TOM PUTNAM: –make a couple quick announcements before we get started. First, as you can tell from your program, we're going to try to cover a lot of material in a very short amount of time. So we're going to do written questions from the audience. So there will be someone going around with index cards. So feel free to write your questions down and we'll bring those up to the moderators.

We're not going to actually do official introductions of the speakers, but you should have received short biographical information about all of our speakers.

On the first panel, C-SPAN is broadcasting this program, but the film clip that I'm going to show all of you about Marian Anderson can't be rebroadcast on C-SPAN. So I'm actually going to pretend like I'm not going to show you so the C-SPAN viewers don't feel like they're missing out on anything. I'll thank Allida Black. We'll all applaud. And then I'll show you the film clip [laughter] they don't get to see.

Between those first two panels – the FDR and then Truman and Eisenhower – it's a very short break; we'll bring up a couple of chairs. But it's not a real, complete break. Feel free to use the restrooms if you need to, but we won't all take a break at that moment. And I think we'll be fine, but the bathrooms are here on this floor. There's also a couple of new bathrooms over here. And if there was an especially long line, there are bathrooms in our Museum that you can use during the breaks.

And we'll try as best we can to keep on schedule. And when we come back, especially for the very last panel, we'll have videotaped remarks from Presidents Carter and Clinton. So you may want to especially come back around 4:00 to be sure that you don't miss those videotaped remarks.

So we'll start in just a moment. We're just putting microphones on a few of the speakers, and then we'll begin.

DAVID FERRIERO: Good afternoon. I'm David Ferriero, the Archivist of the United States, and it's a pleasure to welcome you this afternoon to this conference on The Presidency and Civil Rights.

As you know, the National Archives is charged with preserving and providing access to our nation's most important documents. The record we safeguard are part of the backbone of our democracy, important pieces of the story of the American journey. They contain accounts of heroism and tragedy, moments of pride and moments of shame, of sacrifices that men and women have made to defend our country, and to extend basic human rights to all of our citizens.

This Library and 12 others like it around the country contain the records of the Presidents, dating back to 1929, when Herbert Hoover lived in the White House. They're part of the National Archives' vast holdings that tell the story of America.

Our holdings also include the Charters of Freedom – the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution and the Bill of Rights – which are located in the rotunda of our main building in Washington. But we also have 12 billion more pages of documents, not to mention millions of photographs, maps, charts, and billions of electronic records and artifacts that are part of the National Archives.

Now, you don't have to read and study many of them to realize that the story of America is a story of people struggling to achieve the rights promised in the Charters of Freedom, or protesting because they have been denied those rights. It is, of course, the Constitution and its Amendments that Presidents have used to underpin major actions, and upon which the United States Supreme Court has based so many landmark decisions involving civil and human rights.

The list is daunting: Franklin Roosevelt outlawed discrimination by wartime defense contractors through the Fair Employment Practices Committee. Harry Truman ordered an end to segregation

in the Armed Forces during the historic election year of 1948. Dwight Eisenhower sent Army troops to Central High in Little Rock so African American students could enroll. John Kennedy put the power of the federal government behind the effort to integrate the University of Alabama. Lyndon Johnson pushed Congress relentlessly to enact the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

This city has played a pivotal role in these struggles as the cradle of our democracy at our nation's founding, as one of the centers of the abolitionist movement, and more recently at the heart of the debate over how best to desegregate its public schools to comply with the historic 1954 Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. the Topeka Board of Education*.

These struggles for civil rights have not always been easy. When they occur, they often revolve around the Constitution, where the rights that define us as a nation have always been secured. The first ten Amendments of the Constitution are known as the Bill of Rights. They spell out the personal rights and freedoms that are guaranteed to every American, including freedom of speech, religion and the press; the right to petition the government; the right to bear arms; and the right to due process of law.

Most of the later Amendments sought to explicitly extend rights granted in the Constitution itself to individuals who had been excluded from full participation in our democracy when the Constitution was adopted in 1787. Three post-Civil War amendments abolished slavery, make former slaves US citizens, and grant them the right to vote. The 19th Amendment grants women the right to vote, and another grants access to the ballot by 18-year-olds.

We may view these founding documents as timeless, but the government they envisioned and that we inherited was not inevitable. It required the devotion of citizens like you and me, a national respect for the rule of law, and the wise exercise of power by our elected leaders who are held accountable by we, the people.

As I mentioned before, the holdings of the National Archives chronicle our nation's efforts to live out the ideals expressed in the Charters of Freedom, the document President Abraham Lincoln's wartime proclamation that emancipated the slaves to the signing, a century later, of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 that sought to end legalized segregation.

Many of our documents are housed throughout the country – in this building, in one of our regional archives in Waltham and in 42 libraries and regional archives around the country.

Understanding the stories surrounding the actions by our President helps us give context to Martin Luther King's observation that the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice. It bends not on its own, Dr. King said, but because each of us in our own way puts our hand on that arc and we bend it in the direction of a more just world.

I'm proud that the Kennedy Library is hosting today's conference, and recognize and thank all of those who have put together this terrific program. I'm not allowed to say this in public, especially in the presence of my friends from the FDR Library, but this is – having grown up in Beverly, Massachusetts – this is my favorite Presidential Library. [laughter/applause]

I cannot think of a better day or a better place to mark Presidents Day. I also want to personally thank all of our speakers, many of whom have traveled far, including one from South Africa, to be with us here for these proceedings. And a special welcome to those who are watching us around the world on C-SPAN.

I'm especially pleased to see so many young people and students in the audience today. Those of us who lived through the Kennedy Presidency now prepare to pass the torch again to a new generation of Americans, knowing that the fate of our country and the rights we hold so dear will lie in your hands.

In considering our future, I'm reminded of the famous words President Kennedy used in his inaugural address. He not only challenged us to ask what we can do for our country, he also observed that this election signified that the torch had been passed, and I quote, to a new generation of Americans who are unwilling to witness or permit the slow undoing of those human rights to which this nation has always been committed, and to which we are committed today at home and around the world.

It's now my great honor to introduce the man who will officially open our proceedings, the 41st President of the United States, George Herbert Walker Bush. [applause]

GEORGE HERBERT WALKER BUSH: [via video] Let me start by saluting our friends at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum for launching their JFK50: Justice for All program. I'm particularly happy to single out Caroline Kennedy and Tom Putnam, as well as Bingham McCutchen and Jay Zimmerman for making this program a reality.

Your topic strikes a real chord with me. As a young Congressman from Texas, I well remember the open housing vote back in 1968. I voted with those who were fighting to give Americans of all races and creeds the chance to buy a good home in a good neighborhood. Later, as President, we got the Americans with Disabilities Act passed, to make sure that tens of millions with disabilities had fuller access to the American dream.

Of course, these two instances are only part of the broader struggle for civil rights. Here at this forum, and in other programs, you can learn how and why so many Americans across this great land came together for a noble cause.

Basic human dignity, equal opportunity under the law, recognizing our diversity as a strength and a blessing – these are the values that define more than a movement, but a nation realizing its destiny, our potential for greatness.

