

CABINET PAPER—PRIVILEGED

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REPORT BY THE ATTORNEY GENERAL ON THE ADMINISTRATION'S EFFORTS IN THE FIELD OF RACIAL SEGREGATION AND DISCRIMINATION

This report summarizes various significant steps taken by the Administration to eliminate racial segregation and discrimination in their different forms and aspects.

Education

(1) In the field of public school education, segregation of pupils on the basis of race or color has been declared to violate the Constitution. This was done by the Supreme Court in its decisions of May 1954. Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, 347 U. S. 483, and Bolling v. Sharpe, 347 U. S. 497. The remaining question before the Court is how the decisions are to be implemented. This involves two issues as to which the Court has requested further briefs and will hear further argument from the parties and the Attorney General. First, the Court has asked whether it must order an immediate end to segregation or whether it can permit a gradual adjustment; second, it has asked whether if it has the power to permit a gradual adjustment, how such adjustment should be worked out. Our brief has already been filed. Our position is in essence, first, that the Court has the power to permit a gradual adjustment and, second, that there should be no unnecessary delay in ending segregation. More specifically, we say that the school authorities should be required to submit within 90 days plans for ending segregation as soon as possible and that, if they do not submit such plans, they should be ordered to end segregation forthwith; that the lower courts should pass upon the plans which may be submitted and supervise their execution, with the Supreme Court retaining jurisdiction to step in if necessary.

Oral argument of the case, in which the Government will participate, awaits confirmation of Justice Harlan in place of the late Justice Jackson.



(2) In the District of Columbia the Board of Education has already put into effect a plan for desegregation. In that connection the District Government obtained the dismissal of a citizens' federation suit intended to maintain segregation pending final action by the Supreme Court.

(3) The Department of Defense has taken steps to eliminate racial segregation of children in schools for the children of personnel stationed at military installations. The Department determined that all schools operated by the military would begin operation on an integrated basis with the beginning of the 1953 fall term, and this policy was carried out on schedule. With respect to the question of schools located on military installations but operated on a segregated basis by local educational agencies, the Secretary of Defense on January 12, 1954, directed "that the operation of all school facilities located on military installations shall be conducted without segregation on the basis of race or color", and that this policy should be placed in effect as soon as practicable but under no circumstances later than September 1, 1955. See Integration in the Armed Services, January 1, 1955, a Progress Report prepared by the Office of The Civilian Assistant, OASD-M & P, pp. 2-3.

(4) The Office of Education, Department of Health, Education and Welfare, has undertaken by reeducation to lessen public opposition to desegregation in areas where such opposition may exist. It has done this through preparation of a guide for leaders of public and private community groups concerning knowledge, principles,

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