

[REDACTED]

Notes on proposed plan for use of negro manpower.
(Not a part of the plan.)

1. The fundamental conception upon which this plan is based is that the military man power of the United States, white or black, should be assigned to duties in the Army for which it is qualified. Military considerations alone should govern in war.

2. The negro does not perform his share of civil duties in time of peace in proportion to his population. He has no leaders in industrial or commercial life. He takes no part in government. Compared to the white man he is admittedly of inferior mentality. He is inherently weak in character.

3. The negro issue should be met squarely. The War Department had no pre-determined and sound plan for the use of negro troops at the beginning of the World War. It had no adequate defense against political and racial pressure and was forced to organize negro combat divisions and commission unqualified negro officers. The results are well known.

4. The War Department when occasion demands should be able to present this matter frankly to those who make demands or should know the facts.

The negro, particularly the officer, failed in the World War.

The door will not be closed against him on this account.

He will be given an opportunity to take part in war in accordance with his qualifications in exactly the same fields of activity as are allotted the white man.

He will be accepted for service by the identical standards applied to the white man.

While in the service he will be measured by the standards applied to the white man. This includes reclassification, elimination, and rewards of promotion and decoration.

He will be given a sound plan of organization, training and leadership.

He will be given tasks he may reasonably be expected to perform.

If he makes good he will have the opportunity eventually to fight in the war with all-negro organizations.

If he fails to qualify to fight as a race he will be limited to such tasks as he can perform under white leadership.

What he accomplishes in war will depend upon the negro.

5. There should be no sentiment about the use of negro troops in war.

It is not sound to contend that he should bear losses in war in proportion to his population relative to white population. The basis of his employment in war should be that applied to white soldiers, viz., qualifications and capabilities for military service.

In the American Expeditionary Forces in France the negroe's total share of losses was 1-1/2%.

6. If the negro should be called into service on a plan based on the numerical strength of his population his share of man power for the Mobilization Plan would be almost twice the quota, which under the standards developed in the World War, he can furnish.

7. The Mobilization Plan provides for approximately 140,000 negroes for non-combatant duty. This would leave approximately 30,000 for the experiment of combat duty.

8. The majority of negroes left at home will be in the southern states where they will be needed for labor and where they can best be handled by competent whites.

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

2. In past wars the negro has made a fair laborer. As a technician and a fighter he has been inferior to the white man.

Reference "B".

3. In the World War the negro officer was a failure in combat.

Reference "C".

4. In the World War political pressure forced the formation of two negro combat divisions and the commissioning of about 600 negro officers.

Reference "D".

5. There are 11,000,000 negroes in the United States. The total number which according to the standards developed in the World War are qualified to be soldiers is 352,922. Applying the same standards to the white man we find that the negro can furnish 6.1% of the total man power in the United States qualified for military service. On this basis his contribution of man power to the total required by the War Department General Mobilization Plan is 209,679.

Reference "E".

IV. Opinion of the War College.

1. In the process of evolution the American negro has not progressed as far as the other sub-species of the human family. As a race he has not developed leadership qualities. His mental inferiority and the inherent weaknesses of his character are factors that must be considered with great care in the preparation of any plan for his employment in war.

2. The life of the nation is at stake in war. Neither the white man nor the negro should be given tasks they are not qualified to perform. However, the plan for the use of the man power of the United States in war should be fair to both races.

3. In past wars the negro has made a fair laborer, but an inferior technician. As a fighter he has been inferior to the white man even when led by white officers.

4. The negro officer was a failure as a combat officer in the World War.

5. The door should not be closed against the negro because of his failure in the World War. He should be given a fair opportunity to perform the tasks in war for which he is qualified or may qualify himself under a sound plan of organization, training and leadership. He should be measured by the same standards applied to the white man. Finally, he should be given an opportunity to demonstrate as a race his competency for combat duty.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

6. In making effective the War Department General Mobilization Plan the total number of negroes to be taken into the military service should be 209,679.

7. The largest negro unit that should be organized on mobilization is the battalion. These battalions should be assigned to divisions of the Regular Army and the National Guard in the proportion of one battalion to a division for combat training. If and when these battalions demonstrate satisfactory combat efficiency they should be grouped progressively into larger units with the division as the ultimate aim.

8. Negro soldiers as individuals should not be assigned to white units.

9. The total number of negro combat units to be organized on mobilization should be sufficient to form one complete Infantry division less headquarters of larger units. This number should be organized into battalions, trains, etc., and distributed by services and branches in the proportions indicated by tables of organization for the Infantry division. The remainder of the negro quota, after deducting the number necessary for training and replacement purposes and frontier and other duty in the Zone of the Interior, should be assigned to the Engineers, Quartermaster Corps, Air Service, Cavalry, Coast Artillery, and Medical Department in accordance with the occupational qualifications of the men and the needs of these services.

10. At the beginning of the war the negro combat units should be officered entirely by white officers except in the grade of lieutenant. Only negro officers who hereafter graduate from training camps where they have qualified for appointment as combat officers in accordance with standards applied to white candidates should be assigned to these units. The white officers assigned to negro combat units should be carefully selected.

