■ How Army jim-crow led to the wholesale courts-martial of Negro GIs in Korea

Summary Justice — The Negro GI in Korea

By Thurgood Marshall

THIRTY-NINE Negro American soldiers convicted and sentenced by courts-martial held in Korea asked the NAACP to represent them. All, beginning with Lt. Leon A. Gilbert, who received sentence of death on September 6, had pleaded "Not Guilty." When we examined records of the trials, we knew something was very wrong.

These soldiers were members of the 24th Infantry Regiment. This Regiment won the first notable United Nations' victory in retaking the rail and highway city of Yechon on July 28 after a bloody sixteen hour battle. At Bloody Peak, its Third Battalion fought its way up and down the mountain several times in the face of superior enemy fighting power, with whole companies being wiped out. Despite staggering casualties, these infantry-men fought on until they took Bloody Peak and held it.

And yet, we were faced with a large number of courts-martial cases involving Negroes, with conviction for cowardice, for desertion, for misbehavior in the presence of the enemy and other serious offenses. It seemed hard to believe that these men could change over from heroes to cowards, all within a few days, even under the violent pressures of warfare.

Letters from the men insisted they had been treated unfairly. In most cases there was no dispute between the prosecution and defense on points of law, but versions of the facts given by witnesses varied widely.

We needed facts. It would do little good to submit appeals for review of these trials unless we found out everything we could about each individual case. And the place to get the facts was across the Pacific.

At first, General MacArthur re-

THURGOOD MARSHALL, NAACP *special counsel, spent five weeks in Japan and Korea investigating the circumstances surrounding the courts-martial convictions of Negro troops. He left for Japan on January 11 and returned to New York City during the month of February.*

fused permission for me to go to Tokyo, where the prisoners were. He sent a cable which read:

Not the slightest evidence exists here of discrimination as alleged. As I think you know in this command there is no slightest bias of its various members because of race, color or other distinguishing characteristics. Every soldier in this command is measured on a completely uniform basis with the sole criteria his efficiency and his character. Nevertheless, on receipt of your message I at once ordered the Inspector General to make thorough investigation of your charges and will be glad to have you forward here any evidence in your possession bearing upon the matter.

In any individual trial a soldier can obtain special counsel to defend him if he so desires. In such individual trial there would of course be no objection to Thurgood Marshall representing the accused and coming to this command for such purpose. You understand of course that courts martial are convened by the Major Subordinate Commander in Korea and the hearings are conducted there.

DECISION NO HELP

This decision of MacArthur's was certainly no help to the men who had already been condemned, and we were continuing to receive requests from others who had been convicted under questionable circumstances. We did not hear of these trials until long after they took place, so the General's willingness to have me represent men who might be accused in the future was not encouraging. That same afternoon Walter White, executive secretary of the NAACP, sent another cable to MacArthur, urging reconsideration of its decision, and said:

Examination of courts martial records indicates many convicted under circumstances making impartial justice improbable.

He also forwarded a memorandum of twenty-three cases of individual soldiers, and requested a conference between General MacArthur, the Inspector General, and myself. On December 24, MacArthur cabled that there was "no objection" to such a conference.

Immediately after my arrival in Tokyo on January 14, General MacArthur ordered that I be given the fullest cooperation from everyone under his command. My work was to be carried on through the office of the Inspector General. The most complete cooperation possible was forthcoming throughout my stay.

I must emphasize that every consideration was shown me. But it helped reveal how little consideration had been given to men who had risked their lives for their country.

All the condemned men were confined in a stockade outside Tokyo. I was permitted to see every man I wanted to, as many times as I liked, and with complete privacy. Altogether, I saw about eighty men. I talked to Lt. Gilbert half a dozen times, and to some of the others several times. It was possible to get each man's story, as he wanted to tell it, asking him to explain any questionable or obscure details. All the information which had been lacking in the courts-martial records

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KOREAN FASHION SHOW—*During a lull in the fighting in Korea, Cpl. Charles Yizar of Mamaroneck, N. Y., looks over a bullet-proof vest worn by Cpl. George Brackett (left) of Philadelphia, Pa. Something new in military fashions? Both men are "medics."*

became available for checking — names of witnesses, dates, times of day, places — everything a defense lawyer should have when a man's life is at stake.

