SEGREGATION BREEDS PREJUDICE

a memorandum prepared at the request of the
CONFERENCE ON INTEGRATION OF THE RACES IN THE
ARMY OF THE UNITED STATES

held March 1, 1951 at the Pentagon Building Washington D.C.

attended by:
Secretary of the Army, Frank Pace, Jr.
Assistant Secretary of the Army, Earl D. Johnson
Chief of Staff, General J. Lawton Collins
General Miles Reber
Colonel Bing, Assistant to General Reber
Senator Hubert H. Humphrey, Senator from Minnesota

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March 8, 1951
I
INTERNATIONAL ASPECTS

The experience of the colored peoples with Anglo-Saxon devices of segregation has left a deep impress upon the minds of Oriental and African peoples. Whether the Americans who fight abroad are part of a United States or of a United Nations Army, the visible evidence of prejudice in a segregated army creates suspicion and mistrust. Suspicion of our democratic ideals and mistrust of our future intentions can only hurt our international position.

For our own soldiers who are given basic training in segregated units, and who continue to be members of a segregated army, our policy of adjusting to local situations by a hasty rearrangement of personnel in armies in the field seems to have the flavor of insincere exhibitionism about it. For our allies in a United Nations force it has seemed somewhat ridiculous.

Segregation on racial lines is visible, and it is likely to lose us the respect of our best friends in Europe and in the Far East if it is continued.

II
RISING NATIONAL CONCERN WITH SEGREGATION

Experience with Public Housing, with admission of Negroes to Universities, with opening of tax-supported facilities for recreation, and with enforcement of civil laws dealing with access for Negroes to public accommodations such as hotels, restaurants and transportation facilities has demonstrated that the public is conscious of the connection between prejudice and segregation. The Supreme Court decisions indicate that public awareness of the connection is now sufficiently widespread to justify the courts in stating that what is wrong is also illegal. The "separate but equal" fiction no longer satisfies the public demand for a just solution. A new dimension of "equal" is now held, by the public, to require the inclusion of what a man feels about himself on the basis of what other people feel about him.

In a democracy where both South and North are preoccupied with these values the Army must bring the criteria by which it judges its program for building morale into closer harmony with advancing popular standards. The amazing flexibility with which the Army has adopted the contributions of science in its use of nutritional, medical, mechanical and armament discoveries is admirable. Just as it has utilized psychological tests for measurements of achievement ability and skills, to aid in the better placement of personnel in jobs, the Army can utilize, now, advances which have been made in the science of human relations. If it fails to do this it will become more and more deeply involved in the defense of segregation which no longer appears sound to everyday citizens. If it introduces integration of the races from the first day of basic training the Army will be following a practice which builds morale and self-respect at home and abroad and which can be sanctioned by scientific findings. If it continues segregation, the Army will expend valuable energies in the defense of a practice which is no longer justifiable in the light of new psychological knowledge.
Integrated bi-racial occupancy has been established in a number of public housing projects. M. Deutsch and M. E. Collins made a study which is reported by the New York University Research Center for Human Relations. It had to do with intergroup relations in interracial housing and reports upon the socio-psychological effects of occupancy pattern. The research was on integrated versus segregated bi-racial housing projects. The residential situations of the two groups of white people studied cause them to perceive Negroes in different ways. The table below shows the replies of white people in the project to the questions "Are they (the Negro people in the project) pretty much the same as the white people who live here or are they different?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERCENTAGE OF REPLIES IN HOUSING UNITS WHICH WERE</th>
<th>integrated</th>
<th>segregated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SAME</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIFFERENT</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DON'T KNOW</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data from Deutsch-Collins: Intergroup Relations in Interracial Housing

"We note how residential contact affects the perception of sameness and difference."

The same research contains even more subtle evidence that perceptions of people's qualities change through alterations in degree and kind of contact. When they mentioned the chief faults they thought Negro people had, whites living in segregated units tended to name aggressive traits: trouble-making, rowdy, dangerous. Those living in the closer association of integrated units mentioned predominantly entirely different types of traits, namely: feelings of inferiority or over-sensitiveness to prejudice. The shift here is from a fear-sustained perception to one sustained by a friendly "mental hygiene" point of view.

One of the continuing problems of our time concerns the manner and extent of the utilization of Negroes. To assist personnel administrators in dealing with utilization of Negro soldiers there has been a tendency to advise that they take counsel with individuals who are believed to "understand the psychology of the Negro." Such a science does not exist apart from the total personality structure in the opinion of more than one expert in the study of human relations. Personnel management recognizes that it is necessary to consider attitudes of workers, both white and Negro, but specialization in understanding attitudes of racially identified groups is not a substantiated scientific skill since attitudes are determined not by race but by the atmosphere of acceptance or rejection in which the individual soldier must live.

Rather than emphasizing the differences which are believed to exist racially between one soldier and another, it is upon the basic principle of the full utilization of all men that personnel management in the Army must concentrate. Where conditions between groups create obstruction to the accomplishment of this end, it is upon the obstructions that attention must be focused. As integration progresses there will be varying effects upon the racial groups involved. If these effects are recognized and understood by qualified specialists extension of integration will not be accompanied by explosive situations, but will be a help in removing unsubstantiated false beliefs upon which Army utilization of personnel is now based. It is in this area that specialists are required. Roy Davenport in his article "NEGRO IN THE ARMY," published in 1947 in the Journal of Social Issues Vol. III No. 4, p. 32,
"as military strategy and technology advances the problem of the Negro in uniform becomes more acute." (And here it should be remembered that at the time this was written participation in United Nations forces by United States Army units had not yet added its complications to the problem.) "It is clear that a need exists to arrive at an effective solution which will permit each soldier to achieve for himself a military role unrelated to race...only through the proper application of accumulated knowledge, acquired through scientific research techniques, the Negro soldier and the white soldier can be developed into an effective team for the defense of the nation."