Barbara joins me in sending our best wishes for an informative and enjoyable event.
[applause]

PANEL 1: FRANKLIN AND ELEANOR ROOSEVELT

TOM PUTNAM: So good afternoon, everyone, and thank you all so much for coming. On behalf of my colleague, Tom McNaught, Executive Director of the Kennedy Library Foundation, I want to especially thank the Archivist of the United States for being here and opening our proceedings. I also want to thank the law firm of Bingham McCutchen, who are the underwriters of a special initiative called JFK50: Justice for All. And they've helped to sponsor today's conference.

I'd also like to thank our media sponsors, WBUR and *The Boston Globe*.

Now, we could have a whole hour-and-a-half, a whole conference on Franklin Roosevelt and civil rights. And you'll see from your schedule that we only have about 20 minutes to do that. And I was suggesting to Allida, who is an expert on both Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt, that their courtship lasted about two years, and trying to cover this topic in 20 minutes is a bit like the modern phenomenon of speed dating. [laughter] So we'll do our best to cover this topic. Fortunately, Allida is not only a wonderful storyteller, but she's a very fast talker also. [laughter]

So Allida, there's a debate among historians, really, about Franklin Roosevelt and civil rights. When he became President, he faced a country that was not only facing depression, but was a segregated nation. And like President Kennedy and others, he faced conservative leaders in Congress and within his own party. And so, as he was trying to put forth legislation, if he moved too quickly on integration, in terms of some of that legislation, that could have held back some of his other legislative accomplishments.

So give us the quick gloss of Franklin Roosevelt and civil rights.

ALLIDA BLACK: This is like doing my whole life in 15 seconds, just so you know. [laughter] Well, I think, first of all, we have to remember that the Democratic Party was profoundly Southern and a Western party. And so, when Roosevelt comes into office, he has not yet realigned the party to become the party that we all know today. So it's quite interesting to me that some of the things that immediately happened with the staff that he picks. I mean, you immediately integrate. And I use that word deliberately; you abolish segregation in federal cafeterias in the Interior Department and in other places, when in fact DC was a profoundly segregated city, and was segregated by a Democrat, Woodrow Wilson.

So his appointments, I think, are quite interesting in that way. You've got Harold Ickes. You've got Harry Hopkins. You've got Aubrey Williams. And of course, you have the incomparable Mary McLeod Bethune, who before September 11th I used to lump with Eleanor Roosevelt and say they were the Twin Towers of the pre-War civil rights movement. So there's a huge risk-taking mindset there.

Now, does that mean that it goes as far as we want? No. But I have been all over the map on this, and I have come to a very Eleanor-like conclusion. And that is, you can look at a glass and you can see it half-empty or you can see the water keep increasing. And what I think both Roosevelts did was really introduce to America the concept that the federal government was not just for the forgotten man, or the forgotten woman, but, as FDR said when he spoke at Howard, not only will there be no forgotten man, there will be no forgotten races.

So we have policies. We have the two executive orders that FDR issues. One for the WPA, the Works Progress Administration that outlaws segregation in WPA hiring practices. And then you have the Fair Employment Practices Commission doing that for the defense industry. Now, do they work? No. Do they help some people? Yes. Is there a long way that we have to go? Yes. Do we still have to do it now? Yes.

But when you look at this, I want you to remember that they were the first executive orders passed, or any type of federal legislation since Reconstruction. Which I think says a lot.

Also, if you look at the risks that they took in terms of setting up the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department, and although I'm supposed to talk about FDR and my colleagues at the Four Freedoms Project will expect me and pardon me, as will the FDR Library people, to say that you cannot talk about FDR and race without talking about Eleanor. And Eleanor traveled without Secret Service protection. There are assassination attempts on her life – not threats, attempts – as First Lady. The Ku Klux Klan places the largest bounty in history on her head. They firebomb trees next to Revolutionary-era churches that she spoke in, in North Carolina, in 1937, 1938, when she's talking about the poll tax. She joined Pauli Murray in chairing the national commission to abolish the poll tax. And so, there were profound risks that were taken.

And if I may sort of goad friendly, with great respect, my colleagues who write on this, for once, just for once, please, as a favor to me, when you write about FDR and you write about race, will you please say that people were trying to kill his wife? And that she could have shut up if he said to her "on this you will not cross me," like he did on internment. There's a huge difference here. And the untold story of the Roosevelts and race, which, if I could ever go back and be a fly on the wall and engage in the what-if school of history moment, would be the conversations that they had one-on-one about the risk that she was taking to aggressively change her position from being truly separate but equal, but leaning toward integration.

And so, by the time that Gunnar Myrdal and Ralph Bunche do their landmark study, *The American Dilemma*, Ralph Bunche will say, "Of all the people that I have interviewed in the United States, the person on whose sincerity I have no doubt is Eleanor Roosevelt." Now, when you get to a war, which I guess we'll talk about, you'll really see the impact there.

And the other thing about– we all want anti-lynching passed. I mean, I grew up in Memphis. I'm that chunky white child on the back of the wall in 1968 when Dr. King was giving the

mountaintop speech. I mean, I was two blocks away when he was assassinated at the Lorraine Motel. It changed my life. Nobody on the planet wants FDR to engage in anti-lynching legislation more than I do. But let's look at 1934 and what Du Bois says when FDR calls lynching murder. He's the first President in the history of the United States to call it murder, and W.E.B. Du Bois editorializes about it on the front page of the *Crisis*.

Although FDR does not support the legislation in '35, '36, '37 or '38, when it comes up, by 1938, Eleanor Roosevelt spent seven days sitting in the gallery of the United States Senate. And she's surrounded by civil rights leaders, all people of color. When they ask her what Eleanor is doing, she says, "I am bearing witness." And that to me is a powerful, powerful statement.

So you have to look at– granted, there was no legislation passed, but there were internal policies changed. There was Eleanor's outspokenness. There was her literally putting her life on the line for this. And there were executive orders written and the Justice Department created.

So I look at his record as a huge step forward to help jumpstart where we want to be.

Was that good in three minutes? [laughter] I've never done it this fast. [applause] Ever!

TOM PUTNAM: So let's move to another small topic, the desegregation of the Armed Forces. We're going to have a panel that's going to talk about President Truman, but where did FDR stand? And I think it would be of interest to people that– we've seen the recent movie on the Tuskegee Airmen. Did he know those stories? Obviously, his main intent was to win the war, but how did he face this issue?

ALLIDA BLACK: Well, FDR always thought that the primary responsibility was to win the war. There was never any, any doubt in his mind about that. But FDR did instruct the War Department to, in fact, to allow, to remove the barriers that were placed in front of African

Americans who in fact wanted to enlist and serve. At this point, 9% of the population was African American, less than 1% were allowed to serve in the United States military.

Now, for those of you who may be suspect to propaganda, and people say, Oh, only 1% of African Americans served in the draft, there were laws that prevented people from enlisting. And so, FDR worked with the War Department, who was profoundly opposed to this, to in fact remove barriers. It didn't work that much. It went from 1% to 5%, as opposed to 9%. But if you go back again, the glass is half-full.

When FDR meets with A. Philip Randolph and Walter White, and leaders from the Urban League to discuss this, it's the exact same day that the Tripartite Pact is announced. So that means at the same time he's learning that Germany, Japan and Russia have all signed a pact to come against us, and when Randolph and company come, they come in a meeting that Eleanor has facilitated and they have a list of seven demands.

