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GENERAL CABLE CORPORATION

420 LEXINGTON AVENUE
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February 7, 1950

Judge Charles Fahy,
1625 "K" Street, N. W.,
Washington 6, D. C.

Dear Charlie:

Upon my return to the office yesterday I found your note dated February 1st with a draft of a memorandum for Secretary Gray and two chart attachments, for all of which I thank you. All of your exhibits I took home with me last night and although we are carrying on some corporation sessions here in the office I am finding time to sandwich in my views on a matter of the quota.

Let me put it briefly but clearly before I give you some of the reasons:

My unqualified vote is for complete elimination of the quota regardless of the Recruiting Service GCF. In other words I would not settle for any variation or deviation, such as elimination of quota down to GCF 90 and then have a quota between GCF 90 and 80 or 80 and 70 or any other figure.

Regardless of the fact that the Air Corps and the Navy may have a more glamorous appeal and therefore be able to get all the white boys they want and the smartest Negroes, it seems to me that the Army's inability to attract such men, if that is the case, may in large part be due to the Army's history, that is, how it has mistreated the portion of citizens about whom it complains. In other words, they have made their own bed and it is up to them not only to change the sheets but also to change the mattress of that bed. Those in the Service who continue to object to equal opportunity for all citizens, in the main are carrying on the prejudice, misinformation and the traditions of their forebears. It is easy enough, with the handicaps that the Army has seen to it that the Negro should have, for the Negro not to show up to advantage. Again, I say this is largely the Army's own fault.

It does not seem that it is incumbent upon me as a member of the Committee to play any game with any branch of the Service which would simply be affording a segment of that service protection and endorsement, when I have been appointed as one member of the Committee to do a job which I feel is for the best interests of the country. Certainly I am not going to be a party to establishing a quota between 80 and 90, and 70 and 80, to protect some officers' inefficiencies. We pay for the education of these young men at West Point; we pay their salaries after they are out of West Point. The great majority of these men are capable, sincere, energetic and are doing a grand job. But even they in some instances can lack the horizon that is so essential towards thinking of their country's interests, not alone on how they would like their own particular club to operate but on how they would like the entire economy to operate.



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Stalin is on one side of the world preaching freedom and equality of opportunity. Uncle Sam is on the other side preaching freedom and equality of opportunity. The world to which they are both talking is one third white, one third yellow and one third black and brown. Unless we go into the battle with clean hands, how can we say that our ideology should be followed? We claim one thing and we are living something else.

It is the Army's job, it seems to me, instead of working their quota system at the induction level, to run their Army as trained experts, as you and I would run a business. We hire a group of people. After they are with us a while we measure their efficiency as good salesmen, good accountants, or good engineers. We don't judge them by the scores they received when they came in; we judge them by how they perform and deliver the goods once they are inside.

In my opinion it is up to the Army to set up some yardstick of performance and to exclude from their service the dumbbells whether they are white or whether they are black, and let the yardstick be the answer and not the color of the individual.

As we have all seen from recent news, there are all kinds of opposing influences creeping up on the horizon and if the Army keeps on fiddling while Rome may be burning, it is going to be too bad for all of us. As a Committee we ought to put the responsibility up to the Army as to what yardstick they want to have inside the organization, but as far as we are concerned we will stand for no quota system.

No apologies for imposing upon you at such length, because you are all such good friends and I feel I can do so with impunity - - -

In final, your memorandum as I see it ought to be rephrased or recouched as it has all the appearances and could be readily picked up by any radical opponents as being a means towards restricting the number of Negroes to go in the Army. In other words, we seem to be importuning Secretary Gray to take on our program with insurance that he won't get as many Negroes as he thinks he will. It is the Army's job to get as many people as they can at 90. If they cannot get quite enough, then take some more at a scale down to 80 and shut off when they have enough.

Our memorandum to the Secretary in my opinion should be short and sweet and to the point - - no quota but do your job on the inside; set up your yardstick of performance and whether the fellow is Negro or white make him toe the mark; if he doesn't make good let him out.

cc: Mr. Lester Granger
Mr. E. W. Kenworthy
Mr. John Sengstacke
Mr. William E. Stevenson

