

Trump's anti-DEI order yanks Air Force video on first Black pilots

By Phil Stewart

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The insignias for the five Tuskegee Airmen squads are seen on the side of a Tuskegee Army Airfield AY-6 Texan fighter plane during a ceremony to honor the airmen at Selfridge National Airbase... [Purchase Licensing Rights](#)  [Read more](#)

WASHINGTON, Jan 25 (Reuters) - U.S. President Donald Trump's order halting diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives has led the Air Force to suspend course instruction on a documentary about the first Black airmen in the U.S. military, known as the Tuskegee Airmen, a U.S. official said on Saturday.

The famed Black aviators included 450 pilots who fought overseas in segregated units during World War Two. Their success in combat helped pave the way for President Harry Truman's decision to desegregate the armed forces in 1948.

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Another video about civilian women pilots trained by the U.S. military during World War Two, known as "Women Air Force Service Pilots," or WASPs, was also pulled, the official said.

The Air Force did not directly comment on the decision, which was confirmed by an official who spoke to Reuters on condition of anonymity.

U.S. President Donald Trump has issued a series of executive orders seeking to dismantle DEI programs since he took office on Monday.

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DEI programs seek to promote opportunities for women, ethnic minorities and other traditionally underrepresented groups. Civil rights advocates argue such programs, generally backed by Democrats, are needed to address longstanding inequities and structural racism.

But they have become a rally cry for conservatives who argue that race- and gender-focused initiatives are inherently discriminatory and fail to prioritize merit.

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Reuters reported on Friday that new Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth has told lawmakers [he opposes the use of race](#) as a factor when evaluating candidates for elite U.S. military academies.

Trump's administration and its backers in Congress argue that the U.S. military needs also to be purged of generals who support DEI initiatives, which they say are a distraction to war fighting.

The U.S. official said the video on the Tuskegee Airmen and other historical materials had been pulled as the Air Force conducts a review of course curriculum at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, where new recruits get basic training.

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The official stressed that the videos were not specifically targeted but were part of the curriculum that has been suspended pending review.

For its part, the Air Force said in a statement that it is committed to carrying out Trump's orders.

"The Department of the Air Force will fully execute and implement all directives outlined in the Executive Orders issued by the President, ensuring that they are carried out with utmost professionalism, efficiency and in alignment with national security objectives," an Air Force spokesperson said.

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Phil Stewart has reported from more than 60 countries, including Afghanistan, Ukraine, Syria, Iraq, Pakistan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, China and South Sudan. An award-winning Washington-based national security reporter, Phil has appeared on NPR, PBS NewsHour, Fox News and other programs and moderated national security events, including at the Reagan National Defense Forum and the German Marshall Fund. He is a recipient of the Edwin M. Hood Award for Diplomatic Correspondence and the Joe Galloway Award.



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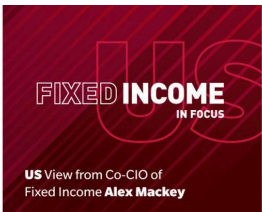
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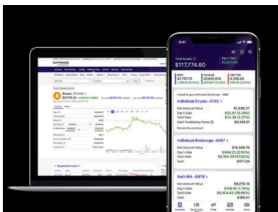
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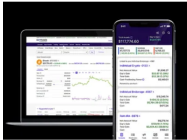


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