

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the resignation is accepted. There was no objection.

CONTINUATION OF NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 112-67)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed:

*To the Congress of the United States:*

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency with respect to the situation in or in relation to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the related measures blocking the property of certain persons contributing to the conflict in that country are to continue in effect beyond October 27, 2011.

The situation in or in relation to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which has been marked by widespread violence and atrocities that continue to threaten regional stability, continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the foreign policy of the United States. For this reason, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency to deal with that threat and the related measures blocking the property of certain persons contributing to the conflict in that country.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, October 25, 2011.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL TO THE MONTFORD POINT MARINES

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2447) to grant the congressional gold medal to the Montford Point Marines.

The Clerk read the title of the bill. The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2447

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

**SECTION 1. FINDINGS.**

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) On June 25, 1941, President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive Order No. 8802 establishing the Fair Employment Practices Commission and opening the doors for the very first African-Americans to enlist in the United States Marine Corps.

(2) The first Black Marine recruits were trained at Camp Montford Point, near the New River in Jacksonville, North Carolina.

(3) On August 26, 1942, Howard P. Perry of Charlotte, North Carolina, was the first Black private to set foot on Montford Point.

(4) During April 1943 the first African-American Marine Drill Instructors took over as the senior Drill Instructors of the eight platoons then in training; the 16th Platoon (Edgar R. Huff), 17th (Thomas Brokaw), 18th (Charles E. Allen), 19th (Gilbert H. Johnson), 20th (Arnold R. Bostic), 21st (Mortimer A. Cox), 22nd (Edgar R. Davis, Jr.), and 23rd (George A. Jackson).

(5) Black Marines of the 8th Ammunition Company and the 36th Depot Company landed on the island of Iwo Jima on D-Day, February 19, 1945.

(6) The largest number of Black Marines to serve in combat during World War II took part in the seizure of Okinawa in the Ryuku Islands with some 2,000 Black Marines seeing action during the campaign.

(7) On November 10, 1945, the first African-American Marine, Frederick C. Branch, was commissioned as a second lieutenant at the Marine Corps Base in Quantico, Virginia.

(8) Overall 19,168 Blacks served in the Marine Corps in World War II.

(9) An enterprising group of men, including original Montford Pointer Master Sergeant Brooks E. Gray, planned a reunion of the Men of Montford Point, and on September 15, 1965, approximately 400 Montford Point Marines gathered at the Adelphi Hotel in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to lay the foundation for the Montford Point Marine Association Inc., 16 years after the closure of Montford Point as a training facility for Black recruits.

(10) Organized as a non-military, nonprofit entity, the Montford Point Marine Association's main mission is to preserve the legacy of the first Black Marines.

(11) Today the Montford Point Marine Association has 36 chapters throughout the United States.

(12) Many of these first Black Marines stayed in the Marine Corps like Sergeant Major Edgar R. Huff.

(13) Sergeant Major Huff was one of the very first recruits aboard Montford Point.

(14) Sergeant Major Huff was also the first African-American Sergeant Major and the first African-American Marine to retire with 30 years of service which included combat in three major wars, World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War.

(15) During the Tet Offensive, Sergeant Major Huff was awarded the Bronze Star Medal with combat "V" for valor for saving the life of his radio operator.

(16) Another original Montford Pointer who saw extensive combat action in both the Korean War and the Vietnam War was Sergeant Major Louis Roundtree.

(17) Sergeant Major Roundtree was awarded the Silver Star Medal, four Bronze Star Medals, three Purple Hearts, and numerous other personal and unit awards for his service during these conflicts.

(18) On April 19, 1974, Montford Point was renamed Camp Johnson after legendary Montford Pointer Sergeant Major Gilbert "Hashmark" Johnson.

(19) The Montford Point Marine Association has several memorials in place to perpetuate the memory of the first African-American Marines and their accomplishments, including—

(A) the Montford Point Marine Association Edgar R. Huff Memorial Scholarship which is offered annually through the Marine Corps Scholarship Foundation;

(B) the Montford Point Museum located aboard Camp Johnson (Montford Point) in Jacksonville, North Carolina;

(C) the Brooks Elbert Gray, Jr. Consolidated Academic Instruction Facility named in honor of original Montford Pointer and the Montford Point Marine Corps Association founder Master Gunnery Sergeant Gray. This facility was dedicated on 15 April 2005 aboard Camp Johnson, North Carolina; and

(D) during July of 1997 Branch Hall, a building within the Officers Candidate School in Quantico, Virginia, was named in honor of Captain Frederick Branch.

**SEC. 2. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.**

(a) AWARD AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President pro tempore of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements for the award, on behalf of the Congress, of a single gold medal of appropriate design in honor of the Montford Point Marines, collectively, in recognition of their personal sacrifice and service to their country.

(b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For the purposes of the award referred to in subsection (a), the Secretary of the Treasury (hereafter in this Act referred to as the "Secretary") shall strike the gold medal with suitable emblems, devices, and inscriptions, to be determined by the Secretary.

**SEC. 3. DUPLICATE MEDALS.**

Under such regulations as the Secretary may prescribe, the Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in bronze of the gold medal struck under section 2, at a price sufficient to cover the costs of the medals, including labor, materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses.

**SEC. 4. NATIONAL MEDALS.**

Medals struck pursuant to this Act are National medals for purposes of chapter 51 of title 31, United States Code.

**SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS; PROCEEDS OF SALE.**

(a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be charged against the United States Mint Public Enterprise Fund, an amount not to exceed \$30,000 to pay for the cost of the medals authorized under section 2.

