

Monday January 16, 1950



[Sun rise](#) 0742 1737
[Moon rise](#) 0557 1507
[Moon Phases](#) 3% 28 days

Yesterday Overview

- [0000](#)
- [0100](#)
- [0200](#)
- [0300](#)
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- [2300](#)

Tomorrow

Overview

January 16, 1950 (Monday)

- All Soviet labor camps in East Germany were ordered closed by the Soviet Control Commission administrator, General Vassily Chuikov. The estimate of prisoners in the camps was as much as 35,000 and many were subject to transfer to camps in the Soviet Union.
- **Born:** Debbie Allen, American choreographer and dancer, in Houston
- **Died:** Gustav Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach, 79, former German arms manufacturer

[\[note\]](#)

End of Quotas in the Army



Chief of Staff of the United States Army

Integration



The gradual shift in Army integration policies and the exigencies of the battle situation in Korea finally offered a solution. Since World War II a number of studies had been made on the better utilization of Negro personnel within the Army and several steps had been taken prior to the outbreak of the Korean conflict. #64

#64 For a discussion of the developments before the Korean War, see Freedom to Serve: Equality of treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Services, A Report by the President's committee, Charles Fahy, Chairman (Washington, 1950).

Army regulations issued in **January 1950** stated that all manpower would be utilized to obtain maximum efficiency in the Army without regard to race, color, religion, or national origin. #65

#65 Army Special Regulations 600-629-1, **16 Jan 50.**

While these regulations did not require integration of units, they did make it possible.

[\[note\]](#)

The quota and assignments issues remained the center of controversy between the Army and the committee. Although Fahy was prepared to postpone a decision on the quota while negotiations continued, he was unwilling to budge on the assignments issue. As the committee had repeatedly emphasized, the question of open, integrated assignment of trained Negroes was at the heart of its program. Without it the opening of Army schools and military occupational specialties would be meaningless and the intent of Executive Order 9981 frustrated.

At first glance it would seem that the revision of Circular 124 supported the assignment of Negroes to white units, as indeed Secretary Gray had recently promised. But this was not really the case, as Kenworthy explained to the committee. The Army had always made a distinction between specialists, men especially recruited for critically needed jobs, and specialties, those military occupations for which soldiers were routinely trained in Army schools. The draft revision did not refer to this second and far larger category and was intended to provide only for the placement of the rare black specialist in white units. The document (p. 369) as worded even limited the use of Negroes in overhead units. Only those with skills considered appropriate by the personnel office—that is, those who possessed a specialty either inappropriate in a black unit or in excess of its needs—would be considered for racially mixed overhead units.[\[14-111\]](#)

Fahy was determined to have the Army's plan modified, and furthermore he had learned during the past few weeks how to get it done. On 9 December Kenworthy telephoned Philleo Nash at the White House to inform him of the considerable sentiment in the committee for publicizing the whole affair and read to him the draft of a press statement prepared by Fahy. As Fahy expected, the White House wanted to avoid publicity; the President, through Nash, assured the committee that the issues of assignment and quota were still under discussion. Nash suggested that instead of a public statement the committee prepare a document for the Army and the White House explaining what principles and procedures were demanded by the presidential order. In his opinion, Nash assured Kenworthy, the White House would order the Army to meet the committee's recommendations.[\[14-112\]](#)

White House pressure undoubtedly played a major role in the resolution of the assignment issue. When on 14 December 1949 the committee presented the Army and the President with its comments on the Army's proposed revision of Circular 124, it took the first step toward what was to be a rapid agreement on black assignments. At the same time it would be a mistake to discount the effectiveness of reasonable men of good will discussing their very real differences in an effort to reach a consensus. There is considerable evidence that when Fahy met on 27 December with Secretary Gray and General J. Lawton Collins, the Chief of Staff, he was able to convince them that the committee's position on the assignment of black graduates of specialist schools was right and inevitable.[\[14-113\]](#)

While neither Gray nor Collins could even remotely be described as social reformers, both were pragmatic leaders, prepared to accept changes in Army tradition.[\[14-114\]](#)

Collins, unlike his immediate predecessors, was not so much concerned with finding the Army in the vanguard of American social practices as he was in determining that its racial practices guaranteed a more efficient organization. While he wanted to retain the numerical quota, lest the advantages of an Army career attract so large a number of Negroes that a serious racial imbalance would result, he was willing to accept a substantive revision of the Gillem Board policy.



