MEMORANDUM
April 7, 1947

TO: Mr. Robert K. Carr
FROM: Milton Stewart

SUBJECT: Conference with Marcus H. Ray,
Civilian Aide to the Secretary of War

I discussed with Mr. Ray the possible role which this
committee could play to affect the status of minority groups
in the armed forces. He expressed great hope that the
committee would see fit to cover this area in its final re-
port. He suggested that the appropriate witnesses would be
the Secretaries of War and Navy, along with Secretary Patterson,
who ought to hear General Paul (Civil Personnel) and Mr. Ray;
Secretary Forrestal ought to be accompanied by General Paul's
opposite number; the Rear Admiral who happens to be in charge
of the Bureau of Naval Personnel.

Within the next year there will be a new opportunity
to re-examine armed forces' policy on minority groups. If
Congress should pass the Army-Navy merger bill, the new
Secretary of National Defense will have the problem of mediat-
ing the present Army and Navy policies.

The best solution for this would be for the adoption
of the Navy policy with the Army's implementation. The Navy's
statement on this question, which I submitted to you several
days ago, is an excellent one. It is carried out to some
slight extent. The Army's policy, as reflected in the Gidley
report, (of which Ray is strongly critical because it main-
tains segregation) is carried out right down the line.
Substantially, the difference is that on Navy posts in Wash-
ington Negro and white enlisted men serve together, share
barracks and mess rooms, etc. In the Army they are generally
segregated. At the same time, the Navy has one Negro com-
missoned officer, while the Army has none thirteen hundred.

The worst offender of all is the Veterans Administration
which does not even have any beautifully worded statement
of policy, but which is frankly discriminatory in its pro-
vision of facilities. One problem which all of these agen-
cies have is that the farther away one gets from the office
of the Department's Executive the worse the situation is.
The Army has done the best job of carrying through; the Navy
has done the best job of verbalizing policy and has tried
ruthlessly to enforce the policy on certain low levels; and
the Veterans Administration has done nothing at all.
Negro Veterans are placed in separate wards even where un-
necessary in Northern cities; they are isolated together
regardless of their disabilities instead of being put into
places where they can be treated with patients like them-
selves. The War Department, on the other hand, has maintained
non-segregated hospitals in which a broken leg is a broken
leg, whether it happens to be black or white.

The recruitment of Negroes in both the Army and the
Navy is limited on a quota basis. The Navy has a policy
(I am not sure whether it is written which states that no
more than ten per cent of the complement of any crew or
post shall be made up of Negroes. The Army has an over-all
policy of having no more than ten per cent of its total
personnel Negro. One control exercised by both services
is through the scores which recruits must make on general
classification tests. The Army now requires Negroes to
achieve scores of 90 if they are to serve in the ground
forces; whites must score 80 and 90 for the Air Forces. The
Navy has a straight requirement of 90. They expect that by
July the Army will have changed its policies so that all
three services will have the same requirement.

One other important difference is that the Army has
adopted an educational policy to win tolerance for Negro
troops.

I suggest that the full committee might profitably
spend a day listening to Secretary Patterson, Secretary
Forrestal and General Bradley, with their respective aides.
We should then make use of the longer situation, which will
roughly coincide with our report, to cover the civil right
of all citizens to have arms equally. Incidentally these are
also Federal agencies it might be advisable to invite the
Civil Service Commission to appear at the same time to report
on discrimination in the Government service.