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SECRETARY OF THE ARMY GORDON GRAY

Interviewed by: Warren B. Francis, Los Angeles Times
Lawrence Spivak, American Mercury Magazine
Elizabeth May Craig, Portland, Me. Press Herald
Martha Roundtree, Moderator

REYNOLDS: Mr. Secretary, I should like to ask you about segregation in the Army. As I understand it both the Dept. of Navy and the Department of the Air Forces have presented acceptable plans on solving segregation problems and the Army has not yet presented an acceptable plan. Does that mean the Army, the largest employer of manpower in the Armed Services is backwards on this problem?

GRAY: Mr. Reynolds I would say I don't know if you mean backwards from the point of view of a solution of the problems that exist or backwards from the point of view of time. It is true that the Navy and Air Force have presented plans which have been approved. We are still working on a plan which we hope will be acceptable and meet the President's order for the elimination of anything other than equality of treatment and opportunity in the Armed Services. Now it is possible that you have reference to a story which appeared in the metropolitan press at least a New York newspaper on Sunday in which it was stated that the Fahy Committee and Army had reached a virtual standstill, I'm not sure I'm quoting correctly. As far as I know there is no standstill, we are talking constantly with the Fahy Committee as a matter of fact I saw Mr. Fahy, not professionally, but I ran into him causally just about a week ago and he said we will have a memorandum for you in a few days and then meet with you.

REYNOLDS: On the other hand, there has been no agreement and you have rather passed your first deadline have you not?

GRAY: Well, we have had our plan sent back to us.

REYNOLDS: What was the big stumbling block? What seemed to be the thing. . . ?

GRAY: Well, I would say that one of the principal issues is the quota, the so-called quota issue. Under present policies which were the result of a study made by the so-called Gillam Board in 1946



We impose roughly 10% which is designed to meet the ratio of the negro in the population upon the negro enlistments in the Army. The Fahy Committee would like to see us ~~raise~~^{release or remove} that 10% quota.

REYNOLDS: As I understand it the Army does not want to mix negroes with white men in basic units. Is that correct? They want to continue segregation.

GRAY: Briefly, if I may state the Gillam Board's policies which were that in combat units there would be units used within larger units such as battalions within regiments and in some cases companies within battalions and in no event however a unit larger than a regiment within a division. It also contemplated complete integration in overhead installations such as at posts, camps, and stations. No discrimination insofar as schooling and technical training is concerned and a general program which would be designed to give the negro soldier, and non-commissioned officer, and offer a chance to develop leadership over and above the situation in which he was competing with better educated white men.

SPIVAK: Mr. Secretary what was meant when the report said that your last answer to the request was too general and too inadequate?

GRAY: I'm not sure—you're not quoting the New York paper . . . ?

SPIVAK: I'm quoting the New York Times that is based on what Sec. Johnson is supposed to have said to the Army's second answer to his request.

GRAY: Yes. Well I think that he felt that we had not particularized sufficiently in certain areas such as for example the opening up of certain MOSs, that is Military Occupational Specialities, which are numbers assigned to a particular type of skill in the Army. We said we were going to broaden the opportunities. Since that time our present studies have enabled us to say, and I have proposed a paper which I will present soon now that there will be no MOS which a negro soldier may not be entitled to have if he is qualified to meet the requirements of it.



SPIVAK: Mr. Secretary that same report said that last August---
quoted Gen. Bradley last August as saying that the Army would change
when the nation as a whole changed in its attitude toward segre-
gation, but that it wouldn't until that time. Now is that in
general the present attitude/of the Army?

GRAY: No. May I state the present attitude of the Army Mr. Spivak
The Gillam Board, as I said, reported in April 1946, I think that
I would certainly be the last to say that a decision taken in 1946
would be necessarily a sound decision in 1949 and I'm not sure that
in every respect the Gillam Board's report was sound, and it is
our intention to further study some of these basic policies in the
course of study to be made by people who will actually command these
combat troops, as of today's attitudes and conditions, to see whether
those policies established by the Gillam Board actually seem to be
sound today.

CRAIG: Mr. Secretary, I'd like to get off on another subject, that
is the five percenters. Do you think it is fair to suspend the
two generals until there has been public charges made against them
or a full investigation?

GRAY: Mrs. Craig I try not to do any thing that's unfair. I
took the action after very serious soul searching and I assure you
that it was one of the most difficult decisions that I've ever had to
make. In answer to your question I think that when a Secretary
of the Army is given information which leads him to question the
judgment of a man in a place as important as these men occupy that
I would be derelict in my duty to the people of this country to
leave him in a position of responsibility until I was sure there was
no reasonable doubt of the situation which gave rise to my question-
ing his judgment.

CRAIG: Then let me ask you this. Congressman Shafer says that as
long as those two are suspended that Gen. Vaughan, the President's
aide should also be suspended. do you have authority over General
Vaughan?

GRAY: No I do not.

CRAIG: Is a military aide assigned by you?

GRAY: He is a military aide to the President.

