squadron, an all-black flying unit. But they didn't call it a new chapter in military history. They called it the Tuskegee Experiment; that word experiment is crucial. It was a test and one that many in power fully expected and even hoped would fail. They sent



the cadets to a segregated, hastily built airfield in Tuskegee, Alabama, under the command of white officers who largely shared the view of that 1925 report. The deck was stacked against them from day one. But the architects of this experiment made a catastrophic miscalculation.

They failed to understand that when you subject men to immense pressure, you don't always break them. Sometimes you create diamonds. The training at Tuskegee was brutal. A crucible designed to weed out any hint of imperfection. The cadets knew they weren't

just flying for themselves. They were flying for the future of an entire group of people just like them to have similar opportunities in the armed forces. A single failure could be used as an excuse to shut the whole thing down. So they pushed themselves beyond all reasonable limits. While white cadets in other programs flew about 200 hours to get their wings, the men at Tuskegee flew 300. The washout rate, the percentage of cadets who failed the program, was staggering at 60%, far higher than the 40% in white programs. Yet, it makes sense, if you make it more difficult to attain success, you can increase the rate of failure.

The instructors led by the base commander Colonel Noble Parish demanded a level of precision and discipline that was almost inhuman was creating a super select group, an undeniable rebuttal to the lies that had held down for so long. When the first graduate led by the brilliant captain Benjamin O Davis Jr finally shipped out to North Africa in April 1943, they weren't rookies. There were some of the most rigorously trained pilots in the world. Davis gave himself to be the living embodiment of their struggle. The son of America's first Black officer. He had endured four years of the silent treatment at West Point, where no white cadet would speak to him of official duties. He had endured the storm of institutional racism with unbreakable dignity, now to lead them into a war, where the enemy in front of them might be less hostile than the allies beside them. Arrival in Indonesia was a cold dose of reality, they were attached to the third fighter group commanded by Colonel William Norman Reed, a man who saw the experiment as a waste of time and resources. He didn't hide his contempt. He gave them secondhand worn-out, Warhawk fighters, tough rugged planes but, already obsolete and hopelessly outdated by the German measurement.



Initially they were assigned to the military equivalent of duty, coastal patrol routine sweeps over the Mediterranean milk runs far from the fighting. A deliberate strategy to sideline them to ensure they never had a chance to prove themselves, so he could write in his reports that the experiment failed. This pattern continued for weeks for the pilots of the 99th. Frustrating pointless missions, as they were being treated like children who couldn't be trusted with sharp knives but then on July 2, 1943, everything changed. Well five bombers against the German

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airfield in Sicily, Charles B Hall, against the Focke-Wulf's, diving on the bombers. The moment they had all been waiting for Hall broke formation and wrenched into tight getting inside the fighters path the trigger stream of 50 caliber trace across enemies fired burst and penetrate aircraft suddenly fell straight into the ground. He had done it, a black American pilot, flying an inferior plane had just shot down one of the elite German fighters. When he landed at the base news spread like wildfire.

The mechanics who received the same daily disrespect as the pilots erupted in celebration. They lifted onto their shoulders around the airfield. They had a real tangible victory that no one could take away from them, a single swastika was painted on the side of Warhawk. It was the first of 112 that would eventually be credited in the wall of prejudice. Victory wasn't enough, silence in fact was the response, it barely made a dent. Reed continued to file negative reports culminating in a devastating assessment sent up the chain of command, saying they lacked aggressiveness, that they were timid in combat, officially recommending they be removed from Frontline duty and reassigned coastal permanently. the report landed on the desk of General Henry Arnold Commander of the entire army air forces the threat was existential the Tuskegee program was being shut down for all the training all sacrifice Charles Hall victory all of it was about to be erased by the stroke of a pen based on the biased report of prejudice commander.



Just as the ax was about to fall, fate intervened in the form of a bloody storm in January 1944 desperately on the coastline throwing everything at them in massive relentless waves. It was a chaotic desperate fight for survival on January 27, 1944, the call went out for every fighter and the Ninety Ninth was scrambled. Tuskegee pilots in their obsolete P-40s flew into a sky swarming with superior German Focke-Wulf's. They were outnumbered and gunned according to reports. They should've run, but they didn't, they tore into the German formation with a ferocity that stunned everyone. Over two days of savage fighting above the beaches the men they had called timid shot down 12 German fighters. Lieutenant Charles Hall got two more bringing his personal total to three and shot down another. Pilot after pilot registered kills, within 48 hours they destroyed more enemy aircraft than their entire 15th Air Force the previous seven months of combat combined. The performance was so spectacular, so completely at odds with - Reed's previous - report that it couldn't be ignored and the war department was forced to investigate. A statistical study comparing the 99th record with other P-40 squadrons in the theater The conclusion was undeniable when you factored in their equipment and the types of missions they were

given the ninth was performing just as well if not better than their white counterparts the experiment was over, they proved they could fight. Now they were about to get the chance to prove they could do something even more important: protect.



