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Army Report on Negro Policy Much Ado About Nothing

The more than 4,000 word report on the War Department's future policy and practices in regard to the use of Negro troops, issued Monday, seems to be much ado about nothing. The long-awaited document does not issue in the millennium by any means. In fact, it announces no radical departure from the general jimcrow pattern of the United States Army. The long-awaited report, by the Board of Officers on Utilization of Negro Manpower

By VIRGINIA VALE

WHEN an actress decides to free lance it's a gamble, even if she's famous. Barbara Britton decided to take a chance, a while ago, and her success will probably inspire many another girl to do likewise. Before leaving Paramount she'd done "Till We Meet Again," with Ray Milland, and "The Virginian," not yet released, so she couldn't tell how the public would like her in that one. Her first picture on her own was "Captain



BARBARA BRITTON

Kidd," with Charles Laughton and Randolph Scott. Now she's signed for a comedy, Republic's "The Fabulous Suzanne," in which Rudy Vallee will also appear. Vallee will have the comedy lead; Steve Sekely produces and directs.

A stray sailor became technical advisor for a few moments on "One Exciting Week," at Republic. Pinky Lee and Shemp Howard, as a pair of phoney marines, had a scene showing them changing their uniforms. And they couldn't get out of those skin tight navy jumpers. The sailor, who goes down in history—AMM 3/e Donald Wardwick, stepped forward and showed them the way.

"Going My Way" has just begun a four-theater run in Paris, one of its first European engagements. But Americans there may be misled by the title; it's been translated into local idiom, and is called "The Road Strwn with Stars."

When he began directing "Calcutta," John Farrow said, "The one thing I want to do in this picture is to get the flavor of the real India. I'm not after that Arabian Nights stuff that is usually seen." So we'll see Alan Ladd, Gail Russell, and the rest of the excellent cast against a background of India as it really is, and we'll all owe John Farrow a debt of gratitude.

Arthur (CBS) Godfrey went into a New York restaurant for a steak and came out with a tenor. It was Frank Saunders, the bartender. Godfrey took him to the studio to sing on his program—couldn't get Saunders away from the mike before he'd sung three songs to the delight of the studio audience. Godfrey, too, was delighted, and has asked the singer to appear with him again.

Bartlett Robinson, "Walter Manning" of "Portia Faces Life," has bought an island in Long Island Sound, between Darien and Stamford; connected with the shore by a causeway, the island boasts a 125-year-old house. Robinson says he's going to spend all his spare time for years fixing it up. He'd better—I remember that house, and the neighbors claim it's haunted!

It's Van Heflin's sister, Frances, who plays the part of "Nora Holliday" in the new CBS air show, "Holliday and Co. But Frances doesn't have to rest on her brother's laurels; till recently she appeared in the Broadway stage hit, "I Remember Mama."

Remember Paul Lavalie's famous "Society of Lower Basin Street"? It's rumored that he may revive it—the rumor's been growing since the appearance of the living "Memphis Five" on Lavalie's "Highways in Melody," on NBC recently.

er in the Post-war Army, goes into many high-sounding details on the need for greater utilization of manpower in the next war; the progress made by the Negro serviceman and civilian since the last World War; indoctrination of white folks, especially those in the army, concerning the Negro's worth and their attitude toward him; assignment difficulties of Negro troops, especially combat men; all of which is a general rehashing of the same old thing.

The board recognizes the value of education for armed services, the value of the Negro's contribution in battle, the lack of educational and other opportunities which have retarded him, and all that adds up to the second-class citizenship with which the American Negro is burdened

Negroes Set Apart

But does it recommend complete and unequivocal integration of Negroes, on the same basis of white, in all branches of the army and other armed services? No! Does it abolish racial quotas? No! Does it speak against the jimcrow education systems that keep the Negro's opportunities unequal to his white fellow citizens? No!

All through the report the Negro is discussed as a race apart. Nowhere is it recommended, suggested, or hinted that all Negroes want and all they should have is the same chance and the same treatment, to be treated exactly like any other American citizen—no better, no worse.

Some of the recommendations for future policy and practices follow.

* to utilize Negro manpower on

a broader professional scale than has obtained heretofore.

* to utilize qualified individuals in appropriate special and overhead units.

* to use the same proportion of Negroes in the Army as exists in the population.

Smaller Units Wanted

* to accept an unspecified number of qualified Negro officers in the Regular Army who will be required to meet the same standards set for white officers.

* to group Negro units with white units in composite organizations, like the Negro platoons in white companies used in Germany in World War II. (Boldface ours.)

* to organize Negro troops into units no larger than an infantry regiment, not whole divisions like the 93rd. (Boldface ours.)

* to accord to all officers, retires where community attitudes are most favorable and "in such strength as will not constitute an undue burden to the local civilian population, exceptions to this principle to be premised on the basis of military necessity."

