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Dear Eric:

The Fahy Committee has laid its emphasis on jobs and schooling on the assumption that if the Negro got an equal chance with the white to get a job or to go to school on the basis of his ability, the mutual respect would be built up between the whites and Negroes, and the social thing would gradually take care of itself. This seems to be what is happening in the Air Force, which put its new policy into effect last May.

Here are the basic figures on the Air Force:--

There are presently 25,891 Negroes in the Air Force. Seventy-one percent of these are now completely integrated in mixed units. This means they are actually working, going to school, living in barracks and eating in messes together. I have seen this, and there is absolutely no doubt about it. There are still 7,400 Negroes in Negro units. These units are mostly service units and Army units -- engineer outfits, etc. -- assigned to the Air Force. However, the Air Force is progressively integrating the remaining 7,400, and the job should be completed in a relatively few months.

I have recently visited Lackland Field, which is the only basic training base in the Air Force. When I was there, 8.8% of the trainees were Negro. As the recruits come in they are formed into flights of 60 men to a flight, and from the very beginning Negroes are put in the same flights with whites. The flights are under the command of flight chiefs and assistant flight chiefs, noncommissioned officers; and there are Negro flight chiefs and assistant flight chiefs in command of whites and Negroes together.

I also went to two bases in the training command -- Keesler and Scott Fields -- which are devoted to technical courses. Keesler is almost entirely radar operations courses, and Scott almost entirely radio repair -- both highly technical. At Keesler 5% of the men taking



these technical courses are Negroes, and at Scott a little over 10% of the men in the radio repair courses are Negroes. This shows not only that Negroes are getting full opportunity to exploit their abilities, but also the grade of Negro recruit that the Air Force is getting. Whereas the total Negro population in the Air Force is about 7.2%, the percentage of technical students at Scott is 10% -- a higher proportion than there is in the Air Force.

Williams Field, Chandler, Ariz., is devoted to training in jet fighters. There were three Negro instructors in jet fighters, two Negroes who were training to be instructors in jet fighters, and two Negro cadets taking jet training -- a total of seven in a relatively small base.

Everywhere I went the officers clubs and the NCO clubs are completely integrated, and Negro officers and their wives make free use of them. As for the service clubs, none of them are restricted to whites or Negro personnel, but in some places Negroes tend to use one club almost exclusively; at other places the service clubs are also completely integrated. The same thing goes for swimming pools and dances. However, at Williams Field I went to a dance, and there was a great number of Negro couples at the dance. The same is true of the airman's club at Scott Field. In other places there are usually a few Negro couples at the white dances, though not very many.

I am enclosing a copy of a report I did on the trip to the Air Force bases, and have marked in red pencil some of the anecdotal which you might find useful.

As for the Navy, Negroes are completely integrated in general ratings, and work and eat with whites. Furthermore, there are Negroes in every general rating in the Navy at present, though there are not Negroes in every grade within the ratings. This is understandable, because it takes quite a while to become a chief petty officer.

At the end of the war the proportion of Negroes in general ratings to those in the steward branch was about 5% to 9%. This has now gone down until there are 42% Negroes in general service and 58% in the steward branch. I have been to the submarine base at New London, and saw Negroes in the submariners schools and saw them also in general ratings in submarine crews.

At Great Lakes Boot Camp there are usually one or two or three Negroes to every company of trainees, numbering about 60 men. At the technical schools at Great Lakes there are Negroes in the most difficult courses. For example, I saw six Negroes in the electronics technician course, which is a course lasting 48 weeks, and requiring a mental score of 130 to get in. The requirement to be a Navy officer in World War II was only 110.



I have also visited the destroyer base for Destroyers Atlantic Fleet at Newport, R.I., and there were Negroes on the tin cans. I went all over the Essex class carrier LEXTE at Quonset, and there were Negroes throughout the ship in general ratings.

The Army has just announced its program a month ago, and has accepted three of the recommendations of the Fahy Committee. It has now opened up all Army jobs, Army schools to Negroes, and has agreed to begin the assignment of Negroes to white units. The fourth recommendation which the Committee made, to abolish the ten percent quota system, is still under discussion; but there is no doubt that this also is going to be abandoned.

Previously a whole range of technical jobs, especially in signal, transportation, ordnance, medical and finance, was closed to Negroes. The Army defended this on the ground that since all-Negro units did not call for most of these jobs, Negroes couldn't be given training in them or sent to school. Of the 106 school courses open to recruits upon the completion of basic training only 21, or 19%, of the courses were open to Negroes. Now all schools are open.

What is going on is a kind of quiet social revolution about which the country knows nothing. We feel that over a period of time this opportunity for whites and Negroes to live and work together is going to have an incalculable effect upon the civil population. And it has all been done by concentrating on the business of job opportunities, and also by not making a public hue and cry, but sitting down with the services and persuading them that they were making inefficient use of the manpower they had. The Committee maintained that the services could not afford this human wastage.

Everywhere I have gone in the Navy and Air Force, the officers report no trouble at all, and claim that as a result of integration, friction has decreased and the efficiency of the service has improved.

Sincerely,

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