HENRY STIMSON
1941 - 1945
April 9, 1941

My dear Mr. Secretary:

The President suggested that I take this up with you. Will you let me know what you think about such a plan and if you think it would be possible to put it into effect?

Very sincerely yours,

[Signature]

Honorable Henry L. Stimson
The Sec. of War
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

April 9, 1941

MEMORANDUM FOR

E. R.

OK to take up with the
Secretary of War.

F. D. R.
FOR THE PRESIDENT:

See Mrs. Roosevelt's note:

"FDR - Say, I write the Secretary? L.R."
My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am enclosing a statement which was given to me by Mrs. [redacted], a former employee of the War Department, who was dismissed several weeks ago.

Mrs. [redacted] tells me she never had a hearing, and I feel very strongly that she should have been allowed an opportunity to state her side of the case, as she sets it forth in this statement.

I have a letter from Mr. John W. Martyn, dated May 13th, 1941, explaining the reasons why she was dismissed, but he does not say that she was given a chance to appear before the board.

Will you please have this looked into and let me know what you find as the reasons for refusing her a chance to appear?

Very sincerely yours.
In view of the attached letter addressed to Secretary Stimson on May 5, 1941 – to which no reply as yet been received – and further that a War Dept. report on the case was sent to Gardner Jackson some time ago; this letter has not been written.
Col. Stimson: The Wash. Youth Council has made representations to me that the woman over whom there has been long altercation, while she was promised a hearing, has never had a chance to answer the charges which were made. She has written out a statement which she has handed me. I am not suggesting, of course, that she should be retained if for any reason it is considered unwise, still I do feel that in the interests of making the Union to which she belongs and the other organizations feel she has had a fair hearing, she should be allowed to answer the accusations. I enclose her statement.

E.R.

Mr. Magee: I seem to remember that the War Dept. made a full report on this woman and that she had a hearing and was represented at it by her lawyer. If I am right, do not write this letter. If you find I am wrong, please have this prepared for Mrs. R.'s signature.
May 13, 1941.

Mr. Ralph W. Hagoe
Administrative Offices
Social Correspondence
The White House
Washington, D.C.

My dear Mr. Hagoe:

I have your letter of May 5th, addressed to the Secretary, in which you desire further information regarding the request of Mrs. W for reinstatement into the service of the War Department.

Mrs.November was not dismissed until after a thorough investigation of her activities by the Military Intelligence Division of the Office of the Chief of Staff. In accordance with Section 6, Public 671, she was given definite reasons for her dismissal and allowed thirty days to answer the charges brought against her. This she complied with, and her reply was then given a full and comprehensive study by the Department. Upon the completion of this study it was thought advisable in the best interests of national security that she should not be reinstated, and was so notified of this decision. The case is now considered closed by the War Department.

However, at this time, I would like to take the opportunity to assure you, and through you to assure Mrs. Roosevelt that we are keenly cognizant to the responsibility entailed in administering the statute involved in Mrs. W's dismissal. It is our avowed intention to continue to exercise extreme and scrupulous care in all such similar cases; so as to provide against discrimination either to individuals or organizations to which those individuals may belong.

Sincerely yours,

JOHN W. MARTYN
John W. Martyn
Administrative Assistant
Dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

Herewith I return the copy of the War Department letter sent to your Mr. Magee by John W. Martyn, Administrative Assistant, concerning the case of

Though I still think that I should not have turned her case over to a group characterized prominently by its opposition to the defense program, I cannot but regard Mr. Martyn's letter as a compounding of the dangerous procedure in this case. The facts that have been brought to my attention on this procedure do not bear out the absoluteness of Mr. Martyn's assertions. There may be other facts of which I have no knowledge.

I have been told of the meeting you had with the Youth Council here and . You were reported to me as surprised that there had been no formal public hearing in her case. I assumed that you understood such to be the case. If you check back over my letters to you on the matter I think you will find implicit in one of them a brief description of the hearing indicating its private nature.

The problem has been raised at a meeting of the Robert Marshall Civil Liberties Trust of which I am one of the five trustees. I have agreed to prepare a memorandum on the case with which two of the New York trustees -- John Finerty and Roger Baldwin -- will approach Grenville Clark, chairman of the civil liberties committee of the American Bar Association, and Whitney Seymour for the purpose of persuading them to accept a moderate retainer from the Marshall Civil Liberties Trust to investigate and report on the procedure and evidence in this case as a guide for future actions of this nature. We have no certainty we will be able to retain Messrs. Clark and Seymour, but we think it in the public interest to try, and, failing them, to seek other interested counsel to make the inquiry. Such counsel naturally cannot and should not, in my judgement -- be expected to collaborate with the National Federation for Constitutional Liberties and such other groups as

the

The crux of the general problem involved relates to type of persons the War Department or any other department assigns to hear these dismissal cases. Undersecretary of War Patterson, as I told you, agreed thoroughly with me that "the military mind" should not be entrusted with that responsibility. Yet the board which gave

the hearing was a military board. Undersecretary Patterson's further expressions of attitude on this type of problem were ones with which I concurred. Unfortunately, in the press of his urgent duties, Judge Patterson's attitude apparently does not prevail.

