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THE PRESIDENT'S COMMITTEE
ON EQUALITY OF TREATMENT AND OPPORTUNITY
IN THE ARMED SERVICES
25-26 April, 1949
Room 3E-949, The Pentagon, Washington, D. C.

APPEARANCES OF
MR. CARLTON SKINNER, DIRECTOR OF INFORMATION
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

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AND

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Monday, 25 April 1949, 4:00 p.m.

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MR. FAHY: Mr. Skinner, they asked you to come this afternoon, didn't they? I had hoped we could adjourn at 4:30 p.m., but I don't want to inconvenience you too much. I did want you to change the time of your testimony so that it would not be later than tomorrow morning, rather than late tomorrow afternoon. Would that be possible?

MR. SKINNER: I couldn't come back tomorrow morning.

MR. FAHY: All right, then we will have it now.

MR. SKINNER: Gentlemen, the views I shall give you today are those of a civilian drawing on his background of Naval experience. I maintain my commission and interest in the United States Coast Guard Reserve, but have been on inactive duty, except for two days, since the fall of 1945. Therefore, I am not speaking as a Coast Guard officer.

The executive order of the President and the statements of the present Secretary of Defense and of his

predecessor make it unnecessary for me to argue in behalf of eliminating discriminatory treatment of minority races in the Armed Services. My contribution to your work will be valuable to the extent that my experiences can be used in helping to attain the goal of equality of treatment and opportunity.

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Brief mention of the manner in which I came to deal with the problem may be helpful. In the fall of 1941 and during most of 1942, I was on extended patrol duty in Greenland and Iceland waters, engaged in convoy, patrol, marine surveying, search for enemy weather stations and air-sea rescue work. This somewhat remote duty with virtually no contact with civilization allowed time for reflection on many of the problems of the war. I concluded during this period that one of the major difficulties our country would face in a prolonged war would be the efficient use of all manpower.

This would be particularly a problem in adequate use of Negroes who were then restricted almost entirely to mess attendant and wardroom steward duty. My thinking evolved something like this: The Navy and Coast Guard would soon have to rely on the draft; with the draft, it would have to take its share of Negroes; there would not be enough wardroom steward and mess attendant jobs to use

all the Negroes; they should not be restricted to shore duty because they would not be participating fully in the war; they would themselves resent the lack of opportunity for active sea duty; there would be significant racial tension, if white seamen began to feel that colored sailors were guaranteed the relatively desirable shore duty.

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From the viewpoint of pure military or Naval theory, it seemed clear that Negroes would have to be used for general duty at sea. I am not well versed in military theory but one of the major problems of a Naval Commander must be that of organizing the available personnel and available equipment so as to make the strongest and hardest hitting force possible. He cannot afford, whether from sentiment or prejudice, to use his men or equipment below the limits of their capacity. While the Negro group as a whole, due to various reasons of environment, nutrition, lack of schooling, etc. would not have the same capacity as the white group, individuals in it would be of far greater capacity than individuals in the white group.

While I was working this out in my mind, I had the interesting example before me on the cutter Northland of a Negro mess attendant who was a fine machinist. He had passed examinations for first class motor machinist's

mate and was being used in the engine room, but we were unable to give him a machinist's mate rating because of the established policy of using Negroes only in the ward-room. We had at the same time, some white men in the deck force who never could qualify for petty officer ratings either on deck or in the engine room.

I carried this kind of logical development further to see what would happen when Negroes were assigned to general duty at sea. I concluded that the shock of the innovation, the experience of many officers at using Negroes in other than servant capacities, the probably suspicion on the part of many of the Negroes of the Service's intentions, and prejudice on both sides would lead to many failures and disciplinary problems which would react against the development.

It seemed clear that the innovation should be made strictly in conformity with regular service requirements on a vessel on regular duty, but should be made with the help of a sympathetic commanding or executive officer, who would take the time and trouble to make it work and not report failure when the first problem developed.

I outlined all of this in a letter to the Commandant of the Coast Guard and in the fall of 1943, he detached me from the shore duty I had had for the preced-

ing six months and assigned me to the USS IX 99, a weather patrol ship, operating out of Boston.

The Force Commander for the weather patrol was very friendly and had already arrived at somewhat similar conclusions and begun replacing the deck force of the IX 99 with colored seamen, fresh from boot camp.

I made one trip on the IX 99 as a watch officer and upon our return to Boston, received orders to take command. She was a large vessel and carried a crew of 175 and 22 officers. I had command for approximately a year. She was then decommissioned for reasons of technical unsuitability--she was a German built vessel and repair parts were difficult to obtain.

