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WAR DEPARTMENT
Washington

1 September 1944

MEMORANDUM FOR THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON SPECIAL TROOP POLICY:

Subject: Participation of Negro Troops in the postwar military establishment.

The War Department together with other government agencies has begun the study and preparation of plans for the post war period. Within the War Department, the Special Planning Division has already established two basic assumptions: (1) that, after the cessation of hostilities, this country will maintain such temporary military forces as may be necessary to insure the continuation of the peace and (2) that a system of compulsory military training will be enacted by appropriate legislation. A small professional Army, to be augmented in time of emergency by organized units drawn from a citizen Army reserve, is stated as the basis for our future military organization.

Experience gained during the current war have shown that though over a period of years the General Staff, Army War College, and other military agencies have studied the problem of the inclusion and utilization of Negro soldiers in our Army, in the main the Army was unprepared to deal with the large number of Negroes who entered the service under the provisions of the Selective Service Act. Therefore, policies with respect to the training and use of Negro military personnel developed in response to specific problems. Many sources of racial irritation persisted over considerable periods of time because of this inadequate preparation prior to the period of sudden expansion.

This war has seen a greater proportionate participation of minority racial groups in the Army than at any time in our history. This participation can be expected to continue in the future, particularly in view of the preliminary assumptions that have been developed for our post war military establishment.

To the end that a definite, workable policy, for the inclusion and utilization in the Army of minority racial groups, be developed before final plans for the post war military establishment have become crystallized, I desire to place before the Committee the following proposed recommendation to the Secretary of War:

The Advisory Committee for Special Troop policy is aware that War Department agencies are at present considering plans for the post war military establishment. Past experience has indicated the necessity of considering in advance the question of the participation of minority racial groups. It is, therefore, recommended that the War Department General Staff review existing War Department policies regarding such participation and that this review be based upon a study which will include all our experiences during the present war, both in this country and abroad. It is recommended that this study be instituted immediately so that the War Department will be in position to effect any necessary changes in policy which may result from such a study either through the proposal of proper legislation or other means.

/s/ John J. McCloy
JOHN J. MCCLOY
Assistant Secretary of War.