Of those demands, four are met. The full integration of the Service is not met, obviously, because that's left for Truman to do. But the steps that FDR does take, I think, are not just incremental, but are a slap in the face. He has gotten rave reviews for changing his Cabinet and bringing in a new Secretary of War and a new Secretary of the Navy. They're Republicans. It's supposed to be a bipartisan Cabinet, and they are absolutely, adamantly opposed to any activity that will advance Negroes through the ranks.

Stimson says leadership is not embedded in the Negro race. He's Secretary of War. The Secretary of the Navy, Knox, says he will resign if in fact this happens. So what does FDR do? Well, he brings the dean of the Howard Law School in to be Stimson's aide. [laughter] He appoints an African American colonel to advise the Selective Service. And he gives Stimson an African American general, the first African American general to in fact ride sort of roughshod on them.

The big obstacle in this, however, is George Marshall. And if you're going to look at who's going to block a lot of stuff, FDR doesn't push hard, but Marshall really is the one that says, "Calm down," and says, "not on my watch. We've got to win the war."

But Eleanor works to help get the 99th Squadron, the Tuskegee Airmen through. She works to have African American women who want to become WAVES and nurses do this. There's a riot in that. Eleanor actually goes to the city the night after the riot to try to calm things down. Stays with the WAVES and insists in fact that the swimming pools that they're in, to train in, be integrated so that they can have the same training that their white counterparts are.

So it's complicated.

TOM PUTNAM: Let's go to another complicated issue, which is Japanese internment. Probably the case most in our history where the federal government actually imprisons people based on race and ethnicity.

ALLIDA BLACK: Well, I wouldn't say it's the first time, but I would say it's one of the major times. There is no doubt in my mind that FDR considered that the emergency of wartime overrode civil liberties protections. I mean, there's just no doubt in my mind about this. I mean, he looked to Lincoln, he looked to a lot of precedents. I mean, he knew immediately.

It was a decision that was greatly opposed within the Administration. Eleanor, for one, strongly opposed it, as did the Attorney General of the United States, Biddle, as did the military command in Hawaii, as did Justice William O. Douglas, who really violated legal protocol, if you will, when he met with Eleanor to advise her on arguments to present to the President.

I think the best book on this, really, is a shoutout to my friend, Greg Robinson, whose book *By Order of the President* really is, hands-down, I think the best study of this. And I think Greg is absolutely right, that FDR did not think it through in the sense of thinking there would be long-

range questions of patriotism, or suspicion of people, or really understand the theft of property that went on.

And so, when there is a riot in the Manzanar camps and in Gila River in the summer of 1943, he sends Eleanor out to meet with them. And I know that they had numerous conversations on this. There's not a shred of paper anywhere in the world on it, I give you my word; I've looked for it since the day that I was born. [laughter] And it's not there. But I strongly suspect that there were countless conversations about this.

Eleanor wanted to adopt Japanese American families to get them out of the camps. She wrote countless letters attesting to people's patriotism. She facilitated their entry into the war.

I would stake my mortgage and my soul on the fact that there were conversations about this that we'll never be privy to.

TOM PUTNAM: And let's end with you giving us the back story to the iconic concert that Marian Anderson gave at the Lincoln Memorial.

ALLIDA BLACK: Well, I love Eleanor Roosevelt. I love Franklin Roosevelt. There are pictures in every room in my house. But we have to give Harold Ickes a shoutout, because he's the one that really got the Lincoln Memorial. But what we need to give both Roosevelts credit for is, Eleanor's understanding of how to use her newspaper column, "My Day," to turn this concert from a local – ie, regional Washington, DC – slap in the face, to turn it into a national civil rights event. When Eleanor resigned from the DAR February 27, 1939, that column goes on the front page of 483 newspapers. And Marian Anderson stays on the front page of 483 newspapers for seven weeks.

And it's Eleanor who goes to the radio programs to say, basically, in polite Eleanor language, which I will never in my life ever be accused of having, is to say that "if you want me on the

radio, you need to carry this." And so it's Eleanor's pressure on the radio stations that make it the first live, coast-to-coast, nationally broadcast radio event in the history of radio.

She also works with Walter White to schedule the concert at 4:00 in the afternoon so that churches around the country, African American churches in particular, on Easter Sunday can have picnics. And she suggests to Walter White that perhaps they can make arrangements for those collections that are capped to in fact be donated to the NAACP. And the collections that are raised that day are the second-largest donation in the history of the NAACP, only surpassed by Duke Ellington's national concert tour when he gave the proceeds of that to the NAACP.

She also had, before the debacle that was the insult to Marian Anderson, Eleanor had invited her to the White House. She'd stayed in the White House. Eleanor had talked about her voice in the column and said, "Hearing Marian Anderson singing Schubert's *Ave Maria* is like sitting in the lap of God."

And after the concert, Eleanor went, July 4th, 1939, to Richmond, the capital of the Confederacy, where she gives Marian Anderson the Spingarn Medal, and gives a speech, in nonconfrontational terms, about the horror that unequal education inflicts on the United States.

So in many ways, to me, the back story of Marian Anderson is how this extraordinary woman got the courage to come up and shift from being an artist to a symbol, which she knew absolutely she was going to become – she was terrified of doing it; I talked with her before she died – and the courage that she took with the support that she got from Eleanor, the friendship that developed about that, the phone calls, the letters that went back and forth, really is a phenomenal story. And it does my heart good to know that when Dr. King stood on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, but he stood on the exact, same spot, and in my lexicon the two angels that sat on his shoulder were Marian and Eleanor.

[applause]

TOM PUTNAM: So we did it. FDR and civil rights in 20 minutes.

ALLIDA BLACK: We really did? See? I did it! [applause]

TOM PUTNAM: Thank you very much. So as promised, we'll now see a film clip from the news reels of that time.

[film clip played]

TOM PUTNAM: I can't think of a nicer way to open our conference. So feel free to stretch your legs. But we're going to try to start the next panel in literally four or five minutes. We're just going to bring some chairs up and bring our next group of panelists up.
END OF PANEL 1

PANEL 2: TRUMAN AND EISENHOWER

CALLIE CROSSLEY: Good afternoon, everybody, or good morning, I guess, early day, whatever. I always think it's nice if you are marking the occasion, and we are, of Presidents Day, too, so a little bit of something about the Presidents for whom this day is named, and that's George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. So I found something from George Washington that I thought was appropriate for our conversation. Let me share it with you.

George Washington: We should not look back unless it is to derive useful lessons from past errors, and for the purpose of profiting by dearly bought experience.

And I think no better way to discuss this, because we got some useful lessons out of the Presidency and the civil rights movement, and certainly we profited by dearly bought experience. So that's George Washington on this Presidents Day.

So our task here is to answer a couple of questions. This discussion is about Truman and Eisenhower, and the questions on your book will say, What prompted President Truman to issue the 1948 executive order to desegregate the Armed Forces declaring that there should be equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons in the Armed Services? And similarly, how did President Eisenhower decide to call in the United States Army to Little Rock and to federalize the Arkansas National Guard?

