Condemning the Army's new "racial equality" policy as a sham policy of "little bit of equality," Americans for Democratic Action yesterday called on President Truman to reject the new plan and to order the end of segregation in the Army.

ADA's views were expressed in a letter sent to the President by Charles E. La Pellette, former Indiana Congressman and National Director of the liberal anti-Communist political organization. The new policy was approved by Defense Secretary Johnson last Friday.

"Men in the field in which the Army pretended to work," the letter said, "it failed utterly to introduce real equality. The integrations 'quota' system is restored, and even after Negro officers have qualified for special ratings they are to be sent back to Negro units and 'housekeeping' chores." The plan "fails to deal with the essence of the problem," which La Pellette named as "the unequal treatment of racial segregation."

Stressing the civil rights aspect, the letter declared, "As unreliable in the fight to contain communism as hundreds of millions of dollars in USA and military assistance appropriations, it costs less in money and has greater moral value." Acknowledging that the Administration's legislative civil rights proposals failed to command opposition in Congress, La Pellette pointed out to the President that "if in the matter of abolishing racial segregation in the United States Army, you as Commander-in-Chief can act directly, unhampered by the changing tactics of Congressional reactionaries,"

"Americans for Democratic Action urges you to reject the new policy which Secretary Johnson has approved," the letter concluded. "We call upon you to order the end of segregation in the Army and thus demonstrate to the world that this country means what it says when it speaks out for democracy and freedom."

(Draft of letter is attached.)
The President  
The White House  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. President,

Americans for Democratic Action and others who believe in the principles espoused in the Democratic Party platform are disturbed by Secretary Johnson's statement of a new policy Department policy with respect to the defense of the United States.

Although we agree that the military is an instrument of defense, we do not agree that it is the only instrument of defense. The military is an instrument of national security, and national security is a responsibility of all citizens of the United States.

In our opinion, this new policy is a move toward the increased use of the military as a tool of domestic policy. This policy conflicts with the principles of a free society and the democratic process.

We urge you to reconsider this policy and to work toward a policy that is consistent with the principles of a free society.

Respectfully yours,

[Signature]  
Charles H. La Follette  
Congressman for Wisconsin
Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson today approved a program prepared by the Department of the Army to give greater assurance of equality of treatment and opportunity to all Army personnel without regard to race or color.

In submitting the new program to the Secretary of Defense, Secretary of the Army Gordon Gray pointed out that he had discussed with Charles F. Foley, Chairman of the President's Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Forces, the Committee's suggestions and the Army's proposed program.

Secretary Gray said that in order to insure a progressively more efficient utilization of manpower, including utilization of Negroes in each of the Army's career fields, the Army is taking three specific steps:

1. Military Occupational Specialties (MOS) will be open to qualified personnel without regard to race or color.

2. The present Negro quota for selection to attend Army schools will be abolished and selection will be made from the best qualified personnel without regard to race or color.

3. The present system of the enlisted career guidance program will be administered on an equal merit basis so that all promotions will be obtained by open competition on Army-wide examinations, without regard to race or color.

4. ROTC students attending summer training camps at several of the Army's training centers will be trained with those units without regard to race or color.

5. A board of senior Army Officers will be convened from time to time to determine current progress under the program and to make recommendations and review the fundamental policies for the utilization of Negro manpower in the light of changing conditions and experience. The first board will be convened in the near future.
"This program," Mr. Grey said, "does not mean that existing Negro units will be broken up or that Negro personnel of these units will be scattered throughout the Army, if it means that qualified Negroes, including members of these existing units, will have the opportunity to learn those skills previously unavailable to them. Hereafter, Negroes who acquire skills will be assigned to positions where their specialties may be applied in the manner most useful to the Army."

Under a new recruitment policy, the Army has limited recruitments to those who, during the first regular enlistment, qualify for promotion to Private First Class if unmarried, and to Corporal, if married. Since promotions to these grades may be made without regard to vacancies, all Army members are eligible to win these promotions. Mr. Grey said this policy is expected to produce greater economy and efficiency by gradually eliminating from Army service those who fail to demonstrate the capacity to advance. As progressive application will also assure continuing opportunities to highly qualified individuals, both Negroes and others, to enlist in the Army.