None of which means that the serious doubts in my mind concerning 's choice of support in her case have been dispelled. It merely means that I think procedures of investigation, of accepting evidence and of weighing it are of the essence of democracy.

May you continue to be your vibrantly intelligent self. The President, we thought, was splendid.

Yours sincerely,

GARDNER JACKSON
6 WEST KIRKE STREET
CHEVY CHASE, MARYLAND

Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt,
The White House,
Washington, D.C.
July 26, 1941

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am sending you this note just to call to your attention the case of Paul Toneman, who wishes to be assigned to liaison with the Chicago Project, and in which Captain Earle Looker of your Department is interested. It seems that an Executive Order is necessary in order to set up the position.

I have known Paul Toneman for a long time and am interested in his welfare, but I do not want to ask that anything special be done that would not be done in the regular channels of business.

Very sincerely yours,

Hon. Henry L. Stimson
The Sec. of War
September 15, 1941

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I am sending you these letters and I know such things are unavoidable, but when they do happen there should be some expression of sympathy on the part of the commanding officer at the Post.

I hope something will be done about changing the height at which the planes fly over congested areas.

Very sincerely yours,

The Honorable Henry L. Stimson
Secretary of War
Washington, D.C.

Mrs. I. Arthur Kramer
September 30, 1941

Dear Mr. Secretary:

Thank you very much for your letter of September 26 and for sending me a copy of Mr. Guccio's letter to General Marshall. I am glad to have had the opportunity to read such a beautiful expression of patriotism.

The Department has certainly done everything possible to convey to these two families the sympathy that we all feel for them.

Very sincerely yours,

Hon. Henry L. Stimson
Secretary of War
My dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

I have received your letter of September 15 enclosing a letter from Mrs. Kramer whose daughter was killed in the recent airplane accident at Hempstead.

We have been greatly concerned over this tragic accident from the very moment that we received word of the crash and saw Mrs. Kramer's open letter published in the newspapers. I know you will appreciate that I myself sympathize deeply with the parents of the three children who were killed.

Immediately on learning of the accident I ordered a thorough investigation. I am glad to say that the pilot, who himself suffered very severely, is not culpable in the matter. With his plane on fire and his face and clothing burning, he did the best he could to glide into the air field, and it is for this reason that the uncontrollable machine was flying at a low altitude. He abandoned the plane only at the last moment and was saved from death by the fact that he fell into a tree.

In the absence of the Commanding Officer of the Hempstead Field the Post Chaplain went in an Army ambulance to the scene of the accident as soon as the crash report was received. Unfortunately he was unable to find Dr. and Mrs. Kramer. The Cuccio children were taken to the hospital in the Army ambulance. General Marshall wrote personal letters of condolence to both the Kramer and Cuccio families, which were delivered by the Inspector General who conducted the investigation. Letters of deepest sympathy have also been written by the Chief of the Air Corps. In addition to this the Chief of Chaplains, Monsignor Arnold, has held memorial services several times during the past month. I feel certain that you will be interested in reading the enclosed copy of Mr. Cuccio's letter to General Marshall. To me it represents one of the finest expressions of patriotism and loyalty that I have read. I have personally convinced myself that the military authorities have been neither negligent nor unsympathetic in regard to this accident.

The only unfortunate aspect of the affair was the visit of an inexperienced young officer to the Kramer household shortly after the accident with a request for clearance as required by law. The young man did not realize at first that he was talking to the parents of one of the children and his embarrassment when informed of this was intense. We have done everything that we possibly could do to make amends for this unfortunate oversight.
You may rest assured that we are doing everything humanly possible to obviate similar accidents in the future.

Very sincerely yours,

Henry L. Stimson
Secretary of War.

Mrs. Franklin Delano Roosevelt,
The White House.
General G. Marshall, U. S. A.,
Chief of Staff,
War Department,
Washington, D. C.

Dear General:

Your very kind letter to Mrs. Cuccio and myself was very much appreciated by us.

A more tragic loss could befall no one and needless to add we are heartbroken.

However, this disaster does not mean that we feel that Army flying activities in this or any other area should be curtailed in the slightest degree.

These are perilous times and if through some negligence Mrs. Cuccio and I have to pay an unusually heavy price to our country it is small indeed compared to the ruthless destruction of life being wreaked in the World today.

Again General let me express our appreciation for your kindly and sympathetic letter.

