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MEMORANDUM FOR THE COMMANDING GENERAL:

SUBJECT: Negro Training Program

1. SELECTION AND PROCUREMENT.

Because of the lower average standard of education, much difficulty was experienced in obtaining suitable officer candidate material, particularly for the aircrew. For example, in the AAF Screening Program as of 1 March 1945, of 66,433 Negroes in the Air Forces, 7,111 were eligible for screening. Of this number, only 1,197 volunteered and 835 qualified to appear before the Board. Of the 835 appearing before the Board, only 14 qualified for entry into preflight. Comparing Negro with White applicants, approximately 17 times more colored applicants must be screened than white to obtain any desired number. Further, on a comparative scale, the colored will be grouped in the lower or minimum qualifying scores whereas the white applicants will be spread evenly throughout the range.

2. TRAINING.

a. Commissioned. Due to the lower average intelligence of the Negro, the elimination rate in the Negro pilot training program from preflight throughout advanced was much higher than the white. Also in the pilot training program to obtain sufficient candidates, minimum qualifying scores had to be lowered for the colored program; that is, where the minimum qualifying stanine score for white pilot was normally 7, Negro qualifying score was lowered to 4 generally and for short periods had to be disregarded entirely for those individuals who were qualified for aircrew training. A considerably higher percentage of colored applicants than whites volunteered for elimination because of fear of flying. Upon graduation, the average colored graduate was generally about equal to what would be considered a weak average for the white; and in many instances to maintain the colored units, it was necessary to pass border-line cases that would have been eliminated had the applicants been white. The non-flying officers also because of lower average intelligence were slow to absorb training and in general much inferior to the average white.

b. Enlisted. The average GCT of colored enlisted shows that 79% of all AAF Negro personnel are in Groups IV and V as compared to 76% of white personnel in Groups II and III. Colored applicants were more adaptable for mechanical training and similar basic trades. Difficulty was experienced in obtaining suitable applicants for the advanced technical training, particularly radio. In aviation engineers, the overall results were less satisfactory than were obtained with white personnel

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both in final proficiency and training time involved.

3. SERVICE

a. Zone of Interior. The outstanding deficiency in the Negro officer was lack of leadership. Notwithstanding sincere effort to replace white officers with colored in Negro posts and units, it was necessary to fill top key positions with white personnel. Similarly, upon activation of the one medium bomb group, it was necessary to return Colonel Davis from the Mediterranean Theater to assume command. No other Negro officer had developed sufficiently to assume this position. Comparing the efficiency of the average colored officer with the white, I would say the majority of colored officers would occupy a rating of "Satisfactory" to "Very Satisfactory" whereas the majority of white officers were grouped in "Very Satisfactory" and "Excellent." Enlisted personnel, when properly trained, produced creditable results and in some instances developed into superior units.

b. Combat. Comparing the efficiency of the colored with the white echelon, the following are the statistics of the 332d Fighter Group. The effective sortie rate of the 332d was 82% as compared with 86% for the other P-51 groups of the 306th Fighter Wing. In a period of eleven months, the 332d was credited with 91 air victories compared with 1024 to the remaining three groups of the Wing; on an average of 8.3 victories per month for the 332d as compared with 24.2 per month for each of the other groups. The ratio of victories per losses for the 332d was .85 whereas the ratio of victories per losses for the Wing was 2.46. A general reluctance of the escort of Heavy Bombardment missions to engage in large air battles with the enemy fighters were reported. This tendency actually contributed to a high loss rate to flak.

4. GENERAL

a. Health and General. In general the problem of maintaining the health of the Negro as compared to the White was considerably greater. The general rate among the colored troops was seven times greater than the white.

b. Racial Problems. Notwithstanding the claim that all people are created equal, the vast majority of white insist on racial segregation. To avoid incidents and to provide for harmony in service, both for white and colored, segregation is essential if Negroes are to be accepted for training.

c. Suitability. Due to the lower average intelligence, the demonstrated lack of leadership, general poor health, and extremely high elimination rate in training, it is far more expensive to train Negro officer personnel than white. Also statistics indicate that the end product obtained in Negro training is much less efficient than that obtained in white. Particularly in the commissioned bracket, the training of Negro personnel is not economically sound.

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CONCLUSIONS:

1. Due to the excessive cost of training Negro aircrew and commissioned personnel, as well as the generally poor results obtained from the graduates, further training of Negro personnel cannot be economically justified. Further, no compromise in procurement or training standards should be made in peacetime in order to obtain Negro applicants. If training of colored applicants is to continue, they should be required to meet the same rigid standards in selection and training as is required of White.

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