In May 1944 a new chapter Combined with three other Tuskegee trained squadrons the 100, 303, 102nd 332nd fighter group were transferred to the Air Force in Italy. They were given a daunting mission long range bomber escort, this was the big league, their job was to fly hundreds of miles

into the heart of Nazi Germany, Sheppard's vast formation of 17 flying fortresses and B2 Liberator to their targets and back. It was one of the pilot's most dangerous and difficult jobs. Colonel Benjamin Davis gathered his men at their new base at Ramelli. He knew this was their ultimate test. He laid down a new doctrine and iron rule that would come to them. Our job is not to fight chasing enemy fighters for personal

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glory. Our job is to bring those bombers home. We will stick with the bombers no matter what. This was a radical idea. Most American fighter groups operated on a more aggressive doctrine, encouraging pilots to Rome and hunt to rack up kills. Davis demanded discipline over glory. He knew that the measure of their success wouldn't be the number of swastikas painted on their planes, but the number of bomber crews who made it home for dinner.

Around this time the 15th Air Force issued an order for all fighter groups to paint their aircraft with distinctive markings for easy identification in the chaos of battle. The 332nd was assigned the color red. They didn't just paint a little stripe on the wing. They went all in; the entire tail section of their brand-new P-51 Mustang was painted brilliant Crimson with their red tails, red propeller spinners, and red nose



brands. They became a flash of color in the cold European sky. The legend of red tails was born. At first, the white bomber crew didn't know who these new escorts were; they didn't know they were black, all they knew was that something was different. These red-tailed fighters didn't dart off chasing German planes at the first opportunity; they stayed close, weaving a protective shield around the vulnerable lumbering bombers.

They were like guardian angels. If a bomber was damaged and fell out of formation, becoming a duck, a pair of red tails would peel off and stick with it, fighting off attackers all the way home. The word began to spread like a gospel through the bomber bases in Italy. The crew started calling them the red tail Angels, briefing rooms buzzing with the question, "Who is our escort today?" If the answer was 332nd, a wave of relief would wash over the Room to the point where a bomber group would specifically request the red tails for the toughest missions. The men who had been deemed unfit for combat were the most sought after protectors in the sky, their discipline born from the harsh training at Tuskegee and forged by Colonel Davis's unwavering command was paying the ultimate dividend saving, American lives. They were losing fewer bombers to



enemy fighters than any other escort group in the 15th Air Force. The final numbers would be staggering on average; other P-51 groups lost 46 bombers. The red tails lost only 27 but their greatest test.

The mission that would cement their legacy in aviation history was yet to come by March 1945. The Nazi's were a shadow of it's former self, but Germany had one last terrifying card to play. The Messerschmitt 262, the world's first operational jet fighter, was a technological nightmare for Allied pilots with a top speed of over 540 mph. It was 100

mph faster than the P-51 Mustang. It was a silver shark that could appear, strike, and vanish before the pilot of the propeller-driven plane even knew what was happening. Almost every pilot who came against them during that moment, to fight seemed impossible. Then, March 24, 1945, the 332nd Fighter Group was given the most challenging assignment of its career escorting B 17 teams on a 1600-mile round-trip to Berlin to bomb the Daimler-Benz tank factory. It was the longest mission they had ever flown, taking them deep into the hornets' nest and intelligence warned them that the Target was being defended by Jawa7 and an elite unit equipped with the fearsome 262 jets.

Colonel Davis led the mission himself as the 43 Mustangs approached Berlin, a jet appeared, the largest formation of German jets ever assembled for a single battle. They sliced through the sky, their turbine

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engines screaming, but the red tails were ready. The Red Tail pilots had studied the ME 262 jet's weaknesses. It was faster, but it couldn't turn as sharply as the Mustang and acceleration was poor. Lieutenant Roscoe Brown remembered their strategy; we knew the German jets were faster. Instead of going directly after them, we went away from them and then turned into their blind spots. It was a brilliant tactical adjustment as a jet swooped in, Brown and his wing man turned toward it but away, forcing the



German pilot to overshoot. Then as the jet blasted past, they whipped their mustangs around, got on its tail, opened fire, pulled up at him, on a 15° climb then fired three long bursts.