Secretary of the Army Gray

Gray was perhaps more cautious than Collins. Confessing later that he had never considered the question of equal opportunity until Fahy brought it to his attention, Gray began with a limited view of the executive order—the Army must (p. 370) eliminate racial discrimination, not promote racial integration. In their meeting on 27 December Fahy was able to convince Gray that the former was impossible without the latter. According to Kenworthy, Gray demonstrated an "open and unbiased" view of the problem throughout all discussions. [\[14-115\]](#)

The trouble was, as Roy Davenport later noted, Gordon Gray was a lawyer, not a personnel expert, and he failed to grasp the full implications of the Army staff's recommendations. [\[14-116\]](#) Davenport was speaking from firsthand knowledge because Gray, after belatedly learning of his experience and influence with the committee, sent for him. Politely but explicitly Davenport told Gray that the staff officers who were advising him and writing the memos and directives to which he was signing his name had deceived him. Gray was at first annoyed and incredulous; after Davenport finally convinced him, he was angry. Kenworthy, years later, wrote that the Gray-Davenport discussion was decisive in changing Gray's mind on the assignment issue and was of great help to the Fahy Committee. [\[14-117\]](#)

Fahy reduced the whole problem to the case of one qualified black soldier denied a job because of color and pictured the loss to the Army and the country, eloquently pleading with Gray and Collins at the 27 December meeting to try the committee's way. "I can't say you won't have problems," Fahy concluded, "but try it." Gray resisted at first because "this would mean the complete end of segregation," but unable to deny the logic of Fahy's arguments he agreed to try. [\[14-118\]](#) There were compromises on both sides. When Collins pointed out some of the administrative difficulties that could come from the "mandatory" language recommended by the committee, Fahy said that the policy should be administered "with latitude." To that end he promised to suggest some changes in wording that would produce "a policy with some play in the joints." The conferees also agreed that the quota issue should be downplayed while the parties continued their discussions on that subject. [\[14-119\]](#)



General Collins

Agreement followed rapidly on the heels of the meeting of the principals. Roy Davenport presented the committee members with the final draft of the Army (p. 371) proposal and urged that it be accepted as "the furthest and most hopeful they could get."[\[14-120\]](#)

Footnote 14-120: Interv, Nichols with Davenport.[\(Back\)](#)

Lester Granger, Davenport later reported, was the first to say he would accept, with Fahy and the rest following suit,[\[14-121\]](#)

Footnote 14-121: Ltr, Kenworthy to Nichols, 29 Jul 53, in Nichols Collection, CMH; Interv, Nichols with Davenport.[\(Back\)](#)

and on **16 January 1950** the Army issued Special Regulation 600-629-1, Utilization of Negro Manpower in the Army, with the committee's blessing.

Fahy reported to Truman that the new Army policy was consistent with the executive order. Its paragraphs on assignments spelled out the principle long advocated by the committee: "Negro manpower possessing appropriate skills and qualifications will be utilized in accordance with such skills and qualifications, and will be assigned to any ... unit without regard to race or color." Adding substance to this declaration, the Army also announced that a list of critical specialties in which vacancies existed would be published periodically and ordered major commanders to assign Negroes who possessed those specialties to fill the vacancies without regard to race. The first such list was published at the same time as the new regulation. The Army had taken a significant step, Fahy told the President, toward the realization of equal treatment and opportunity for all soldiers.[\[14-122\]](#)

Footnote 14-122:

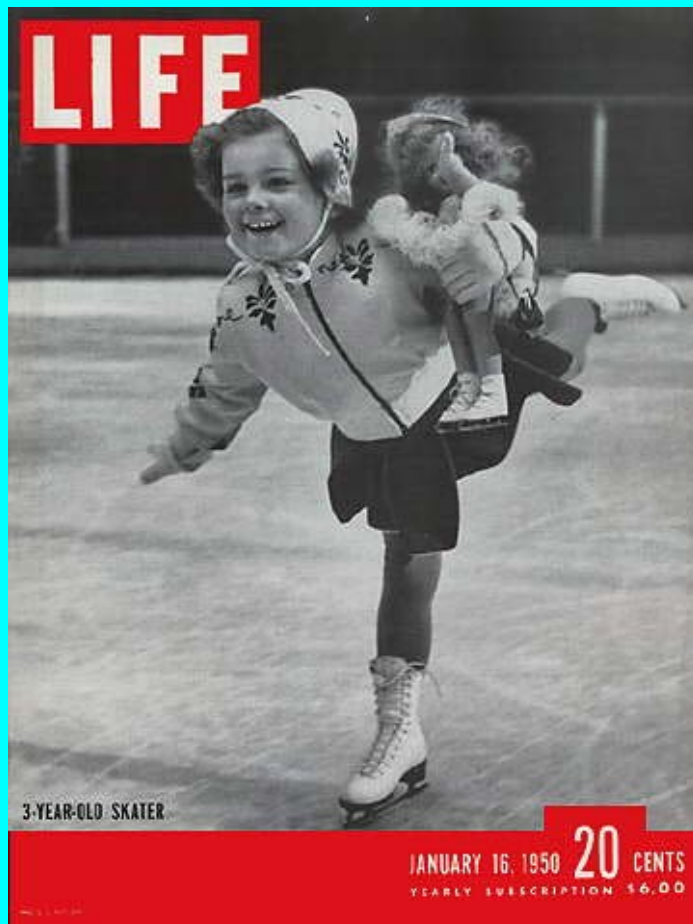
Memo, Fahy for President, **16 Jan 50**, FC file;
SR 600-629-1, **16 Jan 50**;
DOD, Off of Pub Info, Release 64-50, **16 Jan 50**.