(b) PROCEEDS OF SALE.—Amounts received from the sale of duplicate bronze medals under section 3 shall be deposited in the United States Mint Public Enterprise Fund.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to add extraneous material on this bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This is very important legislation. I want to thank the gentlelady from Florida, Congresswoman CORRINE BROWN, for bringing this forward.

I want to say that the chairman of the Financial Services Committee and the ranking member, Mr. FRANK, saw the importance of this legislation and wanted to bring it to the floor as quickly as possible. Mr. BACHUS, who is chairman of the committee, has a son, Warren, who is now in the United States Marine Corps.

Mr. Speaker, I have the privilege to serve the Camp Lejeune Marine Base, which is in the Third District of North Carolina. In 1994, as a candidate for this office, I heard about the very special marines who trained at Montford Point, which is on the base at Camp Lejeune. I did not know the history at that time, but as we all know, during that period of time, we had segregation in this country, which was wrong. President Franklin Roosevelt made a decision and issued a directive that the Marine Corps would accept these fine Americans who wanted to be marines, so therefore they were segregated, but they were marines who gave their very best for our country.

OCTOBER 24, 2011.

Hon. SPENCER BACHUS,  
Chairman, Committee on Financial Services,  
Rayburn House Office Building, Wash-  
ington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN BACHUS: I am writing concerning H.R. 2447, to grant the congressional gold medal to the Montford Point Marines, which is scheduled for Floor action on Tuesday, October 25, 2011.

As you know, the Committee on Ways and Means maintains jurisdiction over matters that concern raising revenue. H.R. 2447 contains a provision that provides for the sale of duplicate medals, and thus falls within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Ways and Means.

However, as part of our ongoing understanding regarding commemorative coin and medal bills and in order to expedite this bill for floor consideration, the Committee will forgo action. This is being done with the understanding that it does not in any way prejudice the Committee with respect to the appointment of conferees or its jurisdictional prerogatives on this or similar legislation in the future.

I would appreciate your response to this letter, confirming this understanding with respect to H.R. 2447, and would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during Floor consideration.

Sincerely,

DAVE CAMP,  
Chairman.

OCTOBER 24, 2011.

Hon. DAVE CAMP,  
Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means,  
United States House of Representatives,  
Longworth House Office Building, Wash-  
ington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN CAMP: I am writing in response to your letter regarding H.R. 2447, a bill to grant the Congressional gold medal to the Montford Point Marines, which is scheduled for Floor consideration under suspension of the rules on October 25, 2011.

I wish to confirm our mutual understanding on this bill. As you know, the bill contains provisions governing the proceeds of the sale of the bronze medals, which concern raising revenue and accordingly fall under the jurisdiction of the Committee on Ways and Means. Further, I appreciate your willingness to forego action by the Committee on Ways and Means on H.R. 2447 in order to allow the bill to come to the Floor expeditiously. I agree that your decision to forego further action on this bill will not prejudice the Committee on Ways and Means with respect to its jurisdictional prerogatives on this or similar legislation. Therefore, I would support your request for conferees on those provisions within your jurisdiction should this bill be the subject of a House-Senate conference.

I will include this exchange of letters in the Congressional Record when this bill is considered by the House. Thank you again for your assistance and if you should need anything further, please do not hesitate to contact Natalie McGarry of my staff at 202-225-7502.

Sincerely,

SPENCER BACHUS,  
Chairman.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CLAY. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues in the House of Representatives to pass this bill honoring the first black marines. I am a proud cosponsor, along with 305 of my colleagues, of H.R. 2447, "to grant the Congressional Gold Medal to the Montford Point Marines."

In 1941, President Roosevelt issued a Presidential directive giving African Americans an opportunity to serve in the Marine Corps. These recruits, from all States, were not sent to Parris Island or San Diego. Instead, African American marines were segregated. They received recruit training at Montford Point, a facility on board Camp Lejeune, North Carolina.

Approximately 20,000 African American marines received basic training at Montford Point during World War II, and 75 percent served overseas. The initial intent of the Corps was to discharge these marines after the war and return them to civilian life. This would have left the Corps an all-white service. As World War II progressed, attitudes changed and reality took hold. Once given the chance to prove themselves, it became impossible to deny that these marines were just as capable as any other marine regardless of race, color, creed or national origin.

According to General James F. Amos, the commandant of the Marine Corps:

"Montford Point Marines served with distinction in three of the bloodiest battles in the Pacific—Saipan, Iwo Jima and Okinawa. The Montford Point Marines fought with such tenacity, valor and distinction that the commandant at the time was moved to declare, 'The Negro marines are no longer on trial. They are marines—period.' Their actions reflected the finest attributes of the 'leatherneck' fighting spirit and blazed the trail for generations of African Americans in the Marine Corps."

The special recognition that Congress has already afforded the first African American servicemen of the Navy, Army and Air Force is long overdue the Montford Point Marines. The distinguished record of these African Americans advanced the cause of civil rights and contributed to President Truman's decision to order the desegregation of the Armed Forces in 1948.

Mr. Speaker, the Montford Point Marines' service and sacrifice reflect great credit upon themselves and uphold the highest traditions of the Marine Corps, so I urge all of my colleagues to honor the Montford Point Marines by voting for this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JONES. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to what Mr. CLAY was saying, I want the House to know that the Montford Point Marines are revered by the citizens of Jacksonville and Camp Lejeune. Their history speaks for itself. They gave their blood and their lives in the South Pacific with their fellow marines as they fought for this country during World War II.

