MEMORANDUM FOR MR. PATT

Analysis of

SUBJECT: Replies of the Army and Navy to Mr. Johnson's May 11 Memo

I. The Navy

The additional forward steps proposed by the Navy in its reply to Secretary Johnson's May 11 Memo are substantially those proposed by the Committee in its "Initial Recommendations." The Navy does not mention the equal entry score for all three services. It does, however, propose a job and age analysis to determine what positions in the Navy can be filled by men with a qualification score of less than 45 — Army equivalent 90 — without impairing the service. Presumably the Navy still uses men below 85 or 90 in those positions for which they are fitted.

This would seem to meet the aim of the Committee, which is not — as some in the Navy apparently feared — to force upon the Navy men of inferior quality when the Navy could not profitably use. The Committee, of course, does not intend that the Navy should be forced to take all men below 90 who may want to enlist, nor even to take an arbitrary percentage of men below 90. The Committee is interested only in matching men to the job, and this objective applies to all three services.

In one respect the Navy goes beyond the initial recommendations of the Committee by proposing to abolish the separate training facilities for Negroes in the Marine Corps. It does not indicate, however, whether or not separate Negro units in the regular Corps following training.

II. The Army

General Comment
The Army proposes to work within the policy of Circular 172, assem- 
blit "to assure continued progress by providing utilization of the Negro 
soldier on the broadest possible professional scale." Thus the objec-
tive set by the Army and the objective of the Committee's recommendations 
are identical.

To achieve this objective the Army proposes:

A. Opening all MOS to qualified personnel regardless of race. (This 
is discussed in detail later.)

B. Removal of segregation of Negroes at the company level rather than 
the battalion level as at present. (This is discussed in detail later.)

C. The creation of additional Negro T/0 & X Units.

The Army does not propose to:

A. Abolish the 20 percent quota system even if there were parity of 
entry scores.

B. Abolish Negro quotas in Army School courses for replacement stress 
students.

C. Use Negro specialists upon completing school courses in other than 
Negro T/0 & X or overseas units.

Detailed Comment:

A. The initial and ultimate objectives of Circular 172. (Page 1, para 2)

The Committee has given considerable thought to the meaning 
of the initial and ultimate objectives of the Gillen Board report.
The original classified report, the correspondence upon that report 
at the secretarial level, some testimony before the Committee by 
those who handled Negro problems during the war -- all have led 
the Committee to believe the ultimate objective of the Army, in event 
of war, was the use of all manpower on a non-medal basis.

The Committee has noted that the Gillen Board did not attempt 
to set up intermediate objectives but merely suggested that "timely 
phasing" be used in interpreting adjustments between the immediate 
and ultimate objectives.

As you know, the Committee has felt that, without definite 
intermediate steps, the initial objective (a Negro quota used in 
Negro units) would never be translated into the ultimate objective. 
In fact, without intermediate steps, the initial objective would 
foretell the realization of the ultimate objective.
In order that the transition to the eventual objective of the Army might be evolutionary, the Committee concentrated in its initial recommendations on increasing the opportunity for qualified Negroes to attend schools. The Committee believes that the best way to affect the objective which the Army set for itself in the Gillian report is to promote actual respect and trust on the job. It was the Committee's intention in setting such intermediate objectives that not only the Negro would benefit by these wider opportunities, but that the Army itself would benefit.

B. Changes in War Department Circular 124 (Page 2, para 3)

As stated before, the objectives of the Army and the Committee are the same. The Army does not particularize here what it will do to broaden Negro utilization.

C. Equality of Treatment and Opportunity (Page 3, para 4)

The Army says a proportionate number of spaces in the troop basis -- "including all grades and type jobs" -- are reserved for Negroes. Negroes are found in all grades in the Regular Army up to lieutenant colonel and in the Reserve up to colonel, but they are not found in all type jobs, nor are spaces reserved for them in all type jobs -- if I understand the meaning of "type jobs." A quick glance at the so-called "U" report will reveal that there are a great many MOS which have no authorized or actual Negro representation.

Moreover there are a great many MOS in the Army which are currently below their white authorization and which do not have any Negro authorization. Whether or not Negroes could be found or trained for all these specialties I do not know. The fact is, however, that there are no authorized spaces for Negroes in these MOS, as the attached chart makes plain.

