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President's Committee on Civil Rights

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MEMORANDUM

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

TO: Members of The President's Committee on Civil Rights

FROM: Robert K. Carr

SUBJECT: "Negroes in the Armed Forces" Prepared by Milton D. Stewart and Joseph Murtha

The importance of the armed forces in the struggle of minority groups for full achievement of their civil rights is too obvious to require labored discussion.* The armed forces are one of our major status symbols; the fact that members of minority groups successfully bear arms in defense of the country, alongside other citizens, serves as a major basis for their claim to equality elsewhere. For the minority groups themselves discrimination in the armed forces seems more immoral and painful than elsewhere. The notion that not even in the defense of their country (which discriminates against them in many ways) can they fight, be wounded, or even killed on an equal basis with others, is infuriating.

Perhaps most important of all is the role of the armed forces as an educator. Military service is the one place in the society where the mind of the adult citizen is completely at the disposal of his government. The use of armies to change public attitudes is an ancient and well-established tradition. In the recent war Great Britain and the Soviet Union, as well as the Axis powers successfully used the time during which their men were in service to "educate" them on a broad range of social and political problems. The efforts of the United States were much more limited and almost certainly less successful. Finally, the armed forces can provide an opportunity for Americans to learn to respect one another as the result of cooperative effort in the face of serious danger.

For a variety of reasons the minority group policies and practices of the armed forces during World War II had a considerable impact upon the thinking of the American people. A number of fundamental questions about social policy were raised. Although this memorandum deals with the utilization of Negroes in the armed forces, it is not meant to suggest that other minority groups did not suffer equally from discrimination. The difficulties which they had were probably in direct ratio to their visibility. Since most of the attention, documentation, policy statements and pro-tolerance education has dealt with Negroes, it is easiest to deal with their problems in the service. The Committee has already heard from Mr. Masaoka, about the problems of the Japanese Americans. At the beginning of the war no branch of the service would accept Americans of Japanese descent. Although the Army later relaxed this rule to admit a volunteer combat unit

*Because of functional differences, which are reflected in a difference in civil rights problems, the Veterans Administration will be covered in a later memorandum on government services.

and a Pacific intelligence group, the Navy continued its policy throughout the war; it did, however, while refusing to accept them into its own ranks, ask the Army for the loan of some Japanese American intelligence workers for operational use.

The main problems confronting Negroes in the armed forces during the War were:

- (1) Severe limitations on their recruitment and promotion.
- (2) Backlog of prejudice against them among white officers and men.
- (3) The official policy of segregating them during their service (the one exception to this policy—and its results—will be discussed in another memorandum)
- (4) Tension between Negro soldiers and white civilians, particularly in Southern communities and in others where public transportation and recreation facilities were inadequate.

This memorandum is limited to a consideration of official policies of the armed forces, administrative action to implement its policies and a statistical summary of the utilization of Negroes at the peak of armed forces strength and at a point after demobilization.

During World War I the patterns of discrimination in the armed forces were traditional and undisguised. Whatever slight efforts there might have been to improve them were quickly dissipated in the post-war period. During both wars about one in every ten men in the United States Army was a Negro. In peacetime, however, the ratio was closer to one in forty. Much the same was true of the Navy and Marine Corps.

In peacetime too, the utilization of Negroes in every branch of the armed forces was almost exclusively confined to traditional types of service groups such as steward ratings in the Navy and Marine Corps and Engineer and Quartermaster Corps in the Army. At peak wartime strength the same Negroes were acceptable in all types of combat duty and in many instances received commendations for outstanding service. In the case of the Army and Navy a token Negro officer complement was equally acceptable, although always in command of Negro enlisted men. With the end of hostilities these advances were quickly lost and the Negroes returned to their traditional duty assignments.

