

MEMORANDUM FOR THE CHAIRMAN, PERSONNEL POLICY BOARD, GSD

SUBJECT: Report on Implementation of Air Force Policy
Concerning Negro Personnel

The current Air Force policy concerning Negro personnel was approved by the Secretary of Defense on May 11, 1949 and is contained in Air Force Letter 35-3, (copy attached).

Concurrent with the publication of Air Force Letter 35-3 instructions were issued to the major commanders to examine the qualifications of their Negro personnel. Those personnel whose qualifications indicated that they could be utilized more effectively than in their current assignment were to be reassigned in accordance with the needs of the service and the qualifications of the individuals.

One of the initial actions in this regard was the inactivation of the only all-Negro Air Force combat wing, the 332nd Fighter Wing at Lockbourne Air Force Base, Columbus, Ohio. With the adoption of the integration policy the personnel of the 332nd Fighter Wing were examined by a group of classification specialists and were reassigned as rapidly as circumstances would permit. Due to budgetary uncertainties, it could not be determined immediately whether Lockbourne Air Force Base would remain active or would be placed on an inactive status. Although this retarded the redistribution of Lockbourne personnel somewhat, the base has now been placed on an inactive status and except for the small caretaking detachment, the personnel have been reassigned throughout the Air Force world-wide.

The Air Force does not specifically designate certain units as Negro units. In the statistics contained herein, units whose strength is over fifty per cent Negro are termed "Negro units." Assuming that the 31 December 1948 statistics are representative of the pre-integration situation, the distribution of Negro personnel by unit at that time was as follows:

Number of Negro units	118
Number of white units containing Negroes	<u>50</u>
Total number of units containing Negroes	168



Memorandum for the Chairman, Personnel Policy Board, subject:
Report on Implementation of Air Force Policy Concerning
Negro Personnel

Upon implementation of the integration policy and redistribution of Negro personnel, the total number of units containing Negroes increased as follows:

June 30	273
July 31	439
August 31	797
Sept. 30	954

During the same time the number of Negro units decreased. Part of the decrease was due to the inactivation of the various units comprising the 332nd Fighter Wing at Lockbourne. The decreasing number of Negro units was as follows:

June 30	106
July 31	89
August 31	86
Sept. 30	81

All of the foregoing refers to numbers of units only. The numbers of individuals assigned to the various units, as of 31 August 1949 are as follows:

	<u>Aug.</u>	<u>Sept.</u>
Negroes assigned to Negro units	11,921	11,521
Negroes assigned to white units	5,223	7,130
Pipeline (includes students)	<u>6,749</u>	<u>6,160</u>
Total assigned command strength, Negroes	23,899	24,811

The percentage of Negro enlisted strength has been running as follows:

December 31, 1948 (pre-integration)	6.5%
June 30, 1949	6.0%
July 31, 1949	6.0%
August 31, 1949	6.5%
Sept. 30, 1949	6.8%

One matter which is affecting the implementation of the integration policy is in regard to the overseas areas to which Negro personnel are not being assigned. Through communications between the Department of State and the Department of Defense this situation is gradually being clarified. The most recent communication from the State Department did not specifically forbid the assignment of Negro

Memorandum for the Chairman, Personnel Policy Board, subject:
Report on Implementation of Air Force Policy Concerning Negro
Personnel

personnel to any overseas areas, but stated that the governments
concerned should first be queried before assigning Negroes to
certain areas. The areas in question are as follows:

Iceland
Greenland
Canada

Newfoundland
Bermuda
British possessions in the
Caribbean area.

We plan to comply exactly with the State Department's letter.
When Negro personnel, through normal assignment procedures, come
up for assignment to one of these areas, we will hold the assign-
ment in abeyance and through the Secretary of Defense and the
State Department, query the government concerned.

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Cy of AFL 35-3
dtd May 11, '49

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