D. Negro units as a training ground for Negro officers (Page 3, para 5, a (2))

The Army says:

"The Regular Army must be a corps of leaders. The quality of leadership in small units on the battlefield is an un- failing yardstick of success in battle... Against the direct competition of the better educated white soldier, the average Negro soldier would find it difficult to rise above the level of service tasks. The present system of segregated units guarantees that Negro soldiers will be..."
given the opportunity to develop leadership, un-  
blinded and unshackled by overshadowing competition  
they are not yet equipped to meet . . . . The army's  
position is that the utilization of its manpower must  
be towards attaining success on future battlefields.  

This is a recurring army argument but it seems to me to be  
dangerous doctrine. The army asserts (1) battle success must be  
the measure of manpower policy; (2) battle success depends largely  
upon the leadership of small units; (3) in open competition the  
average negro would not rise above a service duty; (4) therefore  
Negroes must be protected from such competition by being placed  
in separate units, and Negro leadership must be developed within  
such units.

The question is, Can the Army for the sake of developing  
Negro leaders -- lendable as that objective is -- afford to  
contradict men's lives to inferior leadership and jeopardize battle  
successes.

If the army believes that Negroes are incapable of leading  
men, then there should be no Negro officers. The committee's aim  
is not preferential treatment for the negro, but equal opportunity.
If, when offered equal opportunity, Negroes suffer a loss in the  
number of commissioned and non-commissioned officers, that may be  
regrettable, but it is hardly discriminatory. If the aim of the  
Army is maximum military efficiency, it is hard to see how this can  
be assured under conditions of preferential treatment for the negro.

E. Proportion of Negroes in combat and service units (Page 4, para  
5, 6, 7, 8)

I do not presently have this proportion, but since the Army  
says that for the first time the number of Negroes in combat units  
comprises 10% with the number in service units, I will act for  
their proportion of Negro percentages as contrasted with whites. I do  
not think this is necessarily significant, however. If a Negro, by  
his abilities, belongs in a service unit, that is where he should be  
put. I do not think Negroes should be put in combat units because  
they are Negroes but only if they are potentially good combat  
soldiers.

F. The unit of Negro segregation (Page 4, para 5, 6, 7)

I have mentioned before that, since visiting some installations,  
I have had serious doubts of the wisdom of making the unit of segre-  
gation smaller than the company. A company is the smallest adminis-  
trative unit. By segregating Negroes on the platoon level, you  
would have, in my opinion, far more likelihood of trouble than in
man-to-man integration. In a paper which General James L. Harvorsa
wrote for the War College in 1935, he said that he thought most
racial friction developed between groups rather than individuals.
I really don't see much advantage in company segregation.

G. Negroes and Army schools (Page 4, para 5, a (4))

Negroes are not barred from Army schools because of color. But
they are barred from many courses in Army schools because those
courses have no Negro quotas, and because Negroes are excluded only
for positions in overseas installations and in Negro T/O & R units.

H. Negroes and career fields (Page 4, para 5, a (5))

The Army says that "there are Negroes in every career field
so far introduced and in process of formulation." This is true.

I. 1936 and 1937 (Page 4, para 5, a (6))

The Army says that "as of the latest report" Negroes are serv-
ing in 434 of all 604 job descriptions. The latest report available
to the Committee is the February 43 report. (The latest 1937 report
is that of March, and I have written to BLS for the report in May.
In the February report there are roughly 500 Negroes, excluding the teaching
and special categories which are not relevant to our study. Of these
500 there were 279 without Negro representation.

This figure of 179 is deceptive, however, and hardly fair to the
Army, for it includes 150 in which there are only one or two
whites. To be absolutely fair, it is necessary to take account only
of those 150 in which there is a fairly substantial white representa-
tion and no Negroes at all. Using such a criterion, I found 50
150 in which Negroes were not represented -- which is about the
figure given by the Army.
But this quite a very large number of NS in which there is an authorization for Negroes of only one or two -- merely a token representation. This is particularly true of the Signal Corps.

If you will look at the accompanying chart, you will see the result. There is an authorized white strength for NS 252 -- any push operator -- of 98%. Actual strength is 20%. By December, 1943, it will be down to 1%. And yet there is no Negro authorization for NS 279. Instances of this kind, where the Army is short of men in an NS, and yet has set up no Negro authorization or merely a token authorization, can be multiplied by the dozen.