What justification there might have been for this representation during and after World War I on the basis of low levels of Negro education, and social origins, was to some extent eliminated in World War II. During the first World War one out of every five Negroes was recruited from the North; in the second World War the proportion was one of every three. In the first World War only one out of every 100 Negro soldiers were high school graduates; during the second World War almost one out of every five. During the first World War one in every 20 Negroes had had some high school training, as against one out of every four in the second World War. Whereas 95 percent of Negro troops in the earlier war had only grade school educations,

this number had dropped to 57 percent during the second World War. The natural consequence was a more prevalent intense feeling on the part of Negroes that they were entitled to continuing improvements in their assignments in the forces.

The following discussions of statements of policy indicate developments which Negro groups had at once considered encouraging and disappointing. The official statements on recruitment and enlistment as received from the War, Navy and Treasury (Coast Guard) Departments follow:

A. Policy Statements*

Navy Department:

(1) Navy Department

"No distinction is made between individuals wearing a naval uniform because of race or color. The Navy accepts no theory of racial differences in inborn ability but expects that every man wearing its uniform be trained and used in accordance with his maximum individual capacity determined on the basis of individual performance."

The historical development of this policy may help to clarify the present status quo. At the end of World War I (June 1922) the enlistment of Negroes in other than the Steward Branch was discontinued. This policy remained in effect until early 1942, when Negroes were again accepted for enlistment in the general service ratings of the Navy.

As a result of the recent demobilization, it was discovered that the number of enlisted personnel in the various rating groups was not in agreement with the peacetime requirements of the Navy. The Steward's Branch, which has traditionally drawn the bulk of Negro enlistments, was approximately 35% over-manned. A previous order prohibited members of the Steward Branch from being assigned to training in other ratings. It was cancelled during demobilization to allow Negroes at present in excess of complement in this branch to transfer to general ratings.

Experience during World War II caused some modifications of directives originally issued in the early stages of the war. For example, a directive regarding the assignment of Negroes issued in the summer of 1943 stated that wherever possible, activities having large numbers of Negroes would become all-Negro. This type of segregation has since been repudiated by the Navy and a blanket non-segregation policy is now in effect. An interesting paragraph from a similar directive to commanding officers of all auxiliary ships is worthy of note here:

"It will be helpful to point out that past experience has proven the desirability of thoroughly

*Based on official correspondence to President's Committee on Civil Rights from Secretaries of War, Navy and Treasury.

indoctrinating white personnel prior to the arrival of Negroes. It has been the experience that when this is done and the white personnel thoroughly understand the Commanding Officer's policy and what is expected of them, the chances of racial friction are materially lessened."

As a further implementation of present Naval policy, the Navy Department has recently gone on record in favor of the Powell Bill (H.R. 279) to abolish race segregation in the armed forces.

During the war Negroes were accepted in the Women's Reserve under the same qualifications and standards as other members of the Women's Reserve. The training program was identical and all ratings and ranks were open to Negroes and whites alike. The Negro women were completely assimilated into this group of Naval personnel.

The policy with regard to Annapolis is the same as that for the rest of the Naval Service. Since 1872 there have been six Negroes accepted into the Academy for midshipman training. Of these, three were dismissed because of studies, one on a disciplinary charge, one resigned and one midshipman is in attendance at present.

(2) Marine Corps

Due to a reduction in the estimated peacetime requirements, present Marine Corps policy (March 1947) states that Negro first enlistments will only be accepted for Steward duty. Re-enlistments of Negro personnel into the regular establishment continue to be without quota restriction.

Prior to World War II, recruitment into the Marine Corps was limited to white citizens. In April 1942, the policy was changed to permit recruitment of male Negro personnel by voluntary enlistment into the Marine Corps Reserve (active). Enlistments were controlled by quotas periodically revised in accordance with the estimated requirements and anticipated strength of the Marine Corps. In December 1942, it was determined to procure all future male Negro personnel through Selective Service. Quotas of Negroes were not to exceed 10 percent of the total Marine Corps quota, and voluntary enlistments were ended. Procurement of male Negro personnel resumed in December 1945, when voluntary enlistments were again accepted if the Negro applicant had been honorably discharged from the Corps. Recruitment under this policy was limited to quotas, depending upon the estimated requirement for male Negro personnel in the peacetime regular establishment. This quota continued to be reduced until March, 1947, when the present policy was established.