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During the year, I operated with varying percentages of Negro crew up to about 65 per cent and with from two to four Negro officers. We had no segregation or discrimination. White and colored slept in the same compartments and ate at the same mess tables. Colored officers and petty officers had white petty officers and seamen under them and vice versa. During that time we performed all our duty creditably, completed all assignments and, in our regular Atlantic Fleet inspection, on a comparative basis with other ships under the top command of Commander Destroyers Atlantic Fleet, were rated Ex-

cellent or Very Good in every department. Also, during this period, the ship satisfactorily went through two complete Navy Board of Survey and Inspection inspections with a regular Navy Admiral and Commodore as senior member each time. I think the Captain will bear me out there--that is not an easy thing to do.

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Following decommission, I was sent to Miami for a training course and was then assigned to relieve command of an escort ship operating in the North Pacific. With two of the four colored officers and about thirty of the enlisted men from the IX 99, I was flown to Adak in the Aleutians and we reported aboard the USS PF 5. This vessel, with twelve officers and 200 men, remained on convoy duty along the Aleutian Chain until nearly the end of the war, when it was one of a group lend-leased to Russia. Again, it performed all its duty creditably, survived all inspections and had no major problems. There was no segregation by compartments, departments or messes and white and colored performed the duties of their rates. More colored sailors were assigned and represented about forty per cent of the crew at the time of transfer.

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Vilhjalmur Stefansson once wrote an essay on the literary advantages of inefficiency in Arctic exploration. The same could be written on racial experiments of this

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sort. When everything goes smoothly, the story is a quiet and not very exciting or interesting one. Unfortunately, it was not our good luck to grapple with the enemy on any of our cruises. I am satisfied that we would have acquitted ourselves very well. By comparing the degree of combat training of my two crews with some other, all-white crews that I saw, I am satisfied we would have done very well. We did have a minor brush with a submarine off New York in the spring of 1944. We picked it up on the radar, attacked and forced it to submerge, then reported its position and after an unsuccessful search proceeded on our mission. Using our report, a killer group came out and fought it for two days, finally forcing it to the surface and disposing of it by gunfire. In the action, the captain of one of the destroyers was killed by gunfire. This I would call an "assist."

Since I was anxious to make these ships regular fleet units, undistinguishable from any other--though not undistinguished--I did not keep notes on the detailed development of the mixed crew principle. I delegated responsibility to my executive and engineer officers and the other officers in accordance with Navy regulations and made no effort to give any unusual treatment to anyone. The major policy that men were to be treated and used as sailors,

not as colored or whites was controlling and little else was needed. It is interesting that the Naval system of interchangeability of personnel based on technical qualifications is very well adapted to the integration of a minority racial group.

By Navy regulation and policy, a petty officer has certain authority over the unrated men, has certain responsibilities and is required to perform certain duties. Our operation insisted on this and if a colored sailor was in charge of a work detail he was responsible for getting the work done. If he was merely one of the working party, he had to carry his full share of the load. On this basis, men very soon became carpenter's mates or boatswain's mates or signalmen, not white or colored.

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While we operated as regular fleet units, we were distinctive until the latter days of the war and there was always shoreside discussion. To some extent we were on trial and that meant that we had to be correct and proper and perform our duties smartly. Laxness or sloppiness or inefficiency in our unit would tend to be noticed slightly sooner than on another unit. Fortunately, since at no time did either crew become completely colored, we were not subjected to the kind of spotlight that several racial experiments in the Armed Services suffered.

My conclusions were:

1. Negro personnel should be used interchangeably with white in all general duty positions. No position in a Naval force should be barred to a Negro. Any other policy will weaken the service by preventing it from using its men to best advantage.

2. There should be no segregation aboard ship, in shore stations or in any working, messing, berthing, or training facility. Negro and white seamen should attend the same boot camps and the same training schools. This is economical because you don't need separate, expensive facilities; it is simpler to administer; and it leads to uniformity in training. Life in the compressed space available aboard ship is difficult enough to regulate without throwing in the added and artificial factor of segregated quarters or messes based on color.

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3. Negro and white sailors should have equal opportunity for all advanced training. They should be admitted to service schools on the basis of ability and aptitude. There should be no quota assignments for training. This will make the best use of the available manpower. In the selection of Negroes as petty officers, I favor emphasis on rating them aboard ship. At present, the Negro in sea duty is roughly comparable to the recently commissioned reserve officer. He is new and relatively untried.

