

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 12, 2015

I send greetings to all those honoring the lives and legacies of the Wereth 11.

World War II came at a time when dark forces threatened to spread across the globe and overshadow liberty's light—but it was also a time when the world witnessed the remarkable strength and resilience of the human spirit. Thanks to the service and sacrifice of the women and men of the Allied forces, guns fell silent, the Nazi regime was defeated, and a war spurred by hate came to an end.

Despite being denied rights here at home, hundreds of thousands of brave African Americans stepped forward to do their part during this conflict. They put on the uniform and risked everything they had—even their lives—for the cause of freedom. The courage and determination they brought to the battlefield represented the very best of our Nation's character, and we see that reflected in the heroic acts of the Wereth 11. Though the Nazis brutally took the lives of those 11 men, their memories still shine bright and their example, along with the example of those who endeavored to protect them from harm, continues to inspire our unending pursuit of peace.

On behalf of all Americans, I thank the people of Belgium for paying tribute to the sacrifices made by these brave soldiers and by the thousands of their comrades from the United States, of all races and creeds, who gave their lives so that Europe and the world could live free. As you gather to remember the Wereth 11, let us recommit to forging the future for which they selflessly gave their lives.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be Barack Obama's signature, consisting of a large 'B' and 'O' with a horizontal line extending to the right.