No female Negro personnel were taken into the Marine Corps during World War II nor were there any Negro officers on active duty. At the time of demobilization six Negro candidates were under instruction at Officers' training school. All of these candidates were released to inactive duty with the option of accepting a reserve commission.

The Marine Corps' use of Negroes in World War II, and its plans

for their utilization in peacetime, highlight the sharp change since the War's end. At various times during the war, Negro units included: anti-aircraft, artillery and infantry battalions as well as the usual depot and ammunition companies, security forces and steward personnel. Negro units now in existence and presently planned consist of depot companies, security forces for Naval establishments, logistic and training establishments and steward personnel.

(3) Coast Guard

In recruitment of personnel for the Coast Guard at this time, no distinction is officially made with regard to Negro enlistments. Prior to the war, Negro personnel were trained particularly for duty in the Cooks, Bakers and Stewards ratings. During the war general ratings were open to all minority groups. The same opportunities and facilities are available to Negroes as to all other recruits.

War Department

Prior to World War I Negroes were recruited during peacetime to fill existing vacancies in four Negro Regiments (two Infantry and two Cavalry). These units had been authorized by Congress as part of the reorganized regular Army following the Civil War. Requirements for enlistment or re-enlistment were similar to those of other eligibles for like units.

During World War I, Negroes were inducted for additional units comprising a division for infantry regiments and activated service units.

Between World War I and II, recruitment was resumed for vacancies in the 24th, 25th Infantry Regiments, 7 Negro Service and School Detachments and one Quartermaster Company. An April 1937 policy statement announced that in a national emergency, Negroes would comprise 9 percent of the total mobilized strength of the Army at all times.

During World War II, Negroes were inducted into the Army in numbers supplied by the War Department to meet the requirements of activated Negro units. On January 31, 1942, Negro enlistments were limited to those cases in which the enlistment was "obviously to the best interest of the Service." This policy was adopted because of the critical billeting shortage.

Post war recruiting until July 1946, was equally aimed at all eligibles. A minimum mental standard equivalent to a score of 70 on the Army general classification test was established for white and Negro alike. By July 1946, Negroes made up more than 16 percent of the enlisted strength of the Regular Army. On July 17, 1946, an upward revision of the minimum mental standard for Negroes was made. They were now required to meet an Army general classification score of 99. The requirement for white recruits is much lower. There was authorization for re-enlistment of Negroes with certain specialties. This policy is effective at the present time.

Volunteer Negro women were accepted for enlistment in the Women's Army Corps in accordance with policy applicable to all other eligibles.

They may currently reenter the service in accordance with existing policy. No new enlistments have been made in the Women's Army Corps since the end of hostilities.

Army nurses, white and Negro, were accepted upon application for service during the recent War on an equal basis in accordance with individual qualifications and the need for them. This policy will be continued during the post war period.

Before World War II, the policies by which National Guard units recruited and assigned Negro personnel were determined by the various State governments. Some states had no Negroes in their National Guards. Some had Negro enlisted men, but no officers. Some had small or large Negro units which were segregated. The general pattern was for separated assignment to wholly Negro outfits. Post-war policy on the assignment of Negroes to National Guard units is still in a state of flux. Appendix 2, includes a table compiled by the President's Advisory Commission on Universal Training. It reports the policies adopted by 36 states and territories, whose National Guard bureaus replied to a questionnaire. Ten states replied that their Negro populations were too small to warrant guard units. Twenty-eight said that Negro National Guard officers could be commissioned under the law. Twelve states reported that separate Negro units had been established or were contemplated. And 3 governments (Connecticut, Hawaii and Idaho) reported that Negroes could be integrated with white units.

