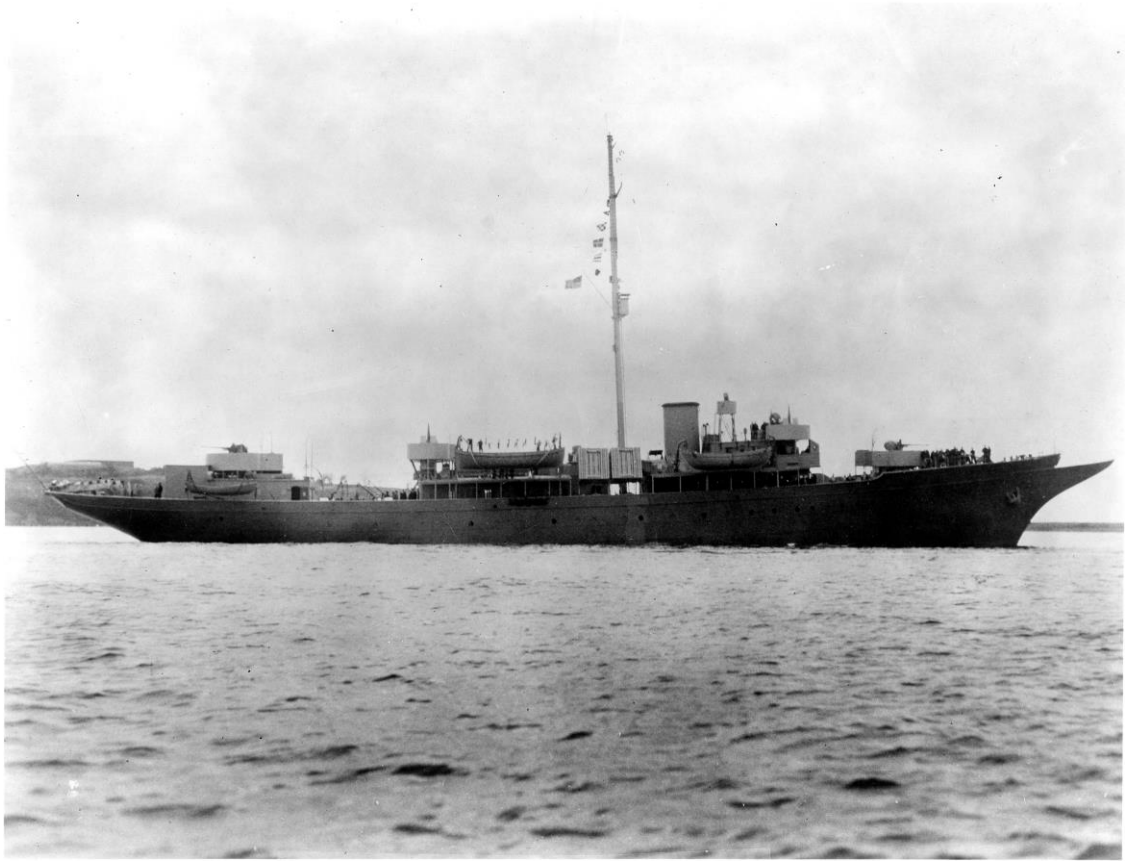

U.S.S. Sea Cloud, IX-99,

Racial Integration for Naval Efficiency

By

Commander Carlton Skinner, USCGR (Ret.)

Preface

This is an account of the USS *Sea Cloud*, IX 99, which became an experiment in racial integration aboard U. S. naval vessels from December, 1943 to November, 1944.

