

Q O P X

30 September 1949

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

SUBJECT: Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Services

I have restudied in great detail the position of the Department of the Army with respect to its utilization of negro manpower and have discussed with Mr. Fahy the suggestions of the President's Committee and also the course of action outlined below. As a result and subject to your concurrence I propose promptly to pursue the following program:

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 remain together and be trained together 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 presented herein, and to re-examine and review the fundamental policies for the utilization of negro manpower in the light of changing conditions and experiences of this day and time. The first board will be convened in the near future.

Under this program, no member of the Army who has qualified for any Military Occupational Specialty will be denied the opportunity to pursue that specialty because of race or color. This will further implement the Army's policy and practice of using qualified persons without regard to race or color to fill the operating -- or so-called overhead -- positions at Army installations.

In connection with this whole subject of equality of treatment and opportunity and the efficient utilization of manpower in the Army, I think it appropriate to draw attention to the fact that the Army has changed its re-enlistment policy. Only those individuals who,



during their first regular enlistment, have qualified for promotion to Grade 5, if unmarried, and to Grade 4, if married, are permitted to re-enlist. Promotion to these grades is made without regard to position vacancies and therefore all individuals during their first enlistment are given an equal opportunity on an Army-wide merit basis, against a single standard, without regard to race or color, to win promotion to these grades. This program will make for greater economy and efficiency by gradually eliminating from Army service those who fail to demonstrate the capacity to advance. Its progressive application will also assure continuing opportunities to highly qualified individuals, both negro and other, to enlist in the Army.

I find that for the foreseeable future negro units must be maintained and that no practicable substitute has been developed for the Army's present policy of regulating Army original negro enlistments on the basis of population ratio, but we are continuing our study of these problems.

Gordon Gray
Secretary of the Army

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