To date, thirty Negro cadets have been accepted by the United States Military Academy at West Point. Of the thirty certified for entrance, eleven have graduated with commissions as second lieutenants, one resigned, fourteen were separated before graduation for deficiencies and four are undergraduates.

B. Administrative Action to Implement Policy

Navy Department

A pamphlet "Guide to Command of Negro Personnel" was prepared for use in the indoctrination of officers. Special training courses for officers supervising Negro personnel were set up at Great Lakes, Illinois, and Hampton, Virginia. In addition to this, directives as quoted in the statement of policy regarding assignment and utilization of Negro personnel were sent to all commands.

(1) Marine Corps

Marine Corps directives were issued to all commanding officers explaining the planned employment of Negroes in the Corps, requiring that every effort be made to locate and group those having the qualities needed for non-commissioned rank. They expressed the policy that so far as the exigencies of the service would permit, Negro Marines would be grouped and assigned to the type of duty which they preferred. No special directives have been issued on the integration of mutually supporting white and Negro units. But emphasis has been placed on the indoctrination of white units serving in the vicinity of Negro units along the lines mentioned above.

(2) Coast Guard

Since the Coast Guard operated under the Navy Department during the war, directives and training material were issued to Navy and Coast Guard alike.

Although no records are kept on the race or color of graduates, the Coast Guard service has no knowledge of any Negro ever having been accepted or graduated from the Coast Guard Academy. There are, however, no regulations prohibiting their attendance, and appointment is made on the basis of open competitive examinations.

War Department

The Army, perhaps more acutely than any other branch of the service, was aware of its minority problem because of its size, its effect upon the efficiency of training camps in divergent areas of the country, and the necessity to insure maximum utilization of all inductees at every level.

An extensive indoctrination program was undertaken for both officers and enlisted men. Pamphlets, memoranda, films, and orientation discussion were circulated to create tolerance and acceptance of minority troops in order to facilitate maximum military efficiency.

In October, 1944, Officers Training Schools initiated courses of instruction on the Negro Soldier, utilizing an Army Services Forces manual entitled, "Leadership and the Negro Soldier." Several similar pamphlets were subsequently published to develop a better understanding of and to effect harmonious relations with Negro units. Films and orientation lectures were available to both officers and enlisted men. Several of these films - "Negro Soldier," "Team Work," "Don't Be a Sucker," and "How Do We Look to Others," have been given army-wide distribution. Among the pamphlets published by the Information and Education Division of the War Department's special staff, were: "The Negro in America," May 1945; "Divided We Fall", December 1944; and "The Army Talks" series among which the best known is No. 170. It deals with Negro manpower in the army, Negro platoons in composite rifle companies and the problems of minorities in the armed forces. (This particular pamphlet has recently been the subject of a number of newspaper articles since it is based on recommendations made by the Gillem Board). A recent War Department circular directs the use of this pamphlet in the indoctrination of all personnel.

To further implement War Department policy a series of orders were issued about the use of facilities on army posts. Among their more important provisions was one permitting Negro membership in officers' clubs, messes, or similar organizations on a military reservation to all officers on duty at the post. In 1943, a policy was adopted prohibiting designation of recreational facilities for any particular race, although permitting allocation of such facilities to organizations in whole or in part, permanently or on rotation basis, provided equal opportunities for usage was granted to all personnel. In July 1944, this policy was further amended to permit the use of recreational facilities on a post to any

personnel located thereon and is still in effect.

The Gillem Board's Report

The War Department is aware of the shortcomings of its policy during the war and its failure to make the most effective use either of the Negro potential in the country or the Negro manpower assigned to the Army. On October 4, 1945, a board of officers headed by Lt. Gen. A. C. Gillem was set up to study the operation of War Department policies over the period of the two world wars and to make recommendations for changes.