The *Sea Cloud* was a converted yacht of approximately 3600 gross tons, 316 feet long, an armament of four twin mount 40 caliber and eight 20 caliber machine guns, two 3" 50' caliber guns, depth charge, K-Gun, and ahead throwing anti-submarine weapons. Built in Kiel, Germany, for Mrs. Marjory Post Hutton in 1930, it had served her as a yacht in the Atlantic, Caribbean, and Mediterranean. Later, married to Joseph E. Davies, U. S. Ambassador to Russia, she took the yacht to the Baltic Sea, Leningrad on the Gulf of Finland, and Black Sea. In 1940, the *Sea Cloud* was placed under conditional charter by the US Navy to be available in time of war. In 1941, it was converted for weather patrol, by taking off all masts but the mainmast, installing a house for inflating weather balloons for radiosonde observations, and adding the armament. Powered by four 800 HP Krupp diesels with twin screws (from one to four of the engines could power each screw) and with the hull form of a clipper ship, the *Sea Cloud* was an effective and comfortable ship for weather patrol. This duty, at the time, required remaining within 50 miles of a designated latitude and longitude in the Atlantic for a period of from 21 to 30 days, following which the ship was relieved by another weather patrol vessel. At least one weather patrol ship was lost with all hands, presumably due to enemy submarine action, but thereafter none were lost. As weather reports were filed by radio every four hours from a pin-point in the Atlantic, it can be presumed that the enemy were copying the broadcasts and decoding them. There were four stations: one off Bermuda, one between Newfoundland and Greenland one between Greenland and Iceland, and one off the coast of France. Weather patrol vessels, four in all at any one time, were manned by the Coast Guard. Weather observers were civilians from the U. S. Weather Service. The ship's complement for wartime was 175 men and 12 officers. However, its officers' country, formerly owner and guest quarters, add 20-24 officers and extra officers were frequently assigned for sea duty familiarization after a prolonged period of shore duty or upon graduation from the Coast Guard Academy.

1. Origins of the Experiment

This is necessarily a very personal account as the idea of a racial integration experiment aboard a naval vessel was my own, conceived, refined and prepared as a memorandum to the Commandant of the Coast Guard, approved by him and implemented by assigning me as Commanding Officer of the ship chosen to try the experiment.

As a former journalist and government official in Washington, I had a lively and concerned interest in the world situation. As such, I wished eagerly to be active in the war against fascism, active in a military service in combat or potential combat. As such, I applied for a commission in the Coast Guard Reserve as soon as it was authorized as a military reserve force. I took my examinations in the spring of 1941, was commissioned in June 1941, and placed on active duty early in July. In the same month I reported for duty on the USS *Northland*, CG, (WPG-49) at the Boston Navy Yard where it was outfitting to return to its assignment as a unit of the Greenland Patrol.

On that remote and extended duty, I served progressively as watch officer, navigator and executive officer. My reflections at the time, which are essential to understand the origins of the experiment, embraced the following: first, the fascism of Germany, Japan and Italy had been extraordinarily successful, both in military conquest and in ravaging and subduing the populations of the occupied countries. Their technology appeared to be superb, their military and naval skills extraordinarily effective and their economic capacity to support these successful. To combat and defeat these, would require the use of every resource of our economy, technology, skills and manpower. If we did not devote every resource of our society to the war (and get into the war soon) our free society would be destroyed.

The next element of my reflections, while in Greenland waters, started from a very small incident. Among his many other duties, the executive officer is responsible for the advancement of enlisted men in their ratings. The *Northland* was a small ship, with a crew of 125. An interested officer could know the entire crew. One of the steward's mates, [a] Negro, was a skilled motor mechanic. He loved engines and he spent his spare hours in the engine room. He came to me and asked if he could be examined for the rating of Motor Machinist's Mate 3d class. I asked the engineer officer about the man and was informed that other Chief Motor Machinist's Mates spoke most favorably of the man's skills. I had him examined and submitted his papers, which were of the highest caliber, to Coast Guard Headquarters. In good time, considering our remote duty, the response came back from Enlisted Personnel at headquarters that he could not be rated as a Motor Mechanic because he was a Negro and Negroes were only accepted in the Steward's Branch. This struck me as both unfair and inefficient and therefore undesirable for a military service. I appealed the decision, through channels, and as a result Enlisted Personnel reversed itself and authorized his transfer to Motor Machinist's Mate and rating in that branch (I believe he later made Chief and served honorably and effectively.) [Skinner is referring to CWO Oliver T. Henry, USCG (Ret.)]

The combination of this incident with my general views on the gravity of the world crisis led me to a consideration of the whole problem of naval use of manpower. Without having statistics on the assignment of naval personnel to different shipboard duties, it seemed clear to me that the steward and steward's mate complement of both Coast Guard and Navy ships could not exceed two to three percent of the total seagoing personnel. The universal draft was then being applied as the source of all manpower for all the armed services. This meant that the Coast Guard and Navy would have to take 11 to 12 percent of Negroes in their new manpower (the generally accepted percentage of Negroes in the U. S. population). Over a period of time this would result in the 9 percent of recruits not available for sea duty being placed in shore installations. Soon Coast Guard and Navy shore installations would be disproportionately heavy with Negro personnel.