Under the Army's new program Military Occupational Specialties will be open to all qualified personnel. No individual who qualifies for a Military Occupational Specialty will be denied the opportunity to follow it because of race or color. This will give greater significance and provide far better implementation to the Army's policy and practice of using qualified persons without regard to race in filling the operating -- or so-called "overhead" -- positions at Army installations.

Formerly, Negroes were excluded from acquiring certain Military Occupational Specialties. Also, they were not assigned to schools on the basis of Negro distribution in the Army. They competed for promotion only among themselves. Now all non-commissioned officers will complete for promotion on an Army-wide equal merit basis, against a single standard, without regard to race or color.

Under the old policy, Negro ROTC students attending summer camps were placed in Negro units for their training. Now all personnel regularly assigned to an ROTC unit will remain together and be trained together.

Mr. Grey declared that the Army was continuing its study of the present policy of regulating Negro original enlistments in the Army, which is now based on the population ratio of Negroes to the total population -- currently about 10 percent.

He pointed out that present policies concerning the utilization of Negro manpower in the Army are based on the recommendations of a board, headed by Lieutenant General A. C. Gillen, which made its report in 1946 and which itself recommended a periodic review of Army policies.

"Changing conditions and attitudes require and permit careful reexamining and testing of our policies and our practices," Mr. Grey said. "The new board, which I intend to appoint promptly, will help us in the performance of this duty."

END
ARMY PROGRAM FOR RACIAL EQUALITY

Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson today approved a program proposed by the Department of the Army to give greater assurance of equality of treatment and opportunity to all Army personnel without regard to race or color.

In submitting the new program to the Secretary of Defense, Secretary of the Army Gordon Grey pointed out that he had discussed with Charles F. Fahey, Chairman of the President's Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Forces, the Committee's suggestions and the Army's proposed program.

Secretary Grey said that in order to insure a progressively more efficient utilization of manpower, including utilization of Negroes in each of the Army's career fields, the Army is taking these specific steps:

1. Military Occupational Specialties (MOS) will be open to qualified personnel without regard to race or color.

2. The present Negro quotas for selection to attend Army schools will be abolished and selection will be made from the best qualified personnel without regard to race or color.

3. The promotion system of the enlisted career guidance program will be administered on an equal merit basis so that all promotions will be obtained by open competition on Army-wide examinations, against a single standard and without regard to race or color.

4. ROTC students attending summer training camps as members of school units to which they are regularly assigned will be trained with those units without regard to race or color.

5. A board of senior Army Officers will be convened from time to time to determine current progress under the program and to re-examine and review the fundamental policies for the utilization of Negro manpower in the light of changing conditions and experiences. The first board will be convened in the near future.
"This program," Mr. Gray said, "does not mean that existing Negro units will be broken up or that Negro personnel of these units will be scattered throughout the Army. It does mean that qualified Negroes, including members of these existing units, will have the opportunity to learn those skills previously unavailable to them. Hereafter, Negroes who acquire skills will be assigned to positions where their specialties may be applied in the manner most useful to the Army."

Under a new recruitment policy, the Army has limited recruitments to those who, during the first regular enlistment, qualify for promotion to Private First Class if unmarried, and to Corporal, if married. Since promotions to these grades may be made without regard to vacancies, all Army members are eligible to win these promotions, Mr. Gray said this policy is expected to produce greater economy and efficiency by gradually eliminating from Army service those who fail to demonstrate the capacity to advance. His progressive application will also assure continuing opportunities to highly qualified individuals, both Negroes and others, to enlist in the Army.

Under the Army's new program, Military Occupational Specialties will be open to all qualified personnel. No individual who qualifies for a Military Occupational Specialty will be denied the opportunity to follow it because of race or color. This will give greater significance and provide further implementation to the Army's policy and practice of using qualified persons without regard to race in filling the operating -- or so-called overhead -- positions at Army installations.

Formerly, Negroes were excluded from acquiring certain Military Occupational Specialties. Also, they were selected to attend schools on the basis of Negro distribution in the Army. They competed for promotion only among themselves. Now all non-commissioned officers will compete for promotion on an army-wide equal merit basis, against a single standard, without regard to race or color.

Under the old policy, Negro ROTC students attending summer camps were placed in Negro units for their training. Now all personnel regularly assigned to an ROTC unit will remain together and be trained together.

Mr. Gray declared that the Army was continuing its study of the present policy of regulating Negro original enlistments in the Army, which is now based on the population ratio of Negroes to the total population -- currently about 10 percent.