Sincerely yours,

PETER CUCCIO (Signed)
December 20, 1941

Dear Mr. Secretary:

The attached communication from Frederick P. Gruenberg is self-explanatory.

I have received quite a number of similar complaints recently and am wondering if the War Department is taking any steps to overcome the situation which Mr. Gruenberg describes. I will appreciate any information you can give me which can be used in answering this sort of letter.

Very sincerely yours,

The Honorable Henry L. Stimson
Secretary of War
Washington, D.C.

From: Mr. Frederick P. Gruenberg
1411 Walnut Street

Re: Turning away of Negro youth from volunteering for service, notably in Navy and Marine Corps.
December 24, 1941

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I am enclosing a communication I have received from the Wisconsin Chapter of the Friends of Our Native Landscapes. I hope the War Department can work as these people suggest.

Very sincerely yours,

Hon. Henry L. Stimson
Secretary of War
Washington, D.C.

Write Sec. War I hope they can work as these people suggest. E.R.

Ask the Dept. to make every effort to integrate the site of the Mor-Dimac region with as little injury as possible to scenic and recreational value
September 22, 1942.

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am sending you this letter with a copy of my answer. I have heard from one or two other sources that the young Southerners were very indignant to find that the Negro soldiers were not looked upon with terror by the girls in England and Ireland and Scotland. I think we will have to do a little educating among our Southern white men and officers, emphasising the fact that every effort should be made to prevent marriages during this period but that normal relationships with groups of people who do not have the same feeling that they have about the Negro cannot be prevented and that it is important for them to recognise that in different parts of the world, certain situations differ and have to be treated differently.

Very sincerely yours,

Hon. Henry L. Stimson
Secretary of War
Washington, D. C.
March 8, 1943.

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I have been told that discrimination is practiced against Negro troops which are stationed at the Carlsbad Army Air Field, Carlsbad, New Mexico. My informant tells me that the Post Theatre, which was presumably built to provide amusement for any American soldier, seems to be exclusively for white soldiers, except for the last row which has a sign with the words "Colored Section" printed on it. Only twenty seats are provided for Negro soldiers although the theatre has a capacity exceeding one thousand. That the Post Exchange offers another example of discrimination; refreshments are served, but Negro soldiers do not have the privilege of eating inside the building. Further, that all colored soldiers must ride in the rear seats of all buses leaving the Base, as the front seats are provided for white soldiers.

I should appreciate it very much if you could have an investigation made as to whether or not such conditions do exist.

Very sincerely yours,

Hon. Henry L. Stimson
Secretary of War
Washington, D. C.
Write letter of love to Miss Marshack

these facts to ask to

have information. (Do

not give name or

try a Soldier wife)

E.R.
HEADQUARTERS
349th AVIATION SQUADRON, (SEP)
ARMY AIR FORCES ADVANCED FLYING SCHOOL,
CARLSBAD AMY AIR FIELD, CARLSBAD, NEW MEXICO

23 February, 1943

SUBJECT: Discrimination and Segregation

TO : Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt
     White House, Washington, D.C.

The three hundred and ten Negro enlisted men of the 349th Avn. Sqn., (Separate) of the United States Air Corps are Loyal Americans, ready and willing to do their part to preserve Democracy. For the most part the personnel of this Squadron is made up of young men who were born and lived in the Northern States where they enjoyed to a large degree the advantages of a Democracy. However, the fact that we want to do our best for our country and to be Valient soldiers, seems to mean nothing to the Commanding Officer of our Post, Col. Lewis, as indicated by the fact that "Jim Crowism" is practiced on the very grounds of our camp. As you may have noticed above our Squadron is designated by the title "349th Avn. Sqn., Separate"; the word Separate being used only to designate our Squadron, as all the other squadrons are white excepting the 1015th which is a Quartermaster Platoon.

The Post Theater, which was presumably built to provide amusement for any American soldier, seems to be exclusively for white soldiers, excepting the last row which has a sign with the words "Colored Section" printed on it. Only twenty seats are provided for Negro soldiers although the theater has a total capacity exceeding one thousand. The Post Exchange offers another example of discrimination; refreshments are served, but Negro soldiers do not have the privilege of eating inside the building.

At a meeting today of the entire personnel of the 349th Avn. Sqn., Sep., our Commanding Officer, Captain Joseph R. Becnel, (as of January 17, 1943 through February 23, 1943) stated that all colored soldiers must ride in the rear seats of all buses leaving the Base, as the front seats are provided for white soldiers. These are the principal factors in our complaint. We do not ask for special privileges. All we desire is to have equality; to be free to participate in all activities, means of transportation, privileges, and amusements afforded any American soldier. We plead for an investigation of this deplorable condition which is certainly Undemocratic. If this humble request does not receive favorable results, we, the undersigned, pledge our continued loyal support to the President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, and to abide by the Articles of War.

