

Tuskegee Airmen, WWII Pilots Cited

OSHKOSH, Wis. (AP)— Hundreds of other black pilots flew combat missions in World War II because Harry Truman was willing to fight old prejudices.

Spencer, recalling his experiences among the blacks known during the war as Tuskegee Airmen, attended the Experimental Aircraft Association's 40th annual exposition where a special salute to the war's black pilots was planned this evening.

Truman was a senator from Missouri when he heard about the opposition facing blacks who tried to enlist in the Army Air Corps, Spencer said.

The future president urged Congress to appropriate \$3 million to train black pilots at Tuskegee Air Field in Alabama, he said.

Spencer said he flew to Washington, D.C., to campaign for blacks and accidentally ran across Truman in an underpass that connected federal buildings.

The senator later viewed Spencer's plane which he said had survived a crash during the trip to Washington. He recalled Truman saying: "If you've got the guts to fly this thing I'm looking at, I've got the guts to fight for you."

An estimated 996 blacks earned their wings at Tuskegee. They flew more than 15,000 sorties in P-39s, P-47s and P-51s, manning combat bomber escort missions from southern France to the Balkans.

Records show 66 were killed and 32 were captured by the enemy.

The EAA's seven-day convention

opened Friday and attracts thousands of aircraft and spectators from throughout the world. It established a Tuskegee Airmen exhibit at the show grounds near Oshkosh's Wittman Regional Airport.

The 332nd Fighter Group was credited with downing more than 250 enemy planes. German Luftwaffe pilots called its members Black Birdmen while grateful U.S. bomber crewmen dubbed them the Black Redtail Angels.

"I've met people to this date—

I'm speaking mostly of black Americans—who say to me: 'I didn't know they had blacks flying in World War II,'" Felix Kirkpatrick of Chicago, a retired brewery worker, said.

Kirkpatrick, 77, logged 70 missions escorting B-24 and B-17 bombers. He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and Air Medal with five clusters. He left the Air Corps as a major.

Prejudice followed the Tuskegee Airmen to Europe, Col. Charles McGee said.

"Segregation was strictly enforced," Kirkpatrick said.

After completing a mission, McGee said, he wasn't allowed to use the same rest camp as whites. He was harassed if he went into a pub, he said.

But the Tuskegee pilots' contributions helped convince the newly created Air Force in 1947 to integrate officially, a year before President Truman ended segregation in the military by executive order.

McGee later flew combat missions in Korea and Vietnam.

ABA Officials React To Quayle's Comments On Anita Hill Citation

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP)—An American Bar Association award to Anita Hill honored "a liberal heroine" whose allegations of sexual harassment have been discredited, Vice President Dan Quayle said.

"Most Americans...believed Clarence Thomas and not Anita Hill," Quayle said. "That doesn't matter to the ABA."

"To them, she is a heroine because she led the attack against a man who happened to be conservative and black—a combination that makes liberals fly into a rage," Quayle told the Christian Coalition of California, a group founded by Pat Robertson, on Tuesday.

ABA officials, reacting to Quayle's comments, said the award was not political but honored the University of Oklahoma

law professor's courage in bringing sexual harassment allegations against Clarence Thomas at his Supreme Court confirmation hearings last year.

The vice president has kept up a running battle with the ABA since he went before its convention a year ago in Atlanta and charged that too many lawyers and too many law students were burdening the American economy.

Quayle, in California on a three-day campaign swing, sought a return engagement at this week's ABA convention in San Francisco but was unable to agree with the lawyers on a time slot or ground rules for his speech.

So instead, Quayle fired his shot at the ABA from Sacramento.

The award was presented to Hill by the ABA's Commission on

Women in the Profession. Quayle aimed his criticism more broadly at the association and its leadership, taking a slap at outgoing ABA President Talbot D'Alemberte for his blunt criticism of the Bush administration's crime-fighting record.

"And who did they choose to present this award to the liberals' heroine for the 1990s? None other than her fellow lawyer, Mrs. Hillary Clinton," Quayle said to hisses from his 250 listeners.

Reacting to Quayle's allegations, Jamiene Studley, a San Francisco lawyer and member of the Commission on Women in the Profession, said the "award to Anita Hill was a recognition of courage not politics."



WALKING ON FIRE—Kenny Neal didn't just happen to play the blues. He grew up playing the blues with Slim Harpo, Lazy Lester and Buddy Guy. The difference a little tradition makes can be heard on Neal's "Walking On Fire," his third effort on Alligator Records.

Report Shows Disparity In Black-White Drivers

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (AP)—Black drivers were more likely to be convicted of a traffic offense in Florida last year than white drivers, according to a newspaper analysis of computer records.

While several black leaders said the statistics show a pattern of discrimination, police officials said tickets are handed out without regard to the driver's race.

Statewide, blacks make up 11.7 percent of the driving population but 15.1 percent of those convicted, the Sun-Sentinel of Fort Lauderdale reported Sunday.

Across Florida, black males received 1.74 tickets per person, compared to 1.51 tickets for white males, 1.41 for black females and 1.28 for white females.

The analysis of Florida's 1991 ticket convictions shows:

•Blacks received proportionately more ticket convictions than whites in 49 of the 67 counties.

•Palm Beach County had one of the worst records. Blacks made up 10.3 percent of the county's driving-age population, according to the 1990 U.S. Census shows, but represented 16.2 percent of the ticket convictions.

•The only counties in the state with bigger gaps were St. Lucie County, which surrounds Fort Pierce, and Flagler County in northeast Florida.

•Black drivers in Broward County fared only slightly better; 12.9 percent of driving-age residents were black, while 17.8 percent of those who got tickets were black.

"It is not surprising. Black people know that when they are driving in certain neighborhoods and in certain cars, they are pulled over," said Donald Bowen, president of the Urban League of Broward County.

"It is discouraging, but it is something blacks have been saying for years. We are not treated equally," said Les McDermott, a

Boca Raton-area black activist. Police say black drivers are not targeted.

"Everybody gets handled the same," said Capt. Larry Austin of the Florida Highway Patrol's Lantana office. "We don't look at color. We look at driving."

Blacks in 16 of Florida's most rural counties, mostly in North Florida, fared better than whites of driving age.

They fared best in North Florida's Jefferson County, population 11,296. Blacks made up 40.1 percent of residents old enough to drive but only 25.8 percent of the convictions. Whites comprised made up 59.3 percent of the driving age population and 72.1 percent of the convictions.

"These little places are where everybody knows everybody else and everybody respects the pecking order. So, because of that, blacks are not as big a threat to police," said McDermott, president of the south Palm Beach County National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Palm Beach County was third on the list of counties where blacks got proportionately more convictions than whites. Broward was 10th.

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