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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

NATIONAL AFRO-AMERICAN (BLACK) HISTORY MONTH

February 1984

On February 1st we begin the Fifty-eighth Annual Black History Month, a national celebration of the role of Black Americans in all segments of life in this nation and in Black culture around the globe.

Launched in 1926 by Dr. Carter Godwin Woodson, founder of the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History, Inc., Black History Month provides opportunities for our nation's schools, institutions of higher learning, and the public to gain a deeper understanding and knowledge of the diverse contributions of Black Americans to our country and the world.

This year's Black History Month theme, "Black Americans and the Struggle for Excellence in Education," is particularly timely, coinciding with efforts across the land to re-examine public education and reinforce excellence for all students.

It is a very special privilege for me to call on the people of the United States to join in this important time of exploring, learning, appreciating, and saluting all that Black Americans have done to help build this great nation.

As we celebrate Black History Month, 1984, let us also share a prayerful thought for the memory of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Dr. King was brutally gunned down by an assassin in 1968, his life cut short at the age of 39. But his leadership and devotion in the cause of human rights changed America forever. In this, the fifty-fifth year since his birth, may Black History Month be an especially meaningful and productive time for all of us.

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