There are certain seagoing activities and practices which become instinctive when learned at sea and are, to some extent, the cachet of the sailorman--the evidence that he is an old salt not a boot. These cannot be learned at shore schools. As a newcomer to sea duty, the Negro will have more self-assurance if he instinctively uses the jargon of the sea, like port and starboard for left and right, ladder for stairway, and hatch for door and is familiar with the seagoing duties of his shipmates.

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4. A quota system should be established requiring every ship or unit to have a certain percentage of Negroes, but not more than another percentage. I would suggest five to twenty-five per cent as the limits, but would leave the exact limits to the service personnel office. I suspect that this will be a slightly controversial recommendation and I want to explain my reasons.

Please notice that I want no quotas on advancement, on men in a given rate or on attendance at service schools. However, quotas are very desirable on the number of Negroes in a given unit, as I will explain. First, we should reject any all-Negro units. For internal and external reasons they are bound to be inefficient. Internally, they would be difficult to organize as Negroes have no group background in general sea duty. The core of an efficient Naval unit, the chief petty

officers with ten to twenty years of service would be very difficult to find. Unqualified men would have to be used in many posts to fill out a complement, unless the service were to go to tremendous lengths to search out the qualified Negro officers and petty officers around the country and the world and assemble them for the one or more all-Negro units. Administrative complications in the unit and in the district personnel office would be excessively and unnecessarily burdensome.

Externally, it would be worse, the unit would be known throughout the service. It would become a lightning rod for all the latent prejudice and resentment in the fleet. It would be on the spot. Not only would this be harmful for the crew, it would affect its relations with other units.

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Organizations, including Naval organizations, are governed by regulations, but they are operated by a tremendous number of daily transactions between men, where authority or regulations are unimportant. Like every other commanding officer, I had a responsibility for morale, which is compounded of a thousand things, not the least of which are good food, supplies, movies and intelligent use of inport time. While the rule may say that my ship has an equal chance at the fresh milk or the green vegetables or the sides of beef in the supply ship or the commissary warehouse, I rely

on my supply officer or commissary steward to get it for me and he relies to a large extent on his friendship with the issuing storekeeper, whenever there is competition. We got our milk and vegetables and beef because we carefully watched our relations with other units and did as many favors for other people as we could. We got our repairs in the repair yard and our supplies and equipment because we were courteous and friendly. In a country not yet free of prejudice, an all-Negro unit would be a target for all kinds of unfriendly treatment which could never be handled by orders.

On the other hand, an all-white unit is a sort of segregation in reverse. The white sailors are removed from the race problem and can never learn that prejudice is artificial, that they can work just as well with Negroes as whites.

A unit with a crew of more than fifty per cent Negroes tends to be subjected to the same problems as an all-Negro unit. It also must face one minor problem. As a group, the Negroes are not as skilled mechanically as white sailors. This I attribute again to inadequate and unequal educational facilities, environment, greater degree of poverty, etc. Negro boys, as a group, are not as acquainted with autos and household or farm machinery. Thus,

the engine room, or "black gang" as it is called, tends to become predominantly white, and the deck force predominantly black. There is always rivalry between deck and engine forces. I think it unwise in the earlier stages of using Negroes on general duty to permit them to segregate into groups with traditional rivalries. Such rivalries can easily be transmuted into racial conflicts.

In 1945, the Navy directed that ^{up to} ten per cent of the crews of its auxiliaries be Negroes. While I think a flexible percentage is better, on the whole, I think this was a wise move on the Navy's part and believe it to have been helpful in integrating Negroes into the fleet in general duty ratings.

If these simple principles are followed and if the commanding officers from the top down understand the reasons for these policies are based on sound military and naval theory, I think the problem of securing equality of treatment and opportunity in the armed services will be handled very quickly. It is amazing how rapidly the artificial distinction of race or color can disappear.

The simplest example I have occurred when two colored officers reported with me aboard the PF 5. In officers staterooms, as any of you who saw Mr. Roberts will know, the lower bunk is preferred. It is easier to

roll in and out of and is not so hot as the upper. Bunks are assigned by seniority. On the PF 5, two southern, white officers, who had been in the same stateroom, split and each shared a stateroom with one of the new colored officers, because in that way each could get a coveted lower bunk. While they probably still objected vocally, when they were in the officers club bar ashore, to having to share a stateroom with a Negro, when it came to the important problem of their own physical comfort, it made absolutely no difference.

Two of the colored officers who served with me, later in the war were given command of small units which were virtually all white, including white wardrooms over which they presided. They had no troubles. I think they had no troubles because they were competent seagoing officers who ran their ships efficiently and treated their officers and men fairly and looked after them. They probably didn't pick fights on the race issue, but then a Protestant commanding officer would hardly ask for an endorsement of the A.P.A. by a wardroom full of Irishmen.

