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April 26, 1948

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The Honorable James B. Forrestal *x 1285*
Secretary of Defense
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Secretary Forrestal:

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x 155 On March 6, 1948, Governor Luther W. Youngdahl addressed a letter to you asking whether the integration of Negro soldiers into the Minnesota National Guard would result in the withholding of federal funds from the state for National Guard purposes.

It is Governor Youngdahl's intention to issue an executive order doing away with all discrimination in the National Guard on the basis of race, religion, national origin, and ancestry. I understand that Colonel Robert Bell raised the question as to whether this might result in the withholding of army funds from Minnesota. The Governor's letter to you was for the purpose of obtaining a clear answer to this question.

I understand that you acknowledged the Governor's letter and indicated that you were turning it over to Secretary of the Army Kenneth C. Royall for attention. I have just been informed by the Governor's office that no reply has been received from Secretary Royall to date.

The Governor informed me a few days ago that he intends to issue such an executive order in the very near future whether or not he receives a reply from Secretary Royall. It seems clear to me that the Governor is completely right on this issue. I can see no moral, legal, or practical reason which would justify the federal government in withholding funds from the State of Minnesota after the Governor issues the order ending discrimination in the National Guard.

Therefore, wisdom, courtesy, and allegiance to democratic principles all point to the importance of sending an immediate and favorable reply to Governor Youngdahl's letter. I am enclosing a copy of an editorial printed in the two leading Negro newspapers in the Twin Cities which is pertinent to this issue.

We in Minneapolis take pride in the forthright action we have taken to end the evils of discrimination and segregation in our community. We are the first city to establish by municipal ordinance a Fair Employment Practice Commission with enforcement power. Our Mayor's Council on Human

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Relations has succeeded in creating a community atmosphere which is favorable to putting into practice in our community the principles of democracy and equality of opportunity to which we all subscribe. Our experience in dealing successfully with these problems leads us to the conclusion that they may be solved with equal readiness by forthright action on the national level.

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Therefore, I urge not only that you comply with Governor Youngdahl's request, but that you take the initiative in ending the policy of segregation throughout the armed forces of the United States. I believe that this step will build national unity and will strengthen both our military and our moral armaments. It would implement a vital recommendation of the President's Committee on Civil Rights. I believe you would find support for this action from the great majority of American citizens and veterans, north, south, east, and west.

It is time that we reaffirm by positive action the fact that the national leaders of our Democratic administration are willing to take a stand against hypocrisy and in defense of basic human rights.

Sincerely yours,



Hubert H. Humphrey
M A Y O R

of Minneapolis

HHH/el

cc: Matthew J. Connelly