Again, I think that Congresswoman BROWN deserves so much credit in bringing this forward, as does the memory of Franklin Delano Roosevelt for seeing the value of creating this opportunity for Americans.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1250

Mr. CLAY. I yield 5 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from Florida and the original sponsor of this legislation, Ms. BROWN.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, as I begin my remarks, I would like to acknowledge that many of the Montford Point Marines are here visiting us today in the Capitol. This is a picture of the Montford Point Marines.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today on this great day for the Montford Point Marines. Today the House of Representatives will pass a resolution giving these marines their long-overdue recognition. I am pleased to join with so many of my colleagues, now 308, to support a resolution to grant the Montford Point Marines a Congressional Gold Medal, the highest civilian honor that can be bestowed for an outstanding deed or act of service to the security, prosperity, and national interest of the United States.

Since 1775, the United States Marine Corps has served our country in peace and war. Today the Marine Corps still serves the Nation as a force in readiness, prepared to serve whenever the Nation calls. It is befitting that as we celebrate on November 10 the 236th birthday of the Marine Corps, that we highlight and honor the Montford Point Marines.

On June 25, 1941, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt issued executive order 8802, opening the doors for the very first African Americans to enlist

in the United States Marines. From 1942 to 1949, 20,000 African Americans enlisted in the Marine Corps in a time of war when the military services were resistant to integration.

These African Americans, from all States, were not sent to the traditional boot camps in Parris Island, South Carolina and San Diego, California. Instead, African American Marines were segregated, experiencing basic training at Camp Montford Point near the New River in Jacksonville, North Carolina.

Years before Jackie Robinson and decades before Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King, Jr., these heroes joined the Marines to defend their country and do their job.

One specific marine is worth singling out. Gilbert "Hashmark" Johnson was one of the first African American marine drill instructors at Montford Point in 1943. He exemplified the work ethic and toughness that it took to be a Montford Point Marine.

Born in rural Alabama, Johnson attended Stillman College in 1922, but enlisted in the Army after 1 year at school. After 6 years in the Army, he tried civilian life for 4 years but enlisted in the Navy in 1933. When he heard about executive order 8802, he immediately requested transfer from the Navy to the Marines.

When this occurred, his nickname of Hashmark was secured, having more service stripes than rank stripes. After service as sergeant major at Montford Point, Hashmark went on to serve as sergeant major of the 52nd Defense Battalion in Guam. While serving in Guam with the battalion during World War II, he found black marines were being assigned to labor details rather than combat patrols, from which they were currently exempt. Once he got the commanding officer to reverse this decision, he personally led 25 separate excursions into the jungle.

Hashmark went on to serve in Korea and eventually retired in 1959 with 32 years of service, 17 with the Marines. After his death in 1972, the Marine Corps paid tribute to this great warrior and leader by naming the camp in his honor, Camp Gilbert H. Johnson. In July of 1948, President Harry S. Truman issued executive order 9981 ending segregation in the military; and in September of 1949, Montford Point Marine Camp was deactivated, ending 7 years of segregation.

General James F. Amos, commandant of the Marine Corps, has stated it is the responsibility of the Marine Corps and this Congress to honor these men who suffered through racism and segregation here in this country. I am honored to offer this resolution to recognize their service and sacrifice and acknowledge today the United States Marine Corps is an excellent opportunity for advancement for all races due to the service and example of these original Montford Point Marines.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. CLAY. I yield the gentlewoman 1 additional minute.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. I want to thank the many Members who helped to bring this resolution to the floor. Financial Services Chairman SPENCER BACHUS, whose son serves in the Marines, was especially helpful, and SANFORD BISHOP, ANDER CRENSHAW and ALLEN WEST, so many Members, over 308 sponsors and the leadership of both parties. This is an example of what we can do when we work together. I am just very excited about what we are doing here today.

I want to end by saying—and I'm not very good at this—oohrah, honoring these men of Montford Point.

This is, like I said, a great day and a wonderful bipartisan example of what we can do when we work together.

APRIL 5, 2011.

HON. CORRINE BROWN,  
*House of Representatives,*  
*Washington, DC.*

DEAR CONGRESSWOMAN BROWN: On behalf of the Marine Corps, I respectfully request your support of legislation to award the Congressional Gold Medal to the Montford Point Marines for their service during World War II.

At a time when the Services were resistant to integration, approximately 20,000 African-Americans enlisted in the Marine Corps, choosing to put their lives on the line in order to be accepted and recognized as fully fledged citizens by this great Nation. Subsequent to undergoing segregated basic training at Montford Point Camp, North Carolina, many of these Marines fought and died for their Country in the Pacific during World War II. Montford Point Marines served with distinction in three of the bloodiest battles in the Pacific—Saipan, Iwo Jima, and Okinawa. The Montford Point Marines fought with such tenacity, valor, and distinction that the Commandant at the time was moved to declare, "The Negro Marines are no longer on trial. They are Marines, period." Their actions reflected the finest attributes of the "leatherneck" fighting spirit and blazed the trail for generations of African-Americans in the Marine Corps.

We believe the service, sacrifice and patriotism of the Montford Point Marines is due the same special recognition that Congress has already afforded the first African-American servicemen of the Army, Navy, and Air Force. Like them, the Montford Point Marines enlisted in the military and defended a society that enjoyed freedoms they did not share. The combat service of these Americans advanced the cause of civil rights and contributed, in large measure, to President Truman's decision to order the desegregation of the Armed Forces in 1948.

Given their meritorious service and patriotism in a society that was slow to accept their value, the time is now to award the Congressional Gold Medal.

