TO THE COMMITTEE ON EQUALITY OF TREATMENT AND OPPORTUNITY IN THE ARMED SERVICES:

Considering it essential that there be maintained in the armed services of the United States the highest standards of democracy, I have declared it to be the policy of the President that there shall be equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons in the armed services without regard to race, color, religion or national origin.

In Executive Order No. 9981, dated July 26, 1948, I directed that this policy should be put into effect as rapidly as possible. By this same executive order, I created the President's Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Services. I am happy to welcome you, each of you, to the tasks and opportunities which now become yours.

Our total national economy demands the most effective utilization of the services of every citizen. Likewise it is the privilege and responsibility of every citizen to make the maximum possible contribution to our national strength. The concept of democracy that our nation represents to the peoples of the world demands that there be equality of treatment and opportunity in the armed services as well as in all other phases of our national life.

It occurs to me that under the guidance of your chairman, the Committee will wish to make a comprehensive survey of the past and present status and service of the Negro citizen in the armed services.
You will find that the services have themselves been developing plans for improving the utilization of all minorities.

It is my profound desire that the work of this Committee shall yield results which will be not simply a report, but a set of operable plans, a blueprint, for constructive action.

The national security requires that you make your contribution, consistent with the fundamental rights of all men, toward the full development of the strength of our country.
Immediate Release

EXECUTIVE ORDER

981

ESTABLISHING THE PRESIDENT'S COMMITTEE ON
EQUALITY OF TREATMENT AND OPPORTUNITY IN
THE ARMED SERVICES

WHEREAS it is essential that there be maintained in the
armed services of the United States the highest standards of
discipline, with equality of treatment and opportunity for all
persons serving in our country's defense;

NOW, THEREFORE, by virtue of the authority vested in
me as President of the United States, by the Constitution and
the statutes of the United States, and as Commander in Chief of
the armed services, it is hereby ordered as follows:

1. It is hereby declared to be the policy of the President
that there shall be equality of treatment and opportunity for all
persons in the armed services without regard to race, color,
religion or national origin. This policy shall be put into effect
as rapidly as possible, having due regard to the time required
to effectuate any necessary changes without impairing efficiency
or morale.

2. There shall be created in the National Military Estab-
lishment an advisory committee to be known as the President's
Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed
Services, which shall be composed of seven members to be designated
by the President.

3. The Committee is authorized on behalf of the President
to examine into the rules, procedures and practices of the armed
services in order to determine in what respect such rules, pro-
cedures and practices may be altered or improved with a view
to carrying out the policy of this order. The Committee shall
confer and advise with the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary
of the Army, the Secretary of the Navy, and the Secretary
of the Air Force, and shall make such recommendations to the
President and to said Secretaries as in the judgment of the
Committee will accomplish the policy hereof.

4. All executive departments and agencies of the Federal
Government are authorized and directed to cooperate with the
Committee in its work, and to furnish the Committee such in-
formation or the services of such persons as the Committee may
require in the performance of its duties.

5. Upon request by the Committee to do so, persons in
the armed services or in any of the executive departments
and agencies of the Federal Government shall testify before
the Committee and shall make available for the use of the
Committee such documents and other information as the Com-
mittee may require.

6. The Committee shall continue to exist until such
time as the President shall terminate its existence by Execu-
tive order.

ELIOT J. STETSON

THE WHITE HOUSE
July 26, 1948