Certainly, in those two years of living in cramped quarters with a mixed crew and officers, many of whom were experiencing this association for the first time in their lives, there were some problems. None of them ever became an incident. That was not because of my skill as a leader

or my toughness as a disciplinarian. It was because the problem was basically artificial and could invariably be solved by reason.

I think this problem will disappear in the Armed Services in five and, at the most, ten years, if it is handled as the Secretary of Defense directed last week. I hope that the measures taken to handle it will not be too elaborate. You don't need race relations officers or inspectors going around to see if somebody's rights are being abused or denied. Treat the sailors as sailors and the officers as officers.

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Before I close, I would like to remind this Committee that the problem is not entirely one of white prejudice against Negroes. There is a great deal of Negro prejudice against whites which needs to be eradicated in the services. One of my early problems was that Negro seamen in a division headed by a white officer would refuse to go to him with their problems and would insist on going to a Negro officer who headed another division. Also, the Negro practice of banding together for protection against an unfriendly white world sometimes led Negro petty officers to protect men of their own race and offer up a white sailor as the victim for punishment. These are minor problems but I mention them to indicate that not only is it wrong to segregate people into black and white, it is wrong to assess blame entirely in terms of "black" and

"white."

I have discussed the problem in relation to the Coast Guard and the Navy because that is the basis of my experience. The general principles, I am sure, are adaptable to the Army, Air Force and Marines. I thank the Committee for giving me the opportunity to relate my experiences and views.

MR. STEVENSON: I would just like Mr. Skinner to state, if he will, his present occupation or interest because you didn't state it when you came in.

MR. SKINNER: I am Director of Information for the Interior Department -- Special Assistant to the Secretary. I have no direct connection with the problem now.

MR. PALMER: I would like to ask a question outside of your presentation, Mr. Skinner, and your reference to the Secretary's order. How would you implement the duplications of experiences that you had? What would you recommend to the Committee as their persuasive way or analysis to insure that your experiment not only be duplicated, but multiplied?

MR. SKINNER: I think the quota system in a given unit is probably the most important thing. If every Naval unit were required to have twenty-five per cent Negroes, coupled with a system of complete freedom for advancement,

of complete freedom to go into different special assignments, complete availability of service schools, I think that problem would handle itself.

MR. FAHY: You have to have a great many more Negroes in the Navy than you have now in order to get that in effect, wouldn't you? Could you put fifteen per cent Negroes in?

MR. SKINNER: Perhaps that requires some changes in the recruiting system, but certainly make it certain types of duty as the Navy did during the war; make it auxiliaries and leave out the battleships if they want to, but a broad picture, a broad sweep of units in which you had this required percentage, I think, would do it almost automatically. Certainly it requires some rather strong indoctrination of the commanding officers. The district personnel officer, for instance, would have to see Negroes were assigned to all units and not kept in ammunition loading dumps.

MR. FAHY: I don't understand the idea requiring anybody to be anywhere regardless of race.

MR. SKINNER: Because in that way you avoid segregation of all Negro units and all white units.

MR. FAHY: You would use that simply as a technique for avoiding segregation in particular spots.

MR. SKINNER: That is right.

MR. FAHY: Dispersal?

MR. SKINNER: Right.

MR. FAHY: It might work out you would have only one per cent scattered throughout the Navy.

MR. SKINNER: That is not a problem of dispersal; that is a problem of recruiting. The Navy then must have some artificial or, in that case, the Navy would probably have some artificial means of restricting the recruitment of colored seamen.

MR. FAHY: Well, as I understand it, the reason they do not have more is because the score a person must attain in order to go into the Navy-- What would you say is the reason that the present overall percentage of Negroes in the Navy is four to five per cent. It is about four to five per cent, isn't it?

CAPTAIN STICKNEY: Well, in the last three years, the number of Negroes in the Navy has stayed about the same. It is in the neighborhood of around eighteen thousand. The total enlisted strength of the Navy, of course, has dropped considerably.

I had prepared here a chart showing by thousands the number of Negroes in the steward branch and the number of Negroes in other branches; also, the percentages during the years 1946 and 1947. The percentage of all of the Negroes in the Navy at the beginning of 1946 that were in

the steward branch was ninety-four per cent; in all other branches was six per cent. On December last, the percentage of Negroes in the Navy; that is, in the steward branch is sixty-two and in all other branches, thirty-eight. It will only be within a year before these two will cross and of the Negroes in the Navy, at least fifty per cent of them will be in all other branches.

MR. FAHY: Yes, that position in the Navy is shifting very rapidly, but what percentage of the total Navy personnel are Negroes? That is what I wanted.

