

Ronald Reagan Presidential Library Digital Library Collections

This is a PDF of a folder from our textual collections.

Collection: Bradley, Melvin: Files
Folder Title: [Proclamation - National Black (Afro-American) History Month, 1986]
Box: OA 14910

To see more digitized collections visit:
<https://reaganlibrary.gov/archives/digital-library>

To see all Ronald Reagan Presidential Library inventories visit:
<https://reaganlibrary.gov/document-collection>

Contact a reference archivist at: reagan.library@nara.gov

Citation Guidelines: <https://reaganlibrary.gov/citing>

National Archives Catalogue: <https://catalog.archives.gov/>



National Black (Afro-American) History Month, 1986

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Black history is a book rich with the American experience but with many pages yet unexplored. A chapter once beautiful and tragic was brilliantly illuminated this very year with the first celebration of the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., as a national holiday. This new holiday symbolizes the trail he blazed for others and the struggle of many Americans for full and unfettered recognition of the constitutional rights of all Americans, regardless of race or color.

Black history in the United States has been a proving ground for America's ideals. A great test of these ideals came with the Civil War and the elimination of slavery. Another test came a century later, in the struggle for practical recognition of the rights already won in principle—the abolition of legalized segregation and second-class citizenship.

The foremost purpose of Black History Month is to make all Americans aware of this struggle for freedom and equal opportunity. It is also a time to celebrate the many achievements of blacks in every field, from science and the arts to politics and religion. It not only offers black Americans an occasion to explore their heritage, but it also offers all Americans an occasion and opportunity to gain a fuller perspective of the contributions of black Americans to our Nation. The American experience and character can never be fully grasped until the knowledge of black history assumes its rightful place in our schools and our scholarship.

The Congress, by Senate Joint Resolution 74, has designated the month of February 1986 as "National Black (Afro-American) History Month" and has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this month.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim February 1986 as National Black (Afro-American) History Month. I invite the Governors of the several States, and our schools, colleges, universities, and libraries, the stewards of our national consciousness, and all Americans to observe this month with appropriate activities to heighten awareness of black history and to stimulate continuing inquiry into this rich vein of the American experience.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-fourth day of February, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and tenth.

Ronald Reagan