Now, we're going to answer those questions, but the first thing to do is to put this in context. So I'm going to ask our historians, both Carol and David, to do that right now. And that is to say, as I looked at this time period with Truman and Eisenhower, it struck me that two wars really framed the civil rights movement and the interaction and the response of the Presidents. So if you would, David– or actually, Carol, if you would, talk to me about Truman, and at that time where we were as a nation and while this World War II, these African Americans coming back after World War II started to make a difference in how people thought about civil rights.

CAROL ANDERSON: When you think about it, the Second World War was an amazing war, because it was the war against the Nazis. It was a war where both Roosevelt and Churchill had issued the Atlantic Charter. And that Atlantic Charter talked about the four freedoms. African Americans who were dealing with double-digit unemployment, who were dealing with massive Jim Crow, who were dealing with the systematic denial of the right to education, who were basically dealing with the systematic denial of their basic civil and human rights, looked at these four freedoms, and you start getting mass mobilization and organization within the organizations such as the NAACP.

And you also got veterans, veterans who were fighting in this war, understanding that when you are fighting against the Nazis– this is the era of the Double V campaign. And this doesn't mean peace. This is the Double V campaign, victory against the Nazis overseas and the Nazis at home. And this is what is framing and stealing these veterans, who are then coming back to the United

States, determined that the US will live up to what is called its vaunted democracy, will live up to its Bill of Rights.

These veterans were not playing. And when you begin to think about some of the key leaders in the civil rights movement, these are black veterans coming out of the Second World War.

CALLIE CROSSLEY: David?

DAVID NICHOLS: Well, I'd go to President Truman right away, I think, because Carol understands that international perspective so much better than I ever would. But President Truman, I think, did issue the executive order in 1948 for two basic reasons. One was his own personal conviction. The other was, he was in the fight of his life for an election. And he issues it on July 26, 1948, in calculation of black votes. And that is apparent.

I don't mean that's the only motivation. These are complicated people, Eisenhower and Truman, and they do things for multiple reasons. And I think from an African American perspective, all of these guys don't quite get it sometimes. But they still were in a political context where they were trying to do things.

So Truman issued that order in 1948. The story I'll want to get to, when we have time, is that he didn't enforce it very well until we got into Korea. Then there began to be some desegregation of the Armed Forces in Korea. But four years later, most of the American combat units were still segregated. Dwight Eisenhower did most of that. And frankly, I think it's a disgrace to my profession that the textbooks still say Truman did it without mentioning Eisenhower. When Eisenhower came in, most of the units were still segregated. And by October of 1954, there wasn't a single segregated combat unit left.

CALLIE CROSSLEY: So Ernie, I'm just going to ask you, from a personal standpoint, if you, as a young man then, remember that impact of uncles, brothers, whomever, coming back from the war and a change in a sentiment at that time.

ERNEST GREEN: Well, I had an experience. My dad actually fought in World War I and he went to France, and I always wanted to know why would you go to the Army and then come back home, and you couldn't vote, the world was segregated. And that was an atmosphere that I grew up in. And I think that the returning veterans, African American veterans, in the South really had a lot to do. It's what I think is one of the untold stories about the civil rights movement, is that these men, for the most part, came back home after freeing Germany, and when they came back home, they met the same issues. As they say in the vernacular, SOS, same old stuff. [laughter]

CALLIE CROSSLEY: Thank you for the stuff!

ERNEST GREEN: And that really was sort of an underpinning, that in many of these communities you found activism resulting from that. And in my case, in Little Rock, the weekly paper that Daisy Bates and her husband, LC, ran where he was a veteran of World War II, and you felt the impact of that. It was something.

And the other point about it is it probably spurred activism in a lot of ways that– my mother was a schoolteacher and she was part of the suit for equal pay between black and white teachers. In fact, a lot of the public school deseg cases arose out of equal teacher pay activity. And the lawyer that argued the case in the '40s, in Little Rock, was Marshall, Thurgood Marshall. You get brushed again, that Thurgood Marshall couldn't stay in the Holiday Inn, or the Sheraton, or whatever, in Little Rock. He was staying at various houses. He stayed at our house for a couple times.

So being involved in it, this unintended consequences out of the return of black veterans I think had a lot to do with spearing the modern civil rights movement.

DAVID NICHOLS: Callie, permit me to dramatize that briefly. When an African American veteran came back to visit the nation's capital, even as late as 1953, a black person could not attend a movie, buy a meal, get a hotel room, or find a restroom in downtown Washington, DC, the capital.

And again, I'll be Dwight Eisenhower's advocate, because he desegregated all of that within about a year-and-a-half; most of it was gone. Not in the entire District, but in the downtown area. But this was a horrendous thing for veterans to come back and face.

CAROL ANDERSON: Callie, I'm sorry. Because I think veterans are really important, as we're talking about the Presidents, what we also understand with these veterans is that when they were coming back from the Second World War, they were facing not only this kind of discrimination, but they were facing massive violence. The lynchings that occurred in 1946 against black veterans were absolutely horrific.

And what also made it absolutely horrific was that the local governments, the state governments and the federal government were all looking at each other going, "uh, uh." And you've got men who are in uniform actually being killed and slaughtered. And this is also part of what is pushing President Truman, who is a veteran. And he just turned with the quadruple lynching in Monroe, Georgia, and just says, "Something is fundamentally wrong."

CALLIE CROSSLEY: And when you say violence, I think you should be very specific. We're talking about eyes gouged out, castration. This is not a mere shooting, as if that weren't bad enough.

CAROL ANDERSON: No, no, no. There is the blowtorch lynching of John Jones down in Mendon, Louisiana. There is the quadruple lynching of two veterans and two women in Monroe, Georgia, where they were taken out to a clearing and then lined up and just slaughtered. When you read the autopsy reports, they talk about at least 60 bullets in each body.

And this was what was driving, part of what was driving the black community as they're looking. And I go to the Frederick Douglass quote, that power concedes nothing without a demand. It never has and it never will.

And so, when we talk about the Presidents and the civil rights struggle, it's also important to understand that they are in complete conversation with a completely mobilized black community that refuses to take it any longer. [applause]

CALLIE CROSSLEY: So I said at the beginning that the civil rights, the thought process and what was happening with the Presidents, both Truman and Eisenhower, were informed by two wars. The first was World War II. The second is the Cold War. We don't think about that in terms of civil rights. And Carol Anderson, you're here to put this straight. Because actually, what was happening externally had a great amount of power on shaping where the Presidents had to go in terms of thinking about civil rights. So explain that, if you would.

CAROL ANDERSON: Yeah, and part of that is I see the Cold War as basically a double-edged sword. Mary Dudziak in her book talks about how the Cold War forced the United States to have to deal with issues of civil rights. Because the Soviets were having a field day every time a person was lynched, every time there was a case of Southern justice, every time a diplomat from Ethiopia or Haiti tried to come over and couldn't find a place to stay in New York City. The Soviets were like, "See? This is what this vaunted democracy looks like." And the US is going, "Oh, man!"

So on one hand, you get movement on the part of the US government saying, "We have got to address our unfinished business of democracy."

On the other hand, what the Cold War did was it limited the range of the options that were available to in fact really create true equality in the United States. Because what was on the table as the NAACP looked at it was the issue of human rights. So not just what we understand as our Bill of Rights, but also the right to education, the right to housing, the right to healthcare, the right to employment. When you're looking at the conditions of black America, of what centuries of slavery and Jim Crow had done, they had systematically denied African Americans their basic human rights.