FURTHER INVESTIGATION

Each day a list of all points which warranted further investigation was submitted to the Inspector General. Inquiry into these detailed points would begin that very day, so that this checking process moved along only a few days behind my questioning.

I then went back and did my own checking on stories that did not quite fit together. In this way it was possible to separate hearsay from facts. It helped distinguish exaggerated statements from the facts, and to document these facts whenever possible.

In many cases, charges were made or strengthened by officers whose statements in the records of the trials called for extremely careful checking. It wasn't possible for some of the things they said to be true. And yet, to find out where they now were required use of the Locator File in the huge six-story Dai Ichi building which was MacArthur's Far East Command headquarters. I hate to think how many times it turned out that the officer had been killed in action. Back in August, September, and October of 1950 the casualty rate was horribly high.

After three weeks of this process, I made a preliminary report to General MacArthur and General Hickey, his chief of staff. This was at a conference in the Dai Ichi building at night. I told them what had been found so far in my investigation, what I believed to be the cause of these courts-martial trials, and who, in my opinion, was to blame.

WENT TO KOREA

Then I told General MacArthur I wanted to go to Korea, and they made arrangements for the same complete cooperation that had been given to me in Tokyo.

All through my inquiry in Korea I was allowed to see anybody I needed to see. From the beginning to the end of that part of my trip a Deputy Inspector General, Colonel D. D. Martin, accompanied me. With his authority and with my published orders from MacArthur, we could open any door. And we did. Whenever I could more easily get what was needed by myself, I would arrange to go alone. This was wholly satisfactory to Colonel Martin.

Since the 24th Infantry Regiment is part of the 25th Division, which is a part of the 8th Army, we first flew to the 8th Army headquarters in Korea. There I talked with officers

MEDAL FOR MIKE—*Michael Benefield, 2, of Alexandria, Va., inspects the Distinguished Service Cross awarded posthumously to his father, Lt. William M. Benefield, Jr., who was killed in Korea last July while singlehandedly trying to remove a mine field which blocked his company's advance. When the medal was pinned on the child's coat, he burst into tears because he thought it would hurt—probably not realizing just how meaningful tears were at the moment.* (*Acme*)

at the top level and men in the lower echelons to get some further idea of what was going on.

Next we went to the 25th Division, where we had talks with General Keane and the men attached to Division headquarters. A whole day was spent getting the stories of the officers who served as defense counsel in the courts-martial cases. Although it is obvious to any lawyer that the cases were prepared in extreme haste, not a single one of these men would admit he did not have sufficient time to prepare his cases properly.

Their legal abilities cannot be questioned. The letter of the military law was observed in nearly every instance.

WHAT HAPPENED

What actually happened in virtually every case was that a defendant would be confronted by two officers, who told him they were assigned to serve as his counsel. Then, observing the letter of military law, they would tell the prisoner, *"You are allowed to choose your own counsel if there is anyone you prefer."*

"Then I want Captain A," the accused man would say.

They'd be sorry, but Captain A was busy right now in a fire fight with North Korean forces on the Main Line of Resistance. His company needed him.

"What about Lieutenant B?" the prisoner would ask.

It was regrettable, but Lieutenant B was up on a ridge with his platoon and could not possibly be disturbed because the enemy was threatening to engulf the whole situation. While the accused man was assured of counsel of his choice, the court-assigned counsel advised him to choose them. The trial was going to begin very shortly. He's been charged with a serious offense, and he needed counsel. Captain A and Lieutenant B were away, and they — the two assigned-counsel — were right there. So was the trial.