CAPTAIN STICKNEY: It is five per cent in round figures right now, yes sir.

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MR. FAHY: In the Army, it is about ten per cent. What is your explanation of that difference? Why does the Army have, in percentage, twice as many Negroes as the Navy? I was suggesting the principle reason was its scoring level.

CAPTAIN STICKNEY: I think that is one reason. In the last six or eight months since the Army was required to reduce their minimum applicant qualification score, and we were not, it might have permitted an increase in the number of Negroes in that level between our lowest and their lowest level.

MR. FAHY: Is there any other reason? Do you think the Negro prefers the Army to the Navy?

CAPTAIN STICKNEY: I think basically the Army

is a favorite service by Negro personnel. They are more inclined toward the Army than to be seagoing people.

From some of the things that I have read in attempting to study this, I am inclined to believe their inclination would be in that direction. It has not been through any restraint on our part in our recruiting services that I am able to detect.

MR. FAHY: In your thesis Mr. Skinner, as I understand it, you eliminate the problem as far as the Navy is concerned if you take your Negro personnel and require that they be dispersed more or less equally throughout all branches.

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MR. SKINNER: Dispensing of companies by guaranteeing equal chances of advancement. For instance, in most service schools, the admissions are by examination. From a given district, there will be eighty-five men for radio school and they take an aptitude test. The Negroes in the Navy, seamen first class, that is, have the same chance to take the aptitude test and be sent to radio school.

MR. FAHY: Dispersion will have to be conditioned by aptitude or ability of skills of Negroes for particular kinds of work in the Navy.

MR. SKINNER: No, because they are all brought in as boots and they are assigned just like any other boots without any special skills.

MR. FAHY: That would be as a future; not those in the Navy now?

MR. SKINNER: Those in the Navy now, just like the white men in the Navy during their career in the Navy, they specialize in certain things. Most of them are in the stewards because that is what they enlisted in.

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MR. JAMES C. EVANS: Don't you come back to the matter of officer's chances for promotion in the Navy? It is put on the basis, when a person looks at the whole situation, as to whether or not he can obtain officership. Now, there are certain things to hurdle; certain things a Negro has to cross if he is going into a ROTC. First, there are no ROTC Negro schools and; two, you have the experiences just mentioned of examination of ROTC's being held in Atlanta, Georgia where the whites take it one place and the Negroes in a Negro colored high school. Third, there is another hurdle he must cross because after taking the examination, a civilian board of three persons must decide on those accepted for this. So, he sees a number of hurdles there and the question is whether that wouldn't deter him from thinking about the Navy.

MR. SKINNER: Sir, very few enlisted men go into officer's ranks. Their promotion is to chief petty officer. There are some get appointments to Annapolis. As during

the war, there were many chances of rapid advancement. As a general rule, however, the Navy system does not provide for an enlisted man to advance to officer's rank.

Chief petty officer is a very fine rank and a very fine job. I think it is one that a man can work up to and be very proud of and retire as a chief petty officer in the Navy or Coast Guard after many years of service.

MR. FAHY: Do you have any other questions?

MR. PALMER: I believe not, sir.

CAPTAIN SEICKNEY: I am very much disturbed about a couple things. Where does the discrimination policy stop and where does it start?

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We know from a survey, we do not have a combatant ship which does not have Negroes aboard. We do not wish to prescribe a quota because, if for no other reason, the Negroes themselves object to it and it makes no difference to us because we assign the man by his individual qualification.

I will admit that if we found one ship that had maybe sixty per cent, we might feel that it should be looked into as why and who had not done their job in correcting it, but in the past three years we haven't found it necessary to issue quotas.

The boys going into recruit training, they are on an equal basis with any other man, and as some of our senior

officers have expressed it to me, we don't care what his color is. It is what he as an individual is capable of doing and we expect everybody to be trained and used to the maximum capacity of the individual.

MR. FAHY: Excuse me just a minute.

(Telephons call)

MR. PALMER: Of course, Captain, the figures contrasting the Army with the Navy bears out that there is an awful dam or stoppage some place in the Navy.

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CAPTAIN STICKNEY: On the contrary, Mr. Palmer, I don't understand-- I have heard several remarks that give a great deal of credence to numbers. We, in the first place-- Take the officers: It takes four years to make an officer; a regular officer.

I went through four years in the academy and I don't feel I knew very much about being an officer at the end of it. There seems to be a feeling that we should put a lot of officers on active duty, not because of their ability, not because we need them, but because they are Negro officers. There is discrimination right away. There seems to be that attitude and every time that we say that we have five or six or seven or eight, or whatever the case may be, well that doesn't show like you have very many. I don't think that that has anything to do with our efforts--what we have accomplished in the past.

