MARCH 25, 1949

CONFIRMATION

E. H. KENYON
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
THE PRESIDENT'S COMMITTEE ON EQUALITY OF TREATMENT
AND OPPORTUNITY IN THE ARMED SERVICES
C/O OFFICE OF SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON, D.C.

MESSAGE:

Pursuant here, additional questions follow (quotation)

GENERAL

1. IS THE VIEW THAT THE ELIMINATION OF SEGREGATED UNITS WOULD DETERIORATE THE SERVICE PERSONNEL THE ONLY REASON FOR INSISTING UPON A SLOW CHANGE OF POLICY OR NO CHANGE AT ALL?

2. THE COMMITTEE IS CONCERNED WITH MORE THAN THE EXTENSION OF EQUALITY OF TREATMENT AND OPPORTUNITY TO MILITARY SERVICE PERSONNEL. IT IS CONCERNED ALSO WITH THE REJECTION OF OTHER PERSONS BECAUSE OF RACE, RELIGION, OR NATIONAL ORIGIN. TO WHAT EXTENT WOULD YOU SUGGEST THAT EQUALITY OF TREATMENT AND OPPORTUNITY IS NOT BEING EXTENDED TO JAPANESE, MEXICAN, JEWISH, AND CATHOLIC?

3. IT IS INSISTED THAT A SLOW PROGRESS IN WHICH THERE IS ALL IMPORTANT IS THE PRACTICAL APPROACH TO THE PROBLOGS WITH WHICH THE COMMITTEE IS CONCERNED. WOULD YOU SUGGEST THE COMMITTEE SUBMIT RECOMMENDATIONS AS TO WHAT YOU THINK THIS PROGRAM FOR SLOW CHANGE SHOULD CONTAIN, AND SPECIFY PERIOD OF TIME YOU HAVE IN MIND?

4. IT IS INSISTED THAT THE LAW ON紙 FLAT THIS SITUATION IS NOT BE CORRECTED. WE INSIST THAT IT IS ESSENTIAL NECESSARY TO AVOID A CRISIS IN CERTAIN AREAS. ESPECIALLY IN THE SOUTH, AND THAT WAITING FOR SLOW CHANGES WILL ITSELF ALLOW THESE ATTITUDES TO GROW AND BECOME PROGRESSIVE. WOULD YOU SUGGEST THAT A PRACTICAL PROGRAM OF CAREFUL PLANNING COULD OR SHOULD BE EFFECTED IN A MUCH SHORTER PERIOD OF TIME, SAY 3 TO 5 YEARS?

ARMS (OFFICERS)

1. HAS ANY SPECIAL EFFORT BEEN MADE TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF NEGRO OFFICER TRAINERS SINCE THE GILLEN REPORT?

2. TO WHAT EXTENT HAVE YOU ACCOMPLISHED AN ELIMINATION OF SEGREGATION IN OFFICER AND SPECIALIST TRAINING SCHOOLS?

3. TO WHAT EXTENT AND UNDER WHAT SPEED COULD SEGREGATIONAL HIERARCHIES OFFICERS IN RECOGNIZED OR RECOGNIZABLE TO THE MILITARY, BE TRAINED AND ADVANCED TO LEADER HIERARCHY THAN THAT OF CAPTAIN?

5. HAS THE ARMY ANY COMPANIES IN WHICH THERE IS SEGREGATION DOWN TO THE PLATOON LEVEL? WHAT IS THE RECORD OF THE MALE OF THESE COMPANIES?

6. IF YOU WERE CALLED UPON TO GIVE UNDER WAY A PROGRAM OF EXPERIMENTATION IN SEGREGATION, WOULD YOU SUGGEST THAT IT BE DEVELOPED FROM VOLUNTEER PERSONNEL, OR THAT IT IS ARRANGED WITHIN THE UNNecessary INSTALLATION UPON WHAT HAS BEEN DONE?

7. IF YOU WERE CALLED UPON TO GIVE UNDER WAY A PROGRAM FOR COMPLETE SEGREGATION IN RIGID UNITS OVER A PERIOD OF TIME — SAY — 2 TO 5 YEARS, WOULD YOU SUGGEST THAT THE SEGREGATION BE STARTED ON THE HIGHEST AND LEADING LEVEL, OR ON THE ASSIGNMENT OR RIGID LEVEL (AFTER YOU WILL HAVE HAD TIME TO WORK WITH THE MEN FIRST?)

