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29 October 1949

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT'S COMMITTEE

SUBJECT: Background to the Proposed Letter to Secretary Gray

The immediate background to the proposed letter to Gray, draft of which is enclosed, is this:

I sent a copy of the Bonis memo to MacFayden and my reply to Bendetsen, who sent both memos to General Brooks in P & A. Brooks turned them over to MacFadyen who pulled Bonis off the job and turned it over to Major Lieblich who has prepared all the Army papers so far on the Army's policy.

I had lunch the other day with Lieblich. He made it obvious that he thought the Army had got itself into an untenable position through the Bonis memorandum.

It would not be difficult to work out a solution to the quota problem which would eliminate the racial quota, prevent the enlistment of too many low-score men, both white and Negro, and not jeopardize the Army's authorized enlisted strength. I know this. So does Lieblich.

I have let Lieblich know that if he can get the approval of his superior officers to sit down with me, we have a chance of working out a solution which might be acceptable to both the Committee and the Army.

He has replied that he thinks it highly unlikely that he could get authority to work with the staff, or get support within P & A for any solution which might be worked out. His reasons for believing so are these: The Army has been planning to re-issue WD Circular 124, with changes to reflect the recently announced policy. Mr. Fahy informed David Niles that the Army was planning to re-issue Circular 124. Niles called Marx Leva. Leva called Bendetsen and told him that 124 should not be re-issued without proper clearance on top-side. Bendetsen called General Brooks and Brooks gave orders to MacFadyen. MacFadyen has now adopted the attitude that he will make no move whatever, on the quota or anything else, and that any action must be taken by the front office. Therefore, Lieblich feels he cannot get backing for working with the Committee's staff.



This, of course, is an impossible situation, since there was a firm understanding with Gray and Bendetson and MacFadyen that P & A would work with the staff to try to solve the quota problem.

The bottlenecks are General Brooks, Director of P & A, and his number two, Colonel MacFadyen. An example of their determination to obstruct any new Army policy is the statement sent out by P & A to all commanding generals forbidding them to use Negroes except in Negro units and in "Negro spaces" in overhead installations.

I know from the best authority within P & A that its hope is that the Committee will submit its final recommendations -- what its recommendations are they don't much care -- and disband.

E. W. Kenworthy
Executive Secretary