According to the Gillem Report the bases of its recommendations are: (1) "the army needs to develop the full capabilities small or great, of every man allotted to it; (2) the improved status of Negroes in education, craftsmanship and participation in government makes a broader base of selectivity available; (3) Negroes should have full opportunity to fulfill their responsibilities as citizens in national defense; and (4) the experiences of white and Negro troops during the war indicated that modifications of policy are desirable."

The essential provisions of the revised policy and program are:

(1) During peace as well as war, Negroes will constitute approximately one-tenth of the army as they do of the civilian population;

(2) In the peacetime army Negro units will be activated, organized and trained in a wider variety of combat and non-combat arms and services than has been peacetime practice heretofore;

(3) There will be no all-Negro divisions in the permanent post-war military establishment such as the 92nd and 93rd Infantry divisions of World War I and II. There will be Negro companies, troops, batteries, squadrons, battalions and regiments. The largest all-Negro unit will be a regiment, group or combat team;

(4) Groupings of Negro units with white units in composite organizations will be accepted policy.

(5) Negro personnel with special skills and qualifications will be employed as individuals in appropriate overhead and special units;

(6) White officers assigned to Negro units will be replaced by qualified Negro officers;

(7) Military considerations being equal, Negro units will be stationed in localities and communities where attitudes are most favorable and in such numbers as not to overburden local civilian facilities;

(8) At installations to which both Negro and white units are assigned, War Department policy directs that Army facilities for recreation and transportation shall be equally available to all military personnel regardless of race.

It is important to note that in its "Army Talk" pamphlets describing the findings of the Gillem Board, the War Department stresses the point that it is not an instrument of social reform. "War Department concern with the Negro is focused directly and solely on the problem of the most effective military use of colored troops. It is essential that there be a clear understanding that the army has no authority or intention to participate in social reform as such but does view the problem as a matter of efficient troop utilization."

Much of the same approach will be found in the Army's attitude towards off-post relationships with the community. In view of the many articles written about the race problem in such camps as Fort Benning, Georgia, a particular sore-spot with the Negro press, the statement of policy seems to lack realism. Army Service Forces Manual M5 states: "Soldiers, Negro and White, should be instructed that the Army has no authority to alter in any direction the existing community pattern as a matter of social reform, and that it will expect the soldier, when in the community to abide by its laws. This, it should be emphasized, applies to all sections of the country and to all soldiers alike. Just as military reservation patterns are the business of the Army so are community interracial patterns the business of the community."

Whether the elimination of racial segregation in Army operated transportation makes the service an educational force for social reform is open to question. It would be difficult to say to what extent a completely non-segregated, non-discriminatory policy in a Southern Army camp would have an educational effect upon the local community. There seems to be a reasonable doubt, in any case, as to whether commanders of certain Southern army camps are putting into effect the latest policies set down by the War Department.

Prewar practice and Policy left decisions on segregation and other discriminatory patterns to the discretion of the local Commanding officer. As was pointed out above, this policy has since changed, but a strong re-affirmation by the Commander-in-Chief and more aggressive implementation by the War Department itself might have a more positive effect.

Those portions of the Gillem Board report which have received major criticism deal with segregated units and the quota system. The former issue has received wide publicity due to a recent bill (H.R. 279) introduced by Representative Adam Powell. The measure is extremely short and is quoted herewith: "...effective six months after the date proclaimed by the President to be the date of termination of hostilities in the present war, the separation of races in the armed forces of the United States whether by means of separate quarters, separate mess halls, or otherwise, is hereby prohibited." According to correspondence released to the Committee on Armed Forces of the House of Representatives, the Navy and the Coast Guard interposed no objection to the enactment of the bill. The Army however, in a lengthy statement referring to the Gillem Board's report, did not recommend enactment of H.R. 279, but said: "The War Department believes that progressive experimentation pursuant to the recommendations of the board of general officers will in time accomplish the purpose of the proposed legislation."