The Negro in the Army has seldom been among the problems to which military scientists have been permitted to devote their attention. There have been studies of venereal disease rates. The incidence of these diseases among Negroes has concerned the Army medics. Crime, AWOL have been investigated by the Provost Marshal. Here again the Negro soldier has been considered....What has not been considered for extensive investigation is the socio-psychological forces responsible for what is obviously disproportionate frequency with which the Negro soldier is included in these statistics. There have been few studies, if any, of the effect of hostile community attitudes upon morale. Scant attention has been given to the relationship between the availability of off-post recreational opportunities and venereal disease and AWOL rates."

Dr. Arnold Rose published a study in 1946 entitled ARMY POLICIES TOWARD NEGRO SOLDIERS in the Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, March. As a member of the Research Branch of the Army's Information and Education Division, Dr. Rose discovered that "Army policy on the utilization of Negro troops is a failure." His report demonstrates how choice of Southern white officers to train and lead Negro soldiers in the Second Cavalry in the 92nd and 93rd Infantry Divisions was made because they were assumed to "understand" Negroes. While the Army assumed that Negro soldiers preferred Southern white officers, a cross section survey made in February 1943 showed that 3% of the Negro soldiers preferred Southern white officers. The study found that Southern white officers did not prefer assignment of Negro troops but accepted it on promise of quick promotion to posts they did prefer, or were assigned to such troops when they were not held to be promising officers. The survey revealed that Negroes were assumed by Southern white officers not to be good as combat troops, but to be better suited to unskilled labor jobs. One Southern white officer stated that 60% of his men were illiterates. Many officers stated that 20% of their men were illiterate. Careful check on actual illiteracy, defined by army standards, showed 3 to 4% of illiteracy among Negro troops.

The result of officer attitudes toward Negro troops was important in many ways; officers expected incompetence and incapability. Therefore they gave poor instruction. The soldiers knew how little the officers expected and responded with less. Morale was poor on both counts.

Findings which have crucial importance are those which show that both in the army and in public housing segregation is always present when conflict, bloodshed, violence arise. Separation of one group from the other permits the development of stereotypes, and prevents observation by the prejudiced of the examples of good performance and good character which eventually conquer prejudice. There has never been an example of violence or bloodshed among integrated interracial groups where occupancy patterns were planned without regard for race or color. It is the Army's policy of segregation which can be shown to cause conflict, not the extension of integration. If the outbreak of violence between segregated racial groups at Camp
Rucker on March 7, 1951, in which no member of the integrated 47th Division was involved, had never happened, there was already sufficient sound evidence for the conclusion that segregation breeds prejudice and lessened self-respect while integration develops higher morale and efficiency. This is reason enough for immediate introduction of interracial integration into all United States Army basic training.

IV

RESEARCH AND FINDINGS CONCERNING PREJUDICE

Perhaps the most distinguished contribution to the study of prejudice has been made within the last six months by Professor Gordon W. Allport of Harvard University. From his lecture on the subject of Prejudice printed in the November 1950 Supplement Series, Number 4 of the Journal of Social Issues, I quote: "Whatever our values may be, prejudice is a fact of mental organization and a mode of mental functioning. It is our business to understand it...Thus the New Oxford Dictionary calls prejudice "a feeling, favorable or unfavorable, toward any person or thing, prior to or not based upon actual experience"..."We shall limit ourselves to the negative attitudes toward human beings held because of their membership (or supposed membership) in a certain group. The pre-judgment runs its course without due regard for individual differences. Mis-judgment is also involved because no group as a whole has attributes that each member unvaryingly shares....Prejudice against human beings is a form of "rash judgment" which, simply said, is a matter of "thinking ill of others without sufficient warrant." Allport goes on to demonstrate that the stereotype which develops through lack of contact which would include good as well as less good experiences is the socially permitted form of hostility toward out-groups to which personalities resort when personal or social inadequacies develop prejudice. When the stereotype and some form of distress combine in a situation the results prove that prejudice is something and does something. "When one investigates the effects of different types of contacts - residential, occupational, social and wartime contacts in combat situations...the generalization that emerges is to the effect that only in situations where different groups meet on equal footing, enjoying equal status, does prejudice diminish. The effect is greatly enhanced if the groups holding such equal status engage in joint participation in a common task."

V

HUMAN RELATIONS TECHNIQUES

In past use of psychological techniques the Army has profited by various forms of tests to aid in personnel placement. The newer field of research in human relations and group-dynamics is, in a sense, comparable to the advance into atomic studies. Effect of interpersonal relationships upon morale, ability to perform, self-confidence, intellectual performance at peak of ability and performance in combat relate to morale. Such techniques are available would permit the Army to plan a rapid time table for advance toward complete integration of the races and evaluation on a sound basis of each successive step. Leadership both South and North is demanding an end to that form of discrimination expressed in segregation. The times demand an efficient use of every man according to his own highest performance and the removal of any barriers whether of race or other kinds of injustice, which stand in the way of our accumulating knowledge of successful ways of arriving at that end. The primary grade of psychological warfare would teach us that a segregated Army at home is a poor instrument for use in United Nations forces, and a poorer instrument for winning the confidence of the vast majority of the human race whose skins are colored.