J. Negroes in overheard installations (Page 4, para 5, a (?))

The report referred to in this paragraph is one that was prepared by the G-1 at Fort Huachuca following a visit to that post by the staff of the Fair Commissary. On the whole this is a very creditable showing in the use of Negroes -- both civilian and military -- in the post overall.

Of course, this depends largely on the individual commander. The 23rd ASV at Ennac, like the 2301 AT at Ennac, is excellent. But there are very few Negroes used in the overheard of the 3rd Armored Division at Ennac, or in the overseas of the Armored School there.

K. "Factors Affecting Policy" (Page 5, para 6)

This paragraph seems to make the following points: a sailor cannot run away without drowning; a soldier is not so restricted. Therefore, soldiers must have more confidence in their fellows than sailors in their shipmates. It is doubtful whether a sailor would subscribe to this view of his courage and initiative.

The Army says that since soldiers must eat, sleep and die together, it cannot risk friction which may jeopardize battle success. The Navy until 1942 always justified its non-use of Negroes in general service on the grounds that the close-living conditions aboard ship invited friction which it could not risk. The Navy now uses Negroes aboard ship in general service ratings.

L. The Negro Quota (Page 5, para 6, b)

Admittedly the Army has a real problem while it takes men at 607 70 and the other two arms can get enlisted at 607 90. Although Secretary Reppel explicitly, and Acting Secretary Gray, by implication, said that the Army could abandon the quota if the entry sources were equalized, this offer is not now put forward to Secretary Johnson.
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The Army says unless it maintains the quota, it may easily have 30 or 40 percent Negroes in the service. This figure has never been mentioned to the Committee, and it is unsupported by any evidence. None of the forecasts in the so-called Noble Report justifies a prophecy of this kind. I think the Committee might ask for a statistical defense of this figure.

Since the whole issue of the quota is so much in dispute, could the Army be asked to make a valid test of non-quota enlistment, to determine whether their fears are well founded?

II. Comparison of NBS policy with Army practice (Page 6, para 7)

1. Negroes and whites attend the same schools; not necessarily the same courses. Assignments are made within racial units or overhand installations.

2. Negroes do not have equal opportunity for advancement while they are denied access to school courses.

3. Army policy on assignment of Negroes from schools.

It is not exact to say that vacancies are reserved for Negroes with school training, as the Army claims, citing the policy order of March 4, 1918. That order read:

"For these reasons it is desired that when these school trained Negroes are assigned to your command, you provide appropriate destinations within your ranking level in your whole overhead transportation, unless Negro NBS positions in these NBS are also open, where this personnel can actually be utilized in their school trained primary NBS, notwithstanding the fact that you will thereby be forced to convert existing white positions to Negro positions and reassign or report as surplus white personnel presently filling such positions. In providing assignments destinations you will bear in mind the fact that Circular 234 permits duty interspersal of white and Negro soldiers in whole overhead positions. Consideration, however, should be given to the presence of a Negro company, detachment, or unit for housing and messing purposes unless you have integrated these facilities at the installation provided as the assignment destination."

There is nothing here which directs commanders to "reserve" spaces, or vacancies for Negroes. Quite candidly, I can't see why such spaces should be reserved. Vacancies in overhead installations should be filled with qualified personnel regardless of race. To reserve spaces for Negroes is in practice discrimination against the whites.
2. Summary (Pages 7, para 3)

1. The Army says it is continuing to convert white into Negro 75% X units, both combat and service. Is there not a danger here? When a white unit is converted into a Negro unit, the positions and MOS required by that unit must be filled with Negro soldiers. Might not this result in taking Negroes of inferior qualifications and giving them jobs for which they are not yet completely trained or fitted — possibly because it is a Negro unit. This is done in both wars, and the result was that the Negro was charged with insufficiency when often he had merely been given a post for which he was not equipped. The committee is not interested in creating jobs for Negroes but in seeing that qualified Negroes are allowed to fill jobs.

2. Fear of Army officers over inserting Negro units in white organizations. The records of the War College, the Command and General Staff School, and the Historical Records Section of the Surgeon General are full of papers expressing expert military opinion that the use of Negroes in divisional units was not successful and recommending utilization of Negroes in smaller units within white organizations. No fear is expressed against such insertion of Negro units. If this means that the Army does not really believe the Negro can be effectively used as a combat soldier, then the Army policy should call for the use of Negroes only as service troops.

The Gillen Board, however, laid great emphasis on training qualified Negroes for combat, saying that this was where the Negro soldier had appeared at most disadvantage.