I remembered also the history of World War I when there was tension and animosity against military age men remaining in the United States from Navy personnel on sea duty and Army personnel serving overseas. White feathers were passed out to men not in uniform. There had

been race riots during and after World War I. There was enough racial antagonism in the United States during World War II. If white sailors were to conclude that Negro sailors had the preferred positions of shore duty, I felt that race rioting could break out.

The next element of the concept was that a racial exclusion policy on general ratings aboard ship was an inefficient use of manpower. Negroes with skills or developable skills in gunnery, radar, sonar, electricity, machinery, etc., would be assigned to cooking, cleaning officer's rooms and serving at table. The latter were essential jobs, but were by no means making use of the skills of many Negroes assigned or to be assigned to them.

In retrospection, it is possible that the size of the one Coast Guard unit with which I was then familiar, the USS *Northland*, had made me more aware of the differing skills of members of the crew, the need to use them to the maximum, and the value of a highly skilled crew. The *Northland* had captured a German weather station in Greenland in September, 1941, had organized from its own crew a "prize crew" to man the Norwegian ship, that brought the German radiomen to Greenland and had a rigorous duty including rescuing aviators from the Greenland Ice Cap and navigating within the ice pack. It was particularly clear on this duty that seamanship was vital to success of the Coast Guard's missions and that seamanship could only be learned at sea, an element I will refer to later.

2. Theory of Proposal

The proposal had to be and was based solely on military and naval effectiveness. This was because, first, that was the origin of the idea; second, because I was sure that it was the only legitimate basis for considering a plan for racial integration of the armed forces during wartime. Everyone forgets to a greater or lesser extent the progress that has been made socially in this country in the area of race relations in the years since World War II. The big civil rights programs started with President Truman. I did not consciously think of the program as a "civil rights" program. It was to me a program for increased military effectiveness. It will be remembered that President Franklin Roosevelt, basically a liberal on social issues, said during the war that Dr. New Deal has been replaced by Dr. Win The War.

To bring about the use of Negroes in seagoing units in their best skills required a change in the rule of the Coast Guard and Navy that Negroes would not be accepted for or assigned to general ratings. It could be said that they had to be emancipated from the officer's servant status. But, it was equally clear to me that this could not be done merely by changing the rule. The rule was encrusted with tradition. It was based on long experience that, in general, Negroes joining the Coast Guard or Navy did not have mechanical or other skills. This was probably because of: 1) the previous educational opportunities, 2) the generally rural southern society from which Negro enlistees came, and the experience of the Army with all Negro units in World War I. These all-Negro units were labor battalions, used in the most tedious and laborious work and with white officers, most of whom had and exhibited racial prejudice.

I concluded that there had to be a demonstration that Negroes could serve in general ratings effectively. I quickly rejected the idea of an all-Negro unit. First, it was a violation of the proven method of training sailors of putting them on board ship and improving on their boot camp basic skills at sea. Sailors learn from other sailors. The Chief Boatswain's Mate with 25 years of service, two thirds of them at sea, is the best instructor. He can be tough, but the sailor learns from this toughness how to maneuver a small boat alongside, how to paint, how to clean, how to steer, etc. For Negroes to be well qualified, they had to go to sea and go to sea with qualified enlisted men as petty officers and fellow seamen. This meant the ship had to be an integrated ship--black and white at all levels, officers, petty officers and seamen.

While I had had no direct experience and had seen no documents, I had heard that the Navy had tried an all-Negro destroyer or destroyer escort, by a process of selecting the brightest and best qualified, and training for ratings ashore. I did not then know the name of the ship, but the "grapevine" reported that on the ship's first trip out of New York harbor after commissioning, it had anchored next to the Ambrose Channel buoy and had wrapped its anchor chain around the buoy's anchor chain. Whether true or not, I felt that a similar misfortune would embarrass and perhaps doom the project.

Thus, I was convinced that the proper use of Negro skills at sea required an integrated ship. I then reflected on the degree of prejudice in the officer complement of the average ship. The few wardrooms I had served in or visited were composed of officers with very conservative political opinions. I sometimes thought I was the only officer present who voted for Roosevelt. While many officers would conscientiously carry out orders, I felt that an officer with racial prejudices, recognized or unrecognized, would not give the project a fair chance. I concluded that the Commanding Officer of the experimental ship must be sympathetic to the idea, want it to work, and be willing to give it the special care necessary to make it work.