In numerous instances the counsel spent no more than fifteen or twenty minutes with the men about to be tried. There were cases when a man was pulled out of his foxhole —told to get out of his blanket, get dressed and ride to Pusan. He'd arrive in Pusan in the middle of the night, be allowed to go to sleep for a while on the court-room floor, only to wake up for his trial to be held then and there.

Since these officers had no wish to endanger their careers, they certainly were not going to concede that there had been insufficient time to prepare the cases properly.

MAIN QUESTION

The following day we rode by jeep to the rear headquarters of the 24th Infantry Regiment. Although this area was called "in the rear" you could hear our artillery firing way behind you. Later we went up to the forward headquarters, where you use a jeep without any springs so as not to mar the accuracy of the 35 and 50 caliber machine guns mounted on them. We were all issued weapons, since an estimated one thousand guerillas were still at large in the country we went through. The cold air was raw and biting, but we used an uncovered jeep, because the officers with us preferred

to be in the open, where they were more likely to see what they ran into on all sides.

It became apparent that we would have to consult the official records to prove what had actually happened to the regiment during those three months last summer and fall. The files we needed were kept at the 25th Division's rear. We hitchhiked a ride back to Pusan, far behind the lines, then took another jeep to ..... (place withheld, by military request). There we found the Division Judge Advocate's office.

In a single room were the investigating reports, military order, and complete files of courts-martial records. Anything connected with any case was available for scrutiny. Here was the precise information, available nowhere else on earth, affecting the condemned soldiers.

The 24th Infantry had been up in the front lines for 93 straight days. Two white regiments were also fighting as long, one of them for 95 days. During that time the ratio of troops of the entire 25th Division serving in Korea, by race, was one Negro to 3.6 white men.

OFFICERS WHITE

The 24th Regiment was the same kind of Negro regiment the Army has maintained since 1865. All enlisted men were Negroes, but for the most part the officers above the level of lientenant were white. As was apparent from my visits to the Locator File in Tokyo, the casualty rate for these officers and their replacements were extremely high. Although many of these officers were dead, they and many of their successors were responsible for the facts revealed by a comparative table drawn up to show how differently Negro and white defendants were treated by courts-martial proceedings.

A court martial begins with a complaint — usually made by an officer. The commanding officer either arrests the man or allows him to go free. An investigation, by another designated officer, ascertains whether the official charges are well founded.

In the 25th Division, between the time of Lt. Gilbert's conviction on September 6 and my visit in late February, there was a total of 118 complaints filed for all types of offenses. Of these, 82 resulted in trials, the rest being either withdrawn or dropped.

Out of the 82 cases which resulted in general court-martial trials 54 were Negroes, 27 were white, and one was Japanese. In these 82 cases, 66 were investigated by white officers and 16 were investigated by Negro officers.

Most of the charges filed against Negroes — 60 of them — were for violation of the 75th Article of War, misbehavior in the presence of the enemy. This means cowardice. In Army life there is no more serious charge.

In the files were complaints against white soldiers for sleeping on their posts during guard duty, up on the front lines within spitting distance of the enemy. But they were not charged with any violation of the 75th Article of War. They were charged with sleeping on their posts. White boys were charged with leaving a sentry post and sleeping on duty who did not even put up a defense, and they were acquitted.

One man was found wrapped up in a blanket sound asleep. In this case, his commanding officer testified, "*I saw him there and he was sleeping.*" One witness testified he didn't *think* the man was asleep. Other witnesses took the stand all saying the boy was asleep. One sergeant testified, "*I was right there. I not only saw him, but I heard him. If he wasn't sleeping, he was snoring while wide awake.*"

This accused soldier was acquitted, found not guilty.

100 PERCENT WHITE

Was it a coincidence that all the commanding officers who approved charges were white, that the entire staffs of the Inspector General's office, and of the trial Judge Advocate's office were 100 percent white? Was it also purely coincidental that one week before my visit to Korea a Negro was added to each of these two staffs?