But what the powerful Southern Democrats did was to link their racism with anti-communism, and to say that the right to healthcare is socialist medicine; it's communistic. That the right to educate is nothing but communistic. That the right to housing is nothing but communism. And so, by having human rights framed as communistic, and then by putting enormous pressure on the NAACP to back off of this human rights frame, it in fact led to a civil rights movement and not a human rights movement.

CALLIE CROSSLEY: So, now, with those two wars in context, let's talk about how Truman, coming from where he was coming from, coming off of what we know about FDR, how he moved toward even getting to the point – you've mentioned his being a veteran – of thinking about desegregating the Army. And then talk about actually that's, when we think about civil rights and Truman, we sort of stick him there, but there's a broader picture. So if you would discuss that.

CAROL ANDERSON: Part of that picture– Dave is absolutely right. Truman was in a battle for his electoral life in that 1948 campaign. And Clark Clifford had made it clear that "the only way you're going to win this election is to get that black vote." That black vote that had moved up North to the electoral college powerful states. And so, that was part of it.

But the other part of what Truman also was dealing with was he had this sense of justice. And he saw the injustice. But he's also tied into these Missouri roots. So when you talk about the complexity of these Presidents as they're trying to balance and weigh all of these things, this is what he's dealing with.

And so, you get on one part movement where his Justice Department is filing amicus curiae briefs with the Supreme Court. For instance, in the *Shelley v. Kraemer* case that dealt with restrictive covenants that limited where African Americans could buy a home. So to in fact get the federal government to weigh in on the side of this was phenomenal.

And so, you get that kind of movement. You get the President's Commission on Civil Rights, which emerged out of these series of lynchings in 1946, where Truman is just like "enough, already, we've got to do something."

So you do get movement. You don't get it as far as it needs to go.

CALLIE CROSSLEY: And that would be legislation? Is that what you mean?

CAROL ANDERSON: You would get it in terms of– you weren't going to get anything via legislation because the Southern Democrats controlled about 63 of the key seats in Congress. They weren't having it. So anything you were going to try to do legislatively was not– you weren't going to be able to get it through Mississippi, Louisiana, South Carolina or Georgia, Alabama. They had that thing on lockdown. So it required the President to move around via executive orders. And so, you do get the executive order for desegregating the military, as well as desegregating the federal bureaucracy.

But that desegging the military was long and slow, and it was the battlefields of Korea that made the Army go, "Okay, we got to do something." So I become fascinated, though, by a President

who is the Commander-in-Chief, where in fact his generals are defying a direct order to in fact desegregate. I mean, that gives you some sense of the power, the structural racism that is embedded in these institutions. And then what some of the Presidents, and particularly these black organizations are fighting against.

CALLIE CROSSLEY: Why is it that we don't know about the other stuff that Truman was doing? It may be limited but, really, all I knew about – maybe I'm ignorant – is just he tried to desegregate the military, that's it. I never heard his name connected with anything else having to do with civil rights.

CAROL ANDERSON: And I think it's because, when we think of civil rights, we often run to the mid-1950s, and think of Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King. And so, when you get a prelude, you get a quick snapshot, deseg the military because we know the military's important, and then folks immediately run to the mid-1950s. And I think that that is part of the issue. But you do get a lot of groundwork happening here, and we can't understand what we see in the '50s unless we understand the groundwork, what was happening in the '30s and the '40s.

CALLIE CROSSLEY: All right, so, let's move to the '50s. Ernie, did you want to say something?

ERNEST GREEN: Yeah, I was just going to say that that backdrop was the reason that, going back to reading this weekly newspaper in Little Rock, this backdrop of soldiers being maimed and killed, and other incidents, was part of your political consciousness. And that was in the back of my head, Emmett Till, and you read all of this, and something's wrong. I didn't know how it was going to– I was a kid, like many of these young people. I didn't know how I was going to change it, but I knew it was wrong. And if I had a chance to be a part of this change agent, I wanted to be there. I mean, and I thought everybody else was with me on that plane. [laughter] The great lesson of life I learned, that when I signed up to transfer schools and all my buddies

said they were going to be with me, and the moment of truth came I'm standing there by myself. [laughter] I said what's wrong with this picture?

But it was all of this that we were looking at. I mean, part of the problem today is that everybody thinks that Dr. King made this speech on the steps and that was it.

CAROL ANDERSON: That was it. Everybody held hands.

ERNEST GREEN: And my hope is that events like this get people to bore down deeper, to understand what else was going on and why we felt we could step forward. And we had the support of family, that we could do something different.

CALLIE CROSSLEY: Well, we're going to get to your big moment in the sunshine in just a minute, Ernie Green, but I did want to highlight something for people who don't know, because I don't assume that everybody knows. Emmett Till was 14 years old. He's part of the whole lynching thing that was going on. He was lynched in Money, Mississippi, for allegedly whistling at a white woman. Those people that lynched him later said that they did it, but it was, of course, after the trial, and it was a rigged trial. But this was a signifying moment in the lives of so many young men like Ernie Green, to know that if the country's going to change, this has got to stop. So that's an important, very important, significant moment in the long spectrum of the civil rights movement.

So now on to you. If I could get a sense from you– because what we've heard now is what Truman did. I'm going to come over to what Eisenhower, how he was working. And Eisenhower has a bad rap. In your book, you try to change the rap on him. And the rap was, all he did was sit there, and then when Little Rock came, he did one big thing and that's it. That's his whole civil rights history. You have a whole book that says otherwise.

But one of the points I wanted to do that I think may be connecting is that, I'm not certain that either man thought that social equality was something to be achieved. So they were not about the business of trying to have social equality between blacks and whites, and yet their actions move them in a direction that had to sustain or support a burgeoning movement, a civil rights movement.

So if you could speak to that, and then show us what Eisenhower was doing really behind the scenes that a lot of people didn't know.

DAVID NICHOLS: Yeah, and a lot of it wasn't behind the scenes; that's part of the mythology. But let's take the transition from Truman to Eisenhower quickly. Truman provided, particularly for the black community, some rhetoric that was important to them. It had so little to count on in any way, shape or form through all this violence and all these problems that African Americans came to hang on Presidential statements as being important. That's something Eisenhower didn't give them much.

Eisenhower had not won the war in Europe by making speeches. Rhetoric was not his thing. He's a man of action, not a man of words. And too much superficial scholarship has been done on Eisenhower by just looking at what he said, instead of what he did. This was a man who appointed five anti-segregation justices to the Supreme Court. Five. Not just Earl Warren. All of them. Anti-segregation.

And Eisenhower's criticism of Truman when he came into office was that the federal government hadn't even used the authority it had. And his pet example was the District of Columbia. And Eisenhower pledged on October 8, 1952, that he would eliminate every vestige of segregation in the District of Columbia. And within his first year in office, much of that happened. Truman didn't do that, Eisenhower did.

Truman deserves credit for the executive order on desegregating the Armed Forces, but Eisenhower in fact implemented most of it, and had the prestige in the Armed Forces to make it happen. And he did make it happen in a variety of ways. He desegregated bases in the South. He desegregated federally controlled schools for military dependents in the South, before the *Brown* decision. And everybody who thinks that Eisenhower was anti-Brown just really haven't done their homework.