Any consideration given us by you will be highly appreciated.
Dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

At the present time I am a member of the 349th Avn. Sqdn, Sep. and eager to do my part for my country. On December 10, 1942, as a civilian I wrote you a letter stating my desire to be assisted in a project of Visual Education for Negroes and I am grateful to have received a reply from the U.S. Department of Education.

Although my proposal was not accepted, I appreciated your attention concerning this matter. It is because of your kindness in my personal affair that I recommended my fellow committee members to write you concerning our complaint. Your prompt and thoughtful consideration will be gratefully received by all the members of our loyal squadron.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Pvt. Richard K. Allen
Carlsbad Army Air Field
Carlsbad, New Mexico
February 23, 1943
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 Merle H. J. Staff
 Donald A. Webb

Melbourne C. Jones
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Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt,
The White House.

Dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

I have your letter of March 8th concerning a report you have received that discrimination is practiced against Negro troops, which are stationed at the Carlsbad Army Air Field, Carlsbad, New Mexico.

This matter is being investigated and when a report is received I shall write you again.

Sincerely yours,

Henry L. Stimson
Secretary of War.
March 2, 1944

Dear Mr. Secretary:

Will you tell me what is the status of American-Japanese soldiers after the war? Are they denied full rights of citizenship, or are they given full citizenship status?

Very sincerely yours,

Hon. Henry L. Stimson

See 1st. to Mrs. Katayama
My dear Mr. Secretary:

Mrs. Roosevelt asks me to bring the following information to your attention.

Mrs. Roosevelt understands that on January 19, 1944, at Camp Davis, North Carolina, two accepted Negro Officer Candidates passed the examining board at that station, along with four white candidates. That since January 19, 1944, all of the six accepted Candidates have been selected and transferred to various Officer Candidate Schools, except the two Negroes.

Mrs. Roosevelt understands further, that these Negroes were told that they were not selected because they are colored and because the Adjutant General did not specify in the telegraphic message whether the Officer Candidate School quotas were for negroes or for whites. If Mrs. Roosevelt’s information is correct, these men have apparently reached all the requirements and qualifications to attend Officer Candidate School, one in Chemical Warfare Service and the other in the Quartermaster Corps.

Very sincerely yours,

Secretary to Mrs. Roosevelt.

Honorable Henry L. Stimson
The Secretary of War
Washington, D. C.
Dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

I am writing in the interest of myself and one other accepted Negro Officer Candidate here at Camp Davis, N. C. On the 19th of January 1944, the two of us were among six applicants, two Negroes and four Whites, who passed the examining board at this station.

I am quite aware of the fact that OCS quotas are small at this phase of the war, but since the 19th of January 1944, all of the six applicants (accepted Candidates) have been selected and transferred to various OCS, except we two Negroes. Upon my inquiry into why we have not been selected, I was simply told that it was because we are colored and because the Adjutant General did not specify in the telegraphic message whether the OCS quotas were for Negroes or for Whites. I am certain that the telegram from the Adjutant General will never list quotas in regard to race. That was seemingly an excuse for not selecting us.

I feel confident that you can help us, if you were to inquire into the matter.

I have reached all of the requirements and qualifications to attend the Officer Candidates School in Chemical Warfare Service and my friend has come up to all of the required qualifications for the Quartermaster Corps. I am sure that I will be of better service to the United States in the field of my choice.

Please help these Negro accepted candidates at Camp Davis, North Carolina to be given the chance that the White Soldiers are given.

Very humbly yours,

[Signature]

W. H. Unthank
T. Sgt 33336560
234th AAA Gun Bn
November 25, 1944

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I hope you will not mind my writing you this letter about publicity in general and the story of the family which had one son returned because of the loss of four others.

It seems to me that, while these stories attest the fact that the War Department is deeply interested in all the men, they create a lot of unhappiness and raise false hopes.

My mail has been filled with letters from mothers who have lost one or two sons and have only one left. They do not see any reason why their sons can't come home or be transferred to a non-combat area.

The same thing happened when one man was brought home to see a sick child.

I realise, of course, that these stories are often written by local newspaper people, but I seem to remember that some of them are War Department releases.

Very sincerely yours,

[Signature]

Hon. Henry L. Stimson

X Solider Returned
January 13, 1945

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I think the Italians fighting with us should be in our hospitals. Isn't this a mistake that can be rectified and won't you please see that the change is noted in Stars and Stripes?

Sincerely yours,

[Signature]

Hon. Henry L. Stimson

Enc. let. from Beatrice Melakoff, 555 W. 113, NYC with letter (copy) from number of soldiers to Stars and Stripes about the case of an Italian partisan soldier who nearly died because of unsanitary hospital conditions - could not be admitted to an American hospital.