MEMORANDUM FOR THE CHAIRMAN, PERSONNEL POLICY BOARD, OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

April 30, 1949

Reference is made to the recent memorandum from the Secretary of Defense, which directs each Department of the National Military Establishment to examine current personnel policies to determine what further steps can and should be made in the light of the policy enunciated therein and in view of Executive Order 9981.

The Department of the Air Force has completed such a study and has determined certain supplemental policies to meet the specific needs of the Air Force.

In implementation, it is planned that the all-Negro 335th Fighter Wing at Lockbourne will be inactivated and the personnel redistributed throughout the Air Force worldwide.

Concurrently, qualified Negro personnel in other Air Force units will be afforded the opportunity to attend service schools or transfer to traditionally white units in accordance with the requirements of the Air Force and the qualifications of the individuals.

It is contemplated that, for the present, certain Negro service type units will continue to exist since they are efficiently performing a necessary Air Force function. Individuals in these units, however, may qualify for assignment to any Air Force activity, and may attend technical or other service schools which will enhance their qualifications without regard to the previous limitations imposed by Negro units and Negro vacancies.

With the adoption of this policy, the principle of Negro quotas to maintain Negro units must, of necessity, be discarded because racial quotas are not consistent with free competition on the basis of merit and ability.

Drafts of proposed Air Force directives have previously been furnished to the Fair Committee and to the Chairman of the Personnel Policy Board, Office of the Secretary of Defense. Upon the advice of the Chairman of the Personnel Policy Board, par. 4(a) of the
confidential letter to the Commanding General, Major Commands
(Subject: Implementation of Air Force Letter 59—\(\)) has been revised
with regard to key personnel in Negro units. This subparagraph
now states that "If they are in key positions and are required
for the successful functioning of the unit, they will be considered
and handled in exactly the same manner as other-than-Negro personnel
in similar circumstances."

Drafts of proposed Air Force policy statement and implementing
directives are attached.

W. Stuart Symington

2 Seals:
1 Draft of AF 59—
2 Draft Letter to Major Commands
"Implementation of AF 59——"