The special regulation was circulated worldwide on the day of the issue; see Memo, D/P&A to TAG, 16 Jan 50, WDGPA 291.2.[\(Back\)](#)

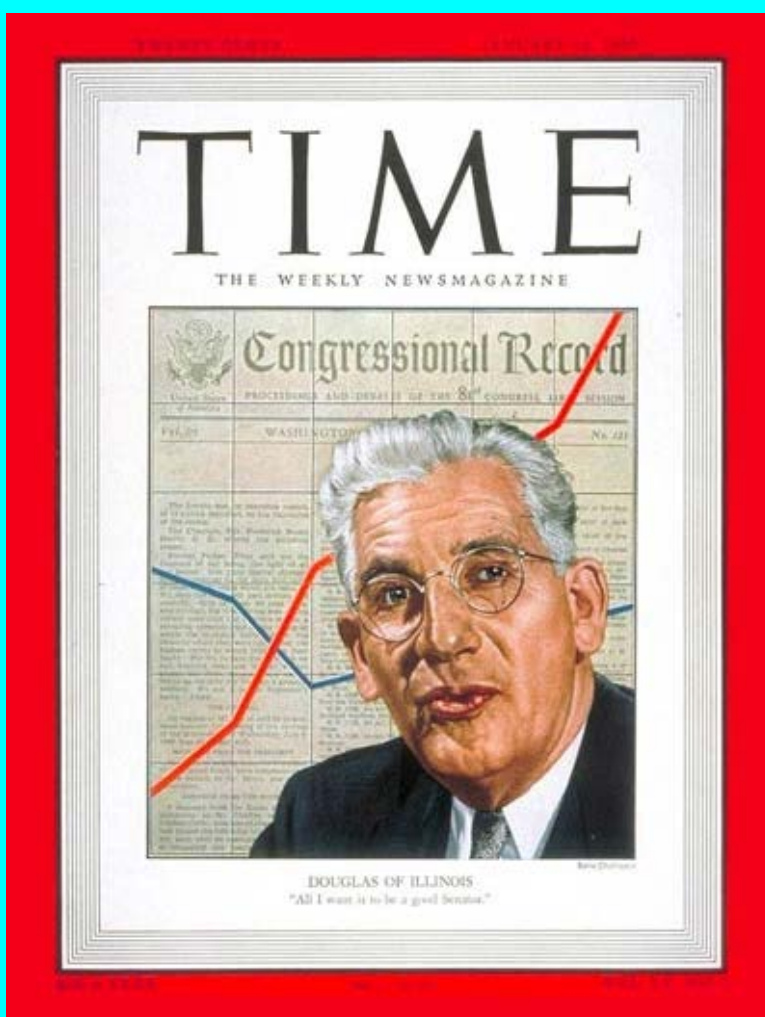
Secretary of Defense Johnson was also optimistic, but he warned Gordon Gray that

many complex problems remained and asked the Army for periodic reports. His request only emphasized the fact that the Army's new regulation lacked the machinery for monitoring compliance with its provisions for integration. As the history of the Gillem Board era demonstrated, any attempt to change the Army's traditions demanded not only exact definition of the intermediate steps but also establishment of a responsible authority to enforce compliance.

[note]



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Cover story is about Lieut. Colonel Paul Douglas USMC.

[\[note\]](#) [\[note\]](#)

[Charles Fahy](#) to Harry S. Truman, January 16, 1950. Reports to the White House, Record Group 220: Records of the [President's Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Services](#).

[\[note\]](#) [\[note\]](#)

[Notes for Monday January 16, 1950](#)