Very Respectfully,

JAMES F. AMOS,  
*General, U.S. Marine Corps,*  
*Commandant of the Marine Corps.*

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will remind all persons in the gallery that they are here as guests of the House and that any manifestation of approval or disapproval of proceedings is in violation of the rules of the House.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. PEARCE).

Mr. PEARCE. I am pleased to rise in support of H.R. 2447, introduced by the

gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. BROWN), which would right a wrong of the segregation era by awarding Congressional Gold Medals collectively to the so-called Montford Point Marines, our country's first black marine unit.

Earlier this month, the country honored the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., for his leadership in the civil rights movement.

In their own way, these African American men, 20,000 of whom trained in a segregated boot camp in North Carolina, fought for civil rights and equality even as they fought for peace and freedom in World War II. It was unfair for them to have to wage the first battle while waging the second to defend us all.

While it is interesting that these brave men were not even the first African American marines, at least a dozen served with honor, fighting alongside white marines during the Revolutionary War.

One, John Martin, a slave, was reportedly recruited without the knowledge or permission of his slave owner. But after the war ended, both the Marines and the Navy were disbanded. And when the Marines were reformed in 1798, the right to fight for their country in the Marines was taken from black Americans. Service by blacks was barred, supposedly based on British naval tradition.

Nearly 200,000 black Americans fought in the Union Army in the Civil War, and black soldiers served in the Army during the Spanish-American War and World War I, but the Navy at the time had a policy of not using blacks in combat roles, although plenty served in support roles.

In recognition of the heroism of the men who took their boot camp at Montford Point, we should immediately pass this legislation. Marine Commandant General James F. Amos has worked tirelessly urging Congress to recognize the Montford Point Marines with a Congressional Gold Medal, as it did a half decade ago in recognizing similar trail-blazing World War II military service by the Tuskegee Airmen and the Nisei soldiers.

Mr. Speaker, this bill has more than 300 cosponsors, of which I am one. The staggering number represents a fitting recognition of the bill's importance, and I urge its passage.

□ 1300

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I want to first thank my friend from New Mexico for his comments on the historic service of African Americans throughout our history.

At this time I would like to yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MILLER).

Mr. MILLER of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, we have honored the Army's Buffalo Soldiers and the Army's Tuskegee Airmen. It's time to give the Montford Point Marines the honor that is their due.

The Montford Point Marines fought an enemy abroad and injustice at home. They served with great valor and distinction and loved their country more than their country loved them at the time. President Roosevelt ordered in 1941 that the Marine Corps be opened to African Americans, but the Marines considered themselves the most elite branch of our military and the most traditional, and many resented Roosevelt's order that African Americans be accepted.

The first African American marines were hardly welcomed with open arms. Their segregated unit was stationed at Montford Point, North Carolina. They were near Camp Lejeune, but the Montford Point Marines could not enter Camp Lejeune except in the company of a white officer. They were passed over for years for promotions that white marines achieved in weeks. When they trained with white marines, which was rare, they waited until white marines had eaten before they went through the chow lines.

The Montford Point Marines were sent to the Pacific theater to serve behind the lines, not in combat for which they were presumed to be unsuited. No one told the Japanese. The Montford Point Marines served in Saipan, Iwo Jima and Okinawa, three of the bloodiest battles in the Pacific. They came under intense fire and showed great courage, winning the praise of skeptical white officers.

President Truman fully integrated the Armed Forces in 1948, and African American marines served side by side with white marines in Korea and in every conflict since then. The distinguished service of the Montford Point Marines largely made that possible.

General Amos, the commandant of the Marines, said he wants every marine, from private to general, to know the history of the marines who fought an enemy overseas, and racism and segregation in their own country.

I want every marine and every American to know that history. Semper Paratus.

Mr. JONES. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, at this time I would like to yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN).

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I thank the gentleman, and I'd like to thank the gentlelady from Florida for making this recognition and the gentleman from North Carolina for all of his leadership in the House on this issue and a variety of others; and I just rise here to say that I want to be in support of not only this resolution but the eventual awarding of the Congressional Gold Medal to the Montford Point Marines.

I think this is a great example of how we in America, sometimes it takes us too long, but we try to rectify these problems. I hope that this is an opportunity for us to recognize discrimination when it's happening anywhere else in the military or across our country, that we shouldn't have to wait to

honor these marines 70 years later because of their commitment that they made. They were dedicated to this country. They fought racism. They fought segregation. They fought humiliation, all to try to serve this great country. I think they really embody what the Marines stand for, the honor, the courage, and the commitment that is exactly what it takes to be a marine. So let us learn this lesson and also honor these gentlemen here today.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CLAY. At this time I would like to yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY).

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by thanking my colleague and very good friend, CORRINE BROWN, for her leadership on this, and also Chairman WALTER JONES and Ranking Member CLAY. I am a proud cosponsor, and I rise in strong support of this bill, and I am thrilled that the Montford Point Marines are with us in the gallery.

In 1941, President Roosevelt issued an executive order which opened the door for the first African Americans to enlist in the United States Marine Corps. Totalling approximately 20,000, these brave men faced segregated training at Montford Point, North Carolina, while white recruits were trained at Parris Island in South Carolina.

Among these distinguished marines was someone who later in life would become an outstanding mayor of the city of New York, my friend and now constituent, David Dinkins. David Dinkins, Mayor Dinkins, enlisted in the Marines in 1945 immediately after graduating from high school and served until the end of the war. He told me this story today about how thrilled he was about this gold medal. He said one day he went out and the drill sergeant announced: Everybody, get on your knees. Thank the Lord, the war is over. Now get up, nothing has changed.