Here is a summary of the actual results of courts-martial in Korea for alleged violation of the 75th Article of War:

	Negro	*White*
Charges withdrawn	23	2
Charges reduced to AWOL	1	0
Acquittals	4	4
Sentenced	32	2
	60	8

These are the sentences given to the defendants:

	Negro	*White*
Death	1	0
Natural Life	15	0
50 years	1	0
25 years	2	0
20 years	3	0
15 years	1	0
10 years	7	0
5 years	2	1
3 years	0	1
	32	2

The white defendant who got the worst sentence (five years) offered as his defense that he was a chronic drunkard, but this sentence has been since reduced to one year.

The investigation-reports, all kept as official records by the Army, revealed that no credence was ever given to the story each individual accused man would tell. The investigating officers totally ignored the statements of the men about to be charged with the worst offenses in the Army code. Scant effort was made to find out what was true and what was not. I had not only talked to these men, but had the benefit of the investigations made by the Judge Advocate's office to check what stories could be proved.

THE MEN

And what actually had happened? Who were the individuals condemned to serve out their lives in army prisons, or endure terms of 10, 15, 20, 25 and 50 years at hard labor for being cowards?

One boy convicted of cowardice had enlisted when he was fifteen. He remained in that bloody, frozen Korean fighting without telling anybody he was under age, knowing full well that he could at any time be returned to the United States as a hero. This coward remained in the front lines of his own free choice

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Acme

CHAPLAIN WINS HIGH AWARD—*Chaplain (Capt.) Drue C. Ford (left) counsels one of his charges, Cpl. William H. Weymouth. Capt. Ford was awarded the Commendation Ribbon presented by the base commander at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, for meritorious service in the field of counseling. This award is one of the highest honors to be bestowed for peacetime achievements. Capt. Ford also won two Bronze Stars and the Asiatic-Pacific Ribbon for his service in World War II.*

DID YOU KNOW —

That the ex-slave William Johnson of Natchez, Mississippi, was "one of the most interesting and remarkable of American diarists"?

Johnson's diary, edited by E. A. Davis and William Hogan, has been recently published by the Louisiana State University Press as *William Johnson's Natchez.*

GROVELAND VICTIMS

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completely vindicated in the reversal of the convictions on the basis of the method of jury selection.

In handing down his concurring opinion, Justice Jackson also lashed out at the convictions as not meeting "any civilized conception of due process of law." He said that "the conclusion is inescapable that these defendants were prejudged as guilty and the trial was but a legal gesture to register a verdict already dictated by the press and the public opinion which it generated."

Now Samuel Shepherd and Walter Irvin face a new trial for the crime of which the NAACP insists they are innocent.

NEGRO GI IN KOREA

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until he was confronted with court-martial charges. We checked, and found he told the truth. His 18th birthday occurred 11 days after his court martial convicted him of being a coward.

One unit of the 159th Field Artillery consisting of Negro enlisted men and white officers was in a river bed, where it was very peaceful and quiet. It was so quiet that the officers went back to town that evening. At fifteen minutes after midnight, enemy mortar shells dropped down on that unit in rapid succession. There was considerable confusion.

The captain in charge of the unit gave the command to Close Station and March Order. Artillerymen do not expect to have enough time to spell out every word in such a situation. The specific order is given by the letters, CSMO. When an officer says CSMO, he means *Get Ready to Get Out.*

They coupled the guns to vehicles called prime movers, a kind of big truck. None of the court-martial testimony is disputed except the application of the CSMO order. The captain admitted he gave it, but says it was for only one gun crew to move out and not the other batteries. He further admitted that his commanding officer had instructed him over the field telephone, *"Don't issue any order. You stay there and fight."*

Even though the batteries were all coupled up to leave, the word was given to uncouple and get back to firing shells. One gun crew of fourteen Negroes, however, had heard the order CSMO and had moved out too fast to get the new order. Twelve men were back the very next morning, even though the battery had moved to a new position that night. The other two men reported to duty shortly afterward. Even with the emergency CSMO order they had all taken the trouble to learn the location of their new firing position.

