

SECRET

**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
THE ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE
WASHINGTON**



DEPARTMENTAL RECORDS BRANCH, A.G.O.

SECRET

291.2-E
J. E. G. 10
1944

MIDLAND ARMY AIR FIELD
Midland, Texas.

24 September 1944

SUBJECT: Racial Discrimination and Violation of Expressed War Department Policies.

(Reference: Letter AG 353.2(5 Mar 43) OB-S-A-M 10 Mar 43.

(Letter FM/md 28 939 Pentagon 8 July 43.

TO: The Inspector General, War Department, Washington, D. C.

1. Orders given by Colonel Charles H. Dowman, Base Commander, Midland, Texas, the week 20 September 44 to date, are in direct violation of War Department policies as set forth in the above mentioned references. These orders are in further violation of specific Army Regulations, and in disregard of certain of the oldest customs of the service. Further, these orders are in continuance of a vicious policy of discrimination, based solely upon racial differences.

2. At this time there are thirty-four Negro officers based at this field for Bombardier training. Five of this number are in either an advanced or a final state of training. Twenty-nine officers are rated Navigators, awaiting the beginning of their training. Direct orders have been given barring these officers from entrance into the building which houses the Officer's Club at this base, and compelling them to occupy a segregated section of the Officer's cafeteria.

3. This officer group has been told that the facilities of the PX-Restaurant would be denied it because, to quote the Base Commander, "this is a concession operated by civilians, and I cannot control its policies.

4. Prior to the assignment of this officer group, no differentiation was required for the seating of student officer's in the cafeteria, and subsequent to the enunciation of this policy, this area has been occupied solely by colored officers.

5. Treatment accorded colored officers on this Base has followed the pattern renowned trenchantly by in the words of a ranking administrative officer who announced to the group, "I am a West-Texan, and I like the way things are run out here."

6. This group finds the treatment accorded them, and the deprivation of limited recreational facilities to make it extremely and unwarrantedly difficult to maintain morale. We further find, and feel it calculated, it to lower our prestige in the eyes of other officers, in the eyes of enlisted personnel, and with civilians, the latter, in certain cases, presuming to give orders to commissioned officers.

7. The continuance of such a policy in force is hardly in accord with the struggle to which our nation has committed itself. We feel that it makes a travesty of "the four freedoms", finding, as we do, that to be a Chinese American, a Canadian student, a member of the Free French, to be anything

is better than being an American Negro seeking decent treatment in America. We find it difficult to conceive that an Army Post, as much a Federal Estate as any Reserve Bank or Post-office, will refuse to enforce a Federal policy because it may be in disagreement with the mores of a backward and barren community.

8. Unless this situation is met firmly, it will spread and thrive. We request therefore, that this matter receive immediate attention. It is our feeling that, failing to receive the common courtesies extended officers and gentlemen, that we be either transferred to a station at which we will be accorded decent treatment, or that we be allowed to request relief from active duty with the armed forces. Under the present situation, it is difficult, almost impossible, to discharge to the best of our abilities.

9. This letter is a one hundred percent expression of opinion by the officers present at this time. Officers absent at this, either on leave or duty will make a similar expression of feeling upon return.

/s/ Walter Boags
2nd Lt., AC

/s/ Richard Jennings
2nd Lt., AC

/s/ George E. Carroll
C/O., AC

/s/ Cyril Burke, Jr.
2nd Lt., AC

/s/ Glenn L. Head
2nd Lt., AC

/s/ Arthur H. Bland
F/O., AC

/s/ Leonard E. Williams
2nd Lt., CAC

/s/ Edward V. Hipps
2nd Lt., AC

/s/ James C. Warren
F/O., A.C.

/s/ Robert Payton
2nd Lt., FA

/s/ Daniel Keel
F/O., AC

/s/ Coleman Young
2nd Lt., Inf.

/s/ Carl O. Roach
1st Lt., F.A.

/s/ Willard W. Savoy
2nd Lt., AC

/s/ Lawrence Hawkins
2nd Lt., AC

/s/ Sheldon Weaver
2nd Lt., AC

/s/ Albert Gaines
2nd Lt., AC

/s/ Perry Lindsey
2nd Lt., AC

/s/ Roger V. Pines
2nd Lt., AS

/s/ Ellis J. Bagley
2nd Lt., AC

/s/ Marcel Clyne
F/O., AC

/s/ Louis Anderson
2nd Lt., AC