Mayor Dinkins and the rest of the men in the Montford Point Marines served with distinction, regardless of the prejudice and segregation they faced, fighting in the Pacific arena during the Second World War in three of the bloodiest battles—Saipan, Iwo Jima, and Okinawa. They fought with bravery and valor, overcoming the resistance to integration within the services at that time and eventually earned high praise from the Marine Corps commandant.

The legacy of their service has endured beyond the battlefields of the Second World War, as they opened the door for generations of African Americans in the Marine Corps. These brave men advanced the cause of civil rights while simultaneously protecting the freedoms of our country. And for that we owe them a heartfelt deep thanks.

Congress has already recognized the first African American servicemembers of the Army, Navy, and Air Force; and this bill to award the same honor to the Montford Point Marines is well deserved, and I am so proud to be a cosponsor and to be supporting it.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded that the rules of the House prohibit the introduction of occupants of the gallery.

Mr. JONES. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, at this time I would like to yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS).

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. I want to thank the gentleman from Missouri for yielding me this time.

I also want to commend and congratulate Representative CORRINE BROWN for her introduction of this legislation and for the tremendous work that she did to get it to the floor this soon today, and I commend you for that.

I have an uncle who was at Okinawa, and of course he talked a great deal about his experiences. But I also remember being a young boy during Korea, and two or three of our older guys went and joined the Marines, and how proud they were to come home wearing their dress uniforms. All of the younger people were running kind of behind them, looking at them when they would come to church or dress up. I have a large Montford Point Marine Association in my congressional district that I visit quite frequently, especially Veterans Day and other times such as Memorial Day when we pay tribute to veterans.

So I simply come to say thanks to all of them who have helped to make America what it is and have helped to keep our country strong. I urge passage.

Mr. JONES. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CLAY. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, at this time I would like to first thank my good friend from North Carolina, Mr. JONES, for his leadership on this issue. I know that he represents Camp Lejeune, and he has certainly been a friend to the Marine Corps; and we are all indebted to him for that.

Mr. Speaker, the bill calls for the Treasury Secretary to strike a single gold medal of appropriate design in honor of the Montford Point Marines collectively in recognition of their personal sacrifice and service to their country.

The bill authorizes the Speaker of the House and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate to make arrangements for the award of the medal on behalf of the Congress and authorizes the Secretary of the Treasury to strike and sell duplicates in bronze at a price sufficient to cover overhead expenses. To me, this is the least we can do for a group of men who served a grateful Nation so well.

□ 1310

During April of 1943, the first African American Marine drill instructors took over as the senior drill instructors of

the eight platoons then in training. The 16th Platoon was headed by Edgar R. Huff; the 17th Platoon was headed by Thomas Brokaw; the 18th Platoon was headed by Charles E. Allen; and the 19th Platoon was headed by Gilbert H. Johnson, who was mentioned earlier.

Mr. Speaker, how much time is remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Missouri has 1 minute remaining, and the gentleman from North Carolina has 15½ minutes remaining.

Mr. JONES. I would advise my colleague that I have no further requests for time and will close on our side.

Mr. CLAY. At this time, Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI).

Ms. PELOSI. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I am pleased to join my colleague, Congresswoman CORRINE BROWN, who's been relentless in calling for this day. And to our colleague from Missouri (Mr. CLAY), thank you for your leadership on all of this as well; and to our colleagues on the other side, the ranking member on the Banking Committee, and Mr. PEARCE as well, who spoke about this.

We have come together in a bipartisan way for a very patriotic occasion for our country. What a thrill it will be when we can tell our constituents we were there to vote for this important resolution which will, as we all know, call for directing the Treasury Secretary to strike a single gold medal of appropriate design in honor of the Montford Point Marines. How exciting.

I know that many of those marines or their families are here on Capitol Hill today. We look forward to welcoming them to a ceremony where these medals will be bestowed. I only wish that all of the marines who served and were willing to sacrifice their lives for our country could be here—all of them the subject of the respect and honor that we pay. This is just another example of some of the inequality that existed in our country earlier on, and it's long overdue for us to redress some of that.

We've had occasion in the rotunda over the last few years to recognize the work of President Truman when he called for the desegregation of the military. Colin Powell—General, Secretary, National Security Adviser; he has many titles—was here with us that day. We've had occasion to honor our Tuskegee Airmen on another occasion. So it is long overdue to, again, take this step to recognize the important work that all Americans played in their most important responsibility—to protect and defend.

I will say this to all of the marines who approached me about this legislation outside the Congress. Every time they did, I said that CORRINE BROWN and LACY CLAY have already gotten to us. CORRINE was absolutely relentless

on this, and we're all here because of her leadership and the work of the members of our Congressional Black Caucus and the bipartisan support that we have. Of course, we wouldn't be on the floor without the leadership of our Speaker, who enabled this bill to come to the floor.

It's a proud day for the Congress. We look forward to an even prouder day when these medals will be bestowed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman from Missouri has expired.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, at this time I would yield 2 minutes to the gentlelady from Texas, Ms. SHEILA JACKSON LEE.

(Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. I want to thank the gentleman from North Carolina and the gentleman from Missouri for their courtesies.

This is an emotional time for all of us. As we pay tribute to the Montford Point Marines, we must pay tribute to Congresswoman CORRINE BROWN. We thank you, first of all, for restoring our faith in this country and showing us that we can work together as Members of Congress.