I feel that in the last two or three years, we have made tremendous accomplishments. We have three at the Navy Academy today. Sure, what are three out of a hundred and some, but it is the initial kick-off of getting them in on a sound permanent basis. I can't think, from working with this problem for two years, of anything more terrible to accomplish the end that we all desire than to put fifteen, twenty, seventy-five or a hundred reserve officers on active duty merely for the sake of increasing the number of Negro officers on active duty in the Navy because the Army has more or because someone else has more, or because somebody thinks we should have more.

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What that would represent today would be this: We are under budgetary limitations now trying to figure out how to let some officers on active duty go. It means some reserve officers who have been selected because of their need to fill some particular job; it means some of our temporary officers in enlisted status would have to be reverted and then in order to put on this number of Negro officers, all of whom by the way, except some brand new ones who have been enlisted or have been appointed recently, had the opportunity to request transfer to the regular Navy, had an opportunity to request active duty and their requests were considered by a board in which there were probably fourteen thousand other officers who did not receive the opportunity to transfer

to the regular Navy and who were not given the opportunity of staying on active duty.

Now, would we take a reduction of fifty, or whatever the number may be, of officers that we need and put in Negro officers merely because they are Negro officers? I don't think that they would have a chance and I think it would defeat our whole purpose; whereas, if we build in Negro officers in the regular Navy under a gradual process on a permanent basis, we have accomplished something that will be lasting and we will be making progress.

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It is very discouraging to us the result of this trip that was referred to this morning; the trip that Lieutenant Nelson made, that was instigated at the Bureau of Naval Personnel. I personally had something to do with that to get it going. It was a "special treatment," mind you, which we didn't want to refer to in that way, but it was a "special treatment" for Negro schools that we do not give in other schools.

We have people in the field that visit all the schools, but to no other area in the United States was an officer sent from the Bureau of Naval Personnel to make a special drive. We continued to do that to assist more of these Negro boys to participate in the NROTC because we realized it would be more difficult for them to get in.

Those are the facts of life; you all see that and we do too, but we want to bring them in that way and if some more congressmen want to send a few more to the Naval Academy, fine. We would, however, like to have them on a somewhat more permanent basis so we have some chance of a permanent solution to this problem.

MR. FAHY: You said: "We all know it is more difficult for them to get in." Why is it more difficult?

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CAPTAIN STICKNEY: It has been discussed here. I referred to it in generalities. I have heard discussions here that they would have to go out of their state and they feel there is a barrier against them, not in the Navy, but I mean in civilian life. They are Negroes and they feel that there is a barrier against them; that they don't have the opportunities of other boys, and we had this special program for them.

MR. FAHY: I thought you meant something more than their own feelings.

CAPTAIN STICKNEY: I meant their own feelings.

MR. PALMER: I haven't heard anyone here in this Committee suggest that any officers be let go or that any group of Negro officers be added to accomplish any purpose such as you outlined. I want to say this: Going back to statistics; that is, the number of officers, the percentage of officers in the Army is far in excess of the Navy and,

regardless of what your opinion may be of what the last two or three years indicate, the number of Negroes in the Navy certainly bears out the fact. From a practical standpoint, they just don't show up insofar as percentages are concerned.

You may have a great policy and it may be that it is being pursued at the present time, but from any information that we have received here, you have how many officers--five is it?

CAPTAIN STICKNEY: I think six regular officers right now.

MR. PALMER: And the number you have in the service totals eighteen thousand Negroes, did you say?

CAPTAIN STICKNEY: In round figures-- eighteen thousand.

MR. PALMER: And we take the figures of the Army and, while the Army has been pointed out as having the limitation of ten per cent, which we all object to, or at least, some of us object to, General Bradley indicated here, as I got it, that they had that as a protection against the difficult grading that the other services had so that they would not have to end up by having a hundred per cent of the Negroes. I think there is some justification for that.

CAPTAIN STICKNEY: I think so, but as we mentioned this afternoon, a few minutes ago, that they had a lower ad-

mission score --

MR. PALMER: By Congressinal Act.

CAPTAIN STICKNEY: I think it changed in the last month.

MR. PALMER: They moved it up a little.

The point we are trying to make is that we are trying to get to the point where merit and merit along should be the deciding factor and the services will provide that opportunity will be afforded these Negroes. That is all; nothing else.

CAPTAIN STICKNEY: I didn't mean to go ahead of this Committee. I merely mentioned this because I felt from the three different times I have been with you gentlemen that there was too much weight on what we are doing and the accomplishments to date. This is really just getting started.