CONFUSION CONFOUNDED

The commanding officer told them that there had been so much confusion and misunderstanding that nobody knew what was going on. They were to forget about the incident, to

go back to work and fight the war. And so the fourteen men forgot about it and were back on duty as before. Nevertheless, even though every one of the fourteen men had returned, charges of misbehavior were made subsequently.

Two of the men were court martialed. Three others, who testified for the two soldiers on trial, were also court martialed. At the two trials the captain gave three distinctly different stories under oath as to what had happened.

It is safe to say that this captain did not know what happened. He was confused. I talked with him and he still does not know what happened. But he has been promoted to Major, while five Negroes are in prison. Three of them are serving twenty years at hard labor and two of them received life sentences for "misconduct in the presence of the enemy."

As General MacArthur indicated in his cable to Walter White, when he first vetoed my visit overseas, under any decent system a man is treated as an individual. The terrible thing about these trials was the hopeless feeling common to every individual defendant. They felt they had no chance. The files showed these trials were held without any respect for the rights of individuals. The courts-martial were carried out with efficient haste, almost as on an assembly line. As many as four cases in a single day were tried, running on through the night, with all concerned anxious to get them over with.

QUICK JUSTICE

In four cases the trials which sentenced men to life imprisonment ran 42 minutes, 44 minutes, and the other two for 50 minutes each. This included the entire process of hearing the charges read, swearing in witnesses, examining all the evidence presented, hearing arguments (if any), explaining to the men their rights under the manual of courts-martial, the recess periods, discussion by the court and pronouncing sentence. Other trials ran an hour or an hour and ten minutes. I have seen many miscarriages of justice in my capacity as head of the NAACP legal department. But even in Mississippi a Negro will get a trial longer than 42 minutes, if he is fortunate enough to be brought to trial.

The men in the stockade had a common feeling of hopelessness. Some men with air-tight defenses had not presented evidence clearly demonstrating their innocence of the charges. Time and again I would ask them, *"Why didn't you tell your lawyer what really happened? Why didn't you tell the court? Why didn't you tell somebody?*

Even though each man is an individual in the eyes of God and under our Constitution, these individuals gave me the same answer. *"It wasn't worth trying. We knew when we went in there we were all going to come out the same way. Each one of us hoped and prayed we would only get life. They gave that officer, Lt. Gilbert, death, only because he is a Negro. What did you expect them to give a Negro enlisted man? We know what the score is."*

Such a spirit of hopelessness will strip away from any man the ability to defend himself adequately. One particular sergeant imprisoned in the

stockade outside Tokyo was representative of the devotion we have come to associate with our armed forces. Under fire in Korea three of his commanding officers were killed in a period of two days. This man had kept his company together. He did not lose a single wounded man in ninety days. He brought every injured man out, sometimes on his own back. He saw to it that his men received hot food, regularly, which he took up to them at the remoter points along the firing line. One after another he saw his friends killed, but refused to be relieved. Day in and day out, he kept on fighting, several times in command of the entire company because there weren't officers around.

BATTLE FATIGUE

This sergeant is charged with wilful disobedience of an order. When he was charged, when he talked to his lawyer, when he went into the courtroom, during the trial, and even after the sentence he never told any of them that right in his pocket was a slip from a doctor, a medical corps captain, certifying that this man was suffering from battle fatigue and should be returned to the rear for treatment. He never told anyone about this slip until he talked to me. I called the captain of the guard immediately and asked to have the sergeant's belongings searched. In the condemned man's wallet, taken away from him with the rest of his personal effects upon his reception at the stockade, was the slip of paper.

"Why didn't you tell them? I asked.