To be able to bestow the Congressional Gold Medal on the Montford Point Marines is something that we would want to be the first legislation of this week. It awards the gold medal to the first African American marines at Camp Montford Point in Jacksonville, North Carolina. Then, of course, it acknowledges their personal sacrifice and their service to the country.

My father-in-law was a Tuskegee Airman. It took so long to be able to honor them. And as we begin to build this country on a more solid ground, it is important to acknowledge the first African American to receive the Congressional Medal of Honor, Sergeant William Harvey Carney. He received it during the Civil War. Then, of course, at its inception, the Marine Corps refused to recruit African Americans from 1775 until 1942. But immediately after the racial restrictions were lifted, nearly 20,000 African Americans signed up to become marines and began their basic training at the segregated Camp Montford Point during World War II until 1949. Yet they were still faced with segregation and racism.

We all know that the Marines are the first in; and as the Marines are the first in, then others follow. They're well known for taking the bullet first, in many instances, as they work with other members of the United States military.

So today it is more than appropriate, Mr. Speaker, to be able to honor these fine heroic individuals. I salute them. I thank God that we have the opportunity to honor them at this time. It is great that America can unite together and go forward under a unity of understanding the dignity of all people.

Thank you, Montford Point Marines. It is an honor to support the Congressional Gold Medal being awarded to them.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2447, "To Grant the Congressional Gold Medal to the Montford Point Marines," which awards the Congressional Gold Medal to the first African American Marines at Camp Montford Point in Jacksonville, North Carolina, in recognition of their personal sacrifice and service to their country.

African Americans have a long and proud history of serving in the U.S. Armed Forces. Since the founding of our fine nation, African Americans have fought to protect our nation. The first African American to receive the Congressional Medal of Honor was Sergeant William Harvey Carney. He achieved this honor for his heroism during the Civil War. Although Sergeant Carney received our nation's highest military honor he would not have been allowed to join the Marines. The measure before us today honors the African American tradition of service and recognizes how far we have come as a society.

From its inception in 1775 until 1942, the Marine Corps refused to recruit African Americans. On June 25, 1941, against heated objections from the Marine Corps leadership, President Roosevelt issued Executive Order No. 8802 to establish fair employment practices which ended racial discrimination in the military. President Roosevelt recognized the need for social change in the armed services. African Americans, who were long denied access to the Marines, now had the opportunity to become Marines.

Immediately after the racial restrictions were lifted, nearly 20,000 African Americans signed up to become Marines and began their basic training at the segregated Camp Montford Point during World War II until 1949. Yet, African American Marines still faced the challenges of segregation and racism.

Railroad tracks divided White Marines at Camp Lejeune from Camp Montford Point. African American Marines could only enter Camp Lejeune if accompanied by a White Marine. Even under these conditions African Americans persevered, completed training and fought to protect our country.

By 1945 all drill instructors and officers at Montford Point were African Americans. In the same year, Frederick Branch became the first African American Marine to be commissioned as a second lieutenant.

Marines from Montford Point landed at Iwo Jima on D-Day, and engaged in combat in Okinawa. The largest number of African-American Marines to serve in combat during World War II took part in the seizure of Okinawa in the Ryuku Islands with some 2,000 African-American Marines seeing action during the campaign. Overall, 19,168 African-Americans served in the Marine Corps in World War II.

In 1949 Camp Montford Point was deactivated and new African American recruits were sent to Paris Island in South Carolina and Camp Pendleton in California. In less than five years, the African American men who served at Camp Montford Point forever changed U.S. history.

We should all celebrate the legacy these heroes have given us. We celebrate this legacy with pride and are optimistic that our children and their grandchildren will forever remember those who have made this country

what it is today. The combat services of the Montford Point Marines certainly advanced the cause of civil rights. These African American men fought fiercely and with honor. Their actions in combat had a strong impact on President Truman's decision to order the desegregation of the Armed Forces in 1948.

We have a duty to recognize Americans who have endured tremendous odds. Let these Marines remind us of a yesterday of segregation and inequality.

Also, let them remind us that, as Americans, we are one in service and patriotism to our great nation. I stand with my colleagues in support of this recognition of the history of such a prestigious group of men—the first African American Marines of Montford Point.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BISHOP).

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I come to the House floor today to pay tribute to a remarkable group of African American trailblazers and patriotic servicemen, the Montford Point Marines.

These distinguished veterans did not just defend our Nation in a time of war; but through their courageous acts, they helped to spearhead a movement where the goals of achieving equal opportunity and respect for universal human rights are now more intricately woven into our society.

In 1942 President Roosevelt established a Presidential directive allowing African Americans to be recruited into the United States Marine Corps. These African American recruits were trained at a segregated compound known as Montford Point, a facility at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. Over 20,000 African Americans bravely served in the Marine Corps during World War II. They selflessly and voluntarily put themselves in harm's way to defend our homeland and to safeguard these freedoms.

This past summer, Mr. Speaker, I had the honor of attending the reburial ceremony of Montford Point Marine Private James Benjamin. Private Benjamin's remains and surviving family members were escorted by the Patriot Guard Riders and members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars from the West Mortuary in Montezuma, Georgia; and he was laid to rest with full military honors at the Andersonville National Cemetery this past Memorial Day weekend.

□ 1320

He was disinterred from a segregated cemetery because at the time of his service he could not be buried where white servicemen were buried.

When it comes to recounting our Nation's history and looking back at the trials and tribulations that were endured by the Montford Point Marines, I doubt there is a generation or group of World War II veterans who had it tougher than they did. People sometimes forget that they were fighting two wars, both foreign and domestic.