There is no doubt that some recommendations are slightly advanced over former policies and practices, but it seems to me that the department, if it were earnest in setting up a real democratic army, could have saved all of this time, effort and paper by merely reporting these four words: "Abolish segregation and discrimination."

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EDITOR'S NOTE: This newspaper, through special arrangement with the Washington Bureau of Western Newspaper Union at 1616 Eye Street, N. W., Washington, D. C., is able to bring readers this weekly column on problems of the veteran and serviceman and his family. Questions may be addressed to the above Bureau. They will be answered in a subsequent column. No replies can be made direct by mail, but only in the column which will appear in this newspaper regularly.

When Will Vets Return?

The Washington office of Western Newspaper Union has received scores of letters from parents, wives, sweethearts and friends of men in service, all asking when their loved ones will get out of the service. We cannot answer these letters with any degree of accuracy because there is no way of ascertaining when men with a given number of points in a given theatre will be released. There are too many circumstances which must be considered in any particular area.

Here, however, is the promise of Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, made in his recent address before a joint session of congress January 15, as regards enlisted men:

"By April 30, 1946, all enlisted men, except volunteers, with 45 points as of September 2, 1945, or with 30 months' service as of April 20, 1946, will be separated from the army or aboard ship returning home."

"By June 30, 1946, all enlisted men, except volunteers, with 40 points as of September 2, 1945, or with 24 months' service as of June 30, 1946, will be separated from the army or aboard ship returning home."

General "Ike" further said that whether this rate of discharge can be maintained depends directly upon the rate of replacements or inflow into the army. So this commitment is limited to July 1, 1946.

Questions and Answers

Q. I am a widow of World War II with one child. I drew an allotment for myself and baby until he was killed in action in the navy. His insurance was made to his parents and neither the baby or I was mentioned in the papers. Now his parents are drawing this. Is there any way for me to get this or any part of the insurance?—Mrs. O. M. C., Crossville, Ala.

A. There is no way for you to obtain this insurance if you were not named as beneficiary, unless parents of the serviceman are willing to share with you. You, however, are entitled to a pension for yourself and baby.

Q. Would it be possible for a veteran's widow who is receiving a Spanish American war pension of \$30 per month, to exchange it for a World War pension to which she is also entitled? How would she go about making the exchange?—B. M. D., Elk Mills, Md.

A. Yes, the veterans' administration says it is possible. Consult your nearest regional veterans' administration office, probably at Richmond or Baltimore.

Q. We had a nephew who was in the army in the Philippines when war was declared. He was taken prisoner and died in a Jap prison camp in July, 1942. He did not carry insurance. His mother is a widow and is she entitled to receive any compensation? The boy's father was a World War I veteran and died in 1930.—His aunt, Watstown, Pa.

A. I would say that the widowed mother, if she was dependent upon the veteran, is entitled to a pension. However, she should file a claim with the nearest office of the veterans' administration, probably at Philadelphia or Pittsburgh, and they will determine her eligibility.

Q. My son has been discharged from the army. He entered service February, 1941. Is he entitled to the pre-Pearl Harbor ribbon? He was entitled to three bronze stars, but only one was shown in his discharge. Is there some way this can be put on his discharge and where can I obtain the information?—Mrs. W.M.J., Purvis, Miss.

A. For answers to both questions write to the office of the adjutant general, enlisted personnel, war department, Washington, D. C.

Q. My husband has one child and has been in the marines since August, 1943, and overseas since June 1, 1945. How many points does he have? He is in Peiping, China. When can I expect him home?—Mrs. D. H. S., Lewisburg, Pa.

A. As of September 2, your husband has 38 points. He is not likely to be home soon since the marines are screening all low point men and regulars out of units scheduled to return home soon. Fifty points are necessary for discharge.

Air Age Contest Winners to Fly To New York

The five Portland high school juniors and seniors who are named as winners in the Northwest Airlines Air Age contest will have a transcontinental air flight to New York, stay at one of the biggest hotels, be taken on conducted tours of the city and fly back home after the close of school in June.

"The high school students of today are the airlines passengers and operators of the future," declared Dan W. Hutchins, district traffic manager of the Northwest Airlines, in announcing the contest.

The four classifications for entries in the contest are as follows: 1. Literary: poems, compositions, essays expressing the future of the Air Age.

2. Fine Art: any medium may be used, such as water color, oils, pastels, linoleum, or wood block cuts, sculpturing, photography or ceramics. 3. Mechanical: model airplanes, designs for airfields, suggestions for inventions to improve safety or comfort in the Air Age. 4. Promotion: posters, advertisements, booklets.

Any students in the junior and senior years at Portland public or private high schools may compete in this contest. Similar contests are being held in Tacoma and Seattle, and the 15 winners will travel to New York together.

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