Honorable Harry S. Truman  
President of the United States  
Washington, D.C.

Jun 24, 1949

Sir: The writer wishes you to have a copy of an impromptu letter directed to Mr. Louis A. Johnson, Secretary of Defense. As Commander-in-Chief of the United States forces, you no doubt approved the issuance of the order directing non-segregation in our armed units where heretofore the time-honored policy of segregation was employed.

Yours respectfully,

[Signature]

[Address]

[Location]
Mr. Louis A. Johnson, Secretary of Defense
Washington, D.C.

June 28, 1949

Dear Mr. Johnson:

I proudly state that I am a normal white man
and feel deeply within me an instinct of racial pride. By cross-
examining hundreds of white men and women who I know personally,
I find that they also, without exception, are distinctly aware of
their innate instinct of racial pride. Therefore, you will not be
surprised to learn that we were all shocked and disgusted to learn from
the press reports that you are an advocate of non-segregation in the
armed forces of the United States, which in plain blunt language means
that because of your military authority and high-ranking power, you
feel that you can order or enforce long-standing social habits and
customs by issuing directives to white men who are in the majority in
the armed forces that they must eat, sleep and work with negroes
without their consent and against their wills. I think your decree is
outrageous and I would never voluntarily enlist now in any branch of the
armed forces in any circumstances, in my opinion, and I am sure that
this is the consensus of opinion of 95% of the white men in America,
the white man does not desire to live intimately with negroes, and we
feel that he should not be forced to do so against his will.

The very object to it with the negroes, and maintain all-white organizations
for those who prefer it. The white man who objects to it should not be
forced into it. To quote an example - I may desire to associate
intimately with Mr. Louis A. Johnson, Secretary of Defense, but if Mr.
Johnson does not want my association, he should not be forced to live
with me, just because I wanted it.

There is an awareness in every normal human being that
he has within him a God-given right to select or reject the people
who he wishes to associate with. It is part of natural law that every
one of us chooses these associations in whose company we are happy,
and in like manner we avoid those who bore us and who are unorthy of
our interests. There is no law that can transcend this natural right
to determine and select our companions. This is primary and should be
easily understood by anyone who is called upon to deal in the realm of
human relations.

I maintain your decree issued to the armed forces to
abolish all segregation by June 30, 1949 will be much regretted and will
cause many racial tensions and antagonisms resulting in shootings, stabblings
clubbings and many murders that otherwise would not have occurred. These
crimes are inevitable because it is a violation and a degradation of
natural law to regiment the two races together and expect harmony to
ensue. Experiments in Chicago for the past thirty years have proven be-
yond any doubt that when negroes are mixed with whites in schools, factories,
offices or any mixed social basis that there are a hundred times
more racial incidents and hatreds than if the two races were kept strictly
segregated. I am positive that your notion in championing segregation
in the armed forces will not open and remove voluntary enlistments to
the point that the armed forces will be so weakened that you will be
forced to revert back to the old tried and proven system of separate
organizations for both races. Yes, as the six purposes of government
enunciated in the preamble of the Constitution of the United States of
America are, to promote the general welfare and to secure domestic
tranquility. The present trend of government is working directly against
these two recognized aims and purposes. I maintain that the govern-
ment is committing a grave error in legislating and compelling the intermingling
of the black and white races. It is an effort on the part of government
to thwart the unerring law of human nature. It will only result in
creating strained race relations, racial tension, and a degeneracy of
the white race. I believe that self-preservation of the white race
demands total separation of the two races.

You will not contradict me when I remind you that this country was
founded by white men and women and that we built up a white govern-
ment and civilization and that our rights as white men are clearly apparent in civil
law and in natural law. We bear no need those facts for fear about negro
rights that we are wondering what has happened to the white man's
rights.

As far as I can determine in conversation with hundreds of white
people, the white man feels no intolerance, prejudice or dis-
regard toward the negro, rather, on the contrary, the white man feels
very kindly and sympathetic toward the negro and would like to see him
progress, comfortable and happy. He would like to see the negro owning his
own home, having his own church affiliation and engaged in self-supporting
enterprise and that they would be economically independent. All
these goods are possible in the field of accomplishment if both races will
blend their efforts toward remaining in their own spheres, particularly their
own well-defined social spheres.

The negro minority today under the stimulus of their various or-
ganizations are driving hard for what they describe as civil rights, but too often
they camouflaging a difference between civil rights and social rights.
The negro believes that his civil rights are so expansive and unlimited that
they include social intermingling, intermarriage and intermarriage.
Not one white man in one million subscribes to this intellectual thought.
Every white man believes the negro to have equal civil rights unless
the same white man will forever be a party of intermarriage and to him the
very thought of such a thing is abhorrent and repugnant. The self-preservation
of the white race demands intermarriage only between whites.

I believe it is wrong, harmful and dangerous thinking to propagate the
idea throughout the country that it is the white man's responsibility
to provide employment for the negro. With Negroes degree in service, I
believe it is high time to encourage enterprise among the negroes in the
and that they can establish themselves on their own capital in all forms
of business, finance, industry and commerce so that they can be self-
supporting and provide jobs for millions of their race.
Beau Harnais

Why cannot the Negro organize for commercial and industrial advancement by building factories to manufacture clothing, hats, shoes, furniture, household furnishings, office equipment, rugs, foods, liquor, hardware, jewelry, cameras, etc.? Then this goal is attained think of the incredible number of Negroes who could be employed in these endeavors. Why cannot the Negro establish hundreds of wholesale and jobbing businesses staffed with Negro personnel? It is logical that they have their own wholesale drug and grocery establishments, also harbor and domestic supply houses and their own retail stores to supply hundreds of varieties of foods and services. It is logical to speculate that Negroes in their own businesses are the result of progress.

If you are not aware of it you will pay attention to the fact that there is a growing consciousness of race feeling in Chicago, particularly among the white people which in the same that I see it, is revolutionary. At first, from the surface, it is not revolutionary, but, warn you that it is only pernicious for the reason that our government in the past two decades has placed limits on the rights of the white people. The religious, educational and political are doing the same thing. Why it has resulted in a state of consciousness and resentment on the part of the white people to the point that if some constraints are not forthcoming and levied upon the institutions of the Negro into the neighborhoods and into the places of recreation and into the churches, schools and eating places located exclusively in white neighborhoods, it all will result in a very fast and sudden race movement that will, because of the serious consequences, cause our leaders in all areas of life to sit down calmly and with determination face this real and settle it sensibly and fairly once and for all.

The subject of non-segregation in the armed forces is so personally vital to each individual serving his country that it should not have been promulgated by executive, executive which robbed each service man of his personal right to express his convictions. I would not hesitate to speak then. If the Negro himself were given the opportunity to go directly between segregation and non-segregation, his free choice would be a free form of decision; the people in power by means of their influence in close proximity to the men, is colored and very objectionable. It is not fair to exclude the white people's right to free association with your own men by forcing the Negro by decree among him.

I repeat that this assault of white racial pride is very strong and will not be overcome by laws, writings, lectures, preaches or military commands. White dignity and culture must be respected and guarded to be mediated by a dictatorial program fostered by government, education, or armed organizations, to free association and insult upon the white race.

I submit these remarks for your consideration, as a student, citizen, and human being. Remember, I shall never unlearn to conserve the white man's dignity and rights in America.

Very respectfully yours,

Joseph B. Harnais

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