Almost immediately the pilot bailed out, that same day Lieutenant Earl did the impossible hitting an ME 262 from over half a mile away with a miraculous deflection shot and Lieutenant Charles Brantley bagged the third. All in a single afternoon the red tails had shut down three of Hitler's super weapons, to put that in perspective, that

was more than most American fighter groups would destroy in the entire war. After this incredible achievement the 332nd fighter group was awarded the distinguished unit citation, one of the military's highest honors. They raised the future of aerial combat and defeated the mockery of them as pilots. If there ever was doubt of their abilities it had since turned to a grim and grudging respect. They reportedly had a name for them, Schwarzer Fogel, mentioned the Black Birdman. Yet, not every pilot's war ended in victory; 32 Tuskegee airmen were shut down and became prisoners of war. Their experience reveals the strange and bitter irony of the conflict. Lieutenant Alexander Jefferson's P 51 was hit by Luftwaffe over southern France in August 1944. When he was captured and taken for interrogation, he was shocked by what the German officer knew. The interrogator had information about Talley airfield, about our squadron, commanders, even details about my parents' home in Detroit, Jefferson recalled. He knew my father was a teacher and my mother's maiden name. Their intelligence was frighteningly thorough. The Germans knew exactly who he was, and where he came from, they knew all about the experiment.



Jefferson was sent to the third, the infamous prison camp featured in the movie, The Great Escape and it was there that the full absurdity of his situation hit him inside a Nazi POW camp. He found a level of integration he had never known in America: the white American POW, many of them bomber crewmen treated him as an equal. They would come up to him,

shake his hand and thank him for the red tail protection that kept them alive for so long. Here I was, Jefferson said, in a Nazi POW camp being treated more equally by white Americans than I would be back home. When the war ended, Jefferson was liberated, the first thing that happened when he stepped back onto American soil was that he was segregated from the white soldiers. He had fought and nearly died for his country. He had been honored as an equal by his comrades in a German prison, only to return home to the same demeaning prejudice he had left behind. He had won the war against fascism but the war against racism was far from over.

When the final accounting was done the numbers were a stunning reputation of every lie that had been told about them. More than 15,000 individuals, 178 combat missions, 112 enemy aircraft destroyed in the air. Another 150 destroyed on the ground, they even sunk a German destroyer with machine gun fire. There were 96 pilots that earned the distinguished Flying Cross and their bomber protection record was second to none. Their greatest victory wasn't measured by any statistics, but the change they forced upon a

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reluctant nation. Their performance provided irrefutable proof that the color of a pilot's skin had nothing to do with his ability to fly or fight. Their combat record was a powerful weapon used by civil rights activists. After the war, it was a major factor in President Harry Truman's decision in 1948 to sign Executive Order 9981, officially desegregating the United States Armed Forces.

The men, who began as an experiment, had become the architects of a revolution. Though the recognition came slowly, almost criminally in fact. After many decades, their story was largely forgotten by mainstream America. It wasn't until 2007 that the Tuskegee airmen were awarded the Congressional Gold Medal, the nation's highest civilian honor.



Unfortunately, by then, only 300 of the original pilots were still alive to receive it. But their legacy was already recorded. It was written in the contrails of their Mustangs over Berlin. It was written in the memories of the thousands of bomber crewmen they brought home safely. And it was written in the fabric of an American military

and an American society that they helped to change forever as Roscoe Brown the man who shot down a jet over Berlin we didn't just fight the Germans we fought ignorance prejudice and hatred and we won all three battles they were set up to fail expected fail and in the end they did the one thing their doubters never thought possible, they soared.

*This article is a compilation of various authors on YouTube. Articles that give a history of the continued maintenance of the system began in the 15th century. (See previous article). More evidence of where the focus and issues on race originated. Revealing the Lamb-like Beast of Revelation not in the future, from our nation's beginning.

God is seeking to reach every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. We know race as it is presented in the world is a human construct. God created only one race. Let's us seek to be part of people looking up when Jesus return that are from every nation, family, language, and people from around the world. It is important not to diminish, cover up, erase, nor steal the history of any nation, people, or culture. It is also important not to judge any group, culture, or people by a small group or one person. Rather than judging, may we all seek to heal connections as Jesus did in His interactions with the Samaritan woman at the well, found in the gospel of John chapter 4.