And you mentioned about my book. My book is not an opinion piece. There's not a phrase in it that's not written in a document or in compelling circumstantial evidence. That doesn't mean there isn't argument that can be had about motivation, but there's some things, facts that aren't– hidden hand facts is the phrase it's become. Supreme Court appointments; Eisenhower refused to appoint judges to federal courts who were known segregationists. He refused to do that. John F. Kennedy, when he came in, appointed those right and left. And I have to say to you folks, I have a son named for JFK, if you want to know where I come from. Okay? And I'm going to have fun handing him the program. But facts are facts.

And so, Eisenhower did a lot. He didn't do some things that people would have liked to have seen him do, but we'll get back to Little Rock, because I don't want to preempt Ernie talking about that. But Little Rock is the tip of the iceberg when it comes to what Eisenhower was doing.

CALLIE CROSSLEY: Later on we'll be discussing JFK and Lyndon Johnson, and so the conversation is that, had not Kennedy laid out what could happen, that Johnson could not have picked it up. Is the same thing true here? If Truman had not begun the process of desegregating the military, even as you say Eisenhower was critical of his not taking it far enough, could he have done what he did in the military?

DAVID NICHOLS: No, I think he did build– I think he did stand on Truman's shoulders. Eisenhower introduced legislation, particularly he introduced it first in 1956, it didn't go anywhere. Reintroduced it in 1957. It's legislation that in the history books Lyndon Johnson gets

credit for passing. But in fact, Eisenhower and his Attorney General Herbert Brownell proposed it. That legislation was built essentially on the foundation that Truman had laid with his commission to declare these rights, like the Civil Rights Commission, Civil Rights Division in the Justice Department, those kind of reforms. Eisenhower picked those up and those were essentially Truman proposals initially he could never get through the Congress. And Truman deserves credit for proposing it.

But I would like to point out to everybody, Eisenhower is the one that got the first legislation in 82 years, civil rights legislation in 82 years. It was a weak bill. It was insipid in many respects because Lyndon Johnson and the Southern Democrats took the heart out of it, particularly the power of the Attorney General to sue in federal court for school desegregation. They took that out, but it still laid the foundation for what happened in 1964 and '65.

CALLIE CROSSLEY: When I said hidden hand, that's the terminology that's been often associated with President Eisenhower in the way that he operated – hidden hand, behind closed doors, not out front. Your book articulated that that wasn't always the case.

But I want to go back and underscore the federal judge appointments, because he quite thoughtful, as you point out in very clear terms, in thinking about those judges he wanted to appoint. And I don't think that we always, in terms of thinking about civil rights movement understand the power of those federal judges. So this was in fact quite significant, the placing of those judges, the appointing of those judges.

DAVID NICHOLS: Yeah, I think it's the most important thing. Little Rock is the most dramatic, but the most important thing that Eisenhower did was to appoint federal judges committed to defending *Brown*. And he appointed them particularly in the 4th an 5th Circuits in the South, and he appointed men like Frank Johnson, who was the federal judge in Alabama, who in 1965 cleared the way for Martin Luther King's entourage to go from Selma to Montgomery. Frank Johnson, who spent 44 years on the federal bench.

So he would appoint those kind of judges. He appointed Ronald Davies, who was the presiding federal judge in Little Rock. And we'll get back to that. And he appointed, of course, his five men to the Supreme Court – Earl Warren, John Marshall Harlan, William Brennan, Potter Stewart, Charles Evans Whittaker is probably his weakest appointment. All five of them committed to the enforcement of *Brown*.

And William Brennan, if any of you know your Supreme Court history, was not a far right conservative in any way, shape or form. Eisenhower actually nominated him when he was in the midst of an election campaign in the fall of '56. And he did that partly for political reasons, too; he wanted a Catholic, so a Catholic Democrat.

But Eisenhower's judicial appointments lasted decades later. And Felix Frankfurter said that the Supreme Court during this era was the Eisenhower Court. We all know it as a Warren Court, but it was the Eisenhower Court.

And I'll tell you a spoiler, folks. One of the great myths is that Eisenhower didn't know what Earl Warren stood for. That is factually incorrect. He knew him well. His Attorney General, Herbert Brownell, socialized with Warren and had run two Presidential campaigns for him. He knew exactly who he was.

And these books that float around and say that Eisenhower didn't know who Warren was or how he stood on race is just ridiculous. There was a tension between these guys, and we can talk about that if you want to. But it was not race; it was Presidential politics.

CALLIE CROSSLEY: We can come back to that. I want to now get to Eisenhower's, some say, finest moment with regard to civil rights. And that's, of course, what happened at Little Rock. Now, gang, remember, we've said that neither Truman nor Eisenhower were looking for social equality. Yet we know, as you have articulated very well, understand what Eisenhower

was doing, that he had the power to do. So here he is, at a situation at Little Rock, and his hand is forced.

But before we get to what he did, Ernie Green, tell us the story of Little Rock. So there you were standing alone, you buddies abandoned you. [laughter]

ERNEST GREEN: Everybody's got a favorite teacher story, one of those magic moments. We had, at the black high school that I attended before going to Central, my 11th-grade history teacher, who's name was Gwendolyn Scott. She taught black history. I'm sure if the Little Rock school board knew what she was doing, they would have arrested her. [laughter] Because we studied rebellions, the protest movement, the beginning of the NAACP, all of this.

And it seemed to me that, again going back, Till was in my consciousness. The Montgomery bus boycott began around December of '55, I remember that. When the *Brown* decision was handed down, I didn't know the nuances of the decision. I only knew the next morning in our local newspaper, it said that this court decision was going to change the face of the South. And I said good, I wanted to change the South. The South that I saw that time as a 12-/13-year-old, it was something– segregated fountains, buses, limited jobs, all of that. We didn't get our street paved until, I think, till the Supreme Court decision was handed down. There were no more new school buildings built for black folks after May 17th, 1954, than any time in the history of the country. All of that is what you're processing.

And so, the way that Little Rock was a challenge from the state NAACP, Daisy Bates– And there's a documentary, I think, that public television has been doing on Mrs. Bates. But the moment came that I had a chance to say that I wanted to transfer. I wanted to transfer because you saw this huge building. You passed it every day. I came out of a family of teachers, and they always complained about the resources that Central had as compared to what we had, the hand-me-down books. And I figured I wanted to get the best college education I could. So if I went to Central and they had more of what we wanted to have, that this was going to be a good thing.

The summer occurs and it's kind of bumping along. And I get an invitation, my mother and I, to go down to the superintendent's office to indicate that I'd been accepted as one of the students to transfer to Central that fall. Thought it was going to be a fairly quiet day. [laughter]

And so did most people in Little Rock. And the night before school was to open, we get Governor Orval Faubus, comes on television and says he's calling out the National Guard to keep us out of school. And I'm thinking, oh, my goodness, I'm a senior. I want to graduate. And I'm walking into this huge unknown.

And that first day, the pictures on the brochure of Elizabeth and the mob behind her, it dawned on me that maybe this was something other than my going to school. [laughter] That there's some other issues going on here, and that I said I wanted to be a part of the change in the South. Well, my moment came.

