

Hollywood Veteran's Day Parade

Talking Points

- I would first like to recognize Sara Van Houten, Chairperson of the Hollywood Veteran's Parade Committee, and our Grand Marshall John Neuman. Thank you for this wonderful event.

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- I want to share a personal story today. About WWI, segregation, and honor.
- It starts with the 369th Infantry Regiment, NY National Guard.

- They were also known as the Harlem Hell Fighters.
- The 369th was the first African-American Regiment during WWI.
- In 1918, they were assigned to French Army.
- They wore French helmets over a US uniform.
- The 369th served in the trenches of France; they took heavy casualties. Over 1500 died.
- After the war, PVT Henry Lincoln Johnson was awarded the Medal of Honor.

- He was also the first American to receive the Croix de Guerre.

Pause

- The Regimental Commander of the 369th was named Colonel Hamilton Fish. He was my grandfather.
- He received a Silver Star for his service.
- After the war, he never forgot the sacrifice made by the brave men of the 369th.
- In 1921 – as a member of Congress, he authored a resolution to honor an

unknown and unidentified American soldier.

- On November 11, 1921, Armistice Day, the unknown soldier, who died in France, was laid to rest in Arlington National Cemetery.
- We will never know whether he was Black or White. Just that he died in service to his country.
- So today, let us honor all soldiers, known and unknown, living and dead, who have proudly worn the uniform of this country.
- And let us never forget their sacrifice.