8. (THIS HYPOTHETICAL MAY GIVE THE COMMITTEE SOME WORKING IDEA OF HOW SERIOUS YOUR PROBLEM MAY BE)

   SUPPOSE YOU HAVE A TRAINING INSTALLATION MADE UP OF THE COMPANIES, ONE OF WHICH IS COMPOSED ENTIRELY OF RESCRS, OFFICERS AND UNRIGID MEN.

   IN PLANNING THE ELIMINATION OF THIS SEGREGATED UNIT, WOULD YOU (OFF-MARK) SUGGEST THAT IT BE DONE BY MAKING THE RIGID COMPANY AN ELIMINATED OR RIGID-COMPANY COMPANY, CREATING A NEW THREE COMPANY MADE UP OF 1/3 OF THE OTHER RIGID UNITS, AND THEN ELIMINATING THE COMPLEMENTS OF THE RIGID COMPANY FROM THE RIGID RIGID COMPANY?

   OR WOULD YOU SUGGEST THAT THERE BE A SMOOTHER TRANSITION OR EXCHANGE OF PERSONNEL BETWEEN THE COMPANIES AS THEY STUDY TOTHR NO LONGER EXIST A DISTINCTLY RIGID COMPANY?

   OR A THIRD ALTERNATIVE MIGHT IT BE TO LEAVE THE PLATOON UP TO THE RIGID COMMAND WITH SPECIAL STAFF AND ADVISORY ASSISTANCE?

9. IT HAS BEEN SUGGESTED THAT MANY OF THE PRESENT PATTERN OF SEGREGATION IN THE ARMY MIGHT BE DUE TO OLD TRADITIONS AND NOT UPON EXPERIENCES ON THE BATTLEFIELD OR EXPERIENCES OF THE ARMY COMMAND ITSELF. IS THIS TRUE, AND DO YOU ANTICIPATE THAT THIS COMMITTEE WILL HAVe THE ABILITY TO DISCOVER WHAT THESE TRADITIONS ARE?

   AIR FORCE

   1. WE UNDERSTAND THAT ABOVE THE AIR FORCE'S SEGREGATION FROM THE ARMY, ITS PROGRAM HAS FOLLOWED THE CECIL REPORT. WHAT PROGRESS HAS THE AIR FORCE MADE IN THE CECIL REPORT?
2. Would it bereasonable for the Air Force to say that as far as it is concerned the Gillum Report is behind times, and that in the Air Force training and assignment of men without regard to race can more quickly be accomplished than in the ground Army? For example, in the Air Force, you are dealing with younger calibers individuals, both white and negro, than in the ground Army.

3. In the last few years a great number of Negro youth have gone in for civilian training in radio, radar, television and communications. Has the Air Force felt their progress in potential Negro personnel?

NAVY

1. The Navy's record as to Negro officers has been far worse than that of the Army. What, if anything, has been done in the way of a special drive or program to increase Negro naval officer personnel?

2. What has been done toward training Negroes for Navy flyers?

3. Has any special recruiting campaign, either through the regular recruiting machinery or through specially assigned recruiting officers to locate and bring into the Navy any of the many young Negro men who are quite capable of being efficient officers?

4. (It has been said that it is best and most democratic to stress the requirements of the most capable American citizen that the Navy can get regardless of their color. This is splendid for the "from hand-on" program, where all other factors are equalized, but it is not sufficient in curing a deficiency in the present status which is the result of a hundred years of discrimination.)

Does the Secretary realize the dual aspect of the problem of eliminating discrimination and segregation? That of completely erasing all future dealing, and that of eradicating the adverse differential presently existing. Has the Secretary been concerned with tackling the problem from both of these angles?

5. The Navy has special recruiting personnel who annually go into trade and professional schools (including law schools for example) for the purpose of enlisting senior students and encouraging them to enlist in the Navy as officers. Have any of these agents been instructed to pay particular attention to outstanding Negro students, or give special attention to the desires of the Navy to increase its Negro officer personnel?

6. It is understood that still more than 9/10s of the enlisted Navy personnel are yet in the serfdom rank. Has any program been started to re-train or re-educate any of these men?

MARINES

1. Has the policy of not enlisting Negroes in the regular Marines been changed since the end of the war?
2. Within the last two years, what progress has been made toward using Negroes in other than the seaman branch of the marines?

3. Has there been any information to the platoon units of the marines, as apart from any information of Negro platoons in other marine companies?

4. How many Negroes are officers in the marines? What is being done to remedy this embarrassing situation?

(Enclosure)

Will see you Monday morning 9:00 A.M.

Sincerely, John M. Bennett
Publisher and Editor