"It wasn't worth it," he said. *"It wouldn't help me. You saw what happened to Sergeant B....., didn't you, when you talked with him? Sergeant B..... put in as evidence the official record book kept by the Army hospital showing he was there on the days they charged him with being away from duty. The court didn't pay any attention to it. They are not paying attention to anything we say."*

There were men who were punished more than once for same alleged offense. Four Negro soldiers were attached to a mess hall miles behind the front lines. When they finished work one day, their sergeant told them they could go off and do what they liked. They told me it was customary to drive a jeep to a place where showers had been set up. When they returned from their shower the sentry told them there was supposed to be no movement in that section, but they could drive around by the road to the back part of the mess-hall area.

These men were picked up on the road going to Pusan. They said they were lost. When these men were brought in by the M.P.'s, their commanding officer said, *"You fellows have had easy jobs behind the lines, but you haven't appreciated it. For your punishment, I am going to put you in the front lines."*

Perhaps this captain was right. He put two of these men in a heavy mortar outfit and two others with a machine-gun unit. They were in fierce front-line fighting for twenty-one days and twenty-one nights. Perhaps they deserved this, since other men had been on prolonged duty in

battle without mess-hall duty behind the lines or shower baths after work.

Their record in battle was never questioned. But these four men were pulled out, brought back and court martialed for violation of the 75th Article of War because of the incident that had happened three weeks before, miles behind the lines. They were sentenced to twenty years each for misbehavior before the enemy. The only crime which they could conceivably have been charged with involved the use of a jeep, without permission, which has not yet been charged against them.

OFFICER BEHAVIOR

How could officers of our Army behave in such a way? The official records proved that they did, but the explanation for their behavior was still lacking. My last Sunday in Korea was spent at a very forward position of the 24th Infantry Regiment, where I talked to the key man in every company of the regiment and of the 159th Field Artillery battery. These men knew what was behind these courts-martial operations.

The Regiment's forward positions were then moved north of Seoul. They had just taken an airstrip six hours before we got there.

These soldiers were survivors of the action occurring prior to and during the three months of courts-martial. There was one man whose father had been in the regiment for twenty years, and he's been in it for nine. I talked to about seventy of these veterans, asking them to tell me what had been going on last summer and fall.

One after another, they all said the same thing. The regiment's morale had been at a disastrously low ebb. Their white officers were in many instances Southerners who had brought their prejudices with them when assigned to duty with the 24th Infantry.

Time and again these officers told the men whom they were going to order into battle, *"I despise nigger troops. I don't want to command you or any other niggers. This Division is no good, and you are lousy. You don't know how to fight."*

I cannot imagine a worse situation in combat, where a man does not care what happens to those serving under him. There is no way to make the soldiers care less what is going to happen to the outcome of the fighting, or to their officers.

CASUALTIES HIGH

The casualty rates among the enlisted men and officers was disproportionately high. And how could it help but be high, when you are following such leaders? This wasn't told about one officer, but about several, by fighting men who were not court martialed and certainly had no reason to tell anything but the truth.

This explained these courts-martial proceedings to me. I think the high rate of casualties among officers made it necessary to assign the blame. The answer was a wholesale conviction of Negro soldiers who had survived this prejudiced leadership.

When I talked to the men that Sunday, morale in the 24th Infantry was certainly high. They had a new commanding officer, Colonel John T.

Corley. They were proud of his having earned more battlefield decorations than any officer in the active Army. He respects them, and every man with whom I talked admired him. They repeatedly told me how, instead of ordering them forward into action, Colonel Corley goes out himself and commands, "Come!"

There are still some other officers in the regiment whom the men do not respect, and have little reason to respect. So long as that sort of officer is in command of jim-crow troops, we may expect the same pattern of injustice in the future. These soldiers are fighting and dying for us, who should see to it that they are not subjected to the kind of leadership which despises them.