The Number of Negroes in the Armed Forces

A series of Staff requests to the Secretaries of War, Navy and Treasury produced the statistics which are summarized in Appendix 1. They describe the ratio of Negroes to whites in the several branches of the Armed Forces at the peak of their wartime strength and after demobilization. The Staff has available still further statistical information on the actual grades in which Negroes served during the war and are now serving. The data presented in Appendix 1 are designed to give a broad, overall view of the role of the Negro in the Armed Forces. The three things brought out most sharply in the statistics are:

- (1) The systematic and successful effort by the several services to hold the number of Negroes to a rigid proportion of the total personnel — both at the peak of wartime strength and after demobilization.
- (2) The Army's quota is much closer to the actual Negro population ratio than any of the other forces.
- (3) The service of Negroes as officers in all four branches (and as enlisted men in the Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard) is way out of line with even the quota systems. How much of this is due to lower educational level of Negroes is debatable.

There is no need to comment at length on the fact that there are only three Negro officers out of almost 70,000 in the Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard. More than one out of every ten white men in uniform during the war and after demobilization was a commissioned officer. About one in 100 Negroes held such a rank. Additional data which the Staff has available indicate the high concentration of Negro personnel in most menial ratings, particularly in the Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard.

The Future

The Senate Committee on Armed Forces has reported favorably on the proposal to merge the armed forces into a single Department. There has as yet, been very little discussion about the consequences of the merger on armed forces policy with respect to Negroes and other minority groups. It is apparent that as in every other field, the merger will provide an opportunity to reconsider the inequality of rights which the armed forces now extend to their members. At the present moment the Navy has a theoretically more desirable policy on the handling of Negroes, since it does not explicitly involve segregation, or a quota system. On the other hand, everyone agrees that the further away from the office of the Secretary of the Navy one gets the less significance the official statement of policy on this matter has. The Army, on the other hand, with a less acceptable policy statement, has taken much more efficient and aggressive action to implement its policy throughout the Service. Ideally then, the merger ought to be used to generalize to all branches the Navy's

non-segregation statement of policy, and the Army's serious-minded attempt to implement whatever policy it has, straight down the line.

Another, and extremely urgent area in which armed forces policy on the handling of Negroes might be re-examined in the light of pending legislation, is the universal training and reserve organization of units. Some criticism has already been leveled at the Army for its failure to include Negroes in the experimental unit at Ft. Knox, Kentucky, composed of 18-and 19-year old boys. Appendix II consists of quotations from the Report of the President's Advisory Commission on Universal Training which bear on the civil rights of Negroes in the armed forces.

Appendix I: Table I:

C O N F I D E N T I A L
For use by the President's Committee
on Civil Rights Only.

**RATIO OF NEGROES TO WHITES IN THE ARMED FORCES
AT PEAK WARTIME STRENGTH
(Includes male and female personnel)***

	Negro (1)	White (2)	Total (3)	P e r c e n t	
				Negro (4)**	White (6)***
ARMY:					
Officers	6,873	885,514	892,387	.8	7.8
Enlisted Men	687,506	6,711,443	7,398,949	8.3	58.9
Total	694,379	7,596,957	8,291,336	8.4	66.7
NAVY:					
Officers	53	335,989	336,042	.02	.006
Enlisted Men	166,897	2,837,499	3,004,396	5.6	18.9
Total	166,950	3,173,488	3,340,438	5.0	18.9
MARINE CORPS:					
Officers	0	37,664	37,664	0	.3
Enlisted Men	16,675	423,273	439,948	3.8	3.7
Total	16,675	460,937	477,612	3.5	4.0
COAST GUARD:					
Officers	6	12,713	12,719	.05	.0006
Enlisted Men	3,629	155,170	158,799	2.3	1.4
Total	3,635	167,883	171,518	2.1	1.5
Total Officers	6,832	1,271,880	1,278,812	.5	11.1
Total Enlisted Men	874,707	10,127,385	11,002,092	8.0	99.2
TOTAL MEN UNDER ARMS	881,639	11,399,265	12,280,904	7.2	100.0

*Based on official statistics submitted by the various Services in response to staff requests. The peak strength of the Army was reached on May 31, 1945, the Navy August 31, 1945, the Marine Corps July 31, 1945, the Coast Guard March 31, 1945. Officers in all categories include Warrant Officers.