And for three weeks– in fact, most people didn't think Eisenhower was going to step forward and do anything, I don't think up until the last minute– we were talking earlier. I had an opportunity to sit with Herbert Brownell back in the '80s. We were at the Eisenhower Library. And I said, "Eisenhower really didn't need to send 1,000 paratroopers with the 101st Airborne. He could have sent 50, 100, or 200. They would have done the job."

But he said that Eisenhower, one, he had just won World War II, he was President of a major university without a PhD, he was the darling of both political parties to be their standard bearer for President, and he wanted to show Faubus who was in charge, that he was tired of having this second-rate governor, as he saw him, push him around.

And so, on the 25th of September, when they finally sent the troops, and we went to school with a convoy of jeeps and Army station wagons and helicopters flying over, you got the feeling you were going to get into school that day. [laughter]

But I think, again, unintended consequences, that that was really, at least in my mind, the first time the federal government had really stepped forward to support that decision, and to show African American communities that they were going to uphold their right. And so, when I bump into people like John Lewis and others, they say that Little Rock was an important part of their consciousness.

So each of these steps and places became kind of stepping stones; one led to the other. And we never expected, any of us, the nine of us, that what we were doing was going to be earth-shattering, and that 56 years later I'm still talking about getting into high school. [laughter]

But the interests of all nine of us was really to pursue the best education, public education we thought that was our right. And we had come from families that education was important, and that they thought we had the right to be there. And that was really what, I think, Eisenhower– I never had a chance to meet him. Never looked beyond that year of the Presidential politics, but one important thing was that at my graduation, there was a young minister from Montgomery, Alabama, speaking in Pine Bluff, Arkansas. And the night that I graduated, that Dr. King came up, sat with my family, and was in the audience.

All of this connection, connectivity of how Charlene's story and others, that we all were doing our individual thing, trying to improve what we thought was the best options for us.

CALLIE CROSSLEY: Now, understanding it's 56 years later and you have the benefit of hindsight. Let's go back to your young self and, for history's sake in this conference, you have to answer the question of, where you frightened?

ERNEST GREEN: Sure, you were frightened.

CALLIE CROSSLEY: I mean, it's a situation where now we've got all these troops showing up to protect you.

ERNEST GREEN: Well, we weren't frightened– we were frightened on the side of the unknown. When the governor called out the National Guard to keep us out, yeah, we were frightened. And the unknown was, will I complete school that year. I didn't know whether it was going to collapse on me.

But when President Eisenhower sent the troops, I mean, that sent one hell of a message. The most difficult times for us was when they withdrew the troops from inside, and then we had to deal with students and harassment and the throwing of food, the cursing, the locker room being steamed up and glass being broken.

But again, something in the back of my head said, They want to fight this out to keep you out, something else is going on here. And giving up on it at this point is not an option. And that, I think, is really– the nine of us, we worked with each other. We became a close-knit unit, a family. And that was really what helped us get through that year.

CALLIE CROSSLEY: Little Rock Nine, Ernie Green, thank you so much. [applause] I'm going to move over.

ERNEST GREEN: I will add one other thing. During that period, Louis Armstrong spoke out strongly against–

CALLIE CROSSLEY: The singer.

ERNEST GREEN: The singer, the trumpet player.

CALLIE CROSSLEY: The musician.

ERNEST GREEN: The musician. And he spoke out, admonished Eisenhower to send some protection in to help us. There weren't a lot of people standing up at that point. And I really think the image that we have of somebody like Armstrong, that he would step out of character and stand up.

CALLIE CROSSLEY: David Nichols, I want you to pick up the thread. Ernie talked to Herbert Brownell, who worked with President Eisenhower quite closely, many years later and said "why so many?" Why did he decide that the would intervene in the way that he did? And why so many troops did he send?

DAVID NICHOLS: Permit me a personal privilege for a second. Mr. Green, you have my enormous respect. And your story is the real story about this. I've written about President Eisenhower, and I'll talk about that. But yours is the great story that my book doesn't pretend to address. And it's a story of great courage and great importance. I have an African American daughter who's better off because of what you did. [applause]

CALLIE CROSSLEY: If I may. For people who need resources on this, PBS has just aired *Daisy Bates*. It's an hour, or a 90-minute documentary produced by Sharon La Cruise, who was once an employee of Blackside, Incorporated, where I once worked on *Eyes on the Prize*, which I think is a very fine resource for this story as well. And there are many, many books on the subject, so people can follow up.

David Nichols.

DAVID NICHOLS: The intervention, you want me to talk about Eisenhower's decision.

CALLIE CROSSLEY: Yes.

DAVID NICHOLS: I treat Little Rock as the tip of the iceberg. And we already talked about the judicial appointments. Eisenhower and Herbert Brownell, his Attorney General, anticipated violence almost from the moment the *Brown* decision was made. And early one, the 101st Airborne Division that was sent into Little Rock in 1957 was trained in riot control. And this was not for riots in Europe. They anticipated this. Hoped not.

One reason that Brownell could persuade Eisenhower to propose legislation was, he convinced Eisenhower that there might be an alternative to using one legal out that he had, which was to use the troops. Hoping not to do it. But he did.

Little Rock is the tip of the defense of *Brown* iceberg. And I would point out to you that Eisenhower could have chosen not to send troops. People assume he was forced to. He chose to. And he chose to very quickly. And he didn't quaver around about it as much as some of the half-informed commentaries say. The timeline was very short. As you mentioned, Ernie, Faubus announced the National Guard to patrol the school on the night of September 2nd. They were there the morning of September 3rd. On September 4th, Herbert Brownell held a news conference and indicated specifically with the President's approval that one of the options the President could use was to use troops to enforce the Supreme Court decision.

Faubus sent a hot wire to Eisenhower, who was on vacation in Newport, Rhode Island. Eisenhower sent a telegram right back, which was made public, and said, "I will do whatever is necessary to uphold the Constitution." Very clear.

Now, they did meet and try to negotiate an arrangement on September 14th, in Newport. And that did not work out. And Faubus did not keep his word. And so, Eisenhower eventually, on September 24th, when violence erupted again, mobilized the 101st Airborne Division. And he said to Herbert Brownell at that time, he believed in overwhelming the force. You don't do these kind of things halfway. You send the message, and I think what you said about it was appropriate. It was several kinds of messages.

But I would point out it's the tip of the iceberg, because remember about these federal judicial appointments. The judge, the federal judge who issued the court order to Faubus to cease and desist was Ronald Davies, an Eisenhower appointee, who opened the door for the Justice Department to intervene, which opened the door for sending troops to enforce the federal court order.

Now, Eisenhower, a typical politician; in some ways he could be very cute about this. And he'd say later, "Oh, I didn't send the troops to enforce desegregation. I send them to uphold a federal court order." Well, a federal court order about what? [laughter] *Brown*! That's what.

And so, Ike would sometimes be too cute by half, which is one reason that people just look at what he said publicly. Sometimes they don't know where he's coming from, because he'd be very politically cute about it.

CALLIE CROSSLEY: But this was the first time the troops were called in, in this way.

DAVID NICHOLS: This was the first time that federal troops were sent in to particularly a formerly Confederate state since Reconstruction after the Civil War. So this is not small potatoes; it's a big deal. But more important are those judicial appointments that lasted long after Little Rock.