But I would like to commend the spirit of these brave men because they

guide me in my duties to maintain our government's commitment to our fighting troops and for helping the troops who protect our freedoms at this time. Not only does that mean that we have to, today, maintain adequate salary and benefit levels for the military, but we've got to keep our promise to our veterans, our armed services retirees, and their families.

Mr. Speaker, I want to commend my colleague, CORRINE BROWN, who has championed this issue and brought the story of the Montford Point Marines to the attention of our entire Nation. I commend the Commandant and Marine Corps for their efforts in making sure that our Nation doesn't forget.

I urge my colleagues, therefore, to support H.R. 2447 and to honor the first black Marines with the recognition that they deserve and that they have patiently been waiting for.

Mr. Speaker, following is my statement in its entirety:

Mr. Speaker, I come to the House Floor today to pay tribute to a remarkable group of African-American trailblazers and patriotic servicemen—the Montford Point Marines. These distinguished veterans did not just defend our nation in a time of war; through their courageous acts they helped to spearhead a movement where the goals of achieving equal opportunity and respect for universal human rights are now more intricately woven into our society.

In 1942, President Franklin Roosevelt established a presidential directive allowing African-Americans to be recruited in the United States Marine Corps. These African-American recruits were trained at a segregated compound known as Montford Point, a facility at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina.

Approximately 20,000 African-Americans bravely served in the Marines Corps during World War II. These men selflessly and voluntarily put themselves in harm's way to defend our homeland and safeguard our freedoms.

This past summer, I had the honor of attending the reburial ceremony of Montford Point Marine PVT James Benjamin. PVT Benjamin's remains and surviving family members were escorted by the Patriot Guard Riders and members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars from the West Mortuary in Montezuma, Georgia, and he was laid to rest with full military honors at the Andersonville National Cemetery this past Memorial Day Weekend.

When it comes to recounting our nation's history and looking back at the trial and tribulations that were endured by the Montford Point Marines, I doubt there is a generation or group of World War II veterans who had it tougher than them. People sometimes forget that these Marines were fighting two wars, one foreign and one domestic. Hitler, Mussolini and the Japanese Empire were not the only foes that the Montford Point Marines had to encounter. Every day they went into battle against Jim Crow, bigotry and racism here at home.

During World War II, there were some German and Italian prisoners of war that were treated better than the black soldiers serving in our Armed Services. Some American establishments that refused to serve blacks serving in the military would allow imprisoned German and Italian soldiers to patronize their facilities.

Not many people would have had the will to overcome such disparate treatment. But instead of harboring bitterness or vengeance, this group stood tall and remained above the fray.

The Montford Point Marines have demonstrated that patriotic service means more than just saying you love this country and the promise it offers. Their resilience and resolve show that true patriots are those individuals who prioritize the needs of their country ahead of their own, even if they do so at their own peril.

These Marines gave our nation a gift that extends beyond their heroic war service. In being the best of the very best, both on and off the battlefield, they helped to change perspectives and broaden peoples' horizons. They showed the entire world that when given an opportunity, people can meet any challenge and achieve any goal.

As a Member of Congress, I rely on the spirit of these brave men to guide me in my duties to maintain our Federal Government's commitment to our fighting troops and those who preceded them. That means not only maintaining adequate salary and benefit levels for our nation's military, but keeping our promise to our veterans, Armed Services retirees and military families.

Mr. Speaker, I want to commend my colleague, CORRINE BROWN, who has championed this issue and brought the story of the Montford Point Marines to the attention of the entire nation.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 2447 and to honor the first black Marines with the recognition they deserve and have patiently been waiting for.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, I think this has been a great debate. I want to thank Congresswoman BROWN for bringing H.R. 2447 to the floor. I think, any time, that the House of Representatives can debate and soothe the pains of yesterday with the glory of today by honoring these Marines who served at Montford Point.

So, Mr. Speaker, it is long overdue that we honor these Marines for their courageous service to our country. These men are a very important part of our country's history, and I hope that each and every one of our colleagues in the House today will join Ms. BROWN in saluting these great marines.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to join my colleagues in support of H.R. 2447. Nearly 70 years after the Marine Corps became the last military branch to accept blacks under orders from President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1941, Congress will vote today on whether to grant the Montford Point Marines the Congressional Gold Medal, the nation's highest civilian honor. I would like to commend my colleague, Congresswoman CORRINE BROWN, for her leadership in sponsoring this important and historical legislation and shepherding the bill to the House floor.

"Loyalty and Service" to our nation despite prejudice and discrimination is one of the mantras used to describe the first African-Americans to serve in the United States Marines. These black marines were segregated during their basic training at Montford Point Camp between 1942–1949.

Overall, 19,168 African-Americans served in the Marine Corps in World War II and helped pave the way for the future of African-Americans in the Marine Corps. Although we have come a long way, we cannot be satisfied and neither is the Marine Commandant. Today, of the 22,155 African American who currently serve in the Marine Corps, there are only about 1,326 officers. The Marine Corps has 88 generals today, but only six are black.

I applaud the efforts of advocates who have committed to increasing the number of African-American officers in the Marine Corps and am a staunch supporter of this legislation. African-Americans continue a legacy of service in the Marine Corps and increasing the number of black officers is long overdue.

But today, we honor those African-Americans who were the first to serve and all who have served and are currently serving. Most of the 19,000 Montford Point Marines have died, but today we join the movement to honor their legacy by bestowing them with the highest military decoration awarded by the U.S. government. This is long overdue and I urge passage of this historical legislation.

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to voice my strong support for H.R. 2447, to grant the Congressional Gold Medal to the Montford Point Marines.