MR. PALMER: You see, the problem we have is that we have very few Negroes in the armed services proportionate to the Negroes.

CAPTAIN STICKNEY: I know. Explaining away a fact is always difficult. I think at some of our previous hearings, it has been pointed out, for example, in NROTC we are limited to fifteen thousand in fifty-two colleges where it is now set up. The question came up a year ago, before a committee at which I appeared as a witness, about setting up a NROTC unit

in a Negro college and I think the discussion went about the fact-- well, would that really accomplish it. since the people that would be members of it would be trained under the segregated conditions and I think that is a very good point.

That is what I really was referring to when I said: "Where do we start and where do we stop in segregation and discrimination?"

MR. PALMER: Of course, we all know in the United States there is great discrimination and has been, I know, ever since I was a kid. The question is not of finding the definitive position as to why we can't do better, but find the positive side as to how we can do better. That is the big thing we are striving for.

57
CAPTAIN STICKNEY: Maybe I am unnecessarily fearful of our --

MR. PALMER: Your being the guinea pig.

CAPTAIN STICKNEY: Of our past effort being weighed on a strictly number analysis. They don't look good and you know as well as I, they don't, but on qualitative --

MR. FAHY: They don't look good on qualitative analysis. You don't look good in either respect in the past because if you go back just a little way on qualitative analysis, you had almost all of the Negroes in the scullery. Now you are getting them out of there gradually.

CAPTAIN STICKNEY: That is my point, Mr. Fahy.

MR. FAHY: On qualitative as well as quantitative you haven't looked good in the past.

CAPTAIN STICKNEY: In the past--that is my point.

MR. FAHY: It is your position that we are to conscience of your past and not conscience of what you are projecting into the future.

CAPTAIN STICKNEY: Most of the testimony the Committee received today had to do with conditions in the Navy, when they did reflect upon the Navy, prior to the first part of 1946, and they did not reflect what we have attempted to do in that very short period since then.

85
MR. FAHY: I have been somewhat sympathetic, I must say, with the Army complaint as stated to the Committee several times that the other services, the Air Force and Navy, point with pride to their position and with some disdain employed toward the Army. The Navy says: "We have no segregation."

When you look at what the situation is and you find that as of today the Navy has so few, they really haven't had much of a problem to deal with. Now, in the Air Force, to a degree, the same thing is true. It is true the Army has segregation, but it is also true that the Army has a quota now, and that quota is filled.

CAPTAIN STICKNEY: Mr. Fahy, I believe that.

MR. FAHY: I think there is a lot to be said for the position that you take in that you do not have a problem. That is not saying much when you say that when the fact is that you do not have a problem because you do not have many Negroes to deal with at all.

CAPTAIN STICKNEY: I would like not to keep you here all evening, but I would like to make two more short comments. I think we have, in the meetings that I have been with this Committee, made an effort to avoid making any statements about conditions or procedures or methods in use in the other services. I feel, personally, that the Navy is in a much better position to deal with minority races within the Navy.

89
MR. FAHY: Then the Army is within the Army.

CAPTAIN STICKNEY: Because of the organization of our ships and the manner in which we would just normally handle our personnel hasn't been as difficult from my point of view as the problem that the Army has had. I don't believe that we have really taken a smug attitude that we have all the answers. We have been trying to get a solution that is peculiar to the Navy and we are very much --

MR. FAHY: I don't think you are going to be able to. I think you have now - I am just talking a little off-the-cuff -- a solution which is adequate for the armed services as

a unit and not a solution which is a Navy solution.

CAPTAIN STICKNEY: You see, we haven't, Mr. Fahy, and I don't now proceed to push for the armed services complete integration. The Navy can do it, as you well know.

MR. FAHY: Can the Navy absorb from the Negro population an equal percentage with the Army and the Air Force?

CAPTAIN STICKNEY: That will depend, I think, Mr. Fahy, on the profiles that are being worked up as to the various degrees of talent and various degrees of intellectual levels that each service will be required to take. We can take those regardless of their race.

MR. FAHY: Do you think that you have to have an average higher intelligence than the Army?

MR. STEVENSON: That is a mean question to ask.

CAPTAIN STICKNEY: I prefer not to answer that question.

MR. FAHY: That is what it comes down to, doesn't it? You have a score now considerably higher than the Army and we have to deal with it, not from the Navy standpoint, or the Air Force standpoint or the Army standpoint, but from the standpoint of the armed services in relation to our total population if we can do it without unfairness to any service.