Equally, I was convinced that the ship chosen had to be a Coast Guard or Naval vessel on regular, normal assigned duty. It had to be a unit of the fleet, like any other. It could not be a special case, a special unit on privileged duty for purposes of show. This was for several reasons. First, if the other ships recognized the specially privileged character of this ship's assignment, they would display, both officer and enlisted man, tensions and recriminations. Second, the very men who were learning to perform in general ratings so as to be assignable anywhere by normal Coast Guard or Navy standards would feel they were special and did not have the normal need to learn or perform. Third, the higher commands would give no credence to the experiment and write it off as an aberration, unimportant and to be ignored.

Linked to these other requirements was the fact that this training for general ratings had to be at sea. The boot camp can give some basic skills and the technical schools can teach radio, electricity, motor mechanics, etc., but for these to be useful at sea there must be sea duty training. This is so obvious I need not elaborate on it.

I felt also that the selection, examination and advancement of the Negro seamen into petty officer ratings must be controlled aboard the ship of the experiment. This was necessary to give the commanding officer authority to choose the best and avoid selection by authority outside the experiment.

There seemed to me to be two corollary requirements to protect the experiment. First, no special favors in assignment of the ship to duty, in the rotation of crew, or in anything else, even movies. This was not to be a "show" ship. Second, no spotlight of publicity. If the newspapers and cameramen were wandering around the ship when it was in port, there would be problems in discipline.

3. Approval Procedures

In the spring of 1943, the conclusion of my second trip to Greenland on the *Northland*, I was detached for training duty as an LST commanding officer. After completion of that I was reassigned as executive officer on a Spanish-American period war vessel, resurrected from the boneyard for anti-submarine duty on the U. S. Atlantic coast. It even had a torpedo tube in the bow, welded over. While in the LST training, I had walked into Coast Guard Public Relations to offer to take a cameraman to the Pacific with me and do some stories and caption writing with him. I had already done a story on Arctic navigation for *Yachting Magazine* and thought some writing could be combined with the sea duty. Apparently, I was spotted as an experienced journalist and public relations officer, and was then, unexpectedly, detached from sea duty and assigned as executive officer of the Public Relations Office.

In the next few months, my views on desirable manpower policy and military effectiveness and my desire to fight the war at sea combined. I prepared a memorandum embodying all my arguments and addressed it to the Coast Guard Commandant, Admiral [Russell R.] Waesche. The Chief of Public Relations, Captain Reed Hill, through whom I had to submit the memorandum either disagreed with it or chose not to have me leave his unit. Anyway, he threw the memorandum in the wastebasket. I had the yeoman type it again and add "Forwarded, Disapproved" over the place for his signature, then took it in to him along with a copy of the *Coast Guard Regulations* opened to the paragraph requiring senior officers to forward reports up stream, marking them in accord with their views.

From my brief tour of duty at Headquarters, I knew the Commandant slightly and knew his aide, Commander Willard Smith, better. I then took the disapproved memorandum to Commander Smith. It disappeared into a void. For months I heard nothing. I had expected to be called in by an officer in Personnel and quizzed about the idea. Nothing. In passing, it should be noted that Admiral Waesche was a remarkable man and a remarkable officer. My direct contact with him was very limited and others would know infinitely more than I. I believe him to represent the

finest type of U. S. military or naval officer. Calm, cool, intelligent AND intellectual, forceful, thoughtful of his officers and men, and demanding the highest performance.

After about two and a half months I received orders to report to the USS *Sea Cloud*, IX 99. Nothing accompanied the orders. It was a routine transfer. I was a Lieutenant, with seagoing experience as watch officer, navigator and executive officer. It was in no way unusual. I asked no questions, took my leave of the Public Relations Office, packed my trunk and reported aboard the *Sea Cloud* at Constitution Wharf, Boston, where it was then based.

About ten days later the *Sea Cloud* sailed on weather patrol. I was assigned the mid-watch and stood it night and day for thirty days. Upon completion of our tour on station and while returning to Boston, the ship received a dispatch relieving the commanding officer on arrival and assigning me to command. There was still no communication of any sort that my proposal had been approved. We tied up in Boston, I relieved the captain, went through the ceremonies of taking command and settled down to the important but dull in-port routine of supplies, crew and officer rotation, etc.