I want to thank my colleague from Florida, Ms. BROWN, for sponsoring this bill and recognizing the efforts of true heroes who were willing to make the ultimate sacrifice for this great nation.

In 1942, President Franklin Roosevelt established a presidential directive allowing African Americans to be recruited by the Marine Corps.

These men were not trained at Parris Island or San Diego, but instead were segregated to Montford Point, near Camp Lejeune, NC.

Between 1942 and 1949, approximately 20,000 men received their basic training at Montford Point.

The original intent of the directive was to discharge all of these men after the conclusion of World War II. But after being able to display their commitment and courage, it became obvious that these African American Marines were just as capable as all other Marines regardless of race, color, and creed.

And to this day, hundreds of thousands of minorities make these same commitment and sacrifices for our country in our military's efforts across the world.

At a time when African Americans suffered countless instances of prejudice and injustice—not only by their peers, but by the laws they abided by—these men were willing to put their commitment to country above all else and become trailblazers for all those who followed their lead.

I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of H.R. 2447 which will award the Congressional Gold Medal in appreciation for these Marines' sacrifice and dedication to our country.

It will, moreover, reassert the fundamental principle that our country was founded on—that all men are created equal.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, today we gather to honor the sacrifice and patriotism of the Montford Point Marines with Congress's highest civilian award, the Congressional Gold Medal.

The Montford Point Marines were this Nation's first class of African-American Marine recruits. As was often the case during the Jim

Crow Era, being the first African-Americans to break the color barriers resulted in a whole new set of hardships. Montford Point Marines suffered from the start. Not only were they not allowed to train at Camp Lejeune with their white colleagues, the Commandant, the Marine's highest ranking officer said publicly that if he had to choose between 250,000 African-American Marines and 5,000 whites, he would rather have the whites.

Training along the North Carolina coast, they endured inferior conditions and trained with inferior equipment dodging snakes and malaria-infected mosquitoes in summer and risking exposure from the bitter cold in winter as they passed the nights in huts made of cardboard.

Fueled by a fierce determination to answer the call to arms in their Nation's hour of need, the Montford Point Marines endured these hardships and joined the fight in Okinawa, where their courage and bravery were celebrated. When the war ended, they returned home to silence, abuse and indifference and were soon forgotten. That is, until today.

As a cosponsor of this bill, I am proud to stand with my colleagues to recognize the Montford Point Marines for their courage and sacrifice with the Congressional Gold Medal.

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise in support of H.R. 2447, introduced by the gentle lady from Florida, CORRINE BROWN, to award a collective Congressional Gold Medal to the Montford Point Marines for their patriotic service during World War II and their important role in promoting the cause of equal rights in our country.

Like the Tuskegee Airmen from my native Alabama, the Montford Point Marines fought for the principles of our democracy overseas at a time when prejudice and segregation prevented them from enjoying all of our country's freedoms here at home.

Recently, our nation has paused to remember two giants in the civil rights movement. Here in Washington, the new memorial to Dr. Martin Luther King was dedicated on the National Mall. Over the past few days in Birmingham, thousands of people from all races have united to pay tribute to the Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth, who passed away on October 5th at the age of 89.

In the face of prejudice, hostility, and physical attack, individuals like Dr. King, Reverend Shuttlesworth, and our own cherished colleague JOHN LEWIS always held to the highest ideals and did not allow the hate they experienced to diminish their love for their country.

Behind the prominent leaders of the civil rights movement, as they themselves would tell you, have been many courageous foot soldiers with the same ideals. The phrase "foot soldiers" is literally true when it comes to the Montford Point Marines.

These men, our first African American Marines, willingly stepped forward during World War II to risk their lives to preserve freedoms that they themselves were being denied. All too often, they encountered vicious racial discrimination that was as painful in its own way as any bulletfire. This could have ripped the morale of our service apart and helped the enemy.

Instead, the soldiers who endured the harsh conditions at Montford Point and racial indignities in the field of battle—more than 20,000 in all from 1942–1949—served with the highest level of honor and loyalty. They fought

fiercely in Okinawa and Iwo Jima. They cleaned up ash after the atomic bombing of Nagasaki.

The Montford Point Marines were never properly recognized for their bravery and heroism—not during the war and certainly not at the end, when they were essentially dismissed and officially all but forgotten.

But their colorblind service raised a profound contradiction: after fighting for freedom abroad, how could any American be denied full rights here at home? We all know the answer, you could not continue to deny those rights.

In the beginning, the Montford Point Marines set out only to serve their country during a time of war. With their valor, they helped to change military history. They wound up changing the social history of America as well.

Today, we are belatedly telling these heroes, "Thank You." Marine Commandant James F. Amos should be commended for his determination to make sure that these veterans are properly remembered not just by the Corps but by a grateful nation as well.

As the proud father of a son who served in the Marines, it is a personal honor for me to be able to speak in support of a Congressional Gold Medal for the Montford Point Marines, and I urge the immediate passage of this long-overdue legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2447.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

#### NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME COMMEMORATIVE COIN ACT

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2527) to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in recognition and celebration of the National Baseball Hall of Fame, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2527

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "National Baseball Hall of Fame Commemorative Coin Act".

#### SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds the following:

(1) On June 12, 1939, the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum opened in Cooperstown, New York. Ty Cobb, Walter Johnson, Christy Mathewson, Babe Ruth, and Honus Wagner comprised the inaugural class of inductees. This class set the standard for all future inductees. Since 1939, just one percent of all Major League Baseball players have earned induction into the National Baseball Hall of Fame.