MADE REPORT

I now had the information for a complete report to General MacArthur, with recommendations. According to Army procedure, MacArthur did not have official responsibility for the disposition of the individual courts-martial cases. After the trials were approved by the major general in command of the 25th Division, the records were forwarded for review to the Judge Advocate General's office in the Pentagon in Washington. There the NAACP has been representing the condemned men, and has already arranged for a number of the sentences to be reversed or reduced.

But in my report it was necessary to place the ultimate responsibility for these courts-martial squarely upon General Douglas MacArthur. He had both the authority and the responsibility for maintaining or ending racial segregation in the Army's Far East Command.

In the large headquarters staff of MacArthur's Far East Command at the time, in the Dai Ichi building, there were no Negroes except for three civilian clerks. This is but one fo several buildings with thousands of army personnel; nowhere were there more than one out of four men fighting with the 25th Division in Korea is a Negro American. There was a handsome, elite honor guard of crack riflemen which used to guard the headquarters and the person of MacArthur, but there was not a Negro among them. Headquarters had a football team, all white. There wasn't even a Negro in the headquarters band.

MACARTHUR RESPONSIBLE

This was General MacArthur's responsibility. He was at the time the Supreme Commander of American and United Nations troops then engaged in battle with a Communist enemy which seeks to divide us from nithe rest of the world. The Communists preach and propagandize how Americans abuse colored people, and MacArthur had allowed discrimination in his own headquarters. Negro troops in Korea are not succumbing to the Communist propaganda any more than they believed the Germans in the last war. They see how the Communists are killing Negroes as thoroughly as they are killing others.

Major General Doyle O. Hickey, who was MacArthur's chief of staff, told me that the General was aware of these things and that a study was being made to find ways and means for correcting them. I told

him that the United States Air Force took just one day to end segregation. They gave a single order, and the Air Force is now an integrated, American body of men using the best efficiency and skill each man can provide in his country's service.

Three blocks down Avenue A from the Dai Ichi building is the Far East Air Force headquarters. Negroes work alongside white soldiers there in the guard, in the offices, wherever they are capable of doing good work. The first time I went by the Air Force building there were two guards of the Air Police standing at attention. One happened to be white; the other was colored. And after the Dai Ichi building, it was a very pleasant experience to see the guard being checked by the Sergeant of the Guard, who on that day happened to be a Negro. The same policy is now in force in the U. S. Navy.

I told General MacArthur that if the Air Force and the Navy, both drawing men from the same forces as the Army, frequently from the same families, have done this without any disadvantageous results, there was no reason why the Army couldn't do it. The Army is eliminating segregation in other places, and the Far East Command has no special problems which would place it at an extra disadvantage. It is disgraceful to have the Japanese clerks in the canteens told to discriminate against Negro service men during their five day recreation rotation from Korea.

In every war in which this country has participated, Negro Americans have had to fight for the right to fight. At the start of each war, military leaders have questioned the Negro's abilities and finally accepted Negro participation under the pressure of necessity.

Although 920,000 Negroes served in the Army during the Second World War, the Army didn't take most of them until manpower shortages impelled their acceptance, using them for menial jobs wherever possible. These men were treated as inferiors in southern training camps. The great majority were used for arduous, dirty work overseas, but they covered themselves with glory just the same.

To date, the Cold War has erupted into violent action in one area, the Far East. There we face the potential enmity of hundreds of millions of men whose skins are not white, who look with extreme care to see how white men feel about colored peoples.

The NAACP believes that the men and women in our Armed Services shall have first preference on our time and efforts. But we are not only a group of Americans seeking *correction* of vicious practices and for the survival of this country, we also work to prevent injustice. The best way to accomplish this in our Armed Services is to work to bring about complete abolition of segregation now.

To date the legal department of the NAACP has secured reduction of sentence for twenty of these soldiers, but we have just begun. The NAACP is working to secure the appropriate exoneration or abbreviation of sentence for every man treated unjustly because of his race or color.