** Percent that column 1 is of column 3. *** Percent of total Negroes and Whites in Armed Forces in all Cat.

C O N F I D E N T I A L
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Appendix 1: Table 2:

**RATIO OF NEGROES TO WHITES IN THE ARMED FORCES
AFTER DE MOBILIZATION***

	Negro (1)	White (2)	Total (3)	Percent		P e r c e n t	
				(4)**	(5)***	Negro (4)***	White (5)***
ARMY:							
Officers	1,317	143,166	144,483	.9	1.1	8.7	
Enlisted Men	92,966	910,499	1,003,465	9.3	78.0	55.4	
Total	94,283	1,053,665	1,147,948	8.2	79.1	64.1	
NAVY:							
Officers	2	58,671	58,673	.003	.002	3.6	
Enlisted Men	21,793	409,444	431,237	5.1	18.3	24.9	
Total	21,795	468,115	489,910	4.4	18.3	28.5	
MARINE CORPS:							
Officers	0	7,798	7,798	0	0	.5	
Enlisted Men	2,190	93,349	95,539	2.3	1.8	5.7	
Total	2,190	101,147	103,337	2.1	1.8	6.2	
COAST GUARD:							
Officers	1	2,981	2,982	.03	.008	.2	
Enlisted Men	910	17,796	18,706	4.9	.8	1.1	
Total	911	20,777	21,688	4.2	.8	1.3	
Total Officers	1,320	212,616	213,936	.6	1.1	12.9	
Total Enlisted Men	117,859	1,431,088	1,548,947	7.6	98.9	87.1	
TOTAL MEN UNDER ARMS	119,179	1,483,704	1,762,883	6.8	100	100	

*March 31, 1947 - latest figures.

** Percent that column 1 is of column 3.

***Percent of total Negroes and Whites in Armed Forces in each category.

C O N F I D E N T I A L

APPENDIX II

EXCERPTS FROM THE REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT'S ADVISORY COMMISSION ON UNIVERSAL TRAINING WHICH BEAR ON CIVIL RIGHTS

A. A Strong, Healthy, Educated Population

....

2. A high general level of education throughout the country, with advanced schooling made the privilege of all who can qualify for it by their own merit and certainly without regard to race--a factor all too prevalent in many States. This is recommended not only so that we may have enough people in the more special and technical fields that lead to industrial and scientific preeminence but also so that we may have an informed public opinion, cognizant of society's problems, and a universal understanding among our citizens of their duties as citizens, of their responsibility for the general welfare, of their country's obligations in the world community, and of the benefits of democracy.

3. Improved physical and mental health, not only for the happiness they would bring, but also to make available to the country, in peace or war, its full potential manpower resources. We cannot squander our most precious asset by failure to correct the conditions of neglect that led to the rejection for health reasons of one-quarter of the young men examined for military service in World War II.

4. An understanding of democracy and an increased sense of personal responsibility on the part of every individual for making democracy work. This involves the substitution of cooperation for conflict in all human relations and the elimination of all forms of intolerance. It is predicated on the moral and spiritual strength of our people and on a recognition that our form of government rests on the will and active support of the people. Freedom and democracy must be reborn in and rewon by each generation.

... Want, ill health, ignorance, race prejudice, and slothful citizenship are enemies of America as truly as were Hitler and Mussolini and Tojo. (Page 20 and 21)

V. The Role of Universal Training in Supporting the Requirements for National Security

....