11. White and negro lieutenants should be assigned to negro combat units in numbers to insure that at all times the companies will have double the number of lieutenants in corresponding white organizations. During the period of combat training the number of negro lieutenants in negro combat units should not exceed the number of white lieutenants.

12. Initially negro officers above the grade of lieutenant, and all other negro officers not included in Par. 10 above, should be assigned in general to non-combatant units of negro troops. They should be observed, tested, reclassified, eliminated or advanced eventually to combat assignments in accordance with the standards applied to white officers.

13. Negro officers should not be placed over white officers, noncommissioned officers or soldiers.

[REDACTED]

14. Negro officer candidates should attend training camps with white candidates. They should have the same instructors, take the same tests and meet the same requirements for appointment as officers as the white candidates. They should be sheltered, messed and instructed separately from white candidates.

15. Citations, decorations, and promotion for demonstrated efficiency should be given the negro in accordance with the standards applied to the white man.

16. This plan provides for the initial assignment of negro man power at the outbreak of war. It will be seen that the eventual use of the negro will be determined by his performance in combat training and service. If and when the battalions assigned to white divisions qualify for combat service they will be assigned to this duty. If the negro makes good the way is left open for him to go into combat eventually with all-negro units. If the negro officer fails to demonstrate his ability to lead his own troops they will be led by white officers. The formation of all-negro units should be made gradually, starting with the company. They should be led by negro officers who have demonstrated their ability to lead. When they have qualified for combat duty they should be given an opportunity to demonstrate in combat whether or not they should progress to larger units.

17. The guiding principle in this plan is military efficiency. The plan is believed to be eminently fair to both the negro and the white man. Political or racial pressure should not be allowed to alter it.

V. Action recommended.

It is recommended that this study be taken as the basis of the policy of the War Department for the use of negro man power and that the plan proposed herein be used as a guide in the revision of the War Department General Mobilization Plan.

VI. Concurrences.

The policies and plan for the use of negro man power proposed in this study are the culmination of several years study by the faculty and student body of The Army War College.

H. B. ELY,
Major General, U.S. Army,
Commandant.

REFERENCE "A".

ANALYSIS OF PHYSICAL, MENTAL, MORAL, AND PSYCHOLOGICAL QUALITIES AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NEGRO.

1. Physical.

During the World War statistics indicate that rejections of Class I registrants for white and negro races were, respectively, 30.29% and 25.40%. Without investigation this might seem to indicate that the negro is physically superior to the white. It appears, however, that the standards prescribed for the whites were not maintained for the negro. Rates of non-effectives in negro units were so high as to cause a protest from General Pershing. He wired, "Colored Stevedore troops arriving with tuberculosis, old fractures, extreme flat feet, hernia, venereal diseases all existing prior to enlistment, not able to stand hardship of climate and travel, larger proportion of sick than among white troops. Recommend elimination of unfit by rigid physical examination before embarking."

"Based upon his observation of the poor physical condition of colored stevedore troops, orders were issued to eliminate the physical unfit negroes before their departure from a port of embarkation. After the issue of such orders, 43% of 3,604 colored drafted men sent from Camp Pike to Newport News were found unfit for overseas service on medical examination at the port of embarkation. Authority had, however, been given in this case to send on from Camp Pike men suffering from venereal disease but not receiving daily treatment."

"The physical condition of a large part of the colored draft is very poor. Many must be entirely eliminated and a large proportion of those left are not fit for combat duty." - Lytle Brown, A.C. of S., W.P.D., to Chief of Staff.

"A further examination into this case shows that the Commanding General, Camp Pike, was not trying to unload undesirables on the Port of Embarkation. He realized they were for overseas service and he sent the pick of what he had but that is the class of men the colored drafted men were. Other examples could be given but it would be cumulative testimony along the same lines." - Col. S.D. Anderson, G.S., Chairman, Operations Branch.

Taking this case, which is stated to be more or less typical, the Surgeon at Camp Pike stated: "From a conservative estimate I will state that fully 90% of all negroes received at the Depot Brigade, now have or have had venereal disease in some form."

The situation with reference to the physical condition of negroes during the war is shown in the following quotation from a report from Col. Anderson to the Chief of Staff:- "The present policy is to accept men with certain ailments along this line and to send them to the camps to receive the necessary treatment before starting them on their training. The large percentage of colored men temporarily unfit reduces the effective strength while the space they occupy might well be used by able-bodied men." This difference between whites and negroes is also apparent in the disability discharge rate which was, respectively, 42 and 80 per thousand.

From this it is clear that the number of physical defectives among the negroes was much higher than among the whites and that full weight can not be given to the figures of the Provost Marshal General, as different standards were used in the physical examinations of white and negro draftees. It can be further deduced from this that the negro is physically inferior to the white man and that more rigid examinations must be conducted in the next war. The Southern negroes, who form the bulk of the race endurance and stamina in cold rigorous climates is low. His normal physical activity is generally small, due to his laziness.