Without notice, about three days before we were to sail, the Coast Guard Receiving station, at the old Hotel Brunswick, sent down to the ship 12 Negro apprentice seamen and we detached 12 white seamen. Still no word of action on my proposal. But it was clear to me that I was being assigned to carry out what I had proposed. The method was probably the best in that it called the least attention to the program. In fact, it was responsive to my recommendation that there be no special attention or publicity.

4. Implementation.

With these first 12 Negro seamen, as with later drafts of seamen and petty officers trained in special skills such as a Pharmacist's Mate, we made no special arrangements. They were slotted into watches and duties exactly as had been their white predecessors. If they worked and studied and learned, they were considered for Seaman, 1st Class, and later Coxswain or Quartermaster 3rd Class, etc. If they didn't work, were over-leave, over-liberty, or committed other offenses, they were hauled up at captain's mast and punished, just as the white.

The Negroes were assigned to berthing arrangements as any other seamen. Inevitably, if there is a preferred sleeping berth, the old-timers on the ship grab it and the newest arrivals get the leavings. I did not interfere with this, but later there were times when white seamen or petty officers were assigned and the old-timer Negro seamen or petty officers then reaped the benefit of seniority. Obviously, petty officers get or find better quarters than seamen, and the same system applied. I was particularly interested to see that when we finally were sent a Negro Chief Commissary Steward, who had apparently been able to cross over from the Steward's branch, he was accepted into the Chief's mess with all its privileges and its superiority over lower ratings, including white petty officers and seamen.

I did not assign an officer to supervise the implementation of this program. Each officer with a department had responsibility for all the men of his department, Negro or white, in full compliance with Coast Guard regulations. After several voyages, we received two Negro officers from the Coast Guard Reserve Officer Training program. Like any other officer on his first sea duty, each was assigned junior watch officer and other duties, eventually qualifying as watch officer and given other assignments.

5. Training

The training program aboard ship was that of the ship itself -- nothing else. The *Sea Cloud* was a unit of the Atlantic Fleet, in Task Force 24, and there were training requirements, drills, etc. In addition, the Coast Guard had certain customary drills. Thus, the normal shipboard abandon ship, man overboard, damage control, general quarters drills were performed daily, except in impossible weather.

In addition, while in Boston or Argentia, there were ASW tracking drills for officers and sonarmen, anti-aircraft gunnery training in Rhode Island, etc. Petty officers and petty officer candidates were sent off for specialized training, normally but not always returning to the ship. In essence, the training was exactly that of any other Coast Guard unit operating in the Navy. I may have watched more closely than if I had not felt responsibility for the experiment. But, I was convinced that it would work only if it were routine.

6. Operations

As indicated earlier, the *Sea Cloud* was a weather patrol ship. Based first in Boston, then in Argentia, it was one of four ships that maintained weather stations and sent regular radio reports on upper air wind direction, strength and pressure. The ship's crew were not involved in the observations which were conducted by civilians of the U. S. Weather Bureau. However, as is obvious we could not maintain radio silence as the messages must go every four hours. We remained within 50 miles of an assigned position In the heavy storms of winter on the Atlantic, this meant operating in the roughest seas and weather. Fortunately, the *Sea Cloud* was a comfortable ship and handled well at one third ahead and a few points off the wind and sea. When we reached the top of circle, we could "coast down hill" for fifty miles, which was always more pleasant in a force 6 or 7 wind.

The Negroes didn't like the bad weather any more than the white seamen. They griped and complained and swore just as much, and no more. In fact, the bad weather and the monotonous duty may have helped to integrate the crew. Both Negro and white seamen felt abused.

The tour on station was usually 21 days, with from eight to twelve days to get to station and back. We would wait until we sighted the relief ship before departing station. Sometimes we

provided a check point for aircraft, including one flight of dirigibles. We saw a moderate amount of wreckage and reported it, but never found any survivors. We had submarine contacts from time to time, most of them abortive.