Our problem would be easier, I think, in general

acceptance, which is very important, if we could say to all three services: "You have got to bear your burden of this problem equally." That means across the board business of qualifications. I don't see anything yet that would prevent that. It seems to me that the man in the Army who has got to master the techniques of what is largely a motorized Army--

CAPTAIN STICKNEY: Mr. Fahy, don't we have the intellectual levels of the individuals of the various services a little mixed up with the races. A race in itself is not a measure of an intellectual level. I think we have them a little too confused here in the last few minutes.

91
MR. FAHY: I am not so sure about that. If so, I think the general staff has it confused too; General Bradley has it confused.

CAPTAIN STICKNEY: I wouldn't deny that, sir.

MR. JAMES C. EVANS: Mr. Chairman, let me approach that, if you will, from a little different angle. Captain Stickney has been very conscientious in his service on this problem and I understand that he has attempted to get sea duty or some other type of duty to get away from it. Before he goes, I think the record - and I want to speak from a defense level the same way the Chairman is speaking. I think the Captain allowed something to slip into the record a moment ago which he himself might not approve; namely:

that on Lieutenant Nelson's tour of the South, we were giving some special attention to the Negroes in that area.

I would like to add one or two or three statements, subject to the direction of the Captain. The first is that seventy-five per cent of our Negroes in the armed forces came out of those states which have separate schools, with all of the deficiencies that may imply. From those states and in those areas, the Negroes, looking at the Air Force sees the Negro pilot, the Negro officer flying around in the air and landing on all the airports in the South and elsewhere.

72
With respect to the Army, the Negroes in those schools sees the Negro Army officer coming to his schools and making presentations. He sees the white officer also on tour on the matter of selection of officer candidates and things of that nature. He does not, however, see the Navy come on Navy Day or otherwise to the Negro schools and it was my conception that this was not a tour designed to do something special for the Negro, but rather to equate that situation in which the Navy officers appeared at the white schools, but no officer, white or Negro, from the Navy appeared in any of the Negro schools. I participated in the Nelson tour all the way down to Miami and back and that was my conception. I would rather think, instead of a special treatment, that was a feeble attempt at equating

among the large number of high school students in the South the fact that the only concept that they had on the Navy and opportunities in the Navy was the pre-war - I started to use another term, but I won't - concept that only the steward branch was available and Nelson was just one man - rather inadequate for that time. Am I wrong, Captain?

CAPTAIN STICKNEY: You are not wrong. I didn't mean to be misleading in the way I expressed it. What you have said is correct; it was primarily - perhaps, I should use a better term, but if I didn't say: "giving special consideration," it was primarily a consideration of acquainting people in this area with the opportunity to participate in NROTC.

93
MR. FAHY: Frankly, I don't see anything wrong with that. Giving it special attention I think was a very good idea.

CAPTAIN STICKNEY: We propose to continue it with more effort in the future because the results weren't too good.

MR. STEVENSON: It is a matter of emphasis.

MR. SKINNER: You have gotten away from my testimony. May I be excused?

MR. FAHY: Yes sir, thank you very much.

DR. MARROW: Mr. Fahy, may I just say that I think

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

ADDRESS REPLY TO:
COMMANDANT
U. S. COAST GUARD
HEADQUARTERS
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.



12 July, 1949
FILE: PRA 78

.From: Commandant (PRA)
To: Lieutenant Commander Carlton Skinner, USCGR
2229 Bancroft Place N.W.
Washington, D.C.

Via: Commander, 5th CG District

Subj: Testimony before President's Committee on Equality of
Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Services; acknow-
ledgement of;

Ref: Your Statement 25 April, 1949, read before subject Committee.

1. Receipt of reference is acknowledged. Your statement was referred by the Commandant to all cognizant Offices and Divisions at Headquarters. Nothing but the most favorable of comments has been received after review by the responsible officers. Extreme interest has been shown both in the summation of your experience as well as your recommendations. While you explicitly pointed out that the opinions expressed were your own, you should be pleased to know that they are not at variance with those of the Commandant.

2. Your straight-forward account of Coast Guard experience with this controversial subject reflects highly on your own, and this service's, treatment of personnel without regard to race, creed, color or national origin. Your action and testimony in this instance is most commendable.

O. C. B. Wev
O. C. B. WEV
By direction

Ind-1

From: Commander, 5th Coast Guard District
To: Lieutenant Commander Carlton Skinner, USCGR

15 July, 1949
File: pra 781

Forwarded.

R. B. Elliott
R. B. ELLIOTT,
By direction

Recd

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD



COMMUNICATIONS SECTION
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O. C. B. W. V.
By Direction

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[Handwritten signature]
R. H. ELLIOTT,
By direction