He pointed out that present policies concerning the utilization of Negro manpower in the Army are based on the recommendations of a board, headed by Lieutenant General A. C. Gillem, which made its report in 1940 and which itself recommended a periodic review of Army policies.

"Changing conditions and attitudes require and permit constant reexamining and testing of our policies and our practices," Mr. Gray said. "The new board, which I intend to appoint promptly, will help us in the performance of this duty."

END
SECRETARY JOHNSON APPROVES NAVY PROPOSALS FOR EQUALITY OF TREATMENT AND OPPORTUNITY

Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson today approved specific actions proposed by the Department of the Navy to assure equality of treatment and opportunity for all Navy personnel.

At the same time, Secretary Johnson asked the Department of the Army to reexamine its position on the subject, to consider carefully informal suggestions received from the President's Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Forces (Fair Committee), and to submit its reconsideration of the matter by June 30.

Proposals of the Department of the Air Force to assure equality for all its personnel were approved by Secretary Johnson on May 11. He then asked the Departments of the Army and the Navy to furnish clarifying information through Chairman Thomas R. Reid of the National Military Establishment's Personnel Policy Board, before making a decision in their cases.

The Department of the Navy has proposed taking these specific additional actions:

1. To promulgate a statement of the Navy Department's policy regarding minority races.

2. To augment efforts to obtain Negroes to enlist in the Navy by the assignment of Negro petty officers to duty in the Navy Recruiting Service, ordering volunteer qualified Negro Reserve officers to active duty to assist in recruitment, and altering advertisements, posters, films, and pamphlets to attract Negroes to the Navy by use of photographs showing whites and Negroes working together in the Naval Service.

3. To exert greater effort to attract qualified Negro students to participate in the Navy's ROTC program.

4. To promulgate a directive to insure that all members of the steward branch who are in all respects qualified are given an opportunity to change their rate to another rating branch.

5. To change the status of chief stewards to that of chief petty officers.

6. To disestablish within the Marine Corps the present separate Negro recruit training facility and integrate the training of Negro recruits with that of whites.
The proposed directive to all ships and stations, setting forth the Navy's revised policy regarding minority races, states:

"It is the policy of the Navy Department that there shall be equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons in the Navy and Marine Corps without regard to race, color, religion, or national origin.

"In their attitude and day-to-day conduct of affairs, officers and enlisted personnel of the Navy and Marine Corps shall adhere rigidly and impartially to the Navy Regulations, in which no distinction is made between individuals wearing the uniform of these Services.

"All personnel will be enlisted or appointed, trained, advanced, or promoted, assigned duty and administered in all respects without regard to race, color, religion, or national origin.

"In the utilization of housing, messing, berthing and other facilities, no special or unusual provisions will be made for the accommodation of any minority race.

In his memorandum to the Secretary of the Navy, Mr. Johnson said: "In my judgment, the specific actions you propose to undertake meet the spirit and intent of Executive Order 9981 of 26 July 1948 and are in accord with my memorandum of 8 April and my second memorandum on the same subject, dated 11 May. Therefore, I am pleased to approve your proposals and trust that you will begin their implementation without delay.

In asking the Department of the Army for reconsideration of its proposals for equality of treatment and opportunity, Secretary Johnson, in a memorandum to the Secretary of the Army, said:

"I have reviewed your comprehensive memorandum of 30 May concerning equality of treatment and opportunity in the Department of the Army and have noted with pleasure the significant progress made by the Army in this field in the last few years. I also note with pleasure the measures you propose in order to broaden still further the professional basis for the utilization of Negro personnel. I have read with understanding and sympathy the Army's contention that its current policies and practices are in accord with Executive Order 9981 of 26 July 1948 and my supplemental policy statement of 6 April 1949. I fully realize the grave problem presented by this question, and that it is of greater magnitude in the Army than in either the Navy or the Air Force. Nevertheless, I am forced to the conclusion that your proposals in reply to my second memorandum on this subject still fail to meet the basic intent of Executive Order 9981 and my memorandum of 6 April.

"Accordingly, I am asking you to reexamine your position and your proposals and at the same time to consider very carefully the informal suggestions of the Fair Committee which, I understand, have been made available to you. I would be pleased to have your reconsideration of this matter submitted to me by 20 June."

END
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