A. Military Benefits of Universal Training

...Further, the Commission considers harmful the policies of the States that exclude Negroes from their National Guard units. The civilian components should be expanded to include all segments of our population without segregation or discrimination. Total defense requires the participation of all citizens in our defense forces.
(Page 33)

APPENDIX II

EXCERPTS FROM THE REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT'S ADVISORY
COMMISSION ON UNIVERSAL TRAINING WHICH BEAR ON CIVIL
RIGHTS

°°°°
B. Fundamental Principles of a Program

.... it must provide equality of privilege and opportunity for all those upon whom this obligation rests. Neither in the training itself, nor in the organization of any phase of this program, should there be discrimination for or against any person or group because of his race, class, national origin, or religion. Segregation or special privilege in any form should have no place in the program. To permit them would nullify the important living lesson in citizenship which such training can give. Nothing could be more tragic for the future attitude of our people, and for the unity of our nation, than a program in which our Federal Government forced our young manhood to live for a period of time in an atmosphere which emphasized or bred class or racial differences. (Page 42)

D. Control, Direction, and Organization of the Program

°°°
We recommend that the personnel of the commission should include a group of full-time, well-paid civilian inspectors, whose functions would be principally these: (1) To keep the commission fully and continually informed of the manner in which the program is actually operating in the field; (2) to advise the commission of the extent to which its policies are being carried out in practice at the local level; (3) to provide an avenue through which any individual in training may submit complaints with the assurance that they will be promptly considered by someone outside the operating agency under whose jurisdiction he falls, and (4) to locate any incompetent or irresponsible training personnel, and to discover malpractices in the camps, and to inform the commission thereof so that immediate remedial action can be undertaken. (Page 47)

We recommend that a volunteer civilian advisory committee, composed of representative citizens, be established in the largest city or village in the immediate neighborhood of each training camp. Its object would be to work with the commanding officer or director of the camp on the nonmilitary aspects of the program, and particularly those relating to the health, education, religion, morals, and recreation of the trainees. We should hope that the authorities in charge would seek the frequent counsel of such a committee, and that the two could cooperate extensively in handling some of the many off-post problems that will inevitably arise in a training program. (Page 48)

E. Basic Training Period

...

The individual must be surrounded during each of the 24 hours in every one of the days of his training with the kind of influences and environment that give life and substance to the lessons in the information courses themselves. One important phase of such environment must be the opportunity for every boy to mingle on a basis of full equality with other boys of all races and religions, and from every walk of life and many different parts of the country. (Page 63)

F. The Options

....

3. Grants-in-aid or scholarships in connection with educational options.

...

The selection of persons who would receive such aid should be in accordance with policies and standards prescribed by the commission, and should be carefully supervised by it. Selection should be based exclusively on the principle of choosing those men who are best qualified to carry out the purposes for which the grants or scholarships are to be awarded from among that group of persons who (1) have been accepted at institutions where those purposes can be properly carried out and (2) apply for such grants or scholarships. (Page 85)

The Staff Study on: "The Status of the Health, Education, and Well-being of Children in Relation to National Security" discusses the underprivileged role of Negro children and youths eligible for military training. It points out that there was an unusually high rejection rate of Negro boys (18- and 19-year olds) in all occupational groups. "At one period during the war...mental disease, mental deficiency and failure to meet minimum intelligence standards accounted for about two out of every five rejections of 18-year old white boys and two out of three of those of Negro boys of like age...in a period when educational deficiency was reported separately, it was the reason given for about two-thirds of all rejections of Negro boys for mental causes."

Children in minority groups, especially in areas where the law provides for separate schools on the basis of race, are particularly affected by these educational lacks. Moreover, many families cannot afford expenses that may be necessary for an older child's continuance in school, such as carfares, the costs of school lunches and suitable clothing, and the charges sometimes made for textbooks, use of the laboratory, and participation in various school activities. (Page 197)