The *Sea Cloud* had one major encounter with an enemy submarine, in June of 1944, when it was returning from the Bermuda weather station to Argentia. About sundown, the sonar operator reported a contact. We went to general quarters and continued to track the submarine, finally getting into position to attack. We dropped a string of depth charges and fired K Guns, passed over the enemy, came back and searched, finally picking up the contact again. Again we tracked, fired the mousetrap and more depth charges. At 14 knots, we were not the most maneuverable of anti-submarine craft, but the tracers showed that we had the enemy under us both times. We searched for about eight more hours, but did not find a trace. In the meantime, on our radio report, Atlantic Fleet sent a killer team of a destroyer, destroyer escorts and aircraft to the site. When they were en route, we were ordered to proceed to port. I later was informed that the killer team found the submarine, attacked and forced it to the surface and, in the resulting battle, the commanding officer of one of the U. S. ships was killed by gunfire. The *Sea Cloud* was credited in the official Navy accounts of this sinking with an "assist".

The other major operational crisis during my command was earlier in 1944, when we were proceeding to the station between Newfoundland and Greenland. We had had reports on coded Navy circuits of German armed merchantmen "raiders" operating in the area through which we had to sail. About 2:00 a.m., I was awakened with a radar report of a ship heading straight for us at 28 knots. We went to general quarters and began evasive action. No matter how we changed course, the radar report was a target always at 28 knots and headed directly for us . The more I heard this, the more peculiar it seemed. I knew something was wrong, so finally ordered the searchlights lighted. Directly in front of us was an iceberg the size of the United Nations Building on its side. Without a word to the Exec or Watch Officer or Quartermaster, I pulled the engine telegraph to Full Astern. As with any ship of that size and weight, we still proceeded a very long way and I felt the iceberg was under my nose before the ship started to move astern. The probable explanation is that the radarman was reading the speed as the time for the signal to go out and return, or double our 14 knot speed of advance and, of course, on such a signal, the target was "headed straight for us.

These two incidents are not unique and every Coast Guard and Navy officer has stories like this or better ones. However, they are worth mentioning because the officers and crew, mixed Negro and white, performed ably and bravely and without any weakness, exactly as they should have. They were completely integrated and reacted to the needs of the military mission as a unit and as a well trained, ready unit.

It should be added that during 1944, the *Sea Cloud* went through a regular Atlantic Fleet inspection, rigorous and complete. It passed with favorable mention in a number of

categories. Certainly the inspection staff of the Atlantic Fleet had no reason to give any special consideration to a fleet unit because it had Negroes in general ratings or was an experiment in racial integration on a fleet unit. Later, the *Sea Cloud* was decommissioned in the fall of 1944, for purely logistical and supply reasons. All parts for the Krupp diesels and auxiliaries, piping, etc., had to be fabricated specially at the Boston Navy Yard. This was expensive and after 1944 other ships were available . At that time because of a peculiarity of the Navy's charter which required the ship to be returned "to its original condition" and because of the obvious interest of Ambassador Davies, the Navy ordered a full Board of Inspection and Survey inspection of the ship. A Bureau of Construction and Repair Admiral, two captains and a squad of lesser ranks came aboard and examined the ship minutely for two days. Again the inspection report was favorable.

7. Difficulties

The difficulties were minor. But, there were some, all of which were satisfactorily handled. First, there were tensions within the Negro seamen and petty officers as a group. These were almost entirely between northern and southern Negroes, and they did lead to fighting. The Master-at-Arms was soon a Negro and handled the problems well. Second, by the summer of 1944, Coast Guard Districts, (other than the First where the ship was based as far as personnel was concerned) , had learned by the grapevine that the *Sea Cloud* had Negroes in the crew and accepted them as replacements for white seamen and petty officers. These districts began to send the *Sea Cloud* their Negro disciplinary problems. I did not need these and I went to see Admiral [Wilfred N.] Derby, the Coast Guard District Officer for the First District and explained my problem. He ordered his personnel officer to prevent this and to work with me if I received a problem assignment I felt was bad for the ship. Third, as the number of Negroes in the crew began to exceed 50 per cent, some Negroes became aggressive with the white sailors and petty officers. The numerical superiority gave these few courage and perhaps they felt the need to compensate for past discrimination. Clearly, the arguments, fights and disciplinary infractions rose when the Negro crew percentage exceeded 50 per cent. Whether this was solely the numerical superiority or was the receipt of some Negro sailors who had disciplinary records before they arrived, I was unable to tell.