CALLIE CROSSLEY: All right. We've got some questions from the audience, these are good ones. Dr. Carol Anderson, I once heard you say when you visited Simmons College and spoke of Eleanor Roosevelt, President Truman and the conflict, underscored, when the NAACP leaders such as A. Philip Randolph wanted to go to the UN and file human rights violations against the US and Mrs. Roosevelt. And Mrs. Roosevelt forced them not to, asked by Truman. You said, your friends can only go so far. Can you say more about this?

CAROL ANDERSON: Yes. And what I'm talking about there is, as Allida Black has so wonderfully laid out, Eleanor was an ally. But one of the things about these alliances, and that is absolutely essential in understanding movement and understanding these freedom strategies, is that your allies can only take you so far. They can only go so far. And if you're relying upon your ally to go this far– because what the NAACP was counting on, because she was a member of the NAACP board of directors, and W.E.B. Du Bois had pulled together a fabulous petition to the UN, called "An Appeal to the World," where he pulled together top scholars, legal scholars, sociologists, historians to document the systematic violation of human rights for African Americans since the founding of this nation.

And because no government entity within the US was willing to fully address these issues, the NAACP took it to the UN. This is 1947. This would be the beginning of the Cold War. And in that Cold War frame, Eleanor Roosevelt was not about to allow this dirty laundry to be aired before the Soviet Union, because the Soviets are sitting there on the Commission of Human Rights seeing this powerful document from the NAACP, a legitimate organization, this careful document going, "Oh, sweet!" I mean, tears of joy. I mean, granted, these are Soviets, but they're like, "Thank you, god!" [laughter]

And Eleanor is like, "No, we must defend the United States. We cannot have our dirty laundry aired." And so, part of that was the pushback in terms of burying this petition deep within the bowels of the UN. But it was also then sending the signal to the NAACP that all of this international stuff about human rights was not going to be tolerated. Particularly in terms of human rights in the United States. We can talk about human rights, the Poles aren't able to democracy. We can talk about human rights, that the East Germans don't have freedom of speech. But we cannot talk about human rights in terms of what is happening here in the United States.

And so, she resigned from the board of directors of the NAACP. And it took all of Walter White's efforts– I liken it to almost doing a James Brown, "Please, please, please." [laughter]

CALLIE CROSSLEY: Don't go.

CAROL ANDERSON: Don't go, yeah. Eleanor, please don't go! So that's what I mean about your allies can only take you so far. There are things that she could do. There are things that she could not do and would not do. And the NAACP needed to understand that as it was crafting its strategy.

CALLIE CROSSLEY: Are there any examples or any documentation of Truman experiencing personal turmoil, threats to his personal safety because of his participation in matters of civil rights?

CAROL ANDERSON: Oh, yeah. Particularly after his message to Congress in February 1948, his state of the union address. And in that state of the union address, part of what he does is he lays out that this has got to be a nation that is committed to civil rights. This is a nation that has to be committed to fairness, to justice, and to the Bill of Rights.

And so, he says in his message before Congress, "I am going to issue two executive orders, one desegregating the federal bureaucracy, and one desegregating the military." And the black community goes wild. I mean, this is what they needed to hear from the President of the United States. When you read the black press, it's like tears, ecstatic, just ecstatic.

The Southern Democrats were like, "Oh, no. Oh, no." And so part of what you see coming through when you go through the documents in the Truman Library, folks were like, "Truman, you're going to have to die. You're going to have to go. We're going to have to get rid of you some way or the other, you're going to have to go." For the Southern Democrats, the politicians themselves were saying, "Unless you get back on this track, we're going to bury you. You will not see the White House again."

And you see this then in the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia in 1948, in July, where Hubert Humphrey gets up and he makes the speech that "we have been in the shadow of states' right for too long, and it's now time for us to walk within the bright sunshine of human rights," and the crowd goes wild, and the Southern Democrats are sitting there going, "Oh, really?" And then they get up and walk out and form the Dixiecrat Party with Strom Thurmond as the Dixiecrats–

ERNEST GREEN: Strom.

CAROL ANDERSON: **Y**eah, Strom. As the Dixiecrats' Presidential nominee. Like I said, when you read through, you get the sense of anger with him, the sense of "you are a traitor, you don't deserve to be in the White House." So he faced a lot of pressure for his stance on trying to move the US forward.

CALLIE CROSSLEY: Could this same question be asked of Eisenhower? But because there has been this long feeling that he was, as I said, operating behind the scenes, except for Little Rock, did he the same kind of threats?

DAVID NICHOLS: I don't have documentation of threats against Eisenhower's personal safety. Those may exist. Scholars always have to limit what we do, and I didn't look at the Secret Service records that carefully. So I'm sorry, I don't have anything to share with you. I'm not aware of any specific threats to him.

CALLIE CROSSLEY: Ernie Green, and I know the answer to this, but this is going to be a great question for you to answer. Someone saw the PBS documentary that we just referred to, *First Lady of Little Rock*, about Daisy Bates. What can you say about her? Did you meet her? And yes, you did. But tell that story, please.

ERNEST GREEN: Well, I said that one of the great things about that documentary, Daisy had great style. She looked good. She wore great sunglasses. Her hats were impeccable. But she was also taking on the– and I think the film makes a nice mark on that. She was taking on men in the African American community asserting leadership.

CALLIE CROSSLEY: How did you know her? You've got to tell this–

ERNEST GREEN: Mrs. Bates was president of the Arkansas NAACP. She was the state president. We knew her because the family had the weekly newspaper, *The Arkansas State Press*. And it was a journal that we all read. So when the time came, she had sued the Little Rock school board the year before we were admitted to adhere to the '54 decision. And when we were finally admitted to Central, Mrs. Bates sort of served as the mentor and her house was the focal point where we gathered.

She had the flow of information from all the journalists from around the world. And she helped to keep us grounded. We didn't know all this was swirling around us. We were trying to stay focused on our studies and make sure that we were going to finish out that year.

CALLIE CROSSLEY: And us is the Little Rock Nine, of which you are a part.

ERNEST GREEN: The Little Rock Nine, yes.

CALLIE CROSSLEY: Okay. Here's a question: Dr. Martin Luther King said we could pass all the laws we want, we cannot legislate the heart. We still have biases and prejudice in America. How are we educating the heart to recognize the humanity in all people? Ernie Green, I'll let you have that final word.

ERNEST GREEN: Well, I think we're educating the heart by events like this, that really we begin to people back the cover of the activity that's been going among these Presidents, among their Administrations.

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BEGIN PANEL 2, PART 2

ERNEST GREEN: –vision about what this country could become, that it would be better than its history, and that the future is hopefully going to be brighter than those of us who played a role in it.

I think it really underscores the opportunity for this next generation. Kennedy talked about passing the torch. The torch really gets passed because all of the players who played a role in it. And that would be my last word.

CALLIE CROSSLEY: And that is the last word here. Except, let me thank our guests Ernie Green, David Nichols, Carol Anderson.

[applause]

TOM PUTNAM: So let's take about a 20-minute break. There's a café if you need to get something to eat or drink. And we'll convene in about 20 minutes.

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