In any case, it led me to recommend later to the President's Commission on Equality in the Armed Forces at its hearings in 1949, that the proportion of Negroes in general ratings in any unit should not exceed one-third during the period of general implementation of this policy. That did not seem restrictive to me, as the Negro section of the total population is 10 to 12 per cent and this was three times larger. The fourth problem was not a difficulty, but an interesting sidelight. While the Negro and white crew members worked well together, with considerable joking and camaraderie, I noticed that they split into the two racial groups whenever going on shore for liberty. I

thought at first this was due to housing segregation in Boston, but it continued when the leave base was changed to Argentia, purely a Naval Base with only Navy facilities.

8. Acceptance of the IX 99--formal and informal

The acceptance of the *Sea Cloud* as a Naval unit was formally quite correct and successful. I have indicated the two major inspections. Beyond that, I had no problems with any Naval or Coast Guard command to which I reported or on which I called for assistance of the normal kinds. There was little noticeable interest in the *Sea Cloud*. It appeared to be treated as any other unit. Thus, in the Navy Yard in terms of presenting Work Orders, getting supplies, etc., we encountered no hostility or prejudice. We did find that the Navy Yard blue collar foremen, quartermen, leading men, etc., frequently tried to avoid the ship and occasionally made slurring remarks about the crew.

Necessity is the mother of invention and we found that with a few pounds of butter or cans of coffee, we could change the attitude. I did have to make a special point of instruction for officers calling on other ships or at the Navy Yard for work or supplies to be especially nice and cooperative. In one incident, when a hurricane was approaching Boston and due to hit at midnight, I passed the word to get wire cable to be used in doubling all our mooring lines. A Negro Boatswain's Mate asked the yard for a spool of cable to allow us to do this and he was refused, I think, because of the nature of our crew. I had to ask the Chief Boatswain's Mate to use his ingenuity after dark. He got the message and we were properly moored when the hurricane hit.

While I felt I could and, in a way had to, leave the shoreside integration of the enlisted men to them, I was concerned about the Officers Clubs. So, starting in the Boston Navy Yard, I took the three Negro officers then assigned to the ship into the Club after work one day. The Club had a very long bar and there were some 50 officers standing at it. As we walked in, fifty heads turned and examined us with surprise and, I felt, some hostility. I insisted the three go back with me each day for four days. Each day we would sit quietly at a table and have one or two drinks and leave. On the fifth day, I said I had to go uptown and asked them to go by themselves. They did and there was no incident. Thereafter they used the Club or not as they wished. Later in Argentia, we went through a similar "familiarization" procedure.

9. Conclusions

The experiment in racial integration aboard a naval ship worked as I had believed it would. It was no more difficult that I expected. It made me tense at times and I am sure made my Negro officers tense at times, but it worked.

I had hoped it would be copied. To the best of my knowledge it was not copied, as such. However, in February of 1945, the Navy issued revised regulations permitting up

to 10 per cent of general ratings in non-combat naval ships to be Negroes. I think my experiment was helpful in producing this change. I had worked before the war with Eugene Duffield who was a wartime assistant to Secretary of the Navy [James V.] Forrestal. On a trip through Washington in the winter of 1944, after the *Sea Cloud* was decommissioned, I visited Duffield and told him the whole story, how it started, how it worked and my convictions on the military necessity of integration aboard ship to get the maximum use of manpower skills in the population. Duffield later sent me a copy of the revised Navy procedure on this.

As I was only the commanding officer of the ship and as Coast Guard Headquarters never asked me for any special reports or conferences I have no way of knowing if the experiment was generally known or how it was used. With my respect for Admiral Waesche, I would assume that he used it to support general improvement of racial restrictions in the Coast Guard.

To the best of my knowledge, the experiment was never used for publicity by the Coast Guard or the Navy. I never had a reporter or photographer come to the ship and was never asked to describe it. While in Boston once, I invited Erwin Canham, then editor of the *Christian Science Monitor*, whom I had known when we were fellow newspapermen in Washington, to come aboard for lunch. I described the project and showed him the ship and crew. He showed no interest of any sort in the project and never wrote about it.

Upon reflection, I have wondered if I should not have evangelized for my theories, put on a campaign for their general adoption. I did not, first because I was too busy as commanding officer making them work, and second because of my basic belief that this kind of thing should happen naturally and should not be in the spotlight.

So, my belief that racial integration aboard ship was sound national naval and military policy was proven, but remained unnoticed.

Further Information:

- Carlton Skinner's 1949 testimony to President Harry S. Truman's Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Services where he describes his role and